The View From Key West: Toward a Global South Atlantic Lyric

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B.A., English, Vassar College, 2006

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English Language and Literature

University of Virginia July 2015

Acknowledgments

I am immensely fortunate to have received endlessly generous training, support, and mentorship from a wonderful department with a vibrant intellectual community. The codirectors of my dissertation, Jahan Ramazani and Jennifer Wicke, have supported and believed in my work and me more than I can ever adequately thank them for, and it means the world to me. I am honored to have been their students at the University of Virginia, benefiting from their teaching, scholarship, critical acumen, and professional and personal support. Stephen Cushman has deeply influenced this project and my development as a scholar and teacher as well. Working with, and alongside, him has been a great and matchless gift—one of my most cherished memories was a course I took under his tutelage during my early years in the department and I continue to be inspired by his pedagogical example. Courses, conversation, and research collaboration with Michael Levenson throughout my years at UVa have been enormously beneficial as well, helping to inspire my enthusiasm for the profession. I am grateful to other faculty members—Elizabeth Fowler, Deborah McDowell, Anna Brickhouse, and Rita Felski—who have supported my work and with whom I have had fruitful conversations The continued support and friendship of Don Foster—whose in its conception. mentorship at Vassar College and beyond—has also meant a great deal to me, having far exceeded his obligations to me as my teacher. I would not have entered graduate school if not for him.

At the University of Virginia, I benefited from the financial support of a Commonwealth fellowship, a South Atlantic Studies Fellowship from the Virginia

Foundation of the Humanities, and generous travel and research grants, which allowed me to do vital archival work and share my scholarship at conferences.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge all that I owe to my mother, Susan, and my sister, Penelope—they are more than my family; they are my life. Without them, I would be nothing—or nowhere. They have believed in me when I have not believed in myself and have ensured that everything I have ever done, including this work, is for them.

Abstract

The View From Key West: Toward a Global South Atlantic Lyric

"The View from Key West" argues that the map of American modernist and contemporary poetry and poetics cannot be drawn without the Global South Atlantic that operates from Key West—a liminal space for writers of the twentieth-century to rethink nation, race, sexual difference, and gender within a transnational frame. Though the increasingly global dimensions of literary study remain focused on the novel, crossings have been equally significant to Anglophone poetics. As Jahan Ramazani's work has repeatedly shown, there exists a "traveling poetry" even when poets remained fixed, because poems travel—literally and figuratively. "The View from Key West" offers one such mapping of a travel, looking to the South Atlantic, instead of the North, for an understanding of how a phase of American literary history has been formed, shaped, and inflected.

From the peninsular tip of the United States to the larger Gulf Region and beyond, the Global South Atlantic has facilitated a crosscultural exchange where poets in the United States, Caribbean, and Americas dissolve national borders and geographical boundaries, alongside conceptual ones of culture and identity, at the same time as they run up against the gaps, tensions, and violence, of a sharp power differential left by the Middle Passage.

Focusing on the work of Wallace Stevens, Hart Crane, Elizabeth Bishop, Audre Lorde, Langston Hughes, Derek Walcott, and Jean Toomer, my study shows how American poetry both remapped itself and was itself remapped by this wide array of Anglo-American, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean poets.

Launching investigations into Cuba, Brazil, Aruba, Central America, the Galapagos, St. Lucia, on the one hand; and the Plains States, the Midwest, the Southern United States, and New York, on the other, they reveal at once the productive cross-connections and insurmountable tensions that define the relationship between North and South. By rendering the hemisphere as mutually constitutive in this way, the Global South Atlantic Lyric decenters the former in favor of a fluid, free-ranging matrix without a center, placing into conversation poets who are often segregated by race as well as nation, crediting investments in social reality and identity to others, such as Stevens, who are not often credited with them, and revealing that American literature—like American history—must be viewed through the lens of South Atlantic, which begins in Key West and extends infinitely outward.

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Introduction: The Crucible

Can we imagine Hart Crane without the Caribbean or Elizabeth Bishop without Rio? – William Logan, April 8, 2007 New York Times

William Logan begins his review of The Selected Poems of Derek Walcott by arguing for the importance of place to Anglo-American poetics. After pointing to Byron and Shelley in Italy and Greece, Eliot and Pound in London, he ends the catalogue with this rhetorical question before addressing a Walcott who has "crossed so many borders, his poems read like a much-thumbed Baedeker." In doing so, Logan not only rehearses Walcott's placement within a poetic tradition his work itself foregrounds, but suggests as neither other readers of Walcott nor even Walcott himself have done—that he stands especially close to its American modernist phase. The poet of St. Lucia occupies the same space as Elizabeth Bishop, who spent fifteen years in Brazil, and Hart Crane, who resided for a summer off the coast of Cuba, on the Isle of Pines. Walcott's affinities to both are well known, the poet at once attracted to Crane's dense, allusive rhetoric and epic ambition and Bishop's skeptical orientation to place and travel that guarrels with the cultural assumptions of tourism—i.e., Logan's Baedeker. But despite Walcott's particularly close kinship to Bishop and the relevance of place to all three poets, the contours of their shared hemispheric geography remains unacknowledged. If we have not been able to imagine these writers without such locales, as Logan suggests—and it is not clear, in Crane's case, that we have not, critics having rendered him national through *The Bridge*, his paradigmatic epic of nation formation—we have certainly

proven able to elide their contiguity, effacing a major poetic lineage that crosses lines of nation, gender, race, and sexual identity.

This is a mistake—for these three poets and more, for the whole of American poetics. Bishop's wide-ranging peregrinations from the 1940s to the late 1960s, in which she interfused Nova Scotia, Brazil, Aruba, Mexico, and the Galapagos; Crane's investments in the Caribbean and Mexico in 1926 and his twilight year in 1933; and Walcott's own vexed crossings between North and South that began during the 1980s, belong to a still larger and richer map of American and Caribbean poetics that converge in Key West.'

Here, at the southernmost point of the continental United States, the largest of the Keys—closer to Havana than Miami, as Bishop herself remarked to her students at Harvard later in life—modernist poetics built on a nineteenth-century hemispheric consciousness informing a trans-American ideal in Walt Whitman and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, José Martí and Rubén Darío, to forge what I call, drawing on Joseph Slaughter, a Global South Atlantic. This critical concept is one that, according to Slaughter, aims to

explore different ways of positioning Atlantic Studies in relation to the Global South ... focusing on how artists and intellectuals from the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa and other Southern zones imagine the Atlantic ... [and] how individuals, governments or political movements, social imaginaries, texts or other cultural artifacts, and markets do (or do not) cross the oceanic space between Africa, Latin America, and surrounding "Southern" regions; and the larger structures of knowledge and power that enable or inhibit these flows (Slaughter).

For a wide-ranging phalanx of mid and late twentieth-century poets that also includes Wallace Stevens, Langston Hughes, Audre Lorde, Jean Toomer, and Claude McKay,

the Global South Atlantic provides a liminal, transnational space to dissolve national borders and geographical boundaries, reveal investments in difference (racial, sexual, class based), and revise social and literary history for the ultimate benefit of the New World, triangulating the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe to draw out their crosscurrents and intersections.

Part of the "transnational turn" that has redefined literary study, this formation reorients a map of American literature still overly indebted to F.O. Mattheissen's American
Renaissance, a modernism embedded within Eliot's "mind of Europe" and its attendant
culture capitals of New York, London, and Paris; and geographies of African American
culture and the African diaspora in the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Atlantic.
From such a dynamic matrix that engages with conceptions of black and white
internationalism emerges a hemispheric modernism. This formation shifts the North
Atlantic orientation of high modernism and the Black Atlantic south, extends the Harlem
Renaissance beyond the United States, and reveals affiliations between modernisms
across the Americas that have for too long been considered incommensurate. As the
North moves South, so the South returns its movement in kind.

By dissolving these national borders, the Global South Atlantic represents a borderlands, to borrow Gloria Anzaldúa's influential critical concept. Anzaldúa's foundational text *Borderlands / La Frontera* "opens up a radical way of restructuring the way we study history" (Saldívar-Hull 2), "[both] disrupt[ing] anglo-centric nationalist histories and interrupt[ing] the Chicano nationalist agenda" (Saldívar-Hull 3) through a liminal space where

two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy (Anzaldúa Preface).

Although Anzaldúa notes "the actual physical borderland that I'm dealing with ... is the Texas-U.S. Southwest/Mexican border," she extends the concept beyond its immediate context: "the psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands, and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the Southwest" (Anzaldúa Preface).

Like a US Mexican border shaped by Mexico and the Americas, the Southeastern border is similarly inflected by the other hemisphere, forming a "northern rim of the Caribbean" (Lowe 54), to borrow John Lowe's phrase. New Orleans was at once "the crown jewel of a Franco-Caribbean empire that spread French culture up the Mississippi and across the Gulf" and a city that distilled the "many markers of the long period of Spanish domination" (Lowe 54-55) that obtained in the Gulf, having been once under Spanish as well as French control. Hemispheric studies has foregrounded this transnational geography to reshape received understandings of canonical figures such as Herman Melville, James Fenimore Cooper, William Faulkner, Walt Whitman, and Zora Neale Hurston, among others, providing the "counter-narrative that questions and critiques the totalizing concept of nation" that Homi Bhaba identifies (ntd in Lowe 54).

But what has been less remarked upon is poetic modernism's and poetry's role more broadly in this map of US literary history. More attention should be paid, as Jahan Ramazani—one of the few scholars mapping this terrain—has observed. As he reminds us in *A Transnational Poetics*, cross-cultural exchange has shaped the arc of poetry over the course of the twentieth and twenty fist centuries (Ramazani 3). Nowhere is this more evident than in the Global South Atlantic. Anglo-American poets not particularly known for such investments in social reality, identity, and routes of global circulation,

undermine the borders and boundaries of nation to cross corresponding barriers of class, race, and sexuality, joining African-American peers in the enactment of cross-cultural contact with the Caribbean and Latin American South. As for Anzaldúa, these crossings take place in the body and find themselves articulated in "the language of the Borderlands," a polyglot ferment where "languages cross-pollinate and are revitalized" (Anzaldúa Preface), thereby rendering these vectors permeable.

Through such multiform pressures on identity, language, and the body, the Global South Atlantic allows poets to graft hybrid cultural forms and reveal a shared literary heritage, disrupting the entrenched national histories of North and South that keep American modernist poetics at once racially segregated and hemispherically isolated.

The Global South Atlantic, also invested in the violence of cross-cultural exchange, is informed by Mary Louise Pratt's equally influential "contact zone" that refers to

social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as their lived out across the globe today (Pratt 18).

Shaped by the legacies of imperialism, the Middle Passage, Jim Crow, and the genocide of indigenous tribes, the Global South Atlantic is a place where "geographically and historically separated [peoples] come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 18).

That contested ground brings to the fore precarious encounters with subaltern figures in the work of white modernists such as Stevens and Bishop and their unequal relations with black peers who are themselves, in some measure, subaltern. Although the cross-cultural contact they undertake is productive, asymmetries of power constrain the exchanges, rendering them incomplete.

Encounters for white modernists are marked with ambivalence, hesitation, and even disgust; focused on native interlocutors who remain silent, or who have been evacuated entirely, their presence evoked only by its absence; and laced with the danger of lapsing into exoticism, even if ultimately defused. The problem for black modernists, on the other hand, is that these same terms operative in the space of "imperial encounter" are those which a McKay or Lorde must escape from, their crosscultural contact reflecting a compensation for the pressures of inequality—and harder to achieve.

This power imbalance the Global South Atlantic instantiates, however, also carries the contact zone's power to dislocate, complicating the easy grammar of colonizer and colonized. "The interactive, improvisational dimensions of imperial encounter" occluded by conquest narratives inform "a 'contact' perspective [which] emphasizes how subjects get constituted in and by their relations to each other" (Pratt 8). Although shaped by power, "a contact perspective" is not reducible to a hegemony where subaltern figures stand merely at the mercy of their imperial observers. The observers, too, find themselves defined by this new narrative that acknowledges an other once providing mere fodder, in conquest narratives, for erasure. Like the relations Pratt theorized, those in the Global South Atlantic are realized "not in terms of

separateness, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices" (Pratt 8).

Upon this basis of interdependence, the contact zone creates a space for creolization, a process of "cultural and linguistic mixing" (Hall 28) developed by foundational theorists of Caribbean poetics, such as Édouard Glissant and Kamau Braithwaite, and subsequently borrowed by more contemporary architects of the global. Pratt uses the related term "transculturation," to describe a process in the contact zone where "subjugated peoples [...] determine what they absorb [from the dominant culture] into their own, how they use it, and what they make it mean" (Pratt 18). Along with related concepts of hybridity, bricolage, mestizaje, metissage, the two terms have often been used interchangeably, which has lead to trenchant criticisms of a theoretical lexicon decontextualized from specific social circumstances. But I am employing creolization for two reasons. Firstly, it describes a process more reciprocal than the more one-sided relation of transculturation. Secondly, in its fundamental Caribbeanness, creolization conforms more closely to the social, historical, and literary context of the Global South Atlantic and thereby responds to such critiques.

Arising originally from linguistics to describe the Creole languages in the region, creolization was subsequently extended by the Martinican Glissant and Jamaican Kamau Brathwaite into a process of cultural interchange where European, African, and indigenous elements mix and are transformed into something distinct and hybrid which "demonstrates ... it is no longer valid to glorify 'unique' origins that race safeguards and prolongs" (Glissant 140). In Brathwaite's formulation, the process involved "indigenizing" its newcomers to produce a "creole culture" and "nation language." Glissant, on the

other hand, saw creolization as an almost infinite mixing informed by "clashes, harmonies, deformations, retreats, and repudiations" (*Caribbean Discourse* 75) that promise "an unceasing process of transformation" (*Caribbean Discourse* 142). Moving beyond a consolatory valorization of hybridity or an empty metaphoricity for the Caribbean condition, both see creolization instead as historically determined by the Middle Passage and, in tribute to its linguistic provenance, enacted in language as well as across culture. These investments correspond to a poetic space—and orientation to space—in the Global South Atlantic with the same kind of mixture, which acknowledges the violence that forged it and the language that refracts it.

Although similarly theorized by the two poet-critics, there exist meaningful differences. The most significant to a discussion of the Global South Atlantic is that Glissant's reflects a more open system to Brathwaite's closed one, an infinite state of flux contending against the *telos* of a creole culture. At once describing a process and the hope for a conclusion finally foreclosed by such unceasing activity, the Global South Atlantic uneasily synthesizes these two strains, and in effect, creolizes *creolization*.

Stevens envisions "a comprehensive island hemisphere" in "The Comedian as the Letter C" (1922), Bishop depicts the titular figure of "Crusoe in England" (1976) experiencing an ironic nostalgia for the island that became his true home, "where all the hemisphere's / left over clouds arrived" and thereby recalls her own hemispheric investments in a space that draws on Aruba and the Galapagos, Brazil and the Keys; and Hughes renovates a decaying Harlem through Havana in *Montage of a Dream Deferred*. But other moments offer questions, ellipses, self-lacerating irony, and various forms of self-doubt to complicate these utopian visions, recollections, and renovations.

That fundamental tension between the realization of cross-cultural contact and its bitter foreclosure exposes a "creole culture" that, however much desired and indeed sought after, is always deferred. The displacement and rootlessness central to the experience of the Global South Atlantic also prevents this vision from reaching fruition. As critics of the transnational turn have been careful to remind us, such global crossings are not inherently emancipatory, with the circulation of black subjects, in particular, dictated by economic and social forces that produce severe alienation.

In the first chapter, I explore how such work of mapping the Global South Atlantic began with an unpromising candidate in the "ephebe" Wallace Stevens, who has long been considered insular and aesthetic, disconnected from his contemporaries and largely denied any interest in social reality, most of all by himself. Never traveling to Europe, sturdily rejecting any sociopolitical significance to his work or poetry more broadly, isolated from the literary culture of New York in his career as an insurance executive in Hartford, Stevens stands in uneasy relation to even the modernist internationalism of Eliot and Pound where he would seem ideally placed. Despite his affiliation with the avant-garde circle around Walter Kreymborg's *Others* (1919), his deep conversancy with trends of modern art (French, especially), and his attention to Arthur Symonds, from whom he imbibed the lessons of Symbolism as well as any of his contemporaries, he has often been regarded as ancillary to the main work of modernist renovation. Amongst such polemics, factions, manifestoes, this "last Romantic" admitted his commitment to what seemed an increasingly attenuated position.

His turning away from the poetics of commitment during the 1930s and 1940s—as much as he had Eliot and Pound's modernist project in the 1920s—was legendary.

The reviews of *Ideas of Order* and *Harmonium* that a young Marxist critic named Stanley Burnshaw published in *New Masses* provoked in Stevens his most sustained and furious response to the social role of the poet, justifying his refusal to be a "propagandist" (*Letters* 309), in "Mr. Burnshaw and the Statue" (1935). Even this response to political engagement has been counted his most notable early failure—not least of all by Stevens himself. He made a drastic revision that became the book length *Owl's Clover* in 1936, but critics have been no kinder to this version. Even Stevens had few kind words for the revision, and the rhetorical posture it represented, omitting it from the *Collected Poems*.

But just as Stevens never fully turned away from responding to the central charge of Burnshaw's reviews—an argument advanced by Alan Filreis and Rachel Blau DuPlessis, among others—he never turned inward. Instead of forsaking the currents of literary culture or confining himself to the nation, he approached Cuba—and the wider Americas—through "the fragrant portal" of Key West.

"Fixing emblazoned poles and fiery poles" in "The Idea of Order at Key West," Stevens signaled the destruction of national boundaries at their very moment of inception, or "fixing." Consequently confronted by "ghostlier demarcations"—the lines of the map that have been vitiated in the conflagration—Stevens makes a breathless appeal to "Ramon Fernandez." At once an emissary of the Southern hemisphere and, as Jani Scandura has argued on the basis of his real life Mexican-French analogue, (Scandura 308), a hybrid figure, Fernandez reflects the hemispheric dimensions of the United States that Stevens wishes to map from the edge of the continent, and the "point of entanglement" the Americas shared in Europe.

During the previous decade, those contours took shape in the American South of Harmonium, a transnational space where the Caribbean rim Lowe identifies bridges the two Americas. In the subsequent decade, it emerged in crosscultural contact with an actual "Ramon Fernandez," when Stevens undertook a poetic correspondence with José Rodríguez Feo, the co-editor of the leading Cuban literary journal, *Orígenes*, and in Stevens's deeper affiliations with the *Grupo Orígenes* on its masthead. With the exception of Eric Keenaghan's work, those affiliations have gone unremarked upon in studies of Stevens.

In this act of reframing the United States through a Caribbean lens Key West provided, Hart Crane joined Stevens. For the same summer on the Isle of Pines that witnessed Crane authoring most of *The Bridge* (1930) also produced the understudied sequence, "Key West: An Island Sheaf." While those poems were not collected and published in full until after his death, Crane's poems of Key West hover at the periphery of *The Bridge*, inflecting the nation with many of the same border and boundary crossings visible in the same Global South Atlantic that Stevens profitably mined. Extending this liminal space further than a heteronormative Stevens who regarded Florida as a female body trapped in the Madonna and whore dichotomy—a Venus divided between the celestial and sensual—Crane destabilizes sexual identity with covert homosexual desire in a space known, even then, for its relatively gay-friendly atmosphere.

Even William Carlos Williams, who was stubbornly insular in his focus from his perch in Paterson, New Jersey, stands to benefit from the lens of the Global South Atlantic. Carlos, the name given to him by his Puerto Rican mother, telegraphs a set of

"Spanish-American roots" that Julio Marzán has profitably explored, but which still merit further attention, having produced translations and an abiding interest in a trans-American project.

The second chapter examines how black modernists Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer and Claude McKay, undertook a parallel journey to the Caribbean and revealed the human cost of the Global South Atlantic, as well as the submarine promise of an African diaspora. From the purview of a Greater Key West that extends the Global South Atlantic to the United States more broadly, these poets focus on the black experience in the New World these white counterparts largely occlude.

For Langston Hughes, who has long been considered the representative African-American poet and central figure of the Harlem Renaissance, this journey took shape in a poetic correspondence during the 1930s with Afro-Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén that has in recent years become increasingly well documented. Vera Kutzinski's pathbreaking work of comparative poetics, *The Worlds of Langston Hughes: Modernism and Translation in the Americas,* embodies this new critical thread, examining the relationship between the two canonical black poets and broaching the wider question of a transnational modernism. Useful critical work by Kutzinski and others has examined their relationship through Hughes's translations of Guillén, explored affinities between the two poets, and identified ways that Hughes influenced Guillén. What has not been pursued nearly as much, however, is the influence Guillén produced for Hughes's poetics. This is a mistake, for the visits Hughes made to Cuba in the 1930s—and the subsequent translation of *Motivos de Son* (1930) Hughes entitled *Cuba Libre*—(1940)

extended to his seminal work of the 1950s, when he was trying to rescue Harlem—and its Renaissance—from suffering an eclipse in black America.

These translations struggled in part, as Vera Kutzinski has convincingly shown, from an inability to translate the Cuban musical form of son that informed these motivos, in particular, into the expected equivalent of the blues. To Hughes's chagrin, the forms did not correspond, as he acknowledged in jettisoning the earlier title "Cuban Blues." But if Hughes found them incommensurate musical vocabularies, he also came to recognize that precisely in such difference, son provided a useful addition to his rendering of African-American experience. Replete with tonal and affective resources, subject matter and formal strategies that no local form of black expression could provide, son provided a useful addition to an already symphonic Montage of a Dream Deferred that grafts related and distinct aesthetic registers (blues, jazz, film) without pretending a synthesis of them—in short, creolizing them. If Langston Hughes operated at the level of culture, importing an Afro-Cuban strain to his representation of black life, Claude McKay, the Jamaican poet who played a foundational role in the Harlem Renaissance, foregrounds the contact zone structuring the Global South Atlantic. In poems such as "The Tropics of New York," crossings directed by global capital and open markets alienate him from his Caribbean experience.

For Jean Toomer—situated within the Harlem Renaissance and Anglo-American modernism—his central work *Cane* (1922) reveals an imbrication in a Global South Atlantic at the level of landscape. From that vantage point of Sparta, Georgia, Toomer forged a Caribbean rim that reoriented the South within the context of the color line, colorism, and the legacy of slave trade, literalizing these conditions in nature and

language. In doing so, he added the blackness elided from Crane's and Stevens's conceptions of the region, and the rural to Hughes's predominantly urban vision of African-American life and culture, without neglecting the urban.

US-centric in his focus, Toomer did not himself look to the Caribbean, but the Caribbean looked to him, ushering in this crosscultural contact. In 1926, British Guiana born Eric Walrond—like McKay, an early light of the Harlem Renaissance from the West Indies—published Tropic Death, a collection of short stories that acknowledged its debt to Toomer's modernist touchstone. The connection has been widely noted, but rarely explored. This is a real lacuna in the conversation of writers who are especially isolated in literary history, for the context places them within the increasingly transnational character of black writing and culture that Michelle Ann Stephens and Brent Edwards, among others, have rigorously mapped. Informed by a literalized geography of the color line, Tropic Death seized on the contours from the agrarian South in Cane to represent a circum-Caribbean extending from the archipelago to Central America. More than merely expand the map of the Global South Atlantic, however, Walrond highlighted the routes of circulation that made it possible through ships central to Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic, along with the underlying social and economic forces, such as the explosion of American capital in the construction of the Panama Canal, which authored those routes and inscribed realities of class and race in the region.

In the third chapter, I explore how Elizabeth Bishop and Audre Lorde helped reframe this transnational ferment by joining gender identity and sexual difference to race and class. Although considered as aesthetic and insular as Crane and Stevens despite her wide-ranging travel, Bishop challenged national borders and boundaries

with even greater force than her predecessors, giving the lie to this characterization of political quietism that has come to be increasingly challenged by readers.

During these formative decades, Bishop focused on marginalized subjects, the constraints of gender, as in the savage piece of late satire "Pink Dog" (1979), and more open expressions of same-sex desire than Crane ever hazarded. This greater interest in alterity on Bishop's part moves her beyond forebears in Crane and Stevens, situating her as much within the African-American poetic lineage I have sketched.

When seen through the lens of the Global South Atlantic, it is clear that even Bishop's Anglo-American inheritance extends beyond the similarities of style with a Marianne Moore, Stevens, Crane, and Bishop all inhabiting a darker, more polyglot world than readers might, at first glance, suspect.

How successfully Bishop articulates the alterity of race and class in her poems of Florida and Brazil can be hotly debated—and indeed has been, many critics faulting her for failing to truly understand her Brazilian subjects, in particular. But such forays into difference on Bishop's part, however partial, are nevertheless meaningful, qualified by her own careful skepticism about empathy shaping these more difficult and contentious crossings.

This willingness to explore race and sexuality also links her to Audre Lorde. Generally read in the context of black feminism and queer poetics, Lorde seems an unlikely partner for a Bishop who expressed skepticism for even Adrienne Rich's brand of feminism. Bishop seems no less inappropriate to place alongside a Lorde who quarreled with white feminists. But I demonstrate how Lorde, after visiting Cuba and the U.S. Virgin Islands in the 1980s, re-imagined the US landscape within an analogous

Global South Atlantic, articulating these dual lenses of race and sexuality with the urgency of her African-American predecessors.

In her 1986 volume, *Our Dead Behind Us*, Lorde forges a transnational space ranging from Africa to Central America, Poland to the Southeastern United States for an experience of the New World that partakes of the creolization and conflict essential to the Global South Atlantic. Through feverish crosscultural contact, Lorde constructs the refuge of an African diaspora where sexual difference and femininity can occupy a meaningful and constructive place. Rather than the questions, secrecy, obliquity, and self-ironizing impulses also marking that generation's cartography, Lorde's map is mobilized with an uncompromising militancy, challenging the mononarratives of nation, race, and sexual identity, expressly and ferociously, in a manner most reminiscent of Anzaldúa's borderlands.

In the coda, I examine how Derek Walcott imagines the Global South Atlantic from a Caribbean perspective that makes productive use of this complex legacy of border crossing and displacement. Beginning with his poetry of the 1980s, when Walcott started to spend significant time in the United States, and culminating in *Omeros* (1992), he mediated the cultural, economic, and political power of the United States through the long-documented agon between the Caribbean and its European histories and traditions informing his broader work. Thus, at the same time as he creolizes the high European poetics of Virgil and Homer with the native materials of St. Lucia in *Omeros*, he performs the same operation for Key West and St. Lucia, deploying Hart Crane's *The Bridge* to inflect his own epic and the United States of the earlier poem to reframe the Caribbean archipelago his poem depicts.

This work of placing both North and South in the same transnational frame distills the trans-American geographies he had developed throughout this phase of his career in *The Arkansas Testament* (1987) and *Midsummer* (1984) for a space that—like Bishop's—looked askance at the barrier between home and elsewhere, with points in Martinique and Puerto Rico, Virginia and New England brought into conversation, and insuperable conflict. In many ways, Walcott embodies what the Global South Atlantic is for all of his predecessors, a fraught experience of the New World where race, nation, history, and identity must be confronted through a tripartite set of attachments: the United States, the Caribbean, and Europe.

What defines a Global South Atlantic Lyric over the long sweep of the twentieth and twenty first centuries is the refraction of a complex social reality in which landscape, culture, language, race, and history, converge, through the lens of a subjective experience that queries that perspective as well as the world it allows the speaker to view.

From Walcott's airplane rides over the Dakotas to Bishop's steamship in Santos, Crane's seclusion on the Isle of Pines to Hughes inhabitation of Harlemite personae that draw on Cuban culture, such poets excavate a long buried integument to American lyric where investments in difference and crosscultural contact articulated with such self-reflection correspond to ones in feeling and desire that inform a Paterian expanse where "feeling can exceed its cause."

By providing a putatively idealized space outside the metropolitan center where affective and cultural vocabularies can be given a freer rein, the Global South Atlantic Lyric is fundamentally pastoral. Housed in tropics only too real, such a wide-ranging

lyric shares the mode's commitment to social critique William Empson and Leo Marx found in encounters between courtier and rustic that undermined the false division between modernity and a prelapsarian idyll.

On the other hand, co-existent with this impulse of critique, the Global South Atlantic Lyric also reflects the "clarifying or restorative force which, however ironically viewed, has always been associated with pastoral," as Kalstone has argued (Kalstone 249). He sees this restoration in the context of a more conventionally lyric Stevens preoccupied with the fluency of the weather and a post-Romantic landscape devoid of sympathetic identification. But what he says about Stevens's "fluent mundo" can be said, with little alteration, about the Global South Atlantic lyric trying to repair a hemisphere never meant to be fractured:

Stevens, by his questions, qualifications, paradoxes, and attempts to give multiple names to experiences ... can suggest the richness, the changeability, the quirks of the natural world he is trying to discover and reclaim. (Kalstone 263)

Put simply, the Global South Atlantic offers at once a space to undermine established orders, and newer ones—Stevens's own "Idea of Order at Key West," joined by the "Ideas of Order" from everyone in the twentieth and twenty first centuries who cast out from that portal that is at once a port and a passageway, a node on global routes of circulation that opens into its own globe.

Wallace Stevens's "Comprehensive Island Hemisphere": From Key West To Cuba

"[...] our Spanish side, which is so often overlooked, and which nevertheless is one of our most fascinating phases."—Letter to Alice Corbin Henderson, April 11, 1921

Ramon Fernandez, tell me, if you know, Why, when the singing ended and we turned Toward the town, tell why the glassy lights, The lights in the fishing boats at anchor there, As the night descended, tilting in the air, Mastered the night and portioned out the sea, Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles, Arranging, deepening, enchanting night. [...] (CPP 106).

The much anthologized "The Idea of Order at Key West," whether seen through the lens of an ode or a crisis-poem—that is, a celebration of a transcendental poetic spirit, or the attenuation of it—has long been regarded as not only one of Stevens's most powerful poems from the 1936 *Ideas of Order*, but his entire canon. Ventriloquizing a female singer—the Sirenesque "she" who joins a panoply of muse figures—Stevens engages, as these terms indicate, in a highly paradigmatic way with Anglo-American poetic tradition, troubling—and being troubled by—the Romantic dialectic between subject and object, between mind and world. Throughout the poem, the singer and shore are emphatically discrete—the song unable to transform "meaningless plungings of water and the wind" into anything beyond themselves—and yet *something*, if only the poem's

¹ Noted in Filreis, Alan. "Voicing The Desert Of Silence: Stevens' Letters To Alice Corbin Henderson." *Wallace Stevens Journal* 12.1 (1988): 3-20.

² Tropic Death (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013); James Davis, *Eric Walrond:* A Life in the Harlem Renaissance and the Transatlantic Caribbean (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Louis J. Parascandola and Carl A. Wade, *Eric Walrond: The Critical Heritage* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2012); Eric Walrond and Louis J.

speaker, has been thoroughly, if momentarily, transformed by the ultimate stanza. The interplay of synesthetic impressions at the shore's edge, with "fragrant portals, dimly starred" produces a scene of unvarnished sublimity.

The most significant transformation, however, emerges in the breathless, apostrophic cry to "pale Ramon" coterminous with this moment. Stevens addresses a rare interlocutor—there are no more than a dozen in all that rise above trope—with a rare naked abandon and from a different kind of portal. Although invariably read in response to a critic familiar to him from such journals as the *Nouvelle revue francaise* and *Criterion* whose self-confessed "fondness for theorizing" is being challenged in the face of a radical particularity (Longenbach 161), as James Longenbach argues, it is Stevens himself—who said "Ramon Fernandez" was "not intended to be anyone at all" and simply indicated "two everyday Spanish names" (L881)—who is closer to the mark here. "Tell me, if you know" is asked in earnest, addressed from a real place to a real person.

Ramon's ethnic identity and cultural background, rather than any Francophone critical orientation, is what finally matters in this moment and beyond. To whatever extent the poem stages a colloquy about order—aesthetic, political, social—Ramon matters pre-eminently as a Hispanic interlocutor. Stevens's question to this mute figure inaugurates a conversation with Latin America that would extend over the course of his career, establishing a paradigmatic entry into another cross-national tradition—namely, between the Americas. That is not to say Stevens did not have the "real" Ramon Fernandez in mind, only that the recollection of the theorist was more important to Stevens for how he added another layer to the "everyday[ness]" of this Spanish name,

the Mexican-French thinker reflecting a hybridized Hispanophone in addition to someone merely Hispanic. Ramon Fernandez also anticipates a series of Spanish manqués in Stevens's work (e.g. hidalgos, dons, even the towering George Santayana) and suggests real-life analogues in a set of hybridized Europeans—Jules LaForgue, Blaise Cendrars, and Andre Breton—that complicates the Anglo-American nexus on its own trans-Atlantic terms by suggesting a different relationship to Europe.

What makes possible Ramon's hybridity—and by extension, Stevens's—is the Key West where both men find themselves. Apart from Scandura, this is a region of investment for Stevens, and for modernism, that has been little discussed. Critics of Stevens see Florida through the lens of a trope belonging to a larger North-South dialectic that informs his work—and moreover, one that ultimately becomes a dead-end. Harold Bloom and Helen Vendler, for example, both agree that in "pursuing the ignis fatuus of luxuriance, he came to grief," having "no instinct for the earth" (On Extended Wings 76). Despite the significant part that such fecundity plays in Key West's allure, it is not reducible to eroticism. Closer to Havana than Miami, the Caribbean island more importantly provides a polyglot and multiethnic palimpsest through which Stevens produces exchange and contestation. As Jani Scandura aptly summarizes in a note on the poem's final appeal, "to ask Ramon Fernandez, 'tell me, if you know,' is to simultaneously evoke the Anglo-European and Latin-Caribbean traditions that continually drift into each other in Key West" (Scandura 262). More, even such fecundity is contingent on the hemispheric real, having been drawn from a cultural category of Latinity where Ramon stands implicated in desire, at once desired himself and a desiring subject.

Pace Scandura, however, this gesture does not merely generate for Stevens a "universalized evocation to poetic inspiration [...] to deracinate the politics and the power embedded [in such traditions]," rendering Ramon a "dehistoricized hybrid" (262). On the contrary, his helpless appeal marks the beginning of an investigation into the various vectors of difference that obtain across the hemisphere and its literary history, a mestizaje patchwork into which even Europe, albeit in reconfigured terms, must be placed. Like Hart Crane's admonition for Whitman to "take my hand," or Pound's "Pact" with the same figure, for that matter, the question is an invitation—here, across space, rather than time.

This hemispheric view not only reshapes our understanding of Stevens's work but also modernist poetic practice. Frank Lentricchia provided a blurb for Stevens's 1940s correspondence with José Rodríguez Feo that predicted the volume would have larger implications for the period, assisting in "the discovery and definition of [its] supremely worldly, densely historical, and political character" (Sec Preface). While Lentricchia's prediction has been in part borne out by developments in modernist scholarship, the historicist and global turn becoming central to the field, it has not been borne out for Stevens. Of all the modernists, he has received the least amount of historical context, with notable and important exceptions in Alan Filreis, James Longenbach, and Rachel Blau DuPlessis. This ahistorical reading is one his own persona invites, but his work gives the lie to the characterization when read not both in the context of his correspondence to Feo and the hemispheric concerns of the 1920s that gave rise to this fruitful exchange. And if Stevens has been largely left out of an increasingly historicized modernism, he has been almost entirely left out of the

"transnational turn" Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz locate in the New Modernist Studies and which has taken hold of modernist since ("The New Modernist Studies"). At the start of the turn, Susan Stanford Friedman insisted "always spatialize" must complement Jameson's "always historicize" for modernist study to escape the "binaries of center/periphery" (425). Stevens remains in especial need of both imperatives, since he has been largely excluded from the transnational and historicist readings that have effectively subverted such binaries.

The boats from this moment may seem, at first glance, to authorize no real maritime crossing such a poetic region requires. The scenario recalls Yeats's Byzantine locus of art, the "fiery zones and emblazoned poles" especially redolent of the later poem's "dolphin-torn, gong-tormented sea" (Yeats 206). But these are fishing boats, and the crossing, if otherworldly in tenor, partakes of social reality as well. Like the earlier "Indian River" (1931—CPP 93), where "the trade-wind jingles the rings in the nets around the racks," the commerce of "fishing boats" signals the system of measurement central to market capitalism and the Enlightenment imaginary more broadly. As "The rings in the nets around the racks" are estheticized industrial objects called upon to sing for their supper, the "zones and poles" of geography and trade, like the fishing boats that precede them, reveal a world equally governed by trade winds here, in the form of routes. The fishing boats, in particular, may be ultimately subsumed to the prerogative of a Romantic self that has "mastered the night and portioned out the sea," but through a mastery contingent on portioning, these objects still remain situated in the market. A close and careful student of etymology, Stevens chooses his words well, and this is no exception: "portion" is rich with meanings of dividing lands, estates,

and dowries, and more specific industrial contexts, in certain compound forms. At a more basic level, the term also encrypts port, situating trade explicitly in the guise of such measurement. If it is too much, as Longenbach does, to see this moment as a reference to warships in an international context (Longenbach 157), a charge made by J. Hillis Miller (Miller 360), it is also too much to see this as merely the ambivalent exaltation of a transcendental poetic spirit untethered to the actual shore, as the critical consensus has long held. Despite the Romantic topos, we are grounded in material conditions, even in history. The purpose of Stevens's encounter—and the subsequent encounters it opens up for his contemporaries, in figures as different from one another as Robert Frost and Hart Crane—proves to be precisely one of exploring social reality. The invitation of Ramon into the lyric tradition gesture both signals a return for modernist poetry to the nineteenth-century trans-American consciousness of Whitman and Martí, Longfellow and Darío, recovering a history elided by F.O. Mattheissen's American Renaissance, and the formation of a hemispheric modernism where poets employ the liminal space of Key West to confront difference in its myriad forms, dissolve national boundaries, and enter into transnational affiliations with Hispano- and Lusophone poets.

In order to consider Stevens neither a post-Romantic endpoint nor a poet delimited by national borders, but rather as one whose career is grounded in such hemispheric ambitions, one has to examine investments in this border region of Key West that extends in both directions. The Southern United States, on the one hand, and the Southern archipelago, on the other, combine to form what Stevens himself called a "comprehensive island hemisphere."

The site of hemispheric community is riven by discontinuities and fractures, bifurcated through the prism of two critical concepts. The first, the "borderlands," reflects the essential *mestizo* character observed in the person of Ramon, where language, landscape, and personhood from different cultural frameworks intermingle, often in psychological and sexual terms. Such mixture enacts the dissolution of borders, challenging the self-imagined homogeneity of the United States and the separateness of a Latin America that spurned the perceived brutality of an increasingly dominant *notreamericano*.

Following Eric Keenaghan's own employment of "borderlands" in his discussion of Stevens's Key West, the region is "where two or more cultures edge each other, [and] where people of different races occupy the same territory" (Preface). It also creates a space both for the "prohibited and forbidden" (Preface), fostering sexual license not permissible in the arid Protestant North. Despite such cultural blending, or perhaps because of the anxieties it produces, the second critical concept is the contact zone of Mary Louise Pratt, Key West offering "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (Pratt 34). Ramon Fernandez, for all his power, cannot speak—remaining, like the girl, in the thrall to the speaker—and such silence has a role in the hemispheric exchange.

On the basis of these investments, Key West is a space where Stevens can transform the Southern United States into what John Lowe calls a "northern rim of the Caribbean" that rethinks national boundaries and borders by "creating a counter-

narrative that questions and critiques the totalizing concept of nation" (Lowe 54). In this rim, Stevens also creates a Southern United States that decenters the regionalism that held out these "representations of vernacular cultures as enclaves of tradition insulated from larger cultural contact" (Brodhead 75) without abandoning local reality in favor of a rootless cosmopolitanism, thereby subverting both micro and macro constructions of national identity. From this vantage point, Stevens undertakes a poetic voyage of discovery in "The Comedian as Letter C" that draws out latent literary affinities between the United States and points further South, uniting the hemispheres through a shared cultural geography and literary heritage, with poetic aims and practices held in common.

In the 1940s, Crispin's seafaring journey became an actual Caribbean crossing whereby Stevens drew the Hispanophone South into sharper focus, departing the Florida shore always already Cuban. Through his correspondence with Jose Rodriguez-Feo, a young Cuban scholar who co-edited in *Origenes* with José Lezama Lima, a journal that would come to play an important role in Cuba's literary history, Stevens found the perfect partner to forge a hemisphere a shared cultural framework and literary heritage set out by "The Comedian as Letter C." Coming to be called by Stevens his "most exciting correspondent" (L515), Feo solicited translations of Stevens's poetry and prose—translating some of that work himself—sounded him out on literary matters, and kept him apprised of his life and studies in Cuba, as well as in the United States, when he attended Princeton. Through an often artless conviviality, Feo drew Stevens out of his usual "chilling reticence" (*Part of Nature* 41), to borrow the memorable phrase from Helen Vendler. But the Feo letters, suggestive as they are, only form a part of what was in a fact a far more profound involvement in the 1940s that represent the culmination of

searching investigations in Stevens's work of the 1920s. Throughout the decade and even beyond, into the late poetry, the hemisphere remains a live issue in tropical survivals that persist against that "blank cold" (6) from the "Plain Sense of Things" (CPP428).

PRE-HEMISPHERIC FLORIDA

Even while Key West transformed the South in *Harmonium* into an outpost of the tropics, the Florida peninsula had other plans. Drawing on Constance Fenimore Woolson's fin de siècle depictions of the region as a Newport of the South as well as his own Late Symbolist perfumings. Stevens imagined the Keys as a pleasure resort at once ahistorical and unthreatening in "Homunculus Belle Etoile" (1919—CPP20). In the Bay of Biscayne, bordered on the west by the eponymous Key, "drunkards, poets, widows / And ladies soon to be married" (3) represent a panoply of idle tourists at leisure amidst a sexualized landscape. In addition to this express "fecundity," the landscape is commodified, the epithets of "young emerald" and "jewel" with a power to "charm" even the "philosophers" (14) and "scholars" (21) bookending the poem. Indeed, even at their most ascetic, the latter figures transform into fops aware of their own finery, that "They should think hard in the dark cuffs / of Voluminous cloaks" (22-23) That neither this eminently commercial Key—geologically speaking, not even part of the Keys—nor Bay could provide a vantage point to envision a hemispheric ideal should hardly surprise. Having passed through the hands of two early century industrialists— James Deering, who felt that "Cape Florida's future lies in making sales for homes" (qtd in Blank 10)—the Key was to such men "a coconut plantation and would-be resort"

(Blank 11). Similarly, the Bay dredged by the notorious Henry Flagler in 1896 provided an opportunity to bring the Florida East Coast Railway to Miami.

"Homunculus" was written after Stevens visited Florida for the first time but before he had reached the Keys, representing the region without any investments beyond those of land development and industrial expansion. To be certain, Florida and Key West are largely interchangeable terms for his hemispheric imaginary—aside from its most famous representation, the island is exclusively placed under the aegis of the state. But as poems after his visits testify, there exists a distinction between the two visions, even if not semantically marked. Befitting a reference to Theseus's dream from *A Midsummer's Night Dream* that Eleanor Cook identifies (*A Reader's Guide* 46), here Florida offers a land of play, innocent of history.

But if the hemispheric character of the Global South Atlantic is not pronounced in this early vision, neither is it totally absent, offering contours of the formation in germinal form. Stevens himself thought of it as "an early poem of order." Describing "a state of confusion (L306), the paradisical space Stevens imagines here enacts a suspension of mores, boundaries, and fixed categories characteristic of the borderlands. In their cavorting, the poets, drunkards, widows, and ladies, have made something akin to the "prohibited and forbidden" crossings Anzaldúa imagines, polite and impolite society, as well as genders, intermingling along the border. The betrothed ladies, set "trembling," thereby betray the awareness of a departure from late Victorian propriety in this tableau, the shared space between such unaccompanied women especially strong for widows occupying the same line as the drunkards and poets.

The fact that such a marginal group has been given pride of place in the poem, as well as spared the indignity of being placed in hierarchical relation to the philosophers and scholars, undermines this very position. Neither dregs, nor objects of sympathy, they belong to a larger landscape generating metaphysical power for the scholars and philosophers without quite being subject to them, and through such an operation, find themselves offered a measure of transcendence, in a "light [that] conducts" (9) their "thoughts" and "feelings" (10). In addition to rising above their material circumstances, they also dissolve the boundary between the social real and the natural world through such a union, anticipating a Key West equally in flux.

Despite these glimmerings, Stevens needed to visit Key West proper to forge the wished-for hemisphere: polyglot, multiethnic, and historically contingent. After his first visit to the island, he imagined a world in "O, Florida, Venereal Soil" (1922/CPP 38) radically different than the resort of "Homunculus," but even here, it is worth nothing that, even for Woolson, her Florida "unsettle[ed] the black-white binary typical in portrayals of the South," populated by other ethnic identities (Diffley 69).

Firstly, and most centrally, Stevens's Florida is Cuban, the two islands connected in his imaginary even before either visit to Havana in 1923 (L233-236, L241), through the cryptic (yet only named) figure of "the Cuban, Polodowsky" (9). Although included amongst the "dreadful sundry" (8), the Cuban is nonetheless set apart, testifying to a special relationship between the two islands dating at least to the end of the nineteenth-century. According to the American consul general to Cuba at the time, Ramon William: "The [Cubans] look upon Florida so much as part of their own country... Between Key West and Havana, people go as between Albany and New York" (ntd in Bucuvalas 68).

It was also during the late nineteenth-century that a community of Cuban exiles sympathetic to their country's independence movement settled in Key West, providing a much needed refuge and source of financial support for poet and revolutionary José Martí. The well-paid Cuban cigar makers were, in fact, more important to the cause than the cigar rollers and sugar titans of New York whom Martí also drew upon for financial backing. By the time Stevens arrived in Key West, the cigar industry had moved inland to Ybor City and Tampa, but the factories still remained visible features of the cityscape. As Elizabeth Bishop maintained to her students at Harvard, "The Emperor of Ice Cream" remembers this industrial past, describing a Key West "full of unemployed Cuban cigar rollers [who now] sold ice cream on the streets" (Monteiro, *Conversations* 146). Even absent these structures, then, the Cuban employees remained, supporting their own press, fraternal organizations, and candidates for public office.

The New York Cubans have their community evoked in this moment as well, Polodowsky's misnaming reminiscent of the renaming of immigrants who passed into Ellis Island and perhaps even reflects an assimilationist drive consistent both with the political conservatism of the sugar titans and the stereotyped Eastern European character of New York labor. By placing the Cuban figure against the backdrop of a wider immigrant identity in this way reveals that the ports of the Southeast are no less porous than those of the Northeast, a move on Stevens's part that further undermines any fantasy of a monolithic US identity. That Cuba had a particular affinity for Key West at this moment in Stevens's career should not surprise us: they are both islands, they are geographically proximate, Key West closer to Havana than Miami, a city itself significantly Hispanophone, and when Stevens did eventually make his visits to Cuba in

the months leading up to *Harmonium*'s publication, it was in the context of a visit to Key West.

However important, the Cuban is not the only significant, or even central, point of reference from the region. The "negro undertaker" (11), while inevitably evoking US racial discourse, also brings to the fore an Afro-Caribbean presence in Key West of Bahamian origin. Deeply involved in sponging and fishing on the island, the black Bahamians in particular find a fitting avatar in this undertaker found "fishing for crayfish" (13). Even his role as an undertaker is apposite, indicative of sponging. Charged with recovering objects that are both corpuscular in their skeletal and fossilized character, and generative of actual dead biological matter, in the industrial products they yield, sponging deals with its own kind of corpses.

Through this metaphorical sleight-of-hand where the undertaker stands in for a larger social group, Stevens embeds this nameless figure into the social real and reveals the pressures of historical time. Death is not simply, Stevens recognizes here, the mother of beauty, but an outcropping from Key West's foundational myth of violence available in the original name of *Cayo Hueso*, or Bone Key, and the larger, fractured history of the Caribbean that made such a myth possible in the first place. In other words, at the same time as Stevens celebrates this Land of Flowers's fundamental profusion, he situates in the same pressures of violence, conquest, and domination that obtain across the South Atlantic. Nowhere is this twinning more evident than in the "tiestas" that stand poised between being the "barrel hoops" (Cook, *A Reader's Guide* 42) encircling goods and the enslaved peoples involved in their circulation and "tiestos," or flowerpots, that such Mexican women might sell, in an instance of linguistic slippage

not uncommon for Stevens. Nor are even the undertaker and his companions exempt from the dead matter dredged up on the shore. Presided over by hovering "buzzards," with ironically titled "live-moss" (3) placed underfoot, these figures have been posed in a frozen tableau where they resemble little more than corpses themselves, at once silent and lifeless. Though "fish, flesh, and fowl" (Yeats 204) have all emerged into view, we are a far cry from Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium," closer to Yeats' later, darker vision of the same imaginative city in "Byzantium," where "mouth[s] [have] no moisture and no breath" (Yeats 260).

By juxtaposing these Bahamians with the Mexican women and the enigmatic Cuban, Stevens also creates a broader Afro-Caribbean context, linking their Africanism to one available in a Cuban community for whom Martí saw an interracial future and which, along with the larger island, stood freer of the racial realities on the peninsula. The Bahamian character of the island proved so central to the island's conception of itself, the term "conch" originally referring to European settlers, came to encompass all long-standing black and white citizens, surviving to this day (Kennedy 6). This was no black republic, to be sure—Haiti was provocation enough—but Florida is fundamentally other in a way Stevens could likely not imagine of anywhere else. No Anglo-American figures, save presumably Stevens himself, populate this gallery. As Gyorgi Voros notes, neither the Rotary Club boosterism nor the drunken fraternity that took place at Long Key Fishing Camp, Stevens's entry to the region, leaves any trace on the poems of the period (Voros 59).

This is not to say that, in revealing the fugitive elements that comprise the United States, Stevens is celebrating a multicultural vision of national possibility, dissolving the

boundaries between the Global North and the Global South without any unease. On the contrary, "dreadful" (8) and implicated in gross death and desire, these hemispheric subjects exhaust the Stevensian speaker. His voice lapses into ellipse, unwilling (or unable) to say more. In the case of the uncapitalized negro, a recognized slur during the period, they are not spared the strictures of Jim Crow, whatever relative tolerance Key West offers.

Yet neither does the poem merely express, as Keenaghan alleges, "revulsion from non-Anglo America" (Dubois 76). Ambivalent to the core, what seems an almost visceral aversion is shot through with seduction, the demos implicated in the same desired landscape that eventually "come[s] tormenting / Insatiable" (20-21). The "dreadful sundry" (8) is not an unwanted disjunction, then, but rather a correspondent set of materials to the "few things for themselves" (1), if not a logical consequence of them, "sun[-]dry" as well as "sundry." Even without the title, they belong to the same world. The beloved elements of the first stanza anticipate the despised of the second, indeed make them necessary outgrowths.

The "convulvus and coral" (2) belong to the same scene that "The negro undertaker / Killing the time between corpses / Fishing for crayfish" (11-13) inhabit. The crayfish and coral each reside undersea, while the convulvus—a flower from the Latin convulve, which means to enfold—transforms into the net that enfolds those same crayfish. The "buzzards" anticipate the "corpses," while the Spanish "tiestas" (4)—whether flowerpots or barrel hoops—belong to the fluent speech of the Cuban, Polodowsky, and the Mexican women, even if the poet abrogates the authority of speaking the word.

Beyond showing Steven's reaction to such peoples is not reducible to disgust, the poem's larger structure demolishes the boundary between the natural and social real that the undertaker, in his more minor way, troubled. Florida and the Keys quite literally bear the marks of those who have passed through them. These sun-dried figures in the poem, bleached skeletons arising from a graveyard fished out by spongers, slaveholders, and wreckers, and slaves, serve to show that the venereal disease all wither under has a human face. Even supposing revulsion represents the ultimate response, these hemispheric subjects are here to stay, having become an essential part of the American landscape and its material culture. They have arisen from "a few things for themselves" (1,5) to become "of this world" (8) and "of Key West" (16), parts made provisionally whole through having been strung together into an archipelago. That island chain plots the Mexican, the Caribbean, the Afro-Caribbean and African-American, the European immigrant, the male and female, the collective group and the named individual.

Stevens uses the landscape on its own terms to create a hemispheric topography that parallels the human demography. "Buzzards," "bougainvillea" (17) "convolvulus," "crayfish" are all flora and fauna native to the South proper, the Southwest, the Pacific, and South America. Even the cheerless North occupies a meaningful position in his biosphere. The "live-moss" evokes both the New England meadow and the Spanish moss that informs Southern Gothic, both dead accretions kin to the sponge and the coral (Keenaghan 451). Like the hibiscus from "Hibiscus on the Sleeping Shores" (1921—CPP 18), "a houseplant in Stevens's climate, but growing wild

on semitropical seashores" (Cook, *A Reader's Guide* 44), the various regions of the continental United States find themselves interfused with the Global South.

Stevens having dissolved the nation through both avenues, the poem finally terminates "in the porches of Key West" (16). With "A few things for themselves" replacing the encompassing soil, Stevens substitutes the island for the peninsular whole. "Venereal" Florida becomes "insatiable" Key West. If the island has broken with Florida, the United States remains an operative term, the imprecise assemblage ("the keys") now becomes the official protectorate ("Key West"). Yoked to this affirmation of state geography, the "porches" evoke a domestic context that reminds us that economy, from the Greek *oikos*, simply means household. Still, Stevens's actual experience might have kept the region within a Palm Beach purview—and quite contrary to such a depiction, Key West did not, offering to him "a place without rich people, a village, sleepy, colonial in aspect, individual" (L269).

Far more problematic, however, to our understanding of the hemisphere is the fact that the region has been premised on the gendering of Florida. Throughout his depictions, the region straddles an "all too earthly" and "heavenly" Venus (Cook 52), a figure at once desired and spurned. But these terms are less problematic than they at first blush appear, inordinately, and I think self-consciously, messy in Stevens's psychodrama. Promising a relief that never appears, desire baffles and defers in the poems of Key West. To be certain, some of this resistance inheres to the category itself—"Desire moves. Eros is a verb" (17) as Anne Carson writes in *Eros the Bittersweet*—but the lacerating self-irony and exaggerated discomfort conveys an appetite undermined at every juncture. From the overpunctuated apostrophe of the title

to the fatally compromised formulation of "Conceal yourself or disclose" (32), where disclosure encrypts another antonym ("closure") that collapses the putative dichotomy with concealment and telegraphs the death of "Dis"—an epithet of Pluto and the city of Dante's *Inferno* which encompasses the sixth through the ninth circles of hell. Stevensian desire is only ever ostensibly fulfilled, soured from the start by these antithetical terms. Other depictions—in "Homunculus," "Paltry Nude on a Spring Voyage," and "Infanta Marina"—offer equally resistant visions of Venus, each incarnation called upon to act as Muse, but gamely eluding the role.

In addition to ironizing this erotic drive of the Romantic lyric speaker, gendered Florida also has a positive aim. Like all the early fictions of the region, Venus, too, participates in the formation of a literary historical and cultural framework more appropriate to a hemispheric America than British and French models. Although based in a high European tradition at once pictorial, poetic, and classical, that is evident throughout these poems, traditions foregrounded by her elevation to pure trope, Stevens is clear to filter these high European intertexts through the lens of a semiperipheral Europe that problematize the high character of Venus. In "Venereal," the honorific of "donna" evokes a confluence of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese contexts ("donna"), while the royal title of "Infanta Marina" conveys a purely Spanish one, both casting even the debt "The Paltry Nude Starts on a Spring Voyage" owes to as explicitly high an allusion to Botticelli's "The Birth of Venus" in a decidedly different light. Placed alongside the Spanish "hidalgo" and "don" of Stevens's own poetic self, the decrepit Naples and Vesuvius in Esthetique Du Mal generative of the sublime, and the shabby, impoverished Eternal City in "To an Old Philosopher in Rome" where an

uncharacteristically unqualified transcendence occurs, these references recover a Europe less European—and more American.

The richness of this hemispheric geography, intertwined with Italian, Spanish, Portuguese strains, reveals a New World consciousness derived from a differently imagined relationship to Europe, where the latent possibilities for indigeneity are the true cultural inheritance of the Americas. In the 1930 poem, "The Revolutionists Stop for Orangeade" (CPP86), when the Cuban and the Italian intermingle through the linguistic confusion of *geloso* noted in Eric Keenaghan's expert reading of the poem (Keenaghan 447-449), the inheritance of this semi-peripheral becomes explicit in the context of the Caribbean. And on the other side of the equator, it is found even in the far North of "An Ordinary Evening at New Haven." A poem that attempts, in Stevens's own words, "to get as close to the ordinary, the commonplace, and the ugly as it is possible for a poet to get" (ntd in Cook 259) accomplishes this aim by yoking the prairie state to the semiperipheral Italy in "Oklahoman—Italian blue (xvi.8). And, in one of the last four powerful cantos, Stevens first turns to "Bergamo on a postcard / Rome after dark" (xxviii.7) the Lombard city, on the one hand, and site of danger that ensnared one such tourist in literary history, Henry James's Daisy Miller, on the other, for the evocation of New Haven, rather than any hoary vision of the continent the subsequent European points of the reference in the stanza offer.

THE REST OF THE SOUTH

The red-clay country of Alabama and Georgia, the Tennessee frontier, and the hardscrabble Carolinas join Florida and the Keys in rounding out the northern rim Rowe

saw principally in the Gulf States of Texas and Louisiana. The inroads of the Southern hemisphere do not cease at the peninsula, inflecting much of the region with the same trans-American culture and history. Above any Keatsian urn or Duchampian readymade that such critics as Helen Vendler, Glen MacLeod, and Pat Righelato, have identified in "An Anecdote of the Jar," for example, is a hybrid art object that bridges Mexico and the United States, challenging the indivisibility of these national constructions, and within them, the essentialism of their regional identities. The jar belongs to a folksy, frontier "wilderness" evoked by quasi-doggerel metrics of irregularly internal-rhymed iambic tetrameter and the colloquial formulations of a tall tale—a place that for Stevens evokes O. Henry's description of Nashville as a place where nothing happens (L 208).

And yet, however embedded in the United States, the jar remains "Like nothing else in Tennessee." "Gray and bare," it evokes Mayan art from the Yucatan in vogue during the period, specifically, the pottery excavated from such sites as Xultun in 1912 known as slate ware, a set of objects whose "most common forms include shallow dishes, bowls, cylindrical jars and larger storage and water jars," that are "often gray, tan, or brown," and "notable for their simplicity of form and decoration" (Witschey 283). Stevens had known about the Mayans since reading John Lloyd Stephens's popular 1843 travelogue, *Incidents in the Travel of the Americas*—a work in his library that also likely informed "The Comedian as the Letter C" (Patke 306)—but not until the late teens could these art objects become visible markers of a pre-Colombian heritage, the ruins confined to illustrations in Stephens. This Mesoamerican context emerging from the newly discovered archaeological sites in the lowlands of Mexico infiltrated the consumer culture of New York. As Margaret D. Jacobs observes:

Even before arts and crafts aficionados consciously sought to distribute Indian arts and crafts in Macy's and Marshall Fields, department stores in big cities helped to fuel interest in the Southwest and its 'exotic' inhabitants. Historian William Leach has found that in the first two decades after the turn of the century New York department stores capitalized on the growing vogue of the Indian and other "primitives" to sell new fashions and home furnishings. Between 1915 and 1920 Rodman Wanamaker peddled a Mayan motif in purses, hats, cushions, and parasols. Wanamaker's fashion show [...] included framed pictures that showed the treasures of Mayan civilization ... (164)

No less than Mary Hunter Austin, a close associate of Mabel Dodge at Taos and a doughty advocate for Pueblo culture herself, remarked on a trip from Santa Fe to New York: "everybody is crazy about my things, and already they have pried ... most of my rings off me. I gave away two jars I brought with me last time, and could give away a barrel full" (qtd in Jacobs 164). Though written after "Anecdote of the Jar" was published in *Poetry* in 1919, Austin's presence in New York throughout the teens when Stevens came of age there and Stevens's own correspondence with Alice Corbin Henderson—the co-editor of *Poetry* who was a fellow traveler of Austin's in the promotion of an Indian aesthetic—means it is far from implausible that the "gray and bare jar" remembers the circulation of such items on Austin's part and more generally.

On account of Stevens's taste for such finery, with parasols and hats recurrent features of his poetry, not to mention the peignoir from "Sunday Morning," the commoditized Mesoamerican jar would have held an especial allure. The readymade in the "Dominion Wide Mouth Special" that Roy Harvey Pearce identifies (Pearce 65) owes as much to the Mayans, then, as it does to Duchamp.

"Of a port in air," the jar stands embedded at once stands within the shipping routes of transnational circulation and the airmail ones that arose with the emergence of aviation in the 1910s and 1920s, when Key West witnessed the incorporation of Pan-

American airlines in 1927. Even more directly than the "portal" of Key West, the jar stands imbricated in the pathways of commerce, "port" additionally ensuring, as would have been crucial for circulation, portability. Following the reading of the line Eleanor Cook offers—carriage and deportment, especially of a substantial kind (68)—the word (and phrase) also evoke the related, more archaic meaning of "style of living, *esp.* a grand or expensive style; rank, status, social standing" (OED 2a) that dominion, itself a fundamentally political designation, only serves to underscore.

Thus, despite indexing energies of the Yucatan and the Southwest emergent in United States culture, the jar hardly embodies some pure distillation of an ancient culture, instead remaining caught up in the messy crosscurrents of Anglo-American modernity. That contingency came to inform Stevens's explicit critique of a nativist esthetic during his correspondence with Feo. As he wrote in a letter, remarking on the vogue for Mexican folk art:

One great difficulty about everything Mexican is the appalling interest in the Indians: the Mayas, and so on. It is just as if every time one picked up a number of the *New Yorker* one found a dozen illustrations of life among the early Dutch settlers. After all, few writers tell us what we really want to know about the Indians. One sees pictures of the Mayas, and this, that and the other. These things never take one below the surface. (L543)

Stevens's willingness to regard his own indigeneity as ridiculous, extending his ridicule of that principle to the same Dutch settlers he spent most of the decade attempting to connect his own lineage to through the services of a professional genealogist, is a remarkable move. To be sure, as a letter on the same subject to Leonard C. Geyzel suggests, Mayan art is singled out for especial contempt, but his implicit concession that

there is something worth knowing about the subject ("few writers tell us what we really want to know about the Indians") that an aesthetics of an essentialized art form cannot access ("These things never take one below the surface") demonstrates his reaction is not reducible to contempt. Even while deriding *Sur* for its Francophile character, he does not pretend he could do any better in capturing the "intelligence of their soil," to borrow from "The Comedian as the Letter C": "The difficulty of writing a poem definitely addressed to South Americans is clear. What this leaves is poems written without a thought of them." Like Glissant's, Stevens's "idea of creolization demonstrates that henceforth it is no longer valid to glorify 'unique' origins" (*Discourse* 140). Put another way, the Mayans owe as much to Duchamp.

Against some pure Americanism of North and South, Stevens insists on the dissolubility of the bond between the hemispheres, slurrying these far from discrete spaces into a borderlands never intended as "particular to the Southwest" (Anzaldúa Preface). In the space forged, the creolization of Glissant also occurs where the jar, having been transported across these spaces, "diffracts, carry[ing] in itself [...] the explosion of cultures ... [that] does not mean their scattering nor their mutual dilution. It is the sign of their free, assented sharing" (Poetics of Relation 46-47). Like the Caribbean archipelago Glissant theorized, through this process the jar contains within it the assemblage of parts placed into "Relation" that the South in its entirety represents for Stevens, a space where individual parts are continually linked and in motion. The explosion of cultures in creolization is evident both in the violence of the "slovenly wilderness," and in the struggle of the object to subdue the same space, and the movement of relation is perceptible, beyond the transport indexed in the jar itself, in the

perspectival shifting from micro to macro constructions of place (state—hill / wilderness — hill / ground — everywhere) that takes place throughout the poem, in ironic contradistinction to its fixed position.

It is no wonder, then, that the project of national formation staged within the poem itself fails. The fact the jar "took dominion everywhere" offers a full-throated brief for an art that masters native materials on behalf of the state and larger nation, consistent with something that had "made the slovenly wilderness" conform to its position on the hill at the outset, rendering this space, by the second stanza, "no longer wild" and thereby static. But the final two lines ("It did not give of bird or bush, / Like nothing else in Tennessee") reveal the outcome is darker and less sanguine. To "not give of bird or bush" removes from the natural world a jar thus far so firmly situated there, having been placed "on the hill" and textually encoded through a recurrent "round"-ness evident everywhere in the landscape ("surround," "around," "ground").

That bond between nature and art having been broken, the hope of deploying such symbols to shore up either regional or national identity disintegrates, only to be replaced by the subject-object dialectic of the lyric tradition. The final line undercuts even this limited triumph, however. Stevens refuses to retreat to an idle post-Romantic poetics. For the same folksy frontier Stevens has undermined through his creolization with the South, in turn, undermines at once its own integrity and that of the nation it metonymizes. The homespun, ungrammatical double negative boast at the end of the poem also gives lie to any transcendent vision where place can be raised above its material conditions, Tennessee somehow extracted from its encircling ground. If through this move Stevens underscores that neither the region nor the nation can

provide a privileged category of understanding the world, he also insists that the world matters.

In the words of Vendler, the transcendent urn fails at "finding a medium of verbal solubility for the vocabularies of Romanticism and modernism" (*Part of Nature* 58). However, this isn't because the American rough in Stevens cannot count on the hoary tradition Europe commands, as she alleges. What the hybrid nature of the art object instead shows is that any attempt to premise an American poetics on stable notions of nation and region must, by necessity, fail. Our heritage more variegated and complex, the urn can be neither Tennessean nor Mayan, but rather some *tertium quid* drawing on both spheres, and multitudinous others. Whereas Stevens in the Feo letter criticized nativism against the backdrop of a US identity predicated on the Northeast, in *Harmonium* he debunks the same myth of origins from the position of being "two minds about the Midway South" (qtd in Cook 67), insisting against North *and* South, it is the hemisphere that must obtain.

Whether dissolving state boundaries in the red-clay country of the Georgia Alabama border in "Stars at Tallapoosa" (CPP 57) or creating a Carolingian space equal part backwoods idyll, and exotic topiary that draws on a nineteenth-century tradition where Crevecoeur held that "Charles-Town is, in the North, what Lima is in the South" (ntd in Greeson 26), in "In the Carolinas" (CPP 4) Stevens holds a binocular view of the region that pushes him to recover, in the phrase of Van Wyck Brooks, a "usable past"—a past that, borrowing Faulkner's even more famous phrase, isn't even really past.

Despite the scant critical attention afforded these poems by readers of Stevens, their slightness belies a crucial role in locating the hemisphere within the states themselves, posing a smaller borderlands within the larger ones of their region to illustrate how constitutive what Stevens called "our Spanish side" is to the larger nation, Florida and the Keys no mere anomaly. While "In the Carolinas" destabilizes the nation through a smaller borderlands where the "pine-tree" (8) sparseness of the North contends against the abundance of the tropical "aspic" (6) South, in "The Stars at Tallapoosa," Stevens dissolves state boundaries central to national formation in a far more fundamental way, excavating a historical memory that shows the cost of their instantiation.

Rightly seen by critics as Stevens at his most Whitmanian, "the night is not the cradle of their cry," the opening salvo in a refutation of "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," the poem draws upon Whitman in another and less remarked upon way. As Robert Buttel first observed in *The Making of Harmonium*, "Stevens, like Whitman, delighted in the lyrical quality of [Native] American place names," "Starting from Paumanok" thereby providing an equally important intertext to Stevens's poem (Buttel 227). Like the "red aborigines" encoded in the "Okonee, Koosa, Ottawa, Monongahela, Sauk, Natchez, Chattahoochee" (qtd in Buttell 227) that Whitman catalogues on his journey across the United States, Stevens recovers the nation's indigenous past through a journey to a site central to the formation of the Southeast, in particular—a site that, to underscore the connection, exists within the context of some of these same places and their tribes.

Unlike Whitman's use of Native American names, however, Stevens does not draw on Tallapoosa to absorb the indigenous past into a national vernacular and landscape, as Ed Folsom argues of Whitman in *Native Representations* (Folsom 80-85).

Instead, he deploys such names to index the violence and cost of that absorption. The hunter of the poem thus becomes a daring avatar of a world-historical past, as well as a literary historical one. Tallapoosa refers to an earlier stage of Indian Removal, the Creek Wars that found their terminus along the banks of the Tallapoosa River where the Georgia city of the same name sits alongside, somewhere Stevens may have visited several months before submitting the poem to *Poetry* (Lensing 160). In the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, the final stand of the "Red Stick" tribes that took place on a bend in the Tallapoosa River in bordering Alabama, Jackson routed what remained of indigenous resistance in the region and forced all the Indians, even the Cherokee and Creeks allied to him, to concede 22 million acres of prime Southeastern land from which Alabama and Georgia were carved (Perdue 209). Thus, Stevens says in the first stanza

The lines are straight and swift between the stars.

The night is not the cradle that they cry,

The criers, undulating the deep-oceaned phrase. (1-3)

"The night is not the cradle that they cry" extends his critique beyond the Whitmanian sublime to a particular iteration that, in the name of Manifest Destiny, would reduce Indian voices to trope, displacing their bodies from earth to heaven. It is the cry's distinctiveness, rather than the night's, that matters here, appearing in the next line. Emanating from disembodied voices "undulating a deep-oceaned phrase," the cry instantiates the watery grave where many of the Creek Indians actually drowned while trying to retreat, turning the waters red (Kanon 3). Later in the poem, we see not only the battle, but also the role that lines played in what an early Jackson biographer called a "slow, laborious slaughter" (ntd in Kanon 9):

Let these be your delight, secretive hunter. Wading the sea-lines, moist and ever-mingling,

Mounting the earth-lines, long and lax, lethargic. These lines are swift and fall without diverging. (9-12)

Stevens must offer the celestial lines that "delight" in their permanence, since those closer to earth offer no such thing for the Indians, whatever their assonant and alliterative seductions. "Wading the sea-lines, moist and ever-mingling," marks their doomed escape to the river where Jackson's forces penned them in, plunging them to their depth, while "mounting the earth-lines, long and lax, lethargic" reflects the insufficiency of the breastwork that walled the bend, failing to restrain the frontward advance of U.S. forces (Tucker 368).

Under the pressure of these spectral presences, the lines imagined cannot merely be those of nature and poetic practice. Returning to the first stanza, they also reflect political borders "Much too dark and much too sharp" (4), having directly arisen from the lines of the battle. "Dark" testifies to the arbitrariness of such borders—Jackson himself underestimated how much land the United States seized by a million acres (Heidler 26)—and "sharp," to how finally, and violently, they had nonetheless been drawn, Jackson refusing to return land illegally seized from the Creeks (Hagan 49). Thus, "The lines [that] are straight and swift between the stars" attempt to compensate the slaughtered Native Americans for how geography has undone them, transforming the "secretive hunter" of an entombed Orion (9) back into flesh and vision: "the body is no body to be seen / but is an eye that studies its black lid" (7-8)

What also offers "pleasure" in these constellations is that they render visible the aggression of the Indians hitherto obscured, forming the "sheaf of brilliant arrows flying straight" (15) that draws on the language from their formulations of "straight ... and swift" (1) and "swift and fall without diverging" (12). More, the sheaf evokes the

particular formation these stars produce: the Orion of tradition slain by Artemis's arrows parallel Indians themselves at once slain by—and slaying with—"brilliant" arrows tipped in flames during the battle (Tucker 351).

In the words of James Longenbach, "at Tallapoosa, the poet steadies himself against nature's world not by retreating into the rarefied world of the self but by turning outward" (Longenbach 81). That turn outward acknowledges historical time through Stevens's famed pressure of the absence. The poet performs this operation, as Longenbach adds, "not in order to oversee the earth and sky" (81)—that is, transform nature through trope—but rather, as I have shown, to reveal that the borders of the hemispheric present are precisely so malleable because they have always been that way, revealing the fissures of a contact zone rather than the demarcations of the nation, as well as a borderlands where the poet, "tak[ing] inventory, communicates the rupture, documents the struggle" (Longenbach 104). Like Key West, Tallapoosa telegraphs at once a more various tapestry of peoples than Southern whites and blacks, staging a site of conflict where Stevens encodes the asymmetries of power in the contact zone created by Jackson's war against Native Americans.

Stevens employs the forgotten conflict to erode these state boundaries the federal government sought strenuously to define so that he might also blur the wider boundaries of the hemisphere through the same figure of the Native American. The Creeks whose passing has been memorialized in the poem, after all, were dispersed to Oklahoma in the decades that followed, General Jackson having become President and authored the Indian Removal Act that eventually produced the "Trail of Tears." While not appearing in Tallapoosa, Oklahoma was a state of profound interest for Stevens, central

to his inaugural poem in the volume, "Earthy Anecdote." The recently formed state, in Cook's reading, "where the odd skewing of the preposition ['over Oklahoma'] and the odd diction of 'bucks' clattering,' arises above mere reference in that poem, drawn attention to by these lexical and phonic markers ("Place-Names" 182). Consequently, the land grabs during Stevens's lifetime in the 1890s find themselves reflected in yet another Whitmanian place name signifying "red men," or "land of red men." It is here, amidst so many "bucks," where a firecat derived from "minor Indian legends [that] tell of a cougar or mountain lion who brings either a helpful or destructive fire" (A Reader's Guide 31), "bristled in the way," intent on some measure of survival for the peoples who bore such a creature.

More immediate to the Battle of Horseshoe Bend were those holdouts led by Creek Leader Chief Minewa that refused the route of surrender that led to Oklahoma and consequently fled to Florida, joining the Seminoles whom they would come to fight alongside in their own doomed wars. The even fewer survivors of the Seminole Wars were in turn also displaced to Oklahoma, and other places yet farther afield—deep in the Everglades, and in the case of the Black Seminoles, in particular, the Bahamas, Texas, and Mexico. Evidence of this diaspora emerges in the contemporaneous "The Cuban Doctor" (1921) and "Indian River" (1917). In the latter, Stevens has not only placed the "Indian" into the literal form of the rivers that have carried him to, and through, Florida, but in one parallel to the Everglades encoded in "boskage perdu"—or "lost forest." Such a phrase of decorative nature might seem wholly inappropriate to an ungovernable tract of marshland, if not an aestheticizing diminution, but the Everglades find in the Frenchified diction a perfect helpmate. The term for the region was rife with

the "connotations [...] of an unexplored territory unique in its physical characteristics and colorful in its history" and marked by a complex, uncertain provenance (McMullen 26). Even in the twentieth-century, such space remained, in a sense, lost: only by midcentury had the interior been completely surveyed. Like Florida proper, a host of names and legends grew up around the site, ensuring this geography was fundamentally fictive from the start. In addition, unlike other versions of Florida, the poem's commitment to the social real can be found in a space emphatically anti-trope—beginning with "The trade wind [that] jingles the rings in the nets around the racks by the docks" (i) and ending with a disavowal of fecund Venus, "Yet there is no spring in Florida, neither in boskage perdu, nor on the nunnery beaches" (iv).

These investigations into the Caribbean dimension of the Southern United States made possible a subsequent exploration into what the region—vis-à-vis Cuba—held for the larger nation. Before considering the manner in which Stevens takes up the island in "Academic Discourse at Havana" (1929), however, it is important to consider the little acknowledge fact that "Academic Discourse" was itself taken up by Cuba. Beyond the significance of such transnational circulation to Stevens, this traveling poem suggests a wider context for cross-cultural transmission in American poetry during the period than recognized by critics of Anglo-American or Latin American literature. As noted in the Stevens-Feo letters, in addition to its publication in *Broom* in 1923

["Academic Discourse" also] appeared as Discourse in a Cantina at Havana in *Revista de avance* [in November 1929.] Stevens had a copy of the translation; in 1943, R.P. Blackmur had given a copy of the issue [...] to Allen Tate, who forwarded it to Stevens. (*Sec* 37)

The forerunner to Feo's journal *Orígenes*, *Revista de avance* grew to become over its brief three year run "the most handsome product of avant-garde activity in Cuba and perhaps in Spanish America," drawing both upon the European avant-garde and modern, if not always strictly modernist, writers from the United States included figures as diverse as Countee Cullen, John Dos Passos, Langston Hughes, Sinclair Lewis, H.L. Mencken, Eugene O'Neill, and Ezra Pound (*Sec* 18) to create a tripartite conversation between the United States, Latin America, and Europe. Some of these US writers, such as Langston Hughes, operated from the same Cuba-Key West nexus in the Global South Atlantic.

Broader than contemporary currents in Cuba and the wider Caribbean, *Revista* attempted to integrate "the patriotic and cosmopolitan, the avant-garde and nationalist" (Sec 8) into a unified aesthetic, becoming neither blandly internationalist nor narrowly parochial. Stevens's hemispheric dialogue, and placement in a site where it was already occurring, neither begun in his poetic exchange with Jose-Rodriguez Feo, nor extended simply in two directions. *Avance* was exceptional—even here, Stevens was published only once, and surely on account of the subject matter—but not singular: *Contemporaneous*, *Ulises*, *La Falange* (Mexico), and *Sur* (Argentina) all published work from the United States. In fact, the Mexican journals, in particular, "turned out to be the main conduits to Latin America for translations of contemporary North American poetry" (Smith 401) and might have been ones Stevens was familiar with, as will become evident later in his career. Even lacking contributions from the North, journals throughout the region took up a hemispheric orientation akin to Stevens's by troubling their own national borders.

As Vicky Unruh notes, there existed throughout Latin America "during the century's early decades, a search for a sharper regional and continental understanding [where] serious inquiries into the cultural specificity of New World experience constituted an influential political and intellectual current" (Unruh 127). "New World concerns and Americanist rhetoric were also widely evident in the activities of vanguardist groups and writers who addressed questions of aesthetic modernity," writers who—like Stevens—have not been granted such preoccupations, having instead been confined to an empire of art. This is despite the fact that "even the most casual examination of little magazines and vanguardist documents reveal this [community], documented through a continental network of magazine and creative work exchanges" where explicitly Pan-American positions have been elaborated in a wide array of manifestoes and journals (Unruh 130). Merlin Forster, another noted scholar of Latin American vanguardism, agrees that there was a shared projects amongst poets long considered insular: "Latin American vanguardists reflected national or regional divisions, but they shared an awareness of participation in a common enterprise with transcended restrictive boundaries. In almost all cases similarities outnumber differences." (Forster 11).

"Explicitly Americanist positions" informing both the literature and culture of the Latin American South did not often take up the dread North American colossus in their understanding of the hemisphere, but their project that "celebrated the continent's humanism, energy, 'ancestral' spirit, and radical newness as powerful antidotes to European cultural exhaustion" (Unruh 128-130) bears more than a passing resemblance to the upheavals transpiring in Anglo-American modernism and were

inflected by at least two Northern points in Whitman and contemporary cultural critic Waldo Frank.

In this earlier iteration of "Academic Discourse," "Discourse in a Cantina at Havana" (1923/1929), a version identical except for the title, Stevens took up Cuba to reveal that the Caribbean forms a corresponding Southern rim of the United States, placing both spaces within a Global South Atlantic that puts pad to any exoticizing conception of an Edenic or resort-style Havana, as tourists and intellectuals would have sought in the Americas during the period. The difference in title here is instructive, the poem's setting of the "cantina" encoding a byzantine colonial framework where colony and semi-periphery alike have been stitched into a mestizo patchwork. The first and primary sense of the term marks out a Spanish context (cantina literally Spanish for "canteen"); the second a hemispheric especially congenial to the Global South Atlantic ("In central and South America and south-western United States: a bar-room, saloon"); and the third, an Italian ("an Italian wineshop") already available in a term literally Italian as well ("cantina"). Additionally, in the first sense of the English "canteen," Stevens evokes an Anglo-Indian and more broadly colonial context, the term "applied to a victualling or refreshment house resembling [...] a kind of sutler's shop in a camp, barracks, or garrison town, where provisions and liquors are sold to soldiers and noncommissioned officers" ("canteen"). With notable examples in Ernest Hemingway's In Our Time (1925), Graham Greene's Lawless Roads (1939), Malcolm Lowry's Under the Volcano (1947), and James Weldon Johnson's Along this Way (1933), cantina offered Stevens and Anglo-American modernism a liminal space on the outskirts of an exhausted imperial landscape.

Beyond the Americans who travelled to Cuba and the larger space of the Hispanophone South, literally as well as figuratively, what connect the island to the United States in "Academic Discourse" are the Cubans themselves. Though the speaker represents yet another Stevensian ironist, he also stands in for a Cuban voice that has learned the speech of French Symbolism well—perhaps too well. The first line of the second stanza ("Life is an old casino in a park.") alludes fairly directly to Jules LaForgue's "Legende" (Cook, A Reader's Guide 101) and the tone established from the very start—urban, sophisticated, blasé—arises from a distinctly LaForguian idiom. This affinity corresponds to a reality on the ground. Like Stevens and Eliot held in thrall by their Symons, Cuba drew its poetic inspiration from nineteenth-century French poetics that inflected both its romanticism and *modernismo*. Cuba was not alone either during the period or afterward in its indebtedness to French poetics, romanticism and modernismo both extending across the Hispanophone South, but these strains of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century verse were "introduced early to Cuba relative to the rest of Latin America" (Greene 200) and petered out fairly late, vanguardism in Cuba only beginning in earnest until the end of the 1920s (Bejel 221). The 1929 appearance of the poem in Revista thereby coincides with an early vanguardist moment that required to be fully shorn from the outcroppings of a late modernism. And Stevens's poem provided fertile ground for such a polemical advance, whatever Stevens himself knew of Cuban poetry. Havana betrays a "difference, at least, from nightingales," but nonetheless still houses a poet alienated from the landscape: "the sustenance of the wilderness / Does not sustain in the metropoles."

At the same time as Stevens addresses a reality where Caribbean and North American poetics find themselves in some sense bound to the twin strains of Parnassianism and Symbolism inherited from the French, he also reveals that Cuba is not so trapped by the exoticizing imperative of Europe and North America. The LaForguian manqué in the poem exists within a landscape as highly refined and aesthetic as himself, a world replete with "canaries," "orchestras" (1) "balloons" (2) "trombones," and "swans," the last more objects of art than nature. Thus, the alienation where "The air is not so elemental nor the earth / So near" that dogs the Caribbean poet also serves, on another level, to release him from a need to distill some essential el Cubano. Even the identification with LaForgue himself—the French poet born in Uruguay—serves to show how French poetics was always, from the start, hemispheric.

Given the hybridity of this LaForguian avatar, Stevens shows it is only the briefest of steps to undermining the literary center of French poetics he embodies and that which the New World finds itself beholden to. All those elements of "present decadence and past grandeur" Longenbach sees motivating a Stevensian critique of Eliot's appropriation of Symbolism (95) have been forsaken by the end of the poem:

Close the cantina. Hood the chandelier.
The moonlight is not yellow but a white
That silences the ever-faithful town.
How pale and how possessed a night it is,
How full of exhalations of the sea.

(IV.12-16)

More than merely settling a literary score, an objective surely in play for a poet who privately and poetically expressed mixed feelings about Eliot, Stevens wishes to turn Symbolist decay as such against itself. Stevens employs the attenuation that the

decadence of such a poetics provides here—"clos[ing], "hood[ing, "silenc[ing]," and "pal[ing]"—to forge a newer, paradoxically more vital symbology at once simple and bare, anticipating the equally anti-ornate, if more expressly anti-Romantic, "Evening Without Angels." The triumph of this new poetics that recognizes "The world is not / the bauble of the sleepless nor a word / That should import a universal pith / to Cuba" (iii.39-42), but rather "reconcile[s] us to our selves in those / True reconcilings" (iv.9-10) still proves far from assured.

For even in this moment, no less than in the antecedent stanzas, there emerges an ambivalence about poetry as such that many readers of Stevens have recognized in a speaker who wonders, "Is the function of the poet here mere sound ... to stuff the ear?" (iv.1-2). If French and English models have been rejected, those are not the only ones that require discarding. Nothing is spared: even the cantina must disappear at the precise moment it truly emerges in the poem.

But while the gaudiness of the *Harmonium* mode may seem under assault here, inflected by doubts about the Florida esthetic underpinning so much of the volume's geography, Stevens may have less a quarrel with the act of poetry than with the risk that the tropics are peculiarly vulnerable from even the Cubans seeking "sustenance in the wilderness." Like Florida, Cuba is in particular need of such "dark, pacific words" (iv.10)—words that both place these Atlantic states underneath a Global South purview through an eastward orientation to the "[P]acific," and arm them with a "pacific" calm proof against the enticements of exoticism.

At the cultural level, Stevens gives full lie to the nativist fantasy that requires the Cuban to play a picturesque role, revealing an argument far from academic. "The

twilights of the mythy goober khan" (iii.9), imagined as a pure origin point of Cubanness by being placed endlessly "before" in the stanza are neither a beginning ("twilights") nor even distinctly Cuban. As Edward Ragg has observed, the "goober khan" reflects the Chinese population Stevens encountered on his visit to the island (Ragg 43-44), writing in a letter of a Chinese peanut vendor (L235). Through khan's fundamental pastness, Stevens also indexes their *history* on the island, dating back to the importation of poor laborers in the nineteenth-century hired to work sugarcane fields. The fact that Stevens employs an ancient Chinese past grossly removed from modernity, Chinese or otherwise, parodies essentialism.

The subversion of *el Cubano* comes in another form, and one closer to home. The same "goober" that evokes the Chinese peanut vendor evokes the United States, and the American South, in particular. The usage found in an 1872 guide for an American Language (still a hot topic in Stevens's time) entitled *Americanisms:* The English of the New World, by Maximilian Schele de Vere, is instructive here. De Vere identifies "goober" as a regional colloquialism describing "the peanuts or earth-nuts known in North Carolina and the adjoining states," and perhaps more significantly, a marker of a shared slave past. "'During the late Civil War a conscript from the so-called 'piney woods' of [North Carolina] was apt to be nick-named a Goober'" ("goober"), this extended sense deriving probably literally as well as etymologically from the primary to describe—no less than the residents of Venereal Florida—peoples that are emanations of their soil. Indeed, this single word not only indexes that idea from "O, Florida Venereal Soil," but also the larger map of *Harmonium* in the Carolinas and its environs,

revealing that if the Caribbean has transformed by the United States, it has been meaningfully transformed, in turn.

What Stevens also reveals through "goober khan" is that the literary and social real intertwine, the compound construction additionally evoking Colerdige's "Kubla Khan." The allusion often noted by critics is a fitting point of reference for a Stevens bedeviled by the Romantics and a poem by its own overflowing rhetoric, illuminating the Anglo-American stakes in this scene. References to Marvell ("That world's enough, and more") and the fairy-tale princess ("wench / For whom the towers are built") only underscore that British as well as French models play a part in this scene.

In "The Comedian as Letter C"— with its verbal and tonal similarities, a kind of companion poem to "Academic Discourse"—that fusion between the literary and social historical assumes paradigmatic shape. The hero-quester of Crispin explores this varied cultural matrix on a wider and more theoretical scale to envision the ideal that Stevens himself would come to realize in a poetic correspondence. If "Florida is a finger which points to Cuba," as a Cuban writer in 1923 opined (ntd in Ragg 48), for the Stevens of the "Comedian," the state might more accurately resemble a hand. Digits only partially extended in "O, Florida Venereal Soil" have now been fully outstretched into South America and the Yucatan Peninsula, without losing their grasp on the Southern United States of Georgia, Carolinas, and Florida. The Atlantic palm thus closed, a hemispheric poetics emerges.

That transnational frame stands at sharp variance with a poem long regarded as an allegory of local disputes in US literary culture, scholars seeing in Crispin's journey either a refutation of the late century pre-Raphaelitism popular at Harvard when Stevens

was a student there and evident in his own juvenilia (Bloom 75), a reading anticipated by Hi Simons in 1940 (ntd in "The Comedian" 175) or a critique of the localism championed by William Carlos Williams, who held American poetry should be expressive of the United States, as Martha Strom has persuasively shown by looking at the draft version, "From the Journal of Crispin," along with A. Walton Litz (ntd in "The Comedian" 175). But the places imagined are real places, as we have already seen, and even had they not been, they must be regarded as such by us when we consider that both allegories—each certainly in play—inform a debate between cosmopolitanism and nativism.

As Marx rightly counsels us, we must take the "Mayan sonneteers"—joined by their own inheritors, the "Mexican sonneteers" of the draft—as literal figures ("The Comedian" 181) and "raise the questions of whether and to what extent North American modernists were aware of the earlier Latin American movement of *modernismo* and whether common interests in primitivism and exoticism indicate a greater degree of Latin American influence on the modernist movement than has been acknowledged" ("The Comedian" 184). What the readings of Bloom, Litz, Strom, and Simons "seem to miss [is] that Stevens was interested in Mayans" ("The Lost Nostalgia" 145), as the letters clearly show.

Stevens's intervention in "The Comedian as the Letter C" ponders precisely the divide within the American subject, providing an urgent brief for the region to move beyond the false alternative of derivativeness on the one hand, and nativism, on the other. Otherwise, artists find themselves placed in what George Yúdice calls an "apparent double bind," where

they seek to be modern like the Europeans or they resort to a primitivism, albeit autochthonous, which the Europeans themselves have called for in order to regenerate a supposedly decaying civilization [and are thereby] condemned to be either Europe's civilizational double or its civilizational other (Yúdice 54).

The constriction of the former cannot be doubted, evident everywhere. Crispin stands entrapped in a dizzying field of reference where European tradition has fully overwhelmed his subjectivity. Less a character than a collapsed textual production, he is at once a figure of commedia dell'arte, the patron saint of shoemakers, a French comic type as valet, a barber, and a figure of turning. Moreover, the nature of each identity renders him comic, and even ordinary, allusion thereby paradoxically acting in detriment to his authority. Still worse for his position is that the figure of turning, in particular, underscores what all the references, across a wide and disparate range, collectively reveal: his literariness not of mere convention—as Bloom's paraphrase of A. Walton Litz states, "Stevens so tropes against tradition that there are very few demonstrable allusions" (qtd in *Wallace Stevens* 72)—but the very act of troping. He is always a metaphor to be manipulated and the hands are never his own.

Even the title intimates the prison of artifice imposed upon the speaker. The subject of the poem is a Comedian, the subject is a letter, but the subject is *not yet Crispin*, much less any speaking subject. The letter, in particular, prospectively evokes the figure of Crispin only to remind us retrospectively of his circumscription in a role. Forming an obsessive refrain, this C also recurs at an aural level, through a variety of forms (TS, Z, X). Crispin is even less a speaking voice than an assemblage of phonemes through which he dumbly passes through, and which, in turn, further erode

his dignity. By Stevens's own admission, he intended the din to provide a "whistling and mocking background" (L351) for Crispin's questing.

Providing another formal analogue is the alternation between long and short sentences that deflate Crispin's oracular pretensions the moment they are asserted. From the outset, we have the earnest Latinate "Nota: man is the intelligence of his soil /, the sovereign ghost" (i.1-2) that situates our hero, semantically as well as syntactically, in a position where he has been reduced to frank ridicule: the same language (and authority) of classicism deployed to undo that same authority, subsequently linking Crispin to "snails, "pears," and a world, more generally, mundane and prosaic. Such a "nincompated pedagogue" (i.5) lacks the heroism of antecedents such as Robert Browning's Childe Roland, say, could more readily depend on, sharing only the anxiety about their heroism, now even more pronounced in this modernist moment.

But if Crispin is undercut at nearly every turn, that critique generating the poem's comedy, critics have recognized that comedy is not the only tone. Vendler's paraphrase of R.P. Blackmur is apposite: "[the] subject is serious and skirts the tragic, and ... in spite of its mock-heroic mode the poem conveys some sort of heroism." (*On Extended Wings* 38). Bloom concurs, offering that the Comedian is "by no means primarily a comic poem" (Bloom 70). The explicit identifications Stevens made with Crispin in the earlier draft (Strom 258)—as well as the preoccupations Crispin holds in common with Stevens at this time in his career—demonstrate the detachment in the final version is less pronounced than it might at first appearance seem, the irony less withering. Firstly, Stevens cannot truly blame him for his slavishness: there is too much punning, troping, and flights of even Shakespearean richness to deprive the tone, even at its most

parodic moments, of a delight in the free play of its fictive matériel. In a volume replete with free verse experimentation, an "unusually regular blank verse" (Cook, *A Reader's Guide* 47)—matched only by "Sunday Morning"—demonstrates a final unwillingness to abandon the stately grandeur of the European tradition that held the heroic mode, even its mock form, in such esteem.

More to the point, Crispin's heroic striving acts on behalf of a New World subjectivity proof to having Crispin "washed away by magnitude" (323) that is taken seriously. On an itinerary from "Bordeaux to Yucatan, Havana next, / And then to Carolina" (i.54-55), the quintessential quest figure attempts to extricate himself from the "faint, memorial gesturings" of Triton, with all the classical architecture he embodies and lyricism of moon and sea-stars, Latinate diction, and ornate language that surrounds him. The line that clears the way for disembarking—"Just so an ancient Crispin was dissolved / the valet in the tempest annulled" (i.52-53)—suggests these dead accretions have been shorn, and in their place, stands a newer Crispin primed for a raiment less borrowed and reflective of European empire than the "cloak / Of China, cap of Spain" (I.24)

Contrary to what Crispin believes, however, his journey can be no "simple jaunt" (i.55). The voyage across the Atlantic certainly refreshes and rejuvenates his outworn poetic self, transforming a "skinny sailor" (i.28) into an "introspective voyager" (i.68). Indeed, like a Biblical prophet, "Crispin beheld and Crispin was made new" (i.80). For outside of Europe's ken, "Here was the veritable ding an sich, at last" (i.69) "a vocable thing" (i.70). But when he reaches land, departure from the center proves harder: "In Yucatan, Maya sonneteers ... still to the night-bird made their plea" (ii.1,4), not only

ignoring their native "... hawk and falcon, green toucan / And jay" (ii.2-3), but also, negating the value of such material, "As if raspberry tanagers in palms, / High up in orange air, were barbarous" (ii.5-6).

In these sonneteers, as Bloom suggests, Stevens addresses the late nineteenth-century poets such as "Trumbull Stickney, George Cabot Lodge, and even Santayana" (75)—not to mention his own callow poetic self—for whom the form was in vogue, but this reference also reflects a *modernista* Mexican poetics, where sonnets loomed similarly large. Even the break with *modernismo* that Mexican poet Enrique González Martínez signaled in killing his own swan had been accomplished through a sonnet in 1911 (Greene 880). Salvation, however, does not lie in their Mayan-ness either. Such poets must be "oblivious to the Aztec almanacs," as he makes plain in the penultimate "Idea of the Colony." The religious-mythic elements in one's past represent yet another outworn creed.

What Stevens's hemispheric poetics instead seeks to recover in the poem is a landscape at once bare of all metaphorical manipulation, endowed with "the strict austerity / Of one vast, subjugating, final tone" (i.82-83) and inclusive of the entire America. The sweep of that inclusion is apparent even within the South. The "Andean breath" (ii.88) that inspirits Crispin in Mexico, the Sierras the "sepulchral señors" (iv.58) should make "scan" (iv.60), and the "pampean dits" (iv.62) from the "dark Brazilians in their cafes" (iv.61) telegraph a set of distinct regions these topographical features are particularly associated with—namely, Peru (Andes), Mexico (Sierras), and Argentina (Pampas). On their own terms, these landforms comprise an even broader intercontinental panorama. The Andes extend across South America, various Sierra

ranges populate Central America, and the pampas define Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina.

The inter-American is anticipated here as well, with the Sierras describing ranges found throughout the Southwest and along the California / Nevada border, while the insistence on keeping these regions bare can also be detected in the terms themselves. As much as Stevens uses them to denote the Hispanophone South, they remain sufficiently non-specific to evoke their etymological roots of "saw" ("sierra") and pampas ("earth"), in order to stress the elemental nature of these features. The fact that pampas has been used in adjectival form only confirms that both of these words with particular purchase to Stevens's entire poetics have been mined in this abstracting way. Even Andes, at once more specific and etymologically obscure, has been transformed into a quality through Stevens's adjectival rendering of "Andean." Such wished for purity is also evident in the epithets attached to them—"intricate," "immaculate"—and the art formed from them ("vigilant")

The full sweep of both the hemisphere and its ideal representation emerges only when considered in conversation with the South Stevens is most familiar with—a South still, as we must remember, always already Latin American. "America was always north to [Crispin]" (iii.12), but not to Stevens, who finds in the Southern United States the same "new reality in parrot-squawks" (ii.59) he sought in the other America. "Approaching Carolina" enables him to imagine and fully articulate what his vision includes, and that vision includes the same Southeast central to the map of *Harmonium* writ large. The vision itself is a spatial imaginary in which a poet might ventriloquize the landscape without abrogating its authority, a place where "The man in Georgia waking

among pines / Should be pine-spokesman (iv.52-53). The dash here ensures union as well as separation and the "waking" that teases "walking" invites both the birth and coming to maturity a beneficent Eden story portends. The latter reveals a comity between man and nature that corresponds to a context where the "spokesman" acts in the office of a deferential agent, rather than an overweening lord. In Florida, closer to the edge that is the border and the shore, the potential for poetry, unsurprisingly, becomes greater. Here, the "responsive man / planting his pristine cores, should prick thereof, not on the psaltery, / but on the banjo's categorical gut," (iv.53-56). In such lines, tellingly joined to the Georgian spokesman by a medial caesura, Stevens envisions a "responsive" poet who attends respectfully to the landscape, and thereby formulates a poetry that might actually arise from the "cores" of the "banjo's categorical gut" "plant[ed]" in the soil, this homespun lyre of poetic speech an American answer to the outmoded medieval instrument found in the "psaltery" doubling for a collection of psalms ("psaltery") the religious tradition of Europe has transmitted to the Americas.

Despite the geographical focus, "the comprehensive island hemisphere" also requires reclaiming an expressly cultural and literary historical space for a region too long burdened by staid European survivals found in "amphitheatre" (ii.2), "demesne" (ii.15), "dissertations" (ii.20) and "chiaroscuro" (iii.27), to identify only the most flagrant examples. In Mexico, Stevens achieves that objective by having Crispin document the space of the city. Our "Discoverer walked through the harbor streets / Inspecting the cabildo, the façade / Of the cathedral, making notes" (ii.61-63). When set against a developing cultural vogue for the oral, folk art of the Mexican Revolution, such mapping is a crucial cultural move. Stevens wishes to show that Mexico City—like Havana—is an

urban space, not a wilderness. The same holds true for Charleston, the Carolinas no empty frontier:

Tilting up his nose,
He inhaled the rancid rosin, burly smells
Of dampened lumber, emanations blown
From warehouse doors, the gustiness of ropes,
Decays of sacks, and all the arrant stinks
[...]
He marked the marshy ground around the dock,
The crawling railroad spur, the rotten fence,
Curriculum for the marvellous sophomore.
It purified. It made him see how much
Of what he saw he never saw at all.

(iii.77-81, 84-88)

Littered with such objects as the "railroad spur," "lumber," "rosin," "warehouse doors" and "ropes," it is an unmistakably modern space where, amidst such almost hyperbolic decay, a site of purification paradoxically resides. Set against the industrial context of forestry, it is also a space that reveals the interdependence of nature and culture, reminding us that choice between the "metropole" and the "wilderness" undergirding the larger bind between derivation and essentialism was only yet another false alternative. Even more than the Mexican cityscape given literate form in Crispin's increasingly deft hands, this hybrid Carolina stimulates his imagination. As Stevens says in the lines I omitted, such detritus "helped him round his rude aesthetic," leaving the poem with someone who "savored rankness like a sensualist" (iii.82-83).

Europe remains in ways large and small, reflecting a perhaps inevitably partial victory for the hemispheric vision. The Mexicans and Brazilians compose "dits" (iv.62) and "antholog[ies]" (iv.63) still beholden to these poetic forms, while Crispin—whatever his success—enacts a heroic quest narrative that not only conforms to European poetic tradition, but far more fatally, the history of empire. As Marx explains:

The figuration of self-discovery as *quest* is so deeply ingrained in English literature that Stevens's choice of the discovery narrative as an appropriate form for his allegory of poetic self-discovery seems an entirely natural one. But the "naturalness" of this allegory, I would argue, demands further scrutiny. ... The adventure novel, a genre so closely intertwined with the discovery narrative genre as to be almost inseparable from it, is even more conspicuous in its linking of the discovery of selfhood with the project of colonial expansion, particularly in its late nineteenth-century forms. (Marx 175)

In other words, by echoing "the classic discovery narratives in the English tradition—those, for example, of Raleigh, Drake, or Captain Cook—[that] are, first and foremost, artifacts of colonialism" (175), the poem recapitulates the same European terms it seeks to overthrow. This hemisphere is still, after all, a colony. The heading, to compound the rout, also indicates the space is only an "idea," cast in the subjective tense ("upon these premises propounding, he / Projected a colony that should extend") whose fulfillment is foreclosed by the descent into the domestic idyll of the final two sections.

But the failure, while real, is less damning than immediately apparent. The smaller missteps of the "dits" and "anthologies" are not truly missteps at all, representing aspects of European tradition that stand more open to negotiation than the sonnets that plagued the sonneteers. As the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* entry on the form states, the dit is "a type of med. Fr. composition of notorious nebulousness" (Greene 370). The anthology is even slippier. Although beginning with the Greeks, the collection of literary works is not confined to a particular tradition and means only, at bottom, "a gathering of flowers," a definition appropriate to this Land of Flowers.

As for the far larger problem of Crispin's fundamental artifice, an imprisoning prism at once literary and historiographical, the same failure of his hemispheric

enterprise may paradoxically, in some sense, release him. For his profitless outcome also means Crispin has failed the heroic quest he has been confined to, coming up short in his generic expectations. The marked *bathos* identified by numerous critics of the poem in connection with the quaint domestic space he builds for himself underscores the unfitness of his end. Nor has he made his hemisphere, on the other side of the divide, an imperial colony. Stevens engages with the traditions of the Romantic and epic quest, on the one hand—Browning and Shelley playing outsized roles in the former—and Drake and Cortez, on the other, only to abandon them, showing, through an echo to Keats's "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" in "demesne," that the two are mutually reinforcing, with the famed sonnet drawing an express equivalence between the mythic heroism of the Greeks and Cortez's men, "silent, upon a peak in Darien" (Keats 72).

As empire is insufficient, so is a unitary North America that underwrites such imperial ambitions. When Crispin considers what power the other half of his famed dialectic might provide on the approach to Carolina, he remains circumspect: "Perhaps the Arctic moonlight really gave / The liaison, the blissful liaison" (iii.35-36). But perhaps not: "It seemed / Illusive, faint, more mist than most, perverse, / Wrong as a divagation to Peking" (iii.39-41). How, finally, could such a feeble recourse to Orientalism have been averted? Stevens tartly concludes: "The moonlight was an evasion, or if not, / A minor meeting, facile, delicate" (iii.45-46. The two Americas must be joined—"his polar planetdom" re-imagined in the context of "Havana," "carked Yucatan" (v.6-7), and a Charleston where "green palmettoes" and "myrtle" (iii.25, 23) bloom against the ice with a dogged persistence. The hemispheric dream has not been abandoned, the Americas

united within a shared culture, geography, and history that allows for the pursuit of shared aesthetic aims in the face of seemingly intractable difficulties.

What happened in the subsequent decade has been comprehensively documented by Alan Filreis in *Modernism from Left to Right*: Stevens's supposedly "pure poetry" where the tropics figured so heavily found itself increasingly on the defensive from critics and poets. One of the most eloquent, Stanley Burnshaw, charged in his epochal review of Harmonium that this kind of verse was something one could only swallow in small doses and Stevens, with uncharacteristic defensiveness, felt the urge to respond by abandoning the periphery of Key West for an emphatically Northern geography more appropriate to the Depression-era United States, "Ideas of Order" even prefaced with a headnote to explain its social aims. Subsequent critics have underwritten such a critique by dividing *Harmonium*—Paterian and Symbolist, in equal measure—from the later more high-minded, if not exactly public minded, verse of the 1930s, with the theorization of the major man, the express meditation on the role of the poet in society The Man With the Blue Guitar (1937) and the polemical argument of Owl's Clover (1936), a controversial poem in Stevens's canon that revisits Burnshaw's critique in a more extended and even more uncharacteristic vein. No longer could he comfortably remain "the explorer of the exotic" Tate identified in his review of Harmonium (Doyle 55), the consensus runs. Indeed, most readers have regarded this change as largely final, Stevens's poetry only becoming more austere and solemn in the subsequent decades. Younger contemporaries, such as Elizabeth Bishop and Randall Jarrell, came to mourn the passing of the Harmonium mode. Even Burnshaw, seeing what his review helped wreak, came to regret the post-*Ideas* shift.

The leave-taking in "Farewell to Florida" appropriately, then, signals the end of the hemisphere for potentially the rest of his career, casting even his appeal to Ramon in the tone of a departing wave rather than a greeting embrace. The peninsula cum isthmus has been abandoned in favor the "leafless" and "wintry" North (31), the female anima superseded by the bardic ring of chanting men familiar from "Sunday Morning." But escape, like Oscar Wilde's dictum on truth, is rarely pure and never simple. Key West does not easily, or perhaps at all, "s[ink] downward under massive clouds" (3). That this valediction begins the volume and maintains the Florida/Key West conflation of "O, Florida, Venereal Soil," signals what the hysterical tone that grows especially vexed at the moment of embarkation confirms: the South stays too strongly with him to ever cease operating as a *genius loci* in his imaginary, offering an immovable counterweight to the "mind of winter."

The speaker counsels a calm he cannot meaningfully feel, internal rhyme and obsessive sibilance recalling the same devices in the psychosexual bondage Florida generated, in the second and third sections. The rhyme, internal and otherwise, is encoded through more or less the same sounds as these earlier sections, too. Snaking throughout the entire poem, the long i (lies/slime/sides/mind/bind-pine/coraline/mine) and the long o (clouds/crowds/south--sound/ground/round) become phonic features that verge on maddening in their profusion. The semantic tenor of these recollections, moreover, in foregrounding all the constitutive elements ostensibly evacuated from the sea that still, significantly, churns with ungovernable libidinal panic, makes it exceedingly unclear what, if any, difference "My North" has from the "sepulchral South" (14) By pairing the two in a single line, Stevens only underscores this confusion.

The occupatio of leafless—doubly damned by the leaves recalled from the poem itself, to say nothing of the sibilance the term inaugurates—fatally undercuts the possession asserted in "My North." The farewell has been effected from the beginning, but must be renewed throughout, and no more powerfully than at the conclusion of the third section. The "I hated" (21, 23) takes on the force of, in Bloom's fine formulation, "I loved too much" (Bloom 111), especially as the anaphora we might retroactively expect is defused by the pleasure of elaborating on the material so despised. The syntax of this first, and indeed only, "farewell," with its infinitive and additive syntax, is not, for once, to qualify or revise, but rather, pathetically, to delay.

Meanwhile, in the counterpart to this same third section, the alliteration is telling:

The **men** are **moving** as the water **moves** The darkened water cloven by **sullen swells** Against your **sides**, **shoving and slithering**, [emphasis added] (33-36)

Not only recalling the "wilderness / Of waving weeds" (22-23), nor even amplifying this image and its correspondent "vivid blooms / Curled over the shadowless huts" (23-24) into "the snake [that] has left its skin upon the floor" (2) that has been with us all along, but having subsumed both acts, the moment also charts in microcosm the metaphoric movement that the sloughing off necessitates. By the logic of Stevens's metaphor, and perhaps the nature of Stevensian metaphor itself, the mariner's self-renewing process creates a prison of reference from which he cannot escape: the men are water and the water is snakes and the snake is Florida and Florida is Stevens.

As Cook notes, the Ulysses found elsewhere in Stevens is evoked here—particularly, when he must bind himself to the mast to resist the song of the Sirens (88), Crispin returning to an equally masculine world. So, too, does the broader epic

machinery recalling Crispin's journey that, for all its mock status, reproduces the archetypical trajectory of setting out and return home in the tradition. But there is another epic intertext of Aeneas and Dido, as Lee M. Jenkins notes, and it is one that complicates such heroic triumphalism, with "hatreds and bitternesses ... foreign to the ancient model" (Jenkins 30). The revision arises from a Stevens who, while assenting to the utility of Aeneas, ultimately identifies with Dido, experiencing his own conflagration on the funeral pyre. By conflating these personae, he renders the division central to his speaker's departure deeper and still more intractable. Within his very person, he is at once social commitment and mere aestheticism. He is at once the desirer and the desired, in a small but meaningful way subverting the phallocentric view Jacqueline Vaught Brogan sees in his representation of the singer in "Idea of Order at Key West" and in his gendered representations of Florida elsewhere (Brogan 180). And perhaps most important, he is at once center and periphery, attached at once to the normative heroes of Ulysses and Aeneas as well as the exotic North African Dido. If Stevens revises the Aeneid to debunk the false alternative between the hemisphere and the nation, this classical context has larger implications, allowing him to place distance between himself and the Victorian transmission of that tradition in the doubt-stricken iterations of Tennyson (e.g. Tithonius, Ulysses, the Lotos-Eaters), for a Global South Atlantic that more deeply entices.

Stevens might have left the region well enough alone in the "Idea of Order at Key West," which was written earlier, but found, finally, he could not. This ambivalent "Farewell" was added to the revised edition of *Ideas of Order* in 1936 and given pride of place, ironically heading the volume. "Idea of Order at Key West," that most canonical of

Stevens's poems, the only poem with Key West in the title, amply demonstrates why his ensnaring tropics could not now be forsaken.

Florida had *literally* become Key West, the island for the first time appearing in a title, and expressly Hispanophone, through the Ramon Fernandez who casts a watershed challenge. Ramon does not have interiority, nor does he speak, seeming only to displace, or perhaps more accurately, mediate, the apostrophe with such a long backstory in Wordsworth and others that Stevens directs at the singer. But the unpromisingly mute companion nonetheless forces Stevens to confront the uncomfortable fact that the hemisphere explored in and from Key West must be regarded at the level of the individual human subject in addition to the contours of geography and culture. The hemisphere has been peopled already—the Mexican women, the Negro undertaker, Crispin, the LaForguian speaker of "Discourse"—but these are hardly real people, only props for Stevens to pose, or masks for him to speak through. There is a way in which Ramon also signifies a prop and mask, but by virtue of his proper name and its Hispanophone character, that is not all he signifies, presaging the social real of the harbor. In that way, the local reporter in Key West with that name noted by Scandura holds greater significance than the Francophone critic popularly identified in readings of the poem, even if, as she says, "to particularize the identity of Fernandez misses the point" (Scandura 262).

In his most famous of the *Adagia*, Stevens ruefully remarked, "Life is an affair of people not of places. But for me life is an affair of places and that is trouble" (CPP&P 901), and this vanishing point is where people and place converge found fruition in the subsequent decade. Stevens corresponded with José Rodríguez Feo, a young Cuban

littérateur who funded and co-edited *Origenes*, a journal that came to play an influential role in the island's literary history. Even before this poetic exchange that produced actual poems, the conversation was more than theoretical on Stevens's part. As he explains to Feo, "during the last several years I have been taking a number of Mexican magazines," singling out *Cuadernos Americanos* for especial praise, calling the journal an "extraordinary publication" (L 543). He also subscribed to the Argentinian journal *Sur* (*Sec* 34), though harbored mixed feelings about the journal's aesthetic orientation, remarking mordantly to Henry Church "that one sends to Buenos Aires for Lettres Francaises, but not for Sur" (L418). Edited and co-founded by Victoria Ocampo and singly edited by Roger Callois in the 1940s, *Sur* "was to have an important influence on several generations" of Argentinian writers," according to John King (King 1).

Stevens valued these journals so much that when R.P. Blackmur appealed to him for financial support for the *Kenyon Review*, Stevens cited *Cuadernos Americanos* and *Orígenes* as points of emulation. Claiming they were worthy enterprises maintained on the basis of voluntarism, Stevens went as far to deem the former "far better than anything here" (*Sec* n111), despite having only a limited amount of Spanish at his disposal. The grounded cosmopolitanism Morello identifies in *Revista*—attentive to the interaction between the local and international, as well as between different genres—might have appealed to Stevens. Literature was not approached in the context of an increasingly professional academic culture, as in the *Kenyon*, but considered integral to a wider discussion of culture and ideas and preoccupied with formal experiment, recalling the little magazines of the 1920s where Stevens first cut his teeth. It is perhaps no coincidence, then, that a week later, Stevens wrote again to Blackmur that *Partisan*

Review was "the best thing we have" (ibid), a judgment echoed in a letter to Leonard C. van Geyzel, to whom he said, "The Partisan Review is the most intelligent thing I know of" (L379). For Stevens might have detected in the leftist journal an engagement with culture, politics, and esthetics analogous to the often candidly political character of Hispanophone journals. While Stevens had the most access to journals, he also came to own a number of Spanish and Latin American volumes in his library, with works by Calderon, Cervantes, Lorca, San Juan de la Cruz, Salvador de Madariaga, and Quevedo (Moynihan 76). He was even sufficiently conversant with Spanish poetry to claim a familiarity with multiple translations of Jorge Guillén's Cántico and to boast his own copy of the acknowledged masterwork important to the Latin American South, mentioning an edition of the poems as one of the "latest ornaments of my shelves" (Sec 204).

And yet, the significance of Stevens's poetic exchange with Feo and these broader Hispanophone intertexts has not been acknowledged, despite the letters having been published over twenty years ago in *Secretaries of the Moon* under the editorship of Alan Filreis and Beverly Coyle. Aside from the volume's introductory essay and its footnotes, the investments in the Caribbean that Stevens developed during the period have been as severely understudied as the more abstracted ones in the 1920s. This gap in Stevens criticism proves all the more striking when set against the broader interest in Latin American literature that arose in the United States in response to the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s and 1920s. As Helen Delpar and more recently, Ellen G. Landau, have demonstrated, "the enormous vogue of things Mexican"—to quote the title of Delpar's survey of the period—had a decisive impact on American modernism.

Twenty years later, realizing the "comprehensive island hemisphere" envisioned in the "The Comedian as the Letter C," Stevens explored the shared cultural space he and Feo might share in poems about, and expressly addressed to, the young Cuban. By his own admission, Feo was not a poet (Sec 46), but his deep knowledge and appreciation of aesthetics and poetics, made him a formidable partner in mapping the Global South Atlantic. Moreover, Stevens's imbrication in Hispanophone literary culture did not end with the enterprising student who made such an impression. Their correspondence brings to the fore the affiliations, to use Said's term, Stevens enjoyed with the *Grupo Origenes*, and with José Lezama Lima, in particular. This contact with Origenes's on Stevens's part echoes and exceeds that he enjoyed with its predecessor and ironically, bête noire, Revista de avance.

Over the course of a rich archive, Stevens and Feo grappled with aesthetic categories, such as the grotesque in "A Word with Jose-Rodriguez Feo" (1945) and "major man" in "Paisant Chronicle" (1945); the role of literature's relationship to life, Stevens skeptical of Feo's claims for a literary life; and the character of French literature, with Roger Callois and André Gide posed as dichotomous figures. But more than merely providing commentary on poetic tradition, the men realized one of their own. As the title from the second chapter of *Secretaries of the Moon* aptly puts it, they were "putting together a world."

In "Attempt to Discover Life" (CPP320), Stevens and Feo created a Cuba that was free of what Stevens during the period now called, in a rare criticism of *Orígenes*, an "eclecticism" (L495)—or overreliance on European references—and the taint of exoticism. Unlike other poems inspired by letters from Feo or translated in *Orígenes* by

other contributors, Feo not only translated "Attempt to Discover Life" himself as "Tentativa por Descubrir La Vida," but published the translation alongside the original, creating a typographical as well as thematic conversation between the two poems. Robert Lesman, in the only consideration of the poem and translation, avers that the exchange "illustrates a unique instance of textual dialogue in which the North American poet submits more of a template than a finished work" (Lesman 15). "Cinematic" rather than "discursive," "enigmatic and laconic," in way even the most opaque Stevens's poems are not, the text is "essentially a poem-to-be translated" (136-137), Lesman concludes. Stevens creates a Cuba, in his view, that demonstrates a "critical exoticism that makes use of Cuban imagery to explore philosophical problems and does so by means of images that evoke destruction instead of the vibrancy that typically marks exotic images of tropical locales" (Lesman 131)—and Feo deepens such anti-exoticism by "interpolat[ing] [...] a Cuban or generally Hispanic reader whose imagination does not proceed across the same cultural trajectory" (Lesman 141), the "dos centavos," in particular, deprived of the same power to shock.

Lesman holds that Feo also resists exoticism through a set of specific revisions in the second and third stanza that render manifest the underlying sexual tenor, create a scene less passive and more active, and defuse the relationship between the "cadaverous person" and the "woman brilliant and pallid-skin" of something distinctly dark—what I see as an almost Sweeney-esque menace in the erotic *frisson* both between and around them suggestive of sexual service in the "dos centavos." Such changes on Feo's part, in his reading, show that the value of the artificial experience Stevens located in the poem—"The San Miguel of the poem is a spiritual not a physical

place" (L540)—are more productive than credited. In my view, however, the significance of the transformation must be found elsewhere.

Feo does not remove the specter of decay from the original to provide a happier judgment on what Cuban experience offers, but rather to imagine a Cuba—a la "Academic Discourse"—free of Symbolist interference, expunging the French poetry that the two men debated with contentious fervor throughout their entire correspondence. The aim of the translation is not, then, to reverse Stevens's antiexoticist decay on behalf of the new poem's own anti-exoticist argument (Lesman 142), but rather to confront a decay no less bound up with exoticism than Floridian fertility and substitute a Stevensian poetics forswearing all metaphorical manipulation, extending that insistence to language itself in the new poem's Hispanophone verbal texture. To reread the aim of these revisions, the "gravido" of "el aire gravido" resonant with a connotation of pregnancy renders explicit the sexual subtext of the scene where the cadaverous man and woman stand together, the woman "smiling and wetting her lips;" "ensayos," or "attempts," neutralizes the pharmacologically loaded "fomentations;" "florecer" activates "bloom" into a verb that literally corresponds to the reality of the flowers found throughout the poem; and "surgieron," more active still, extinguishes the Symbolist languor in "drifted" beginning the stanza that sets the tone for it (Lesman 141). Feo doesn't succeed in making a real place—"black Hermosas" are not found anywhere, much less Havana (L540)—so much as a place that is more real than the one either of them had been handed by their shared French poetic tradition. Indeed, post "Description Without Place" (1947), Stevens continues to explore in "Attempt to Discover Life" the "interesting ... idea that we live in the description of a place and not in

the place itself, and in every vital sense we do" (L494) to argue that description of our America must be written by ourselves.

Two years after "Attempt to Discover Life," the poem "The Novel" (1948—CPP 391) amply demonstrates that nativism in the postwar moment provides an even less compelling position, if not an untenable one. With Borges having made his glittering impression in Paris, a signal event of the periphery entering the center that took place against deepening economic, social, and political ties between the Americas and the Global North, Stevens's Argentine, like Borges, must live in a global literary marketplace, joining the Lorca and Camus who appear alongside him in the poem. Beyond showing the impossibility of a insularity in the Global South Atlantic, "The Novel" defends the social value of lyric, placing it underneath the aegis of a form granted purchase on the social real to dissolve yet another boundary.

The morally serious Albert Camus, the gloved hand as if rising from a grave, the mundane details of a young man in bed, the maternal solicitude pathetically urging the claims of the local over the international, may all contribute to a scene rooted in firmer, grimmer realities than poetic tradition allows for, but "The sun stand[ing] like a Spaniard as he departs," the troping of a fading empire whose eclipse sets the stage for such a twentieth-century reality, reveals a world stubbornly caught up in the poetics "of the past, the rodomontadean emptiness" (6). Even before this baroque allusion to the vainglorious figure from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and setting of the Spaniard sun, the larger metaphorical apparatus of the poem has been put in a place by "a foyer of summer" (1). Framed thus, the poem continues to drift through an array of flames (13,

24-26, 35), seasons (winter, summer), forms of red (14), and even the tradition of portraiture in in the Spanish-speaking world ("retrato").

These figures, as well as the transformations Stevens has subjected them to, stand in tension with the poem's novelistic conceit, breaking up the continuity of the narrative found in the italicized "words of Jose" (12) by instead "Lol-lolling the endlessness of poetry" (19). "The fire burns as the novel taught it how" (21), but it is "the mirror"—a trope for poetic fashioning, and self-fashioning, in particular—which "melts and moulds itself and moves / And catches from nowhere brightly-burning breath" (22-23), putting this fire of the hearth—this "late, least foyer in a qualm of cold" (15)—to use.

It blows a glassy brightness on the fire

And makes flame flame and makes it bite the wood
And bite the hard-bite, barking as it bites.
The arrangement of the chairs is so and so,

Not as one would have arranged them for one self
But in the style of the novel, its tracing
Of an unfamiliar in the familiar room. (24-30)

In these three stanzas, the spaces of narrative in the poem—the "words of Jose" dispatched from "vividest Varadero"—are superseded by the return to a Stevensian room where the plot exercises no power. Here, the poetic fashioning and self-fashioning of the mirror has facilitated linguistic manipulation that further undercut the sequential form. The alliteration and sibilance of its motions ("melts and moulds itself and moves") prompts the almost crudely mocking alliteration and repetition of "make," "flame," and "bite," the flagrant punning of "barking as it bites," and the touch of anaphora in "and"—all offering a self-reflexive language that disrupts the verisimilitude of a standard realist

novel. The end has in some sense, dismissed another conceit of the realist novel—the room as foundational space—, too: "The arrangement of the chairs is so and so." Thus, it not surprising, we have moved from the novel as such to merely "the style of the novel." Stevens needed the novel's conceit of commitment, placing the gloved hand holding the politically serious Camus alongside a poet in Lorca who was even more trapped in his historical moment, dying in the Spanish Civil War for his radical politics.

Beyond appropriating commitment for lyric poetry, what Lorca also performs is a realization of the hemisphere's alternate, semi-peripheral lineage as a still vital force in the modernism Stevens has imagined. The all but "depart[ed]" empire of Spain that begins the poem, seems to make way, at both a literary historical and broadly cultural level, for the British and French conventions addressed earlier. But such terms show that a more centrally European tradition remains partial in the Americas. It is not for nothing that Spain's passing has been ironically cast in the famous formulation of the British empire "upon which the sun never set"—England by this time long gone, too. These suspect European elements form a bulwark for the North as well. As Stevens concludes with a note of some surprise ("how odd"), "that Argentine is oneself." Like any author of the Global South Atlantic, he remains plagued by the same literary problems respecting tradition, the fraught question of poetry's value and role in a postwar global setting, and by the absorbing melancholy that any poet, in any time, experiences in the "fatality of seeing things too well."

Despite the value of their correspondence, the poetic exchange with Feo must be situated within a boarder hemispheric project the journal undertook, lest Stevens's cross-cultural encounter remain consigned under the auspices of a "personal dialogue"

Keenaghan aptly identified in the textual framing of these letters ("Wallace Stevens's Influence" 187). Soliciting contributions from North American poets (Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams, T.S. Eliot) and critics (Allen Tate, Edmund Wilson) to place alongside the poetry and literary criticism of the *Origenistas*, the *Origenes Grupo* built their own "comprehensive island hemisphere" where Stevens's role extended beyond his smattering of periodical appearances. Despite the fact he never corresponded with anyone in this famed group of critics, poets, and poet-critics, they certainly read his—and attentively. When Stevens sent one such figure, the poet Lorenzo Garcia Vega, a "very lovely note thanking him for his book *Espirales Del Cuje*," Feo remarked "these fine gestures on your part are what have converted you, my dear Wallachio, to an almost legendary *amigo* of us Cuban writers" (Sec 190).

Whatever influences might exist between the two, Stevens's affiliations with the journal and the writers on its masthead are abundant, joined to larger affiliations between their avant-garde poetics with those of Anglophone modernism. There has been some interest in these connections, but they have largely been confined to prose fiction, as in César Augusto Salgado's study of James Joyce and José Lezama Lima. This is a mistake, for in no place are these affiliations more salient and indeed pressing than in the poetry of the *Origenistas*. This is particularly true for Lima, who has been recognized as "without a doubt the dominant figure of Cuban literature in the 20th century" (Mette 25) across the Caribbean and Latin America. Emilio Bejel has noted the Lima/Stevens connection (Bejel 2) in the only book length study of Lima's poetry to appear in English and other Anglophone literary critics have followed suit. Eric Keenaghan has situated Stevens in the queering of masculinity that took place in

Origenes, while more recently, trenchant comparisons between Stevens and Lima have been theorized through the lens of the neobaroque in the work of Christopher Winks and Joaquín Terrones. But given how fertile the grounds for comparison are, the subject remains seriously understudied. However foundational to world literature, Lima is rarely considered in conversation with Anglophone modernism and Stevens, no less a canonical figure, has clearly been excluded from Caribbean poetics. While an exhaustive consideration of the two canonical poets remains beyond the scope of this chapter, a number of suggestive contours can be drawn that merit more attention from literary critics.

Contemporary peers and subsequent critics have labeled both poets hermetic, effete, aesthetic, and solipsistic alike. Both also shared tropes, images, and a poetic sensibility informed by Catholicism. The latter was for Lima explicit. For Stevens, on the other hand, it might be located in the deep-seated allegiance to the famed Spanish-Catholic philosopher George Santayana who Stevens became friendly with while a student at Harvard. Stevens came to admire him over the course of his career. He employed him as a kind of aesthetic ideal both in his 1948 essay "Imagination as Value" and his 1955 poem "To an Old Philosopher in Rome," suggesting a covert Catholic sensibility in Stevens's own work that may anticipate his deathbed conversion to the religion. In their critical prose, each commanded an elliptical, lapidary style, replete with metaphors and built on aphoristic statements, at once compressed and complex. Theorizations of metaphor were central to their poetics, and both had codified larger poetic principles (Lima's *imago*, Stevens's Supreme Fiction) that were no less central and indeed bear significant affinities. And both men famously remained in their native

lands their entire lives—Stevens visiting Cuba twice, Lima only leaving the island twice, for Jamaica and Mexico. Their most significant point of contact is a shared *habitus* in the Global South Atlantic.

No less than the Stevens who stands apart from clearly demarcated national, Anglophone, and European frameworks, Lima resists "rigid concepts like latinidad or hispanidad, latinoamericanismo or panamericanismo, cubanidad or caribeanidad" and thereby "maintains a safe distance to such essentialisms as the Cuban, the Caribbean, or the American" (Ette 26). What Lima imagined in the place of these fixed categories and identities was a poetics that "gives rise to a transhistorical and transspatial perspective, that is to say, a point of view that traverses the most diverse times, histories, and spaces" (Ette 30) and, dissolving such borders and boundaries, incorporates Europe into Latin America on different, more equitable terms, through the offices of the neobaroque. Stevens both provides an analogue for this poetics in his own hemispheric project, and helps embody in his crosscultural contact.

Like the apparent attenuation of Stevens's hemisphere in the 1930s, so the imaginary operative from Key West survived even the barrenness of the late poetry in "The Rock." The name of this final section, whatever else it signifies, doubles for what citizens of Key West called their island in the 1930s (*A Guide to Florida*). Amidst the deep ruination of these final poems, the final phases of a *Collected Poems* Stevens had wished to call "The Whole of Harmonium," have this portal and the tropical spaces of its transport firmly in view. The palinode of "As You Leave the Room" recollects the "poem about the pineapple" at least as much on account of the pineapple as on account of the poem. Stevens's traditional "last" poem, "Of Mere Being" (1954), foregrounds the

Floridian palm adorned with a bird that, thus suspended, cannot simply be the archetypal phoenix, the Yeatsian figure of artifice, and the endlessly troped nightingale. Plumed in "fire-fangled feathers [that] dangled down," the creature also recalls the parrot, the cockatoo, the macaw. In the muse figures from "The Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour" (1950) "The World as Meditation" (1950), the female singer of Key West can be found, their erotic lives far less anxious.

Robert Lowell, in a review of Stevens's 1947 volume, *Transport to Summer*, said that "his places are places visited on a vacation" (ntd in "Actual World" 151), but Stevens—throughout his career—shows that, contrary to Lowell's assessment, these places were not so distant, after all. "Tradition is near. It joins and does not separate" (CPP), and no tradition is more reflective of proximity than the Global South Atlantic that emerged in his hemispheric modernism. Spaces throughout a "south whistling below the South," to return to "The Comedian as Letter C," shaped a trans-American geography, landscape, culture, and history from whence shared poetic aims, principles, and problems were founded and refine.

In search of the same "usable past" Van Wyck Brooks and José Martí alike imagined for the Americas, Stevens is deeply imbricated in his own literary past and a transnational one, subverting in the former the dominant narrative of a New England. Refusing the same calls to commitment that José Lezama Lima faced and negotiating with José Rodríguez Feo the nature of their shared French poetic inheritance, he spoke to an equally trans-American present. Key West might have grown too "furiously literary" (L355) to provide a tourist destination beyond the 1930s, but the portal remained a vital

force in his imaginary until the end of his career, opening into other tropical spaces and ways of thinking about them in relationship to the United States.

Like standard readings of Stevens, nearly all accounts of modernism fail to acknowledge that this "Spanish side" constitutive of both the nation's historical and literary past determines the twentieth-century landscape of American modernist poetics no less forcefully than the Anglo-French. That is a grave mistake, for along his vertical axis, Stevens explored transnational space and historical time with a fervor and sophistication equal to any of Eliot and Pound's trans-Atlantic peregrinations, reorienting the European past toward a more hospitable end for American poetics by charting a freer, more productive future.

Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, and Claude McKay: Greater Key West and the African Diaspora

Equally committed to the transnational poetics that made investments in the Caribbean was the Harlem Renaissance. Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, and Jean Toomer—three of the formation's most formative and pivotal figures—reveal lines of affiliation as well as influence between North and South, foregrounding the blackness elided from the geographies of Anglo-American modernists such as Wallace Stevens and Hart Crane, who consigned race to an unreflective troping in *Harmonium* and elsewhere. These investments inform a geography consistent with the transnational pathways of black internationalism theorized and mapped by influential critics such as Paul Gilroy and Brent Hayes Edwards and build on them, shifting the transatlanticism imagined in these landmark accounts further south to intersect with Michelle Stephens's readings of the region.

McKay's transnational commitments are well known and documented, providing an object lesson in the upheavals, displacements, and crossings central to both Gilroy's and Edwards's theoretical frameworks that privilege routes of circulation over roots of national belonging. Through his 1922 volume *Harlem Shadows*—regarded as the starting point of the Harlem Renaissance—McKay explores the United States from a West Indian perspective, most evident in such poems as "The Tropics of New York" and "Home Thoughts," which reveal the human cost of the Global South Atlantic. What begins as a sensory experience in the poem—the fruit of the West Indies dotingly catalogued, the sensory richness of the material underscored by consonance as well as rhyme—deepens into a menacing vista, imbricated in the histories of slavery and global capital. Revealed as a memory evoked by an encounter with the landscape in a store window, these tropics are now commodities, placed behind plate glass from

which McKay stands alienated, excluded from partaking of their bounty and moved to weeping. Having had a book of poetry published and likewise put on display about these same materials, McKay cannot, now, possess them. Once himself no less cargo than the luxurious bananas shipped by the United Fruit Company, he remains caught up in the same system of exchange. Jim Crow segregation bars his entrance from the tropics he is, at the same time, helping to usher in through poems sold and displayed in a capital as much cultural and commercial. As McKay deftly illustrates, the two are inseparable.

McKay's two volumes of dialect poems, published a decade earlier at the urging of white patron Walter Jekyll ("Constab Ballads" and "Songs of Jamaica"), instantiate no less ambivalent crossings at the level of language and poetic form. He hybridizes the ballad with dialect by juxtaposing the island's native flora with the English poetic tradition of flowers.

Earning contemporary James Weldon Johnson's rare note of approval for a dialect he generally disdained as retrograde in its racial stereotyping and romantic primitivism, these volumes have since come to be recognized by critics for their fundamental modernity, deploying irony and defined by a formally hybrid nature—a critical trend ushered in by Michael North's "Dialect of Modernism," who saw this linguistic register on McKay's part as a defining feature of Anglo-American modernism, shaping the way in which Eliot and Pound theorized and deployed the vernacular.

Jean Toomer's hybrid novel *Cane* (1923)—a work as foundational to the Renaissance as Jamaican poet Claude McKay's contemporaneous *Harlem Shadows* (1922)—has also been confined to regionalist and high modernist frameworks, despite

its exploration of an agrarian South that owes as much to the Global South Atlantic as to the United States. He confined himself to the nation, dividing the work's geography between the urban North and rural South, but *Tropic Death*—a short story collection published five years after *Cane* and openly indebted to its predecessor—places the South the work envisions within a circum-Caribbean frame.

This auspicious debut by Eric Walrond—a native of the former British Guiana who spent his formative years in Panama and Barbados—drew widespread acclaim in the early days of the Harlem Renaissance only to be followed by no major work. Like Toomer, Walrond retreated from the literary scene and consequently from critical view. Walrond, also like Toomer, has found himself re-situated within the Harlem Renaissance, modernist, and regionalist frameworks through a recent flurry of criticism.² Despite these affinities, the connection between the two has been left unexplored.

This is a mistake, for they forge a space in the Global South Atlantic where historical pressures and the psychosexual consequences destabilize fixed notions of place within and without the Americas. In this aim, they reveal the shared history of violence that victimizes black subjects who must contend with intersecting color lines. While Anglo-American modernism elided those lines in shifting the southern United States, in particular—and the US broadly—into a Caribbean frame, Toomer and Walrond threw them into sharp relief.

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² Tropic Death (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013); James Davis, *Eric Walrond:* A Life in the Harlem Renaissance and the Transatlantic Caribbean (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Louis J. Parascandola and Carl A. Wade, *Eric Walrond: The Critical Heritage* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2012); Eric Walrond and Louis J. Parascandola, *Winds Can Wake Up the Dead: An Eric Walrond Reader* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998).

More than thirty years later, after the Harlem Renaissance had more or less ended and the optimism of those early years had faded, Langston Hughes reshaped the urban landscape of the North to Toomer's and Walrond's shared South. By borrowing a musical form from the Afro-Caribbean writer Nicolás Guillén, he reclaimed a site of black possibility in Harlem under increasing assault and neglect, as well as returned a sense of daring experimentalism to a modernism also in eclipse by an uneasy set of legatees in American poetry moving in other directions.

In *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, Hughes used the tonalities and subjects of the Afro-Cuban *son* he discovered via Guillén's *Motivos De Son* to inflect and complement the polyvocal late masterwork that draws on the blues, jazz, and film. Through a Cuba that Hughes entered through stop-overs in Key West, he re-imagined black New York at the precise moment it required re-imagining.

CANE AND TROPIC DEATH

The landscape of *Tropic Death*—encompassing Barbados, Panama, British Guiana, and a ship traveling from Honduras to Jamaica—outwardly bears little resemblance to the American South of Toomer's *Cane*, but it is on this basis the two writers dissolve the borders and boundaries of their respective regions. When Walrond acknowledges *Cane* in the first story, "Drought," he does so through the offices of place: "It wasn't Sepia, Georgia, but a backwoods village in Barbadoes" (22). Beyond the mere rhetorical sleight of *occupatio*—where to evoke is always, on some level, to aver—backwoods provides an idiomatically American term in this putatively alien Caribbean. The alliteration serves only to underscore this inscription of the North American frontier

within the specifically Barbadian context of this story. Even the place names share a geographic kinship legible at the level of etymology. Georgia was named after King George, while "Barbadoes" signifies an earlier, more English variant of Barbados increasingly fallen into disuse over the 1920s. Through these geographical markers, Walrond signals a shared English experience between North and South. Despite Walrond's incursions into the Hispanophone South elsewhere in the volume, the Englishness of the world imagined is highlighted by the Anglophone register of each text and the especially Anglocentric perspective of *Tropic Death*'s title story, which hews most closely to Walrond's biography.

The recasting of Toomer's Sempter—itself a fictionalization of the Sparta, Georgia, where Toomer spent time—into Sepia brings to the fore their shared commitment to exploring miscegenation and transracial desire. This quasi-anagram also emphasizes the complex racial subjectivity in *Cane* which Toomer had already attempted to sideline by the time *Tropic Death* was published—a mere four years after its own release. Although "as late as [that year]" Toomer agreed to publish a group of seven poems from *Cane* in Countee Cullen's anthology "Caroling in the Dusk" (Foley 77), he became increasingly unwilling to identify as Negro—a choice that has been roundly contested for its significance. Many of the critical essays gathered in the second Norton edition of *Cane* (2011), including the introduction by Henry Louis Gates and Rudolph Byrd, attest to this debate. The gesture on Walrond's part thereby reclaims Toomer's blackness against his increasing circulation through Anglo-American literary circles populated by figures such as Waldo Frank, Hart Crane, and others. The "sepia" complexion, however conducive to passing, still encrypts a visible blackness. Walrond

amplifies this racial subjectivity through "sepia." That marker of complexion places the world in a space, paradoxically, at once more racially mixed and, with few signs of the wider white world, more thoroughly black.

This direct echo between *Cane* and *Tropic Death* belongs to a broader topography the two works share, each reflecting a shared commitment to the malleability and rigidity of racial categories that arise from an ultimately Anglophone experience of the Middle Passage and its aftermath. For both writers, the Global South Atlantic provides a space to reframe the Americas and the Caribbean through the features that overlap—the cane and marl that organize their landscapes, as well as on the basis of the categories dissolved within each, cane and marl at once natural and all too human. Like McKay's bananas from "The Tropics of New York," these features of the landscape remain caught up in the systems of slavery and domination that operate in the Americas at the same time as they participate in, and provide emblems of, the region's profuse landscape.

Cane is a *raison d'etre* for the slave trade, a sign of fertility and regenerative nature, and a trope of desire. Its negative image, marl is the blanching whiteness of a stratified racial order in the Caribbean that is exerted with particular rigidity in the American-controlled Canal Zone of Panama where several stories are set, and the hostility of a natural world that promises no Eden, deprived of Toomer's fertility.

By themselves being divided to the core between these social and natural valences, marl and cane metonymically represent what happens outside their nation-states, destabilizing those spaces from within. For the image of cane, this destabilization happens from without, too. Central within the Caribbean slave system,

the crop situates the southern United States within that frame in addition to a North American one.

Beyond being equally divided between the natural and the human, these features give shape to a racialization as fundamental to each world as nature, being rooted in the material world, if not the physical landscape. The desire for marl at the center of "Drought"—where the little girl Beryl ingests the poisonous, white substance due to her overpowering hunger and eventually dies—stands in for an equally baleful desire for whiteness elsewhere in the story.

For Beryl's family, that desire finds expression in the ritual of drinking tea at the end of each day, a "rite absurdly regal," which Walrond indicts the larger British Afro-Caribbean population for: "pauperized native blacks clung to the utmost vestiges of the Crown." That desire is also mirrored in the text as a whole, where "conflicts over gradations of skin color in a world where white skin equals power and where nonwhites crave whiteness mar the psychological and spiritual landscape" (16), as Arnold Rampersad notes in his introduction. Those conflicts often take the shape of abortive and grotesque sexual unions. The mulatto woman in "Panama Gold" rejects a darkskinned man who might emotionally fulfill her, while the deeply color-conscious Jamaican innkeeper from "The Palm Porch"—obsessed with having her daughters marry white or mulatto men—only ends up prostituting them.

On the other side of the gender divide, the dark skinned black man and his Hispanic rival for the affection of a mulatto woman instigates a cross-racial conflict inspired by racial self-hatred ("The Yellow One"). Beyond its rendering as marl, the murderous whiteness consistently finds other forms of natural expression. In "The White

Snake," the titular animal murders the black servant woman Seenie who mistakes it for a child, the incubus suckling on her breasts. In the "Black Pin," whiteness provides another vehicle of death—albeit ironically through the black religious practice of Obeah. The titular black pin that murders the same Zink Diggs who tried to use the supernatural force against her despised neighbor, leaves only the "the white clay pipe ghostly in her mouth."

At once a literal undersong in "Georgia Dusk" "Harvest Song" to the black Sempter depicted in the first section and the dominant feature of its geography, cane furthermore reflects the same bracing racial violence and cross-racial desire. Sugar is the one gift given to the titular character in "Becky" (C 9) that is recurrent ("[he] never went her way without some sugar sap"); whose giver is named ("Old David Georgia"); and whose process of composition is noted ("grinding cane and boiling syrup"), thereby proving central to the text's understanding of miscegenation. This trope of desire figures the outlaw sexuality of a poor white woman who bears two black children and faces ostracism from her community for the transgression. It also suggests that such desire is less outlaw than the community wishes to believe, having grown out of this social order where cane plays an outsize role. Everyone claims some measure of responsibility for Becky, bringing her secret gifts as penance. For "Carma," a story supposedly of the "crudest melodrama," "the wind in cane" provides a matrix for adultery ("she had others") and miscegenation ("her mangrove-gloomed yellow-flower face") embodied in Carma, on the one hand, and the murderous violence of Bane, her husband. The latter effects Carma's fake suicide that Toomer expressly situates in canebrake—"grabbing a gun, she rushed from the house and plunged across the road into the canebrake,"

where he "heard the gun go off"—the disfiguring of a friend falsely accused of facilitating the ruse ("slashed one of the men who'd helped her"), and Bane's ultimate imprisonment for such violence ("now he's in the [chain] gang.")

In Toomer's "Blood Burning Moon" (C31–37), cane provides the most thorough frame for locating an unrepentant racial violence borne from desire. The white Bob Stone and black Tom Burwell compete for Louisa, a black women, and in the process, kill each other—Tom killing Bob, and then himself becoming lynched afterward, in turn, through the white supremacy he retains, even in death, even in the lost ground of his family name now presumably entirely lost.

The material comprises the literal atmosphere ("all around the air was heavy with the scent of boiling cane"), shapes the ground of the space ("A large pile of canestalks lay like ribboned shadows on the ground"), and anticipates the central trope of the murderous climax—the "blood-burning moon"—with its "boiling cane" tended by the familiar "Old David Georgia" from "Becky."

The blanching marl and boiling cane that structure the natural, physical, and psychological landscapes of *Tropic Death* and *Cane* not only dissolve the boundaries and borders by performing analogous ends, a kind of coin and its obverse, but do so by dissolving their own borders and boundaries. The contours of whiteness compass Barbados ("Drought," "Panama Gold," and "Black Pin"), the Canal Zone of Panama ("The Palm Porch"), and British Guiana ("The White Snake"), and in a space itself transnational, aboard a ship sailing from Honduras to Jamaica ("The Yellow One"). Likewise, cane moves north from Sempter in the second section of *Cane*, providing an emblem of nourishing nostalgia amidst an airless urban north, in such stories as "Calling

Jesus," "Box Seat," and the poem "The Harvest Song," where the speaker rhapsodizes on the bygone harvesting of cane and other crops against a "throat [that is dry]," a body "too chilled, and too fatigued." Cane also returns, when the South returns in "Kabnis," to inform the metaphor of rape in the "flower" of miscegenation noted by Charles Scruggs and Lee VanDemarr: "White-faces, pain-pollen, settle downward through a cane-sweet mist and touch the ovaries of yellow flowers" (Scruggs 193). As a trope of desire whose potential for violent sexual congress is reflected in the joining dash (an essentially forced connection) cane is no mere incidental part of this transaction. With its epithet of sweet and this typographical marker, the material thus rendered is at once a formal and thematic correlative to the "pain-pollen" of the flower's actual botany.

Through these constellations of images and textual echoes, Toomer and Walrond mine a fictive terrain that grapples with race by literalizing slavery and its aftermath in a landscape that spans the Caribbean and the Americas to reveal their continual blurring into one another. These authors are not, strictly speaking, poets, but with their formal experimentalism—Toomer mixing poetry and prose and Walrond attending closely to nuances of dialogue across region—they nonetheless have a poetics consistent with the aims of the Global South Atlantic, and while they do not operate in Key West, they do operate in a space analogous to the one Wallace Stevens explored from there, learning the lesson well enough that they no longer needed the island to mediate the complex crosscurrents of race and desire eddying in the water no less than marking the land.

The transnational poetics of Langston Hughes, evident in a commitment to the African diaspora that spanned the course of his career and took shape thematically

and through crosscultural contact, is much better known, having become an increasingly prominent part of the conversation around his work. It is one that belongs to the larger critical discourse of black migration and cultural transmission. Nowhere is Hughes's transnationalism more significant—or more discussed—than in his poetic exchange with his Afro-Cuban contemporary Nicolás Guillén. Forming a capstone to this conversation, the already influential Vera Kutzinski's *The World of Langston Hughes: Modernism and Translation in the Americas* documents—through rigorous archival research and a comparativist lens—the myriad ways that Hughes translated, and was translated by, the Hispanophone South.

But "if the arguments for or against influence relations between Hughes and Guillén" have been "amply covered," as Kutzinski insists (Kutzinski 133, 287), with opinions ranging from Langston Hughes being responsible for Guillén's use of *son*, to no cross-communication at all, what has rarely been considered is the influence Guillén might have produced on Hughes's poetics. The line of influence in these accounts invariably runs from North to South.

This is a mistake. For such an account overlooks the reality that the two years Langston Hughes spent translating *Motivos de Son* into *Cuba Libre* with Ben Frederic Carruthers, a professor of Spanish at Howard University, produced far reaching consequences for his poetics that extend far beyond *Cuba Libre* to his experimental volumes of the 1950s and 1960s, *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951) and *ASK YOUR MAMA* (1961). Recognizing that blues and *son* were not equivalent, whatever their affinities, Hughes still embedded the inassimilable linguistic difference of Afro-Cuban musical form into the panoply of other musical and more broadly aesthetic

forms long central to his work—a variegated field that, with this new addition, finds its ultimate expression in *Montage of a Dream Deferred*. Following Hughes's preface, critics have typically placed film and bebop at the center of readings of the poem. Although those particularly modern modes are indeed central to the poem's conception, joined to the older forms of black music, jazz and otherwise, that remain essential features in Hughes's conception of African-American art and culture, *son* forms a vital and disruptive undersong. Paralleling the blending of Cuban rhythms during the rise of jazz, which Jelly Roll Morton referred to as the "Spanish tinge" in his retrospective 1938 interview with Alan Lomax (LoC 1938), and their later, more sustained deployment in the mid-to-late 1940s via Dizzy Gillespie's collaborations with Cuban musicians, *son* nonetheless moved beyond these musical iterations for Hughes.

He situates the form's own "sharp[est] and [most] impudent interjections" (CP 387), which are used to describe bebop in the preface of the poem within a filmic and musical tableau already discontinuous, with its scat syllables and jump cuts between variegated scenes of Harlem life. Even if son does not merely represent an Afro-Caribbean version of African-American vernacular forms such as blues and jazz, it resembles them in its generic flexibility, thereby complementing as well as supplementing the native strains at once literary, musical, and oral deployed at their most synthetic and programmatic in *Montage of a Dream Deferred*.

As James Robbins argues, *son* refers to everything "from the designation of a particular complex of specific musical elements to a cluster of related genres linked by commonalities of form to ... the essence of Cuban music—that is, the thing that makes it Cuban ... to a [symbol] for establishing Cuban solidarity with other Caribbean

cultures" (Robbins 182–191), mirroring the generic complexity of the blues and its identification as central to black experience. Also like jazz and blues, *son* arose out of, and was identified strongly with, the black underclass in Cuba, undertaking an analogous arc of cultural transmission. Brought from the rural Oriente to the white dance halls of Havana, it quickly became a form that shaped and was shaped by the more genteel forms of European dance music, such as the *danzon*, popular with white Cubans in the capital, voicing an aesthetic expression first reviled as vulgar and lascivious (i.e., too black), and then embraced, albeit uneasily, for much the same reason (Waxer 144).

The critical archive on *son's* transnational reach—a conversation taken up by scholars of Hughes and the Caribbean—has left these routes of transmission unexplored and has focused on the relationship between blues and *son* in particular at the expense of other forms of black music. Moreover, the story told by readers of these cultural forms is one largely of failure, the affinities between the two forms outweighed by their divergences. Nor is there much interest in the significance of the affinities for black music, much less the black poetry inflected by it.

More critical work can be undertaken in accounts of African-American literature and culture to bring the blues and *son* in fruitful conversation and thereby recover the "Spanish tinge" that inflects the African-American literary tradition without eliding either the specific cultural meanings of blues and *son* or sidestepping "the unequal relations of cultural prestige and political power between Harlem, New York City, and Havana, Cuba" (Leary 135). This commonality can be seen in their status as black vernacular forms expressing rural and urban black life that perform similar

symbolic work within their cultures, followed similar paths into the mainstream, resist easy definition, and even in terms of musical structure, share the feature of call and response of African derivation.

And still more work can be done, since there exists none to place *son* in conversation with black music more broadly. For although Hughes found *son* could not be translated to blues when he translated Guillén's *Motivos*, discarding earlier titles such as *Cuban Blues* or *Blue Notes* (ntd in Kutzinski 143) when he found the forms did not align, he did find a place for it among the other forms in *Montage*. Precisely owing to similarities with black music of which blues forms only a part, albeit a central one, *son* could be integrated into Hughes's poetics, while the differences provided the inflection of a different mode.

Amidst the indigenous rhythms, formal structures, and motifs that mark *son* as culturally specific, it was the latter—and particularly the tone in which those motifs were handled—that Hughes integrated into *Montage*, registering the difference in the poem that bedeviled him in the translations. Such a fecund cross-cultural influence arose partly from his encounter with Guillén's *Motivos de Son—poemas* that were, like Hughes's poems done "in the manner of the blues," only motifs, after all. They also arose from his encounter with the music itself, in his visits to the nightclubs of Marianao, to which he returned to every night and where, as Guillén recalls, he was a hit with the *soneros*.

There, Hughes would have heard a musical form more defined by a "feeling rather than a specific formal structure" [emphasis added] (Singer 5). That affective range, at once hard-driving, boastful, savagely mocking, and sentimental, arose from a

number of thematic concerns that defined *son* with particular force. These included an unabashed nostalgia for the country, a ribald humor, fervent nationalism, an interest in daily, quotidian life, and a daring, albeit often misogynist, sexual posture where "soneros could make claims for the charms of 'Cuban women' (of any race) that blues musicians could not make for Americans in general" (Leary 137). Not all of these are particular to *son*, to be sure. These preoccupations have analogues in the blues—a form also noted for its humor, interest in the quotidian, and even a vanguard sexual politics. But even in these contexts, Hughes's iteration of these subjects owes as much, if not more, to the Afro-Cuban form. Others—such as nostalgia and nationalism—are largely alien to the blues. Hughes seized upon the distinct brand of vitality that *son* offered when he discussed the form in *I Wander as I Wander* (1956):

Rumbas and *sones* are essentially hip-shaking music—of Afro-Cuban folk derivation, which means a bit of Spanish, therefore Arab-Moorish, mixed in. The tap of claves, the rattle of gourds, the dong of iron bells, the deep steady roll of drums speak of the earth, life bursting warm from the earth, and earth and sun moving in the steady rhythms of procreation and joy. (43)

Hughes also intuited the social potential of *son*. As Rampersad notes, he located a "will to revolt" in the music. As Arnold Rampersad notes, Hughes heard "drums like fury; like anger; like violent death" (ntd in Rampersad 179). The salacious erotics of the form—and the particularly racialized form it took—did not escape him either. What applies to his discussion of the rumba played and danced to at a party in his honor applies to *son*:

Most of the songs were risqué in an ingenious folk way. One thing that struck me was that almost all the love lyrics were about the charms of *mi negra*, my black girl, *mi morena*, my dark girl, my chocolate sweetie or my mulatto beauty, plainly described as such in racial terms. (45)

The cultural nationalism and patriotism that defined *son* (Avalos 4; Moore 123), with *sones* extolling "Cuba's natural scenic beauty, its radiant, tropical sun, its beautiful women, and its [...] music" (Avalos 5)—is a feature that can be found in *Montage*, with Hughes's nation, as perhaps always, Harlem.

This is a feature Hughes would have found mirrored in the broader cultural milieu of Afro-Cuban life on the island. In his trip to the black social clubs, such as Club Aetnas and Club Minerva, he came into contact with a black pride and a broader Cuban nationalism that these sites shared with *son*, even as they disliked the form itself, preferring the more genteel *danzon*.

While it is hardly surprising that Hughes remained committed to the black metropolis, his optimism about the site's prospects became an increasingly remarkable position to uphold in the doldrums of the 1940s and 1950s. Already by the late 1930s and early 1940s, the cultural touchstone of Harlem had begun to enter poetic eclipse. As one critic has observed, "after the depression years and global war ... few poets seemed to be able to sing about Harlem" (De Jongh 100), the major figures to emerge during the decade—Gwendolyn Brooks and Robert Hayden—avoiding the space entirely in favor of other places. With a riot in 1935 and another looming in 1943, only Hughes really persisted, seeking to reconcile the optimism of the 1920s with the increasingly grimmer realities of the contemporary moment in such volumes as *Shakespeare in Harlem* (1942), *Fields of Wonder* (1947), and *One Way Ticket* (1949).

By the 1950s, when *Montage* was published, it likely seemed an even less fortuitous time for him to hoist such a banner aloft. The sensationalized news coverage that had begun in the 1940s remade Harlem into a byword for drugs, crime, and urban blight, and jazz—in the form of an insurgent bebop—attracted the attention of the Beats as it moved to the whiter precincts of 52nd Street, losing at least some of its connection with its African-American *locus*.

But *Montage of a Dream Deferred* offers as full throated a celebration as any mounted in *Shakespeare in Harlem*, a volume that takes "Harlem" as only one point of reference amongst several others (Preface), by putting the black capital at the center of his investigations. It is a space, like the Cuba of the *soneros*, where one can espouse unbridled patriotism. "Crucé Los Mares" ("I Crossed the Seas"); "De Dónde Serán" ("Where Are They From?"), "Incitadora Región" ("Inciting Region"), and "Son A La Mujer Cubana" ("Son to Cuban Women") attest to Cuban exceptionalism.

Likewise in Harlem, "New Yorkers" (CP 394) have that "same old spark!" Trumpeting the claims of the city against racial realities found elsewhere in the North and South, "there ain't no Ku Klux" (CP 396), a place where one speaker can "Croon" (CP 394) "I don't give a damn / For Alabam' / Even if it is my home," the state doubly damned in the exact rhyme of the clipped syllable.

With an irony gained by insider knowledge, the denizens of Hughes's Harlem see through the lies that Hollywood tries to peddle, "laughing in all the wrong places / at the crocodile tears / of crocodile art" (CP 395). Outside the theater, they are no less able to form a sacred community in "Corner Meeting." The "speaker catches fires / looking at their faces. His words / jump down to stand / in listeners' places" (403).

Even the morose terms offered by the widely anthologized "Night Funeral in Harlem" (CP 419–420) produce the same communal ideal that render a "poor boy's / Funeral grand" (CP 420). In Hughes's most wildly celebratory moments, he addresses in the most sustained and open fashion the value of black music and its connection to Harlem, in particular. In this way, he takes a page from the *soneros*, who were equally expressive about the value of their music and its centrality to the social world of Cuban life.

In "Reina Guajira" ("Guajira Queen"), for example, a paean to the country music that was grafted onto *son* during the 1930s, the *sonero* valorizes the shared cultural inheritance of this predominantly urban form, looking to the countryside where *son* itself arose (Waxer 142). He not only praises guajira itself—singling out its expert intonations, singing, and rhythm—but the still more specific form of the *Zapatero*, or "heel tap dance from the countryside" (Avalos 12) that evokes the social context of dancing. The *zapateo* makes this turn to a community explicit, when he subsequently turns to an imagined landscape of anthromorphized animals who partake of the social real—such as a cat cutting cane, a rabbit-cook—and concludes with a naturalistic one of a farmer finishing for the day and a serene night settling over the village. The zapateo, and the guajira of which it forms a part, reveal the centrality of *son* to Cuban life, as well as its power, whereby the *sonero* intermingles the natural and the cultural, the naturalistic and fantastical.

Poems in *Montage* such as "Projection" (CP 403) and "Neon Signs" (CP 397) are no less sanguine about the communal role black music can play in depicting new configurations of the social order. In "Projection," Hughes posits the

neighborhood's leading nightclubs important both to bebop and jazz more broadly as both religious temples and centers of democratic possibility. "MINTON'S"—the traditional birthplace of bebop—becomes the "ancient altar of Thelonious" and "MANDALAY ... where the booted / and unbooted play." In "Projection," meanwhile, Hughes imagines a moment of ecstatic deliverance, envisioning a utopian space rooted in a particular Harlem geography with reference to major black celebrities. These places, too, have that power of transformation seen in *sones* and arguably to an event greater extent, sacralizing the profane.

Such allusiveness to the wider black world on display here also belongs to a Harlem in *Montage*—unlike the versions depicted in *Fields of Wonder* (1947) and *One Way-Ticket* (1949) that are mediated through a more individualized lens—which Hughes renders more fully in the aggregate. The volume offers a *patria* as broad as any of Cuba's *mujer* in which there are coachmen, criminals, police officers, different social classes, and color gradations following the logic of colorism (Avalos 6).

In *Montage*, this wider frame emerges from the very outset of the sequence, when the speaker asks the daddy about "their feet" that dance to the "boogie-woogie"— a collective form of bygone black expression—in "Dream Boogie" (CP 388). Similarly, "Parade" opens the volume with "seven ladies / and seventeen gentleman / at the Elks Club Lounge" subsumed into the social form of the PARADE (capitalized and repeated in ecstatic emphasis) alongside the "Grand Marshal in his white suit" and hostile "white motorcycle cops." That will toward collective expression—however mediated through the lyric subject who views or voices them—persists, emerging in some of the same moments referred to earlier: street corners; movie theaters ("The Roosevelt,

Renaissance, Gem, Alhambra"); night clubs, like Minton's and Small's; broader geographical classifications, such as states; and college formals, amongst various other spaces of black life in Harlem.

Despite this spirit of black uplift designed to restore Harlem's flagging fortunes, the neighborhood nonetheless remains a powerful site of critique in *Montage*. This is also a feature *son* is also known for (Avalos 6), with subjects ranging from "cultural imperialism to the historic popular resentment toward the 'ugly North American tourist' or gringo" and critiques of Gerardo Machado, the increasingly authoritarian president of Cuba. And, as Robin Moore notes, "although relatively rare, some [of these] political protest songs became popular" (Moore 123). "'Bomba lacrimosa' (Tear gas bomb) mixes reference to government instigated street violence with sexual double entendre," while "Los tabaqueros" ("The Cigar Makers") and "Oración por todos" ("Prayer for All") describe the "murder of striking factory workers by government forces" and "the assassination of student activist Julio Antonio Mella in Mexico" (Moore 123).

Whatever its frequency in *sones*, critique is largely invisible in a blues and jazz that was either exclusively nonsemantic (in the case of bebop) or catered to popular tastes (pre-bebop forms of jazz). That is not to say blues did not have a social salience. Baldwin, who pleaded an inexpert knowledge in "The Uses of the Blues" (1964), understood well such meaning, claiming "a great deal for the blues"—both "a toughness" that "manages to make [black experience] articulate" and "the ability to know that, all right, it's a mess, and you can't do anything about it ... so, well, you have to do something about it" (Baldwin 70, 73). Plenty of critics before and since have argued for similar uses on behalf of the blues, Hughes included. Nor is it to say that jazz did not

possess any either—even the bebop that helped foster a new black aesthetic and which offered to the wayward Beats a symbol of alienation from their white, middle class America. But whatever room for critique or even social commentary either genre offered was largely oblique, anomalous, and in the case of jazz, contested.

Despite its formal obliquity, *Montage* stands as openly invested in exposing the racial realities of Jim Crow as forging affirmation in the face of them. The dream deferred at once provides its running motif and poses its literally most explosive moment when the speaker asks, after proceeding through a number of metaphoric possibilities for characterizing this denied hope in "Harlem" [2], "*Or does it explode*?" (CP 426).

And like the critique of *son*, which looks outside of its borders to critique *notreamericano*, so does Hughes's. He juxtaposes the local racial discrimination depicted in "The Ballad of the Landlord" with American shortcomings on the global stage, such as "Relief" (CP 401)—a brooding meditation on the connection between the New Deal politics of the WPA and the relief needed by postwar refugees—and "World War II" (CP 415), a savage dig at postwar jingoism.

These two poles of hope affirmed and denied—constructed both within the parameters of Harlem and without, to the larger nation and world—resonate throughout his career, of course, forming its major impulses. Indeed, Hughes's ameliorist vision of social change was based on the assumption that the two were not in conflict--that, on the contrary, they were mutually exclusive. Racial discrimination was lambasted through appeals to the unfulfilled promise of American ideals, "I, Too" providing the paradigmatic example of this gesture, with its adoption of a Whitmanian persona that might at once

"sing America" and instill "shame" in the white citizen for refusing to acknowledge their "darker brother." This is the position Baldwin would come to articulate in *Notes of a Native Son*, albeit intending a sharper and more thorough critique: "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually" (*Notes* 9).

Critique and black uplift are arguably form a more significant part of Hughes's work from other decades. In his proletarian poetry of the 1930s, for example, . there resides a more bracing spirit of social protest, much to his chagrin during the McCarthy hearings that hounded him later. On the other hand, there emerges an less complicated celebration of Harlem's bounty and aesthetic power in *The Weary Blues*, his landmark volume. But setting aside the question of whether Hughes was affiliated with *son* from the start, in no other volume prior to *Montage* have these disparate *topoi* been synthesized in the manner of the *son* tradition. Nor are they elsewhere filtered so insistently through the cultural context of a Harlem that looked outward to Cuba through *son*—and further still, to the wider Caribbean. This transnational view does not remain embedded at the level of form, however. Transnationalism becomes a subject in its own right, Hughes urging the claims of the Caribbean, in particular.

In "Brothers," the Kentuckian speaker claims kinship with a West Indian—offering the promise, in short, of an African diaspora. And although Hughes demarcates their heritages ("You from Africa / I from the U.S.A."), estranging the American subject from his African past at the same time as he urges their connection on the basis of race ("we're related") to register unease for the solidarity imagined, what enables the poem to reframe the two as brothers is their shared placement in Harlem—we are from the

West Indies and Kentucky, we are from Africa and the U.S.A., but *now we are in Harlem*, the speaker urging the claims of this transnational space against those of region and nation. The Great Migration enacted here is no erasure of either those routes or roots, however. The circulation imagined instead offers a valorized blending of them. The poem thereby moves freely from the national to a transnational frame without erecting borders and boundaries, or displacing the linguistic difference transported ("chico"):

Good morning, daddy! I was born here, he said, Watched Harlem grow Until colored folks spread From river to river Across the middle of Manhattan Out of Penn Station Dark tenth of a nation. Planes from Puerto Rico. And holds of boats, chico. Up from Cuba Haiti Jamaica. In buses marked New York From Georgia Florida Louisiana To Harlem Brooklyn the Bronx But most of all to Harlem. . . . (CP 426-427)

Put another way, in circumscribing his view of America, he expanded it.

Another link to *son* can be found in a deepening interest in the quotidian, which in the blues is articulated in more general terms and with less reference to an urban geography. While the daily lives of typical, representative figures are found in Hughes's work from the start throughout the 1940s and 1950s, those details become more pronounced, consistent with a *son* tradition that approached daily affairs with a startling specificity. In a *son* such as "Sorteo De La Caridad" ("Lottery Drawing"), the

sonero identifies where the drawing takes place ("Cespedes Park in Santiago de Cuba"); the radio stations broadcasting the information (Longwave stations XIS, short wave station PPW); the numbers called; and the amounts in play (Avalos 5, 16).

Hughes delineates a similarly particular experience of Harlem, where the movie theaters and night clubs belong to a well-drawn wider map within prosaic details of urban life. There are the "Lenox avenue buses," "taxis," and "subways," of "Jukebox Love Song" (CP 393), the ordinariness of such public transit underscored by the sublimity of the scene they inform in which the speaker imagines transforming the night into an embrace for his beloved. There are the street names—"on a 133rd" (CP 396), "Lenox Avenue" (CP 407), "409 Edgecombe" (CP 403), "12 West 133rd" (CP 404), "125th Street" (CP 424), "Seventh Avenue" (CP 403)—that culminate in the map from "The Theme for English B" (CP 409), where the student of the poem maps a walk for the reader from "The college on the hill above Harlem" (CCNY) to his room at the "Harlem Branch Y."

There are newspapers like the DAILY NEWS (CP 424) and the headlines from "Ballad of the Landlord"; curbs and corners; dollar amounts, in the forms of wages, winnings, and cents; black and white churches ["Abyssinia Baptist" and "St. James Presbyterian" (CP 403)]; markers of time; and boldface names, such as "Dizzy Gillespie," "Marian Anderson," and "Sammy Davis," among others. With these allusions and spatiotemporal markers, Hughes redraws the site against his own abstracted depictions from earlier volumes as much as the broader culture's reductive readings that consigned the neighborhood to urban blight, redeeming the site's cultural vitality through this newfound specificity. By placing black celebrities alongside the lives of

average black citizens who comprised Harlem's bulk, he also sought to historicize black culture, with a view to forestalling the cultural amnesia depicted in the blistering "Shame On You" (CP 415):

A movie house in Harlem named after Lincoln

Nothing at all named after John Brown Black people don't remember any better than white.

Against these contours of critique, patriotism, and the quotidian of such texturing, however, it was the unrepentant sexuality of son that confers upon Montage its most outlaw frisson: Hughes draws on the form's preoccupation with a frank desire that provided its "most popular theme" (Avalos 4). Leary cites a particularly popular standard "Essas no son cubanas" ("These Are Not Cuban Women") for its nationalism as much as its sexual politics, son extolling the charms of Cuban women against those from other regions. While this particular son provides a helpful reminder that sexual politics never strays far from an imbrication in politics as such, the sex matters on its own terms in Hughes's work of the 1950s, producing some of his most daring poetry in terms of gender and sexuality. "Impassioned elegies to a woman's beauty ... where the subject was always a jealous woman, unfaithful and ungrateful" (Avalos 4) were sexually explicit to a degree that only the dirtiest blues (rarely recorded nor often even performed) could rival, with references to genitalia, sexual intercourse, and a womanizing that expresses the sonero's "obsession with sexual conquest" (Avalos 4). Almost exclusively male, the posture of the sonero was undergirded by a machismo as retrograde as Bessie Smith's 1920s blues have come to be seen as proto-feminist. Hughes appropriates that sexual

openness, without merely reproducing its misogyny, in poems that broach the taboo, like "Mellow" (CP 405):

Into the laps
of black celebrities
white girls fall
like pale plums from a tree
beyond a high tension wall
wired for killing
which makes it more thrilling

An "excursus on the delicious danger of interracial sex" (Wallace 91), the poem is preoccupied with transgressive sexual desire that reflected a racial reality where even the suggestion of a romantic overture to a white woman merited a lynch mob. The lynching wires of the noose have been rendered phallic and the purpled heads bloom into tropes of desire, if not sexual organs as well (his or hers?). At the same time as Hughes exposes the violence of such encounters in the poem, he does so by ironically recapitulating the sexual stereotypes which held that black men—and black celebrities, in particular—were especially desirous of such congress with white women. In effect, with wry irony, Hughes's partakes of the same desire he lambasts in order to stoke it.

Even "Strange Fruit," the prototypical lynching song of the 1930s, could not transport Hughes into this lacerating terrain, where he enacts a dare to white sexual mores. The "mellow croon" (CP 50) from "The Weary Blues" encountered *son* in the intervening twenty years, utterly transformed by the cross-cultural contact. "Café: 3 a.m." (CP 406)—much anthologized in anthologies of queer poetry—is more outré still, indicting the police brutality visited upon homosexual residents of Harlem with

increasing frequency during the 1940s and 1950s and expressing sympathy for the gay and lesbian victims of such violence:

Detectives from the vice squad with weary sadistic eyes spotting fairies.

Degenerates, some folks say.

But God, Nature, or somebody made them that way.

Police lady or Lesbian over there?

Where?

Shane Vogel, reading this queer sensibility back into Langston Hughes's poetry of the 1930s, nonetheless bemoans: "those of us who do queer Harlem Renaissance studies secretly wish Hughes had written 'Café: 3 a.m.' for *The Weary Blues*, rather than for his 1951 collection, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*" (Vogel 408). "Café: 3 a.m." is the only poem in his oeuvre where Hughes explicitly references the terminology of homosexual deviance ("degenerates," "fairies," and "Lesbians"). The other examples are found entirely in his short fiction (Vogel 408). But the placement should not surprise us, in the wake of his exposure to a more sexually explicit—if not at all queer—musical form.

"Café: 3 a.m." is surely "looking back to a time when sexual group identifications allowed for a greater movement of desire," with "thematic interest in indeterminate and uncertain identity [that] resonates with the vice policing of the Progressive Era and its pre-closet sexual epistemologies" (Vogel 408), and the classic blues of Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Gladys Bentley took cover from this cultural

context in songs with references to same-sex desire. But in its explicit identification—expressed alternatively in pejorative slang and neutral language—are more consistent with the unblushing candor that *son* provides, where a double entendre such as *yoyo* refers to female genitalia, or where an article of clothing like the *camison*, apparel "reminiscent of modern day hot pants or a miniskirt" (Avalos 4), invites cat calling and the threat of sexual violence, as in *El Camison De Pepa*. While the expression of same-sex desire and sexual autonomy were largely anomalous features of the blues, these more retrograde sexual politics were central parts of a tradition notorious for its misogyny.

Put another way, if blues were queer in the way that *son* could be, owing to the heteronormative sexual posture of the *sonero*, *son* was sexually explicit in a way that blues almost never were, aside from the most risqué dirty blues. In that way, Hughes brings the two aspects of blues and *son* in conversation, insisting on a sexual progressiveness through a lens of explicitness found nowhere else in his work.

"The surveillance and countersurveillance" (Vogel 401) structuring the encounter between the vice squad with "weary sadistic eyes" imbricated in contemporary social discourses of homosexuality ("degenerates" and "fairies) on the one hand, and these same "degenerates and fairies" who spot the interloping police on the other, only serve to amplify the taboo. As in "Mellow," sex and violence have been connected. They are also, like "Mellow," conflated. For the indeterminate "or" and a wider deictic instability (over there? Where?) leaves room for the suggestion "that the 'Police lady' herself might be the 'Lesbian' (Nero 193). Indeed, in the shared capitalization, alliteration, and

fundamentally Hellenic derivation of their identities (police/polis and Lesbian)—Hughes might go further still, solidifying that intimation with an "and" as much in play as an "or."

These dueling optics also revise *son*, with the male gaze of the vice squad that is ultimately trained on, and reversed, by the Lesbian doubling in for a posture where the male gaze of the *sonero* might be similarly resisted by Hughes's poetics. This small-scale allegory belongs to a larger one in the volume, women returning fire against their male lovers in a more extended way. "Up-Beat" (CP 408), for example, re-imagines a cultural logic of desire where men and women "both can rise" to initiate sexual encounters on the margins of Harlem, their motions parallel, their division of the poem's first ten lines equally reflecting some degree of equality:

In the gutter
Boys who try
Might meet girls
On the fly
As out of the gutter
Girls who will
may meet boys
Copping a thrill
While from the gutter
Both can rise[.]

Hughes also depicts a world where women refuse the sexual politics that holds them as adulterers, such as in "Sister," where the speaker—the brother to an ironically named Marie—finds himself challenged twice for his censure of her conduct with a married man. First, Marie's proxy underscores the precarious economic position of unmarried women:

Did it ever occur to you, son, The reason Marie runs around with trash Is she wants some cash? Then the putative female proxy broadens her critique when the brother stands

unconvinced:

Did it ever occur to you, boy,

That a woman does the best she can?

In the Comment on the Stoop section of the poem, a communal male chorus provides

the last word with its flat reply "So does a man," but such a dull, spiritless rejoinder

cannot counter what Marie's champion has offered. This nameless figure doesn't simply

uphold the claims of this woman, after all—she also undercuts the nameless brother's

masculinity with the cutting forms of address found in "son" and "boy." "Question" [2]

(CP 392) foregrounds another plaintive cry from a female voice such as Marie's, who

might ask such a question from her unprotected position, demanding more than desire

from her latest suitor:

Said the lady, Can you do

What my other man can't do-

That is

Love me, daddy -

And feed me, too?

This particular iteration joins a wider form of female address, where the deployment of

"daddy" elsewhere in the volume marks its central voice as female. Befitting this

centrality, such an articulation recurs throughout—explicitly in "Warning" (CP 393),

"Boogie: 1 a.m." (CP 411), and "Good Morning" (CP 426) and implicitly in "Easy Boogie"

(CP 395), "Nightmare Boogie" (CP 418), and "Dream Boogie: Variation" (CP 425).

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While boogie (the same "boogie-woogie" of the preface) refers both to an amalgam of early jazz and blues that depended on "forceful, repeated bass figuration" (Gammond 1), the rhythmic figuration itself, and songs cast in that style, by the 1950s, boogie had become incorporated into emerging rockabilly and rock and roll while waning in popularity as a distinct style. Hughes attempts to reclaim the blackness of boogie against increasing encroachment from white musical form.

But boogie also drew on the Afro-Cuban rhythms during this period, principally found in New Orleans bluesman Professor Longhair, nee Henry Roseland Byrd, and his much more successful inheritor, Fats Domino (Sublette 544), with additional outlays in more classic blues figures such as Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf and purveyors of nascent R&B such as Ray Charles and Otis Rush. Writing within this context, the musically knowledgeable Hughes—who likely was familiar with all of these figures (Tracy 120)—used boogie to encode another level of blackness in the text.

Though less well known, Longhair incorporated Afro-Cuban elements to such a degree in songs such as "Longhair's Blues Rhumba" (Sublette 544) that his style was popularly known in New Orleans as "rumba-boogie," the category joining the native black folk music to an Afro-Cuban one that arose directly out of the *son* tradition. The "Rhumboogie" was no mere *recherché* dimension of contemporary black music in America either. That particular portmanteau described a style distinct and commercially viable enough to provide the name of two black clubs: the mob-owned "The Rhum Boogie" in Los Angeles, "a black-and-tan joint where [...] many of the great black acts broke in[.] (ntd in Horne 106), and "The Rhumboogie Café" in Chicago, an important but short-lived establishment opened in the early 1940s with Joe Louis as a co-owner

(Semmes 120)—a figure whose mythic stature in the black community Hughes underscores through the form of "god" he assumes in "Joe Louis" [1] (CP 423). It also had provided a hit for the Andrews Sisters for their film debut *Argentine Nights* (1940), the style still retaining an identification with African-American culture amidst white appropriation of the most homogenizing kind:

Rhumboogie, rhumboogie woogie It's Harlem's new creation With a Cuban syncopation It's a killer (Raye and Prince).

In such a cross-cultural context, the boogie woogie of the preface—and the boogie of the poem proper—would have been ripe for the insertion of this intertext, the genre and style having accreted a transnational resonance different from its texturing of his earlier blues poetry. Even the aspects most tied to a jazz and blues tradition in the poem—the self-referentiality of the bebop syllables that form a continual refrain and the call and response of dueling, competing, and collaborative voices—are also salient features of the *son* tradition.

Even bebop—the master musical trope of the volume—is one that benefits from Hughes's investment in *son*. Like boogie that has its blackness reaffirmed through this Afro-Cuban integument, *son* allows a bebop, which had moved uptown and was not especially popular with black audiences in the way that earlier forms of jazz and blues had been, to be positioned in relationship to the music's own Afro-Cuban strain in the collaborations of Dizzy Gillespie and Cuban percussionist Chano Pazo that produced "Mantacea," Charlie Parker and Machito that produced "Mangó Mangüé," and Machito's own Afro-Cuban jazz band, active in New York, all during the mid-1940s.

If Toomer and Walrond dissolved the seemingly discrete social realities of the Global South Atlantic through landscape, Langston Hughes performed the reverse operation, bringing New York to Cuba through a shared cultural heritage in the "Spanish tinge" first identified by Jelly Roll Morton in the early decades of the twentieth century, but which continued well into its mid-century. And just as Morton's Spanish tinge arose from a crosscultural New Orleans operating within a Gulf, so did Hughes's and Toomer's arise from a Southeast operating within the same Gulf, bridging the Americas and the Caribbean.

ELIZABETH BISHOP AND AUDRE LORDE: "DRIVING INTO THE INTERIOR" OF THE HEMISPHERE— FROM NOVA SCOTIA TO TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Since Five Temperaments, the first major scholarly treatment of Elizabeth Bishop, when David Kalstone famously observed how difficult a poet she was to place in literary history, various connections have been traced by subsequent critics: to contemporaries like Robert Lowell and John Berryman; mentors such as Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore; protégés such as James Merrill, May Swenson, and Adrienne Rich. Likewise, being known for an expansive travel itinerary that informs a poetics where "geography is a prime determinant of knowledge" (Cleghorn 4), Bishop's literal placement has become increasingly important to readers, with her real life investments in Florida, Nova Scotia, and Brazil examined for their effects on her work. Concomitant with exploring the relevance of these specific sites to Bishop's poetics, critics have sought to determine her vexed orientation to the idea of any fixed place, fostering a critical lexicon where homeless, alienated, outsider, periphery, and marginal, amongst several other related concepts and cognates, predominate. Such an orientation, if ever stably held, is always precarious, open to continual revision and sometimes lacerating skepticism. As Bishop herself says in the title poem of her 1965 volume "Questions of Travel," "Home / wherever that may be," troubling the same distinctions between "home" and "elsewhere" the volume establishes and itself troubles. Such an orientation of instability is one that, as Bonnie Costello has shown in Questions of Mastery, has its uses: "her active displacements of perspective ... affirm the presence of a creative subject" (Costello 20).

Nowhere can both the importance of place and the uses of its instability be seen as well as in Key West, a region of investment for Bishop second only to Brazil, both sites comprising the "two cities" she so memorably speaks of having lost in "One Art"

and yet whose significance to Bishop's poetics has not been sufficiently explored, much less connected.

Here, to use Barbara Page's formulation, "in the desuetude of [the island], at the geographical periphery of the country, Bishop found a place corresponding to her own disposition for the margins" ("Off-Beat" 197). The marginality Bishop found so congenial in Key West extends beyond narrow autobiography, however. The southernmost point of the United States offers a liminal space where the social reality of difference (racial, sexual, gender) and history obtrude, reorienting our understanding of postwar American poetry that is no more confined to nation than the modernist generation that preceded it.

In other words, the "gradual clarification of her artistic principles" ("Off-Beat" 196) informs an imaginative terrain where questions of the margin and periphery move to the fore. This predilection extends beyond Key West, important though the island may be to twentieth-century geography of American poetry. Dissolving the same national borders and boundaries that modernist forbears Stevens and Crane troubled in peregrinations to Cuba, Bishop "does more" (ntd in Goodridge 148) with the island than what she believed Stevens had done during the 1930s, as she once confessed in her notebooks from the period.

For Bishop, re-mapping the American nation into the American hemisphere involves taking on more of the Global South, decentering the former. Her work extends a loping arc from Nova Scotia to Tierra Del Fuego that is plotted with intervening nodes in Haiti, Aruba, Bermuda, Rio, Ouro Preto, Mexico City, and the Amazon River Basin, tracing intersections and fault lines between these disparate spaces. The "total recall about Nova Scotia" (OA 249) Bishop experienced only when residing in Brazil reflects

her concentric view of the hemisphere, where ostensibly discontinuous spaces blur, overlap, and meld. The critics George Monteiro and Richard Flynn supply a more prosaic rationale for this "total recall" on Bishop's part (security, distance, and a midlife nostalgia), but the connection she drew between Nova Scotia and Brazil—like her other acts of mapping—should instead be read within the liminality of the Global South Atlantic, disrupting these autobiographical terms that space more broadly is circumscribed under in Bishop.

Against this fusion, Bishop foregrounds the violence that informs any map of the world. Her conception of the hemisphere offers no mere instance of happy hybridity. Confronting asymmetrical power relations borne of race and class, the effort to collapse distance often runs aground on insuperable barriers that arise from the smaller confines of subjectivity as much as the larger scale perspectives of history that infuse such perspectives.

In "One Art," if Bishop moves from a geographically specific sense of place ("I lost two cities, lovely ones") to a dream of fairytale imperium ("some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent") that reasserts the privilege of ownership in the face of such a loss. But if she erects a bland, general construction that the hemisphere seems vulnerable to, she does not do so without self-consciousness. In the off-handed articulation of this possession that "some" provides and which proves consistent with the wry self-deprecation of the poem more broadly, she acknowledges that fantasy as a compensatory gesture. Like the others, this "loss" is no "disaster." The monumentality of the view imagined is once more undercut by her final return to a starkly personal loss—a loss, in arising from this continuum, not separate from the larger, world-historical view,

but rather imbricated in it. Life for Bishop, as it was not for Stevens, was an affair of people in places, rather than either people *or* places.

To return to Kalstone's specific argument—that Bishop is hard to place in literary history—Key West provides a fuller placement there, too. The island links her to the preceding modernist generation, and the generation after modernism who reacted with ambivalence to their antecedent. The latter framework joins her to twentieth-century figures such as Audre Lorde and Derek Walcott, who explored the Global South Atlantic with the same ambivalence for modernist poetics.

Bishop requires these acts of placement for a complete understanding of her contribution to twentieth-century poetics, for here, too, the connections that have been drawn—whether to Lowell or Swenson, Merrill or Moore—have been done so largely on the basis of biography. Like the modernist generation, "the poet's poet's poet" of James Merrill's famed ascription remains orphaned from literary history and confined to the ahistorically aesthetic when in fact she stands profoundly imbricated in a social reality contingent on questions of race, gender, and nation. The role translation played during her years in Brazil, in particular, raises important question of cross-cultural influence that deserve greater scrutiny. Bishop's attempt to interpret Brazilian letters and culture for an American audience, through anthologies, contributions to periodicals, and her ill-fated collaboration on a Time-Life project on the country, and Brazil's understanding of Bishop reveal affiliations in literary history shaped by a shared historical context.

On either side of the equator, postwar American poetics negotiated the legacy of modernism at the same time as the United States mounted a "seduction of Brazil" identified by Antonio Pedro Tota. What began during World War II as a charm offensive

by the United States to recruit Brazil for the Allies created a unique relationship that persisted into the postwar era, belonging to a larger hemispheric turn on the part of US foreign policy that mirrors this literary turn to the south.

Entering this textured space meant leaving behind the European tradition that Bishop describes in a Grand Tour with Vassar friends Louise Crane and Margaret Miller in favor of something less abstracted. She writes of one village they are staying in that it was "too PICTURESQUE for much longer than a month. The picturesqueness is just like the water in Salt Lake, you simply can't sink in it, it's so strong (OA 34). When even provincial Europe remains too overdetermined by history and culture, not least of all the passing shadow of a barely concluded war, it is not surprising that her quartet of Paris poems—"Paris, 7 A.M." (Poems 28), "Quai D'Orleans" (Poems 29), "Love Lies Sleeping" (Poems 18)—are some of her most surrealist verse from her poetry of the 1940s from North and South. Even in the most materially grounded of the group ("Paris 7 am"), Bishop's attempt to confront social reality in the same battered metropole that Ted Hughes memorably remembers in the "Paris" of *Birthday Letters* by forcing herself (and the reader) to "Look down into the courtyard," where "All the houses are built that way." Here, the clock literalizes a Time embodying the specter of history, and which "stalls almost frighteningly in its inward-turning manipulation of geometrical figures, of star, rectangle, circle, and square, and in the tangle of its play with metaphors of infinite regress" (Goldensohn 110). Directing the panopticon of Jeremy Bentham's conception is apparently no easier than being placed under its purview. The privileged position produces a vertiginous displacement that is striking even for Bishop.

"Seascape" (Poems 41), Bishop's earliest meditation on the Florida, shows that this space is susceptible to that same miasma of disorientation and abstraction, of becoming, quite literally, too picturesque. In fact, without the historical reality of courtyards to anchor them, the uncultivated Florida stands in a worse position, ripe for projections that arise from European tradition. It is a picture, simply put, painted by an outside hand.

Like the Venus of the Stevensian imaginary, Bishop's early vision stands trapped within the aesthetic, historical, and religious traditions of Renaissance art, and it is an imprisonment largely constructed to Florida's detriment. The ironizing "cartoon," the jaunty and off-hand tone ("with white herons got up as angels"), the qualification the Gothic arches of the mangrove roots receive ("suggestively"), and the "bright green leaves edged neatly with bird-droppings" serve to demonstrate the absurdity of the landscape depicted. "Herons flying high as they want and as far as they want sidewise," are simply too gawky and graceless to resemble the angels compared to, so when the lighthouse finally intrudes—skeletal in "black and white clerical dress"—we learn that "heaven is not like this. / Heaven is not like flying or swimming."

But if this collapse occurs because these features are jarringly grotesque, it might also serve to mock the conventions of Renaissance beauty (form, order, proportion), Bishop preferring the Stevensian faith that "death is the mother of beauty" also set in the shadow of Floridian excess.

Herself a painter who has come to be known as the most painterly of poets, with her precise palette and powers of observation, Bishop hardly disdained visual art, much less tapestries. The form was one was she returned to in "Brazil, January 1, 1502," after all, but as that later poem showed, she knew they could lie: visual art (like all art) was hardly an innocent lens through which to regard and construct the world. Bishop's encounter with Brazil—and the portal of Key West by which she arrived there—shifted her poetics from a visualization of landscape that uneasily recognized the disparity between a New World reality and European tradition to one that directly confronted that disjuncture in terms historical as well as aesthetic. Such travel opened into a Global South Atlantic larger than either site—or indeed any.

THE APPROACH

In "Florida" (Poems 33-34), Bishop's ever accurate eye begins the work of seeing through these same conventions of beauty formalized by what the Spanish named *Pascua Florida* ("flowering Easter") to the harsh historical reality underneath in "brackish water," decrypting the colonial legacy by "the state with the prettiest name," as the opening line mordantly remarks. The topo and zoological view of the Florida coastline resonates with multiform historical pressures.

...The white swamps with skeletons, dotted as if bombarded, with green hummocks like ancient cannon-balls sprouting grass.

does not merely, or perhaps even primarily, refer to the once living, now skeletal oysters depicted in the poem, but also allegorizes the dead US soldiers that forged the American iteration of Florida. During the Second Seminole War, according to historian

John Mahon, "cypress knees, mangrove roots, and sawgrass tortured the foot solider" (Mahon 240) during swamp warfare against the indigenous tribes of the region. By acknowledging this natural fundament, Bishop also excavates the aboriginal presence that emerges later in the central figure of the Indian Princess. That act of historical recovery happens in two ways. The first is through the offices of etymology that Florida's naming shows is uppermost in the poem's mind, mangrove's Spanish-Portuguese origin in "mangue" arising from "a Cariban or Arawakan language" ("mangrove"). The second is through their importance to the Seminoles, who called them "walking trees." Beyond situating the state against the backdrop of US expansionism and European colonialism, this reference to mangrove roots situates Florida in a broader geographical frame, varieties found throughout the Global South Atlantic. Collectively, Africa and the Americas has the largest concentration, containing almost half the world's mangroves.

Later in the poem, the human dimensions of a death displaced to nature emerges in another avatar:

enormous turtles, helpless and mild, die and leave their barnacles shells on the beaches, their large white skulls with round eye-sockets, twice the size of a man's.

Unlike the "tanagers embarrassed by their flashiness" and "pelicans whose delight it is to clown" found in the intervening lines – figures who, as New World cousins of the hoary nightingale with a song less assured but also more jaunty, are principally

ones of art – these turtles emerge as far more fraught examples of personification. With references to human anatomy in addition to qualities of mind, they are more person than trope, revealing the historical humans that have been buried, but not deeply enough, beneath the flowers of paradise. Readers of Bishop have not stinted on exploring the significance of such imagery in the poem, but they have placed it in service of a "life-in-death" (Doreski 20) thematic that elides the political violence at its center.

That breakdown of nature's bounty continues in "the palm trees [that] clatter in the stiff breeze / like the bills of the pelicans." The first is literally discordant in the noise imagined; the second figuratively, Bishop suggesting dismemberment where the songbird's mouth has been divorced from the true source of his art—this "delight to clown." In stripping away the innocence from figuration, Bishop allows history to emerge. Anticipating Derek Walcott's contention that the "Sea is History," it is at the liminal shore where colonial violence becomes most evident, the victims of historical erasure most emergent:

[...] The tropical rain comes down to freshen the tide-looped strings of fading shells:
 Job's Tear, the Chinese Alphabet, the Scarce Junonia, parti-colored pectins and Ladies' Ears, arranged as on a gray rag of rotted calico, the buried Indian Princess's skirt.

With the exception of the Indian Princess, these appear only to be shells place at the center of a peninsular ecosystem, the rain and tides that greet them generating a cycle

of inexorable currents that alternate between "fading" and "freshen[ing]," thereby giving us an orderly world governed by natural time as well as biology, the impressions of nature indelibly stamped in "tide-looped strings."

But what Bishop actually presents, upon further investigation, is a world scored by historical change. These objects she gathered along the shore during evening walks offered more than records of geologic time or artifacts for a naturalist to taxonomize; they were repositories of semantic meaning and human culture. Jani Scandura is indispensable on the histories such names that Bishop committed to memory might have indexed for her:

From the biblical "Job's Tear" of native Arawak who were ravaged in the name of Christian conversion, to the Chinese alphabet of those indentured Caribbean laborers from Asia, to the mulatto parti-colored pectins of Bahamian immigrants and Maroon, to the pioneer women's "gray rug of rotted calico" and the "buried Indian Princess's skirt," Bishop resurrects the multiple forgotten histories of American nation building through found objects and skeletons, the material traces of those who were erased (Scandura 100).

To Scandura's enormously helpful reading of the histories held in these shells, I would add that Bishop gives added force by *dramatizing* the decimation in this allusion to Christian conversation. "Job's Tear" implicates the watery cycle of ostensibly natural tides that has deposited this shell and its companions here in the first place, writing history into landscape. More specifically yet, Job's Tear also recalls the Trail of Tears, the forced migration of several Native American tribes from the Southeast to the prairie, the Seminoles central actors within the group. The pun on tear captures the violence as well as the grief embedded in this reference, acknowledging all native peoples who have been torn from the land no less than the shells from the sea, their bodies *literally*

torn in the wars that Andrew Jackson and Christopher Columbus waged. And if "Job's Tear" reflects the Christian empire that triumphed, "Junonia" identifies the corresponding paganism powerless to resist it, Juno the goddess of war who failed to protect her tribe.

Through such resonances, the shells map a wider and more precise world of Indian devastation than the Princess could perform on her own, situating her North American imprimatur in a transnational frame. The peoples that fall under the purview of such a narrative—Seminole, Maroon, Arawak, Bahamians—compass nearly every part of the Global South Atlantic. As Richard Price has shown, the reach of the maroons, fugitive slaves who built independent communities across the New World, was immense across space and time: "for more than four centuries, such runaways dotted the fringes of plantation America, from Brazil to the southeastern United States, from Peru to the American Southwest" (Price 1). Through such names, Bishop revives these displaced figures of the New World who had been buried, disembodied, and when acknowledged at all, transmuted to myth, monster, or, like the Indian Princess, fairy tale, excavating the material sediment that informs the existence of these "parti-colored pectins" that Scandura identifies as the mulatto population of the West Indies, but which truly stands in for all the peoples of African descent. The pectins not only represent that blending in the aggregate, but in a more local form that holds hope for a sense of community, rather than mere dispersal. Pectin was a gelling agent central to a cigar industry owned and operated by Cubans where racial segregation was almost absent, mirroring a larger racial tolerance on the part of this community.

Against this backdrop, the princess still remains a significant figure on her own terms, and not simply because she embodies the histories of these displaced peoples to an extent that the abstracted pectins, even through the lens of the Cuban context, cannot. Consigned to conflated metonymies of the domestic ("gray rag of rotted calico") and the feminine ("the buried Indian Princess's skirt"), she represents the explicitly gendered nature of a decimation where the histories of these shells, enlisted as mere ornaments to her skirt, arise from another form of desire no less insidious. Like the skirt that metonymically beautifies the literal rape that took place, the shells perform the same office, shells and skirt alike susceptible to Euro-American appropriation: shells as curios (Bishop herself collected them, after all), calico rag suspiciously close to the calico rugs (and prints more broadly) popular with Europeans during the Victorian period. Her connection to calico also brings to the fore both the histories of empire wide and large. The former is owing to the fabric's origin in the caliyans of India, the latter to its role in Manifest Destiny, when "early settlers and homesteaders seldom made a supply list or record of purchases without including this plainly woven fabric" (Mills 7).

Bishop continues to deglamorize the landscape through social reality, completing the transformation from "the state with the prettiest name" to "the careless corrupt state." But whereas earlier in the poem Bishop had looked to the colonial past of the Global South Atlantic, now she turns to the contemporary reality of the history's lived aftermath, in fraught US race relations. "All black specks / too far apart, and ugly whites" adorning this "poorest post-card of itself" emphasize the common burden of poverty both groups shoulder, as well as the divisions borne of Jim Crow that separate them. Whatever heterogeneity obtains, Bishop makes clear that racial restrictions remain

stubbornly operative, whites still "ugly" and the blacks still separate ("too far apart.") To signal that this contemporary reality grows out of the historical past, Bishop has the Indian Princess return with a kind of vengeance, as a way perhaps to reclaim the vanished past:

The alligator, who has five distinct calls: friendliness, love, mating, war, and a warning— whimpers and speaks in the throat of the Indian Princess.

Despite being forced to monstrously ventriloquize the alligator, she has nonetheless become vital in the process, issuing calls of "war, and a warning" under the mantle of this animal subjectivity. More, the juxtaposition bears comparison with another linkage between woman and reptile, namely, Shakespeare's Cleopatra and her totemic crocodile that also emanates, quite literally, from the Nile. That affinity not only works to elevate the Indian Princess, recognizing a tragic stature consistent with how she is represented in the poem, but also suggests that just as Egypt provides a viable alternative to the Rome that ultimately triumphs in Shakespeare's late tragedy, so does the Global South Atlantic to the nation.

If Bishop complicates the purity of the tropics by dredging its historical silt to reveal that no landscape stands innocent of history and culture, she still engages with the question of what constitutes an appropriate poetic voice in relation to European tradition. Extending the argument of "Seascape" further into the Global South Atlantic, Bishop refuses to brook a choice between literary and social history.

The birds central to the poem offer models to emulate in their love of performance and display ("delight it is to clown"), their responsiveness to nature ("who coast for fun on the strong tidal currents"), in their sheer beauty ("on the sand-bars drying their damp gold wings / on sun-lit evenings"), akin to but distinct from their Romantic antecedent, the nightingale—at once more independent of human control, jauntier, and imbricated less in the aural than the visual. These birds also register an anxiety—"unseen hysterical birds who rush up the scale / every time in a tantrum"—that registers ambivalence about their status as transcendent beings. Like so many animals in Bishop, they are all too human. It seems likely, too, that they are aware that this kinship with older, hoarier birds proves one they finally cannot escape, that perhaps even compromises them—hence, their embarrassment and maniacal drive to perform. For all the painterly distinctiveness Bishop imbues them with, they remain "unseen," hopelessly wedded to the musical conceit of song in their drive to "rush up the scale."

Such a fearsome agon is more happily pursued through "The mosquitoes [who] / go hunting to the tune of their ferocious obbligatos" and "fireflies [who] map the heavens in the marsh until the moon rises." Whereas the birds provide native alternatives shot through with ambivalence, these modest creatures comfortably appropriate, rather than uneasily navigate, the aesthetic framework of European tradition.

The Italianate "obbligatos" of the mosquitoes and the fireflies that double as angels return to the Renaissance terms of "Seascape," no less, drawing on their position as lightbearers and heralds of the moon, for the latter, and vessels of song, as the former. Gigantic in everything but size, to quote Stevens from "The Sail of Ulysses," these winged beings remake the equally feared moon of Romantic figuration into an

image "cold white, not bright"—spurning the heavens for the same crypt into which the shells have been deposited, the surface of the celestial body "coarse-meshed" like fishing nets. Through her assimilation of European tradition, Bishop achieves a more radical aim—the convergence of geography and history has a counterpart in one between history and literary history, where politics and aesthetics become one.

In that way, the alligator song of the Indian Princess is emblematic of a voice that gives voice to the lie of this division. While the reptile literally ventriloquizes this indigenous figure, she figuratively returns the favor, his "five distinct calls" contaminated by the human "love and friendliness." Assisted by a larger frame where the poles have been placed continually in flux, disorienting us from any stable position, the binary of nature and culture has been fatally compromised. Throughout the poem, we are dispatched from the subterranean "mangrove roots" to the top of the scale, horizontally from the peninsular coast to "mangrove islands" containing the vertical trace of their earlier roots, from the clouds to the shore, and finally, from the sky, "down, down, down" back to the ground, repetition underscoring our descent.

In the final frame of reference, the interstitial marsh happily combining earth and sea, we may seem to finally arrive at *terra firma*. But even here, we can neither remain below, having risen with the moon; nor escape above, condemned with the alligator to the sludge. Like his cry, and hers, we remain unresolvably poised between the two, the hemisphere unsettling such divisions as unrepentantly as the borders and boundaries, as the gulf of history and its lived aftermath, articulated with the fierce urgency of now.

MAKING LANDFALL

In two poems from what Bishop called her "tript-itch" (qtd in Millier 165), "Jerónimo's House" (Poems 35) and "Cootchie" (Poems 46), along with "Faustina, or Rock Roses" (Poems 60), she endows the shells and specks from "Florida" with a human face, exploring the interlopers at the margins of Key West's social structure. The cigar worker, servant, and nursemaid of each poem stands at the center, at once grounded in the material conditions of the present and dogged in surviving their collective histories. Bishop, simply put, moves beyond the troping of the Global South Atlantic to examine how it is lived on the ground. The world of these figures essentially "opens up"—as Goldensohn remarks of "Jerónimo's House"—"into the Latin American settings that later blossom into the heavy interest in Brazil of *Questions of Travel*" (Goldensohn 99).

The "unpainted board shacks that had been erected in close-packed, identical rows for the workers in the cigar factories" (Travisano 82) that Bishop describes in a letter to Marianne Moore in January 1937 (*OA* 68) are where Jeronimo resides, reflecting a history of displacement for Cubans. Émigrés from Havana arrived in Key West during the Cuban wars of independence in the late nineteenth-century and established one of the most profitable businesses on the island in a cigar industry they owned and operated. "Play[ing] each year in the parade for José Martí"—the leader of Cuban independence whose cause was bankrolled by these same figures—Jerónimo memorializes this wider history.

Dwelling on the "Negro" inhabitants of the nearby houses that made up "Jungle Town," the black district bordering Bishop's boarding house, the same letter indicates

that she likely had in mind the Afro-Cuban population of Key West for Jerónimo as well. Such racial indeterminacy represents a Cuban community in Key West that worried the bright, red lines of Jim Crow by Bahamians as well as Cubans for whom the "color line was flexible and was mostly a matter of social practice" (Kennedy 174).

If Jerónimo embodies the polyglot populace of the Global South Atlantic, he remains an impoverished, subjugated, and even spectral interloper within these outskirts of the United States. His so-called "home"—depicted as a "gray wasps' nest / of chewed up paper / glued with spit"—is one literally held together by body and masticated text, as if one were enough to nourish the other. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, Jerónimo himself appears almost absent from the *miser-en-scene*, defined more by his objects as any fixed sense of personhood. "At night you'd think my house abandoned," the disembodied voice says. That is because—with only an aestheticized debris that culminates in "writing-paper / lines of light / and the voices of / my radio" marking his existence—no real human presence exists. As in many of Bishop's encounters with other people, much less otherness, the poem offers an exploratory act of voyeurism by an outside observer that such a canvas of "writing paper" renders legible. One might read this as facile appropriation, Bishop assuming possession of his house and conflating its social reality to an aesthetic form visible not only in its materials, but in the columns of the poem itself that reproduce the structure.

But given her understanding of the historical erasures that operated in "Florida," Jerónimo's absence might also serve to embed a trace of his own violent past. In its more Anglicized form, Geronimo was the famous Apache general misnamed when American soldiers mistook the Spanish appeals of St Jerome from the Mexican soldiers

they fought alongside as the enemy Indian chief's name--a call that was later used as a battle cry in World War II for parachuting airmen.

At the same time as the name reveals his aboriginal ancestry in North America, forming a ineluctable bond between the modern Caribbean subject who has been marginalized in the United States and the Native American erased from its historical record only to be repurposed as a token of Anglo-American death, it remembers European complicity in that erasure. To inform her figure, Bishop draws on a history of cross-conflict as well as solidarity between the peoples circulating in the Global South Atlantic.

She might also look still further South in the poem, to Jerónimo de Albuquerque—an important figure from the Portuguese colonization of Brazil who appears in Robert Southey's *History of Brazil* (OA 320), a work she especially admired. Underscoring this connection, the original Jerónimo that appeared in the poem's periodical appearance was the same Anglicization in Southey's in chronicle—namely, Jeronymo. Brother-in-law to Duarte Coelho, the Portuguese noble granted the captaincy of Pernambuco in 1534 by the crown for his service in India, this Jerónimo was "prestigious and influential both in Pernambuco and in Portugal" (Castro-Klaren 100). Playing an important role in Lisbon's imperial ambitions in the New World, he links Bishop's iteration to the imperialist as well as the dispossessed. Furthermore, if we consider that the historical Jerónimo intermarried with the daughter of a Tobajara chief, Maria do Espirito Santo, with whom he "sired such a large family of *mamelucos* that he became known as 'the Adam of Pernambuco'" (Bethell 522), allowing Duarte to "build on existing relationships with the Indians living in the region, as well as new ones"

(Metcalf 81) and that Jerónimo's house doubles as a "love-nest" where such unions might have taken place, the picture is complicated still further. This intertext means Jerónimo has, in effect, retrospectively reproduced his own hybrid nature—a *mestizaje* at once Cuban, Afro-Cuban, Afro-Caribbean, Native American, and Portuguese who embodies the confluence of hemispheric crosscurrents carried from the past to the present in Bishop's Global South Atlantic.

While the Jerónimo depicted in Southey's history eventually married a Portuguese woman at the request of the queen, Bishop's version is one of these mamelcuo children who reveals their "marriage of convenience" represents scarcely more than a token gesture, an absent concession to recorded history, a sham. The indeterminate Jerónimo that she has revealed, not the monolithic Portuguese children in Europe, has survived to populate and determine the New World, crossing into the Global North with the intersections of race, culture, and history generated by the Global South held intact. Put another way, what we see in these in intertexts—and through Southey's, in particular—is that Jerónimo was always already hybrid.

The house, too, bears evidence of an equally rich hemispheric history. In the ironically noted "veranda"—ironic on account of the feature's inappropriateness to such a modest domicile—Bishop provides a feature of the plantation as powerfully in evidence in the Antilles as in the Mississippi—if not more so. For as the *OED* notes, etymologically the word "appears to be merely an adoption of Portuguese and older Spanish *varanda* (*baranda*) railing, balustrade, balcony" ("veranda"). Bishop thereby places the house under the twin signs of the Luso- and Hispanophone South. At the same time, the structure retains a more conventionally European connection, the

French *véranda* appearing to have been "adopted, more or less entirely, into English" ("veranda"). Like Jerónimo's fundamental hybridity, these Spanish-Portuguese-French roots give the lie to the myth of purity, whether from the Old or New World. The Global South Atlantic is a mongrel sphere, where the already semi-peripheral Spanish and Portuguese strains of European empire reflect a hemispheric reality that at once inflects, and finds itself inflected by, centrally European partners in the British and the French. Amidst this enlargement of perspective that threatens to swallow up the American South, the "hominy grits" reflects the survival of the local, instantiating the Southern United States and, through its American Indian derivation, the indigenous past of the United States broadly.

Meanwhile, the other objects found within Jerónimo's house—the "French horn" and "Christmas decorations"—reveal that the argument with tradition remains powerfully alive, *materiel* from Europe remade according to native demands. By adopting "an old French horn / repainted with / aluminum paint," Jerónimo's space remakes Europe by appropriating a vision of the continent and its aesthetics more appropriate to the Americas—namely, the French New Orleans where horns played a central role in the musical cultures of both classical and jazz. Aesthetically and culturally, New Orleans provides a useful analogue for Key West, at once polyglot, multiethnic, and Spanish as well as French.

The "Christmas decorations" appear less open to negotiation, representing merely "left-over" forms from the consumer culture of the Global North. Through the Christmas Tree that necessarily forms the centerpiece of such displays, Bishop provides a totem of Victoriana rendered into an aesthetic commodity—one, much like

"the Maple Leaf (forever)" from "First Death in Nova Scotia" (Poems 124)—that recalls a supposedly beneficent British Empire. Amidst such accounterments, Bishop nonetheless creates a less alien space to reveal that even the most resolute imperial objects can be transformed. Her "ferns / planted in sponges" that "adorn" the "veranda / of wooden lace" is a tropical version of the expected Christmas tree, with flora that is equally evergreen, supported by sponges that provide a makeshift stand. Like Hart Crane's own Christmas tree of the tropics, "The Mango Tree," or in a different context, Stevens's "Floral Decorations for Bananas," Bishop forces the Global North to conform to the distinct conditions of the Global South.

Even the impoverished house has been endowed with an aesthetic power at variance with its dim social reality. Despite its febrile, makeshift construction, it is a "fairy palace," a "love nest," a site of painterly color and artful arrangement, populated by a "front room / with red and green"; a "center table / of woven wicker / painted blue / and four blue chairs"; "walls [with] / two palm-leaf fans"—in short a locus of the imagination, and one, moreover, as our investigation of the love nest makes clear, that partakes of the social real. Even the food has such embellishments, the "fried fish / spattered with burning / scarlet sauce" the table holding "four pink tissue- / paper roses." But even more the old French horn, it is "my radio"—with its "voices" "singing flamencos / in between / the lottery numbers"—that represents his greatest aesthetic resource, signaled by the same possessive that attaches Jerónimo to his house and confirmed by the music it makes audible in the poem. This is not simply the music of cultural memory, valuable though that recollection of Martí may be, but of a native aesthetic tradition ("flamenco") and a social reality ("lottery numbers"). In this emblem of modernity, the

two aspects converge, telegraphing a form of loss in the distance that separates the speaker from Cuba, and in the *lectores* – men who recited current newspapers and literature to the workers – whom the device eclipsed (Westfall 66). On the other hand, the radio requires a proximity where Jerónimo could realistically receive broadcasts from Cuba, or perhaps, given the *el Cubano* of Key West, might find such broadcasts within the compass of this American island.

Amidst this transnationalism and hybridity, "Cootchie" provides a useful corrective, revealing how American racial mores still bitterly obtain. In this poem about the black servant of Bishop's first landlord in Key West, a surprisingly fierce critique gives the lie to the tolerance "Jerónimo's House" encodes, speaking frankly about the Jim Crow that determined the woman's death no less than a life spent "eating her dinner off the kitchen sink / while Lula [her employer] ate hers off the kitchen table." "Black into white she went / below the surface of the coral-reef," her corpse confined to the bleaching whiteness of "marl," her history returned to the watery grave of a Middle Passage from which she does not, this time, survive. Nor does her death receive any acknowledgement from the world on the shore. Rendered with a savage irony as "Miss Lula's losses," Cootchie's passing is not an event of which anyone is prepared to "shout and make her understand" the true meaning in the poem, save Bishop herself.

Still, nature has its consolations. Using the horizon from "Seascape," Bishop gives Cootchie's death the import the social structure of white supremacy neglected. The lighthouse "will discover Cootchie's grave / and dismiss all as trivial; the sea, desperate, will proffer wave after wave." Both acts on nature's part revive the old dream of sympathetic identification, where human existence and consciousness matter to

nature, and in this case, do so through the lens of a Middle Passage that has been turned into a regenerative force. Even if the social order has left Cootchie, social reality keeps her firmly within its ken.

That context is even more apparent in the lighthouse. Beyond the symbolic associations, the manmade object of the sea remembers the wrecking industry in Key West – an industry of recovering treasure from shipwrecks which made the island the richest city in the nineteenth-century – to recover the human cargo of such ships that Cootchie embodies, a pharos combing through the more modern forms of circulation that obtain in the Global South Atlantic as well as the older routes of enslavement.

Featuring another servant Bishop knew from her time in Key West, "Faustina, or Rock Roses" (Poems 70-72), provides a kind of companion poem to "Cootchie" and "Jerónimo's House," avenging their cramped positions in the Global South Atlantic. The black nursemaid serving an enfeebled white master challenges the Jim Crow of the former and articulates a fuller subjectivity than the latter. Though not part of Bishop's triptych, the poem was so important to her conception of *A Cold Spring* that she initially planned to entitle the volume *Faustina and Other Poems*.

Where "Cootchie" has been silenced, forced into separate eating quarters, and finally, buried under a sky complicit in the racial hierarchy ("The skies were egg-white for the funeral") that plagued her life, Faustina has a language that subverts the grammar of the master-servant relationship. Her Spanish is what her master beseeches her with, the linguistic register italicized to highlight at once its inassimilable difference and privileged position as the only speech in the poem as well as the stanza:

By and by the whisper

Says, "Faustina, Faustina... "¡Vengo, señora!

"Quickly" is a command, but a disembodied and desperate one. Additionally, the master defers to Faustina in another way, her mistress addressing her first by name and then by honorific. The poem also takes aim at a racial segregation engrained so deep in "Cootchie" as to be reflected in the color scheme. Locating health in the prismatically and culturally dark drink of "conac" that Faustina requests for herself, and illness in objects of whiteness such as "talcum powder," "white disordered sheets," "fine white hair," and perhaps most pertinent to conac, a "farina" that is culturally as well as literally white in its Anglo-American character, "each contributing its / shade of white, confusing / as undazzling," Bishop reverses the color scheme and their associations.

To be sure, poverty informs Faustina's life as much as her companions, but she is unconfined by her position, "complaining of, explaining / the terms of her employment." And even though the poem isn't as centrally about her as the title suggests, her presence rather belated in the poem, it is not really interested in her employer either. As Bonnie Costello notes, "the poem barely acknowledges the humanity of the old woman, focusing instead on human surfaces and the coverings of flesh: white hair, undershirt, and fan." With subterfuges such as "the cans of 'cream," the gown with the undershirt, the crooked towel covered table" that fail to conceal the pall of the woman's illness, "it is not nakedness but its opposite disguise, which is embarrassing here" (Costello 70). For all her delayed emergence, "Faustina is strangely at home" (Costello 71), uncovering the death hidden in this bedchamber by becoming transformed into its herald:

She bends above the other.
Her sinister kind face
Presents a cruel black
Coincident conundrum
Oh, is it

Freedom at last, a lifelong dream of time and silence, dream of protection and rest? Or is it the very worst The unimaginable nightmare That never before dared last More than a second?

Aside from emblematizing the grave in her "sinister kind face [that] / presents a cruel black / coincident conundrum" that allows her, as Costello notes, "a moment of mastery over her supposed mistress," she also offers a racial nightmare. Like Melville's Benito Cereno that Costello also identifies in this moment (Costello 71), a tale of a slave's assumption of power over a captain that we know was important to Bishop, Faustina portends the threat of revolt continually feared by the white imaginary. Indeed, if we consider the mistress's abjection and Faustina's grousing, the poem perhaps offers a live if indiscreet suggestion in its latent menace that such medicine—reflected in vague creams and powders—are actually poisons that trade on the association between the Caribbean and black magic.

At the same time as Faustina helps her fellow travelers challenge the monoculture, national boundaries, and racial hierarchies of the United States, bringing to bear their discomfiting elisions and occluded histories on the resistant mainland, she also poses a threat to Bishop's very capacity to speak either for, or through, these subjects. The visitor to the sickbed scene never becomes a real participant, much less

an interlocutor. Someone who merely "sits and watches," her "embarras[ment]" becomes so profound, she "awkwardly proffers her bunch / of rust-perforated roses" at the finale of the poem when the black visage becomes inescapable. "The acuteness of the question"—having been rendered into a "snake-tongue flickering"—unleashes enough menace that the "problems becoming helplessly proliferative," engulfing this observer, making them "ours." "The discomfort and anxiety in this scene" finds a formal analogue, too, "in the tense trimeter stanzas, with an indrawn shuddering dimeter" (Costello 71). While Bishop exists at another remove, the fact the unnamed figure supplies her with a proxy only compounds such tensions, the first person perspective that was part of the original draft disguised as a third person one in fear of self-disclosure. What this circumspection on Bishop's part shows is that—despite crying out helplessly against Cootchie's plight and exposing the pressures of social reality that determine both hers and Jerónimo's existence—she doesn't pretend the easy consolation of sympathy.

Bishop cannot see her subjects, nor can they see her, and she knows it. To adapt Randall Jarrell's famous praise—where he affirms that "all her poems have written underneath: I have seen it"—she cannot see *them*, only the pressures of race, class, and history that have been brought to bear upon their bodies in the Global South Atlantic. Not to put too fine a point on it, seeing Key West whole means acknowledging what—as a privileged white observer—cannot be seen.

BONE KEY, or KEY OF BONE

Still, if the historical shadow of Bishop's Global South Atlantic casts a long pall on such voiceless subjects, in her Key West fragments published in "Edgar Allan Poe & the Juke-Box," the denizens of the region have been placed in a literal graveyard, a dismembered space haunted by their evacuated human presence. Even outside of the actual cemeteries Bishop imagines in the sequence, the phantasmal looms large: in dark honkey tonks, deserts, gritty playgrounds, and disconsolate porches that thread the cityscape. In "The New Elizabeth Bishop," a recent collection of essays on new and salutary theoretical approaches to her work, leading critics of the poet have reconsidered the canonicity of pieces that were greeted with considerable controversy upon publication for their unfinished nature and Bishop's legendary scrupulousness, Helen Vendler famously remarking that the volume should be titled, "Repudiated Poems" ("The Art of Losing" 33). The connection of the Key West fragments, in particular, to the Global South Atlantic has not yet been considered, however, and this is a mistake.

For these poems that comprise the Bone Key sequence are probably the least fragmentary of those gathered in the volume. Bishop intended to include them in her second collection, as we know from a letter to Houghton Mifflin in 1953 (ntd in EAP xiv). "The Street by the Cemetery" was even submitted to *The New Yorker* (EB&NY 7) for consideration, Bishop loath to have anything considered (even by an organ so friendly) that didn't meet her rigorous and exacting standards. Second, precisely to the extent that these poems are unfinished, they become uniquely able to reflect the fragmentary nature we have already seen in a Jerónimo and Faustina represented more through an object field than in terms of any fully formed consciousness.

In "The Street by the Cemetery" (EAP43), the most finished of the sequence, the death and violence informing the Global South Atlantic take shape in an apparently genteel Southern ease shaken by convulsions of its postbellum order. "The people on the little verandahs" become "passengers on a ship-board," allegorizing the transformation from a diminished slave past where bygone masters have become poor whites, to an early twentieth-century reality, where they have regained their footing, now passengers on a vessel resembling a luxury steamship such as the Titanic or Lusitania. But if their fortunes have been restored, all is hardly stable. The Titanic sunk, after all; German U-boats downed the Lusitania. In Bishop's poem, such upheaval becomes neither a function of world war nor accident. In having "Steerage passengers given deck chairs," Bishop has marginal peoples subvert the dominant social order.

The poem suggests that, after the Civil War, liberated slaves become neither pioneers of Reconstruction nor Haitian revolutionaries, nor do defeated whites become noble champions of a Lost South. As we saw in "Florida," they have become merely "poor whites and black specks." As in that poem, which juxtaposes an admiring if ambivalent aerial view of the state's landscape with the paltry human presence below, the contrast between the gigantism of the steamship and the obvious poverty of the subjects on the street serve to cruelly ironize human fate and striving. Imprisoned thus, such people find themselves unable to respond ("with nothing much to say"), or even react ("hypnotized they sit") to their circumstances. In the face of a history that overwhelms them no less than the sea, the human has been silenced, rendered passive and deprived of subjectivity. They are figuratively connected to death through such stasis as much as they are literally implicated in it by their adjacency to the cemetery.

The verandahs only serve to underscore the Middle Passage the ship by itself embodies. In Paul Gilroy's account of the Black Atlantic, the slaveship is the central trope, "focus[ing] attention on the Middle Passage, on the various projects for redemptive return to an African homeland, on the circulation of ideas and activists as well as the movement of key cultural and political artifacts: tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs," and embodying "a living, microcultural, micro-political system in motion" (Gilroy 4). Bishop's steamship operates in an analogous way, revealing a transatlantic machinery of cross-class and racial conflict and circulation that extends to the Southern hemisphere.

It also shares a history with Gilroy's cartography. A captain's report from the end of the nineteenth-century described Havana as "only a few days sail from the Atlantic Ports of the U.S. and only two and a half days steaming from New Orleans" (ntd in Guterl 26), placing the two Southern cities of the Gulf Region the company of their North Atlantic neighbor. Havana was second only to New York in importance as a port and New Orleans was no insignificant node on trade routes either, enjoying "connections to New York, Boston, Havana, Vera Cruz, and Liverpool,"(Guterl 22); Bishop's Key West that was always already Cuban facilitates transnational circulation between North and South. If Anthony Trollope, the Victorian novelist who would prove important for Bishop's conception of 50's America in "From Trollope's Journal," was correct to surmise that "Havana will be someday as American as New Orleans" (Trollope), Bishop suggests that these Atlantic American ports—Key West, New York and New Orleans—had always been as Cuban as Havana.

As historically inflected as the verandah and ship render the site of Bone Key, they also provide a site of aesthetics, working with European tradition where the French lineage of American poetics is re-imagined. The world viewed from this vantage point—with its "oleanders," "moons," "white blossoms," and "pieces of paper"—is French symbolism rendered through the lens of Southern Gothic, where anthromorphization ("graveyard paling"), metaphor ("moon goes sailing") and simile ("white blossoms stir / like pieces of paper") of an especially self-reflexive kind magnify Bishop's deep aestheticization of the cityscape according to these poetic vocabularies. The sickliness ("paling"), grime ("dirty harbor"), and finally, the *fleurs du mal* themselves ("long row of oleanders"), oleanders known for being poisonous, reflect the former. Meanwhile, the larger context of desolation and decay they instantiate is consistent with a genre where "feelings of degeneracy abound, society is infested with psychic and social decay, and coloured with the heightened hues of putrescence" (ntd in Flora 316).

Bishop creates a space that draws on both European tradition and US regionalism, revealing their mutual implication in the Global South Atlantic. By evoking the Gothic, in particular, Bishop foregrounds the New World reality of a genre itself derived from European tradition. Moreover, this genre is one not only defined by Anglo-American figures of the South like William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor, but ones with expressly transnational aims, such as Zora Neale Hurston, George Washington Cable, Mark Twain, Lafcadio Hearn, Edgar Allan Poe, and even the Herman Melville of Benito Cereno—figures who imaginatively and in some cases literally spent time in the Caribbean. In a similar way, the juxtaposition of American Gothic with French Symbolism allows Bishop to mine even French Symbolism for its own New World

reality. By placing the "sailing moon" that recalls the ship from "Le Voyage" and "Un Voyage à Cythère" in orbit around the Caribbean Bone Key, she slyly acknowledges Baudelaire's investments in Reunion, Mauritius, and Jeanne Duval, his Haitian Creole Muse—all aspects of his poetics that have long been neglected by critics of Symbolism—to reveal the racialized nature of his investments.

Although the French Symbolist never traveled to the Global South Atlantic, much less wrote about it, Bishop considered him a figure appropriate to the tropics. In "The Bight," she muses that "if one were Baudelaire / one could probably hear [the tides of Key West] turning to marimba music." If Baudelaire was himself not interested in this space, Bishop understood only too well that the region was interested in him. To Latin America, no less than the modernists who read their Symonds, nineteenth-century French poetics was deeply influential. In Bishop's view, this commitment was held even to a fault, the poet sharing the consensus of North American writers that the region was "stuck at Valery" (WIA 247).

In "Edgar Allan Poe & The Juke-Box," a poem set amongst the seedy streets of Key West and inside their dance halls evocative of New York, Bishop extends this argument with tradition, moving beyond the mutual implication to a mastery exercised on the part of the New World. By focusing on the figure of American Gothic lionized by the Symbolistes, Bishop reverses the relationship between the French center and American periphery, forging in Poe an independent agent who reshapes the world of Bone Key to meet the demands of the Global South Atlantic. Thus, the lingering Symbolist fragrance arising from "cavities in our waning moon" dissolve into images that owe little, if anything, to French poetics—"bottles and blue lights / and silvered coconuts

and conches." From death's null monochrome to a variegated color scheme, from an unearthly nature to one that is grounded in the tropics of Key West ("coconuts" and "conches"), from a field of abstraction, such as we saw in the "The Street by the Cemetery," to one of modernity—where bottles and blue lights belong to the poem's wider social context—Bishop has placed American poetics and life at the center. Indeed, she renders the two nearly indivisible, wedding said poetics to social reality in her most direct way by exploring racial identity and cultural transmission through the aesthetic forms depicted in the poem. The "Starlight and La Conga," popular dance halls in New York sit comfortably aside the shabby more anonymous dives of Key West ("all the dance-halls in the block of honkey-tonks), revealing a shared geography in the Americas in which La Conga has sister sites in Cuba and Miami Beach, its New York version a derivation of the Havana original. The shared geography also reflects divisions in race and class reminiscent of those seen in the Florida triptych, here institutionalized in social structures. De rigueur for the period, La Conga and Starlight featured performers racially different from their moneyed patrons (Cuban immigrants and black jazz musicians respectively), Bishop gesturing toward hybridity at the same time as she acknowledges the forces that foreclose it.

But if such ethnically different music promises a transnational geography that cannot be finally fulfilled, instead confined to darker precincts, the juke-box provides a reminder that these vernacular forms will be transmitted throughout the United States and the Global South Atlantic regardless. In this way, Bishop places marginalized aesthetic forms at the center, too, drawing on the well-known lineage between music and poetry. This casting of jazz and conga as the source of poetry happens in the poem

not only by implication, but explicitly. "The burning box" of the jukebox which "can keep the measure / strict, always, and the down-beat" connects rhythm and meter, on the one hand, while the assertion "Poe said that poetry was *exact*," on the other, links "strict" music to a poetics on his part that is equally "exact."

Bishop also explores sexuality here to a degree that she does in no other poem of Florida, anticipating deeper investments in sexual difference and gender that emerge in Brazil. What contributes to the seediness of the tableau, as Marilyn May Lombardi notes, are the "groping hands"—"the hands [which] fall on one another" to imagine casual encounters sufficiently furtive and darkly rendered to warrant consideration within the context of Bishop's own lesbianism. Her attitude, then, appears at least somewhat clear. The narcotic effect of poetry versus alcohol Lombardi locates in the poem renders this already "helpless earthward fall of love" as a bleak, desperate groping automated by the jukebox that implicates the aesthetic and in effect commodifies desire. But it is depicted nonetheless, and for Bishop, at least, with a rare, unblushing candor. The "fall of love" continues, after all, the idiomatic romantic sense of "falling in love" shirked in favor of the less genteel desire "descending from the head and eye / Down to the hands, and heart, and down." What makes this descent possible is the epistemology of the closet—to borrow Eve Sedgwick's phrase—provided by the cover of darkness in Bishop's Bone Key, the fall into love rendered as a fall into darkness also signifying, of course, the Fall. But even the darkness, however guilty in the emblematic loss of sexual innocence, reveals more than obscures.

During the fraught moment in the poem where its status as draft proves most significant, Bishop has the hands "fall on one another / [down] darker darkness under

tablecloths and all descends, / descends, falls, —" The bracketed down, the repetition and alliteration, the superlative of "all," the intensifying "darker" all lay the groundwork for that irruptive dash that emerges because Bishop cannot contemplate the tumult of eroticism such precincts have unleashed at the same time as the punctuating break ushers in the "earthward fall of love" that is only, as we have already seen, superficially discreet. She offers a poetic formulation redolent of Robert Frost's "To Earthward" to defuse the bare reality of what had been developing, stepping outside the world of forbidden sexual desire as well as vernacular form into a more recognizably poetic diction, but finds herself circumvented by the body that finally appears in full, armed with much of the same stuttering repetition from the earlier fall. The hands and throats were suggestive enough—central conduits in the ministrations of sex—but in plunging further down, the die has been irrevocably cast, Bishop perhaps taking a cue from a Frost who himself twinned doom with desire when thinking earthward.

In the poems and fragments of Florida and Key West, Bishop's hybrid subjects, non-normative sexual identities, and transnational histories, reflect a space at once global and local, imbricated in the social real and engaged with question of poetic inheritance, these investments on her part becoming invariably convergent. Bishop's Global South Atlantic—replete with history, difference, and boundary breaking—began at the peninsular tip of the United States that later in life she was quick to remind her students at Harvard was closer to Havana than Miami, but which extended much further. The same hemispheric geography that defined Bishop's Florida shaped her conception of the Brazil where she spent nearly two decades, because, even before arriving, she had in some sense already made landfall. Bishop even acknowledged this

sense of return when she depicted a scene of arrival in Petropolis whose "dream-combination of plant & animal life" ultimately recalled "all the Key West flowers I know & Northern apples and pears as well" (OA 236), North and South soldered together through the nodal point of Key West.

BRAZIL

Brazil has long been acknowledged as central to Bishop's poetics. The unplanned *durée* of fifteen years in the country, beginning when her cruise steamer docked in Santos and a cashew allergy detained her in the care of Lota De Mercedo Soares, the scion of a prominent Brazilian family who became her partner, produced poems about various subjects and locales in the country that also, unexpectedly, unlocked a long submerged Nova Scotia childhood and the happiest time in Bishop's life. More recently, critics have historicized this fertile period of her career, moving beyond the earlier, more biographically centered readings to think about how Brazil as such, rather than its metaphoricity, functioned in her poetry, with George Monteiro, Barbara Page and Carmen L. Olivera, Bethany Hicock, and Kim Fortuyn, exploring Bishop's complex interactions with Lusophone culture and literature—a country, even within the Latin America South, considered isolated from broader cultural and historical currents.

Fearful of being regarded as merely picturesque, ambivalent about Brazilian literature, limited in her facility with Portuguese, even well into her residence there, Bishop was committed to entering into imaginative sympathy with the nation's indigent

and honoring its folk forms and yet felt that her poetic efforts in service of those aims often fell short. Many critics have come to feel that Bishop's South "not only inspired but also troubled her art" ("Home" 118). Marked by projects that dissatisfied, such as a *Time Life* book, or were discarded, abandoned within her notebooks, Brazil often confounded any attempt to address its difference in spite of even those poems and prose works that did meet Bishop's exacting standards. Although I am not suggesting she performed a seamless act of cultural translation and interpretation, what has been in large part overlooked about this difficulty is that it was not only productive—a point Page makes in the same essay—but more important, difficulty was written into her aesthetic aims and objectives from the start.

The orientation of self-consciousness Bishop deepened in Key West rendered her equally circumspect about how well the racially, culturally, and linguistically other subjects could be known, or if indeed they could be known at all. But her reservations owed less to any presumption of an inherent opacity on the part of the Other than the self-acknowledged blind spots of the Bishopian speaker. Preparing to leave a Brazil Bishop increasingly absented herself from for teaching stints in the United States, which had become a site of loss when her increasingly fractious relationship with Lota ended in her partner's death; she wrote a letter to Lowell expressing a wish to write a "Goodbye to Brazil"—"sort of combination of [Stevens's] to Key West and Auden's to Ischia" (WIA). Although the poem was never written, the rendering of these sites in Stevens and Auden that proved as transformative to their poetics as Brazil was to Bishop's helpfully distill what she developed there.

In both Stevens's and Auden's rhapsode, "Farewell to Florida" and "To Ischia," respectively, we see an erotic tumult of "shining earth" and a "ground that bound me round" which emerges into full force in Bishop's Brazil. Known as a gay resort in the 1940s, Auden's Ischia also embodies the non-normative sexuality that comes increasingly to the fore during this phase of Bishop's career. Ischia versus Florida also reflects the dialectic between the Americas and Europe relevant to Bishop's conception of this relationship between the Old and New World, the expected binary troubled in these cities' shared status as sites of desire. Like Auden's Europe that belongs to an American Mediterranean, Bishop's Brazil remakes Europe in the New World's image.

At the same time as these poems help show how deeply Bishop imbricated herself in the currents of the Global South Atlantic, references to the North in each—Stevens throughout, in his "world of men," Auden, in a "master who sighs for a Brooklyn / where shirts are silk and pants are new"—reflect a competing Global North perspective on Bishop's part no less dogged. Likewise complicating this vision of fluid transnational circulation, Stevens's poem promises bifurcation as much as synthesis, the conflict between North and South part of a lifelong agon that Bishop extends to conflicts within her own "United States of Brazil," as well as without. These poems Bishop had in mind when reflecting on Brazil crystalize the exigencies of sexual desire and identity, the blurring of broad scale cultural, geographical, and aesthetic boundaries, and intimate the barriers to such blurring, that she found there. However attuned to the efforts of these predecessors to map the Global South Atlantic, Bishop went further, making investments in class, race, and gender that neither of these poems really occupied

themselves with. She found in these vectors of identity more divisions that richly texture a rendering of what transpires in the Global South Atlantic.

Even Bishop's early days in Brazil witnessed her venturing into the terrain of gender and sexuality. In two poems from her 1955 volume, A Cold Spring—"Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore" and "The Shampoo"—Bishop addresses the two most important women in her life, her poetic mentor Moore, and her partner, Soares. In "Invitation," a encomium to Moore written for a special issue of the Quarterly Review of Literature to commemorate the poet's sixtieth birthday, Bishop imagines a female poetic lineage as a counterweight to a literary tradition that is not only overwhelmingly male, but to a modernist and postwar poetics that regarded its thematic concerns as masculine, with investments in history and system-building belonging to the world of men. Moreover, Bishop accomplishes this revision through a South American lens, Pablo Neruda's "Alberto Rojas Jimenez Viene Volando" a source for the poem. Neruda elegizing Jimenez, the source poem itself provides an account of male poetic inheritance. By drawing on Neruda's poem, Bishop also cross-fertilizes the traditions of the Americas, creating at once a feminist and hemispheric lineage whereby Bishop, Moore, Neruda, and Jimenez all exist in conversation. She looks across time as well as space, however, implicating some of the male forbears that have elided the kind of female tradition she wishes to construct, so as not to compound the omission.

Through the crossings imagined in the poem, Bishop evokes Walt Whitman and Hart Crane, figures with their own imbrication in the Global South Atlantic. Whitman was a seminal figure in the trans-American consciousness of nineteenth-century poetics informed by Rubén Darío and particularly José Martí, the latter of whom had a parallel

career as a journalist and addressed his North American counterpart as a fellow traveler—and no less a touchstone in the twentieth-century. Of all the figures from the American poetic tradition, Whitman meant the most to poets in Latin America. Neruda himself summarized the consensus view: "I, a poet who writes in Spanish, learned more from Walt Whitman than from Cervantes" (ntd in Zamora 214).

That reoriented genealogy, developed within the context of Bishop's apprenticeship to Moore, makes the Global South Atlantic depicted here revisionary in terms of gender as well as national boundaries, adding women to an American hemisphere long noted for chauvinism on both sides. At the level of structure, "in what resembles the classical poet's traditional invocation of the muse" (Gilbert 211), Bishop pursues a more radical end respecting gender, appropriating the long assumed prerogative of the male poet to challenge both who can summon and be summoned for the purposes of being inspirited.

While "Invitation" anticipates the gendered dimensions of Brazil through the Chilean Neruda, the final poem from "A Cold Spring," "The Shampoo," anticipates its erotic energies. Also written in frank admiration of a woman, Bishop's partner Lota Mercedes Soares, "The Shampoo" represents a romantic relationship between Bishop and Lota, albeit obliquely. This desire was not totally absent from "Invitation" either. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar helpfully note that "the consummation Bishop devoutly wishes to achieve in her confrontation with [Moore] seems erotic [and] apocalyptic" (Gilbert 211).

Nor is desire totally present in "The Shampoo." The addressee is never identified as female and the speaker's tone seems more "nurturant than amatory" (Goldensohn

136). But in the deep and persistent tenderness, the total intimacy, and a hair washing that recalls the same-sex caretaking of "Faustina" and "Cootchie," Bishop provides sufficient grounds for inference. She did not elsewhere hide the subject, after all, writing to May Swenson about Lota's role as the impetus, and contemporary readers divined the omission well enough. The erasure still visible, *The New Yorker* and *Poetry* each rejected the poem, Moore maintained her famed silence, and many of her friends whom Bishop showed the poem to studiously ignored it, with the exception of perhaps Lowell, prompting her to wonder about its "decency" in the same letter to Swenson.

As in the Bone Key sequence, desire enters, but in Brazil Bishop's interest in the subject has become more sustained, more central to how she conceives of what identities might be formed in the Global South Atlantic. One need look no further for confirmation than the epigraph from *Questions of Travel*. To accompany the dedication of the volume to Lota ("FOR LOTA DE MACEDO SOARES"), Bishop quotes the final lines of a love sonnet from Luís de Camões, the revered Portuguese poet of the Renaissance who exerted influence well into the nineteenth-century, which reads as follows in English:

Because it brings me such great bliss giving you what I have and what I may, The more I give you, the more I owe you (trans "Presence" 105).

The same-sex eroticism Bishop employs Camoes to help convey, a desire marked by abundance and self-satisfaction as much as chaste devotion, informs such poems as "Song for the Rainy Season" and "Electrical Storm." These depict bedroom scenes

where sexual consummation—sublimated to electricity and precipitation—stands in relation to the world outside their bed, supplementing and complementing that exterior environment, respectively.

Angus Cleghorn finds the consummation offered in the lightning of the "Electrical Storm" ultimately abortive, antagonized by the atmosphere into which it enters. He is correct to observe that "while the electrical storm is substantial, the poem narrates it after the fact" (Cleghorn 75), but it seems mistaken on his part to argue that speaker's pejorative rendering of this power aligns with the poem's to render the storm a failure. With the repeated onomatopoeia of "cra-aack" and "Crack" and the "One pink flash"—the latter armed with its own line and a central position that bisects the first strophe—providing the most vital images in the poem, the electricity spites the world, rather than the reverse, as Cleghorn suggests.

For despite the poem entering after the electrical storm has passed (and the event has not entirely departed, having left the aftereffect of its sound), the natural phenomenon has left a dull sky ("Dawn is an unsympathetic yellow"), sterile clouds ("hail, the biggest size of artificial pearls" that is "dead-white, wax-white, cold-"), and a broken home ("wiring fused / no lights / a smell of saltpetre, / and the telephone dead") in its wake. Embodied in this outlaw force, ungovernable desire has sterilized the traditional structures of order. The regenerative dawn central to poetic tradition can no longer perform any such effect, robbed of the power to provide sympathetic identification. Neither can the more closely related natural element of hail provide anything save an artifice equally inert, the precipitation having become "pearls / dead white, wax-white, cold."

Bishop subjects the hail as pearls to one more transformation to reveal their lifelessness that the lightning has laid bare. They become mere "party ... favors" for "diplomats wives," the objects thereby embodying—both in themselves (as jewelry) and in the "dead" eyes they evoke—women who find themselves equally artificial and possibly sterile as these items they keep and instantiate, women without any autonomy, sexual or otherwise, that might facilitate an escape from the social status confining them to their husbands. Not only has art and nature been made spectral in this unholy mixture of nature and culture, but also the social order and the human life within its compass. By having the "wiring fused," the lightning levels perhaps its closest rival, the human artifice of modernity that abrogates to itself the same power. Mercilessly cutting telegraphic lines ("the telephone dead") as well as electrical ones, the poem reminds us, aided by the premodern saltpetre once used for preservatives and gunpowder, that all inventions can finally be trounced.

It is no wonder Tobias, the cat, "stayed in the warm sheets" or that the "Lent trees," abstainers of desire, subvert their own nature to offer some of the most vital images in the poem—the imagistic "petals / wet, stuck, purple, among the dead-eye pearls" that recall Pound's modernist touchstone, "In the Station at the Metro." The same-sex eros this poem is written in the shadow of is the only force that perseveres, and preserves.

"Song for the Rainy Season"—whose placement as the subsequent poem reinforces the dialogue its similar setting to "Electrical Storm" already suggests—reimagines a world entirely in sync with such secret desire, inside and outside steamily

interfused. At the outset of the poem, the house is "hidden, oh hidden / in the high fog," but by the fourth stanza has become an "open house / to the white dew."

Bishop emphasizes the transformation from enclosure to openness in the syntactic and syllabic parallelism of the two phrases ("hidden, oh hidden" and "house, open house"). The house deferred at the start of the poem—appearing only until the third line—has now been mentioned at once, and in the context of an openness the ecstatic "oh" has surely anticipated. Likewise, whereas once the "house we live in" seemed almost trapped "beneath the magnetic rock," Bishop has the fog later "holding them both / house and rock, in a private cloud," preserving the privacy of a secret desire and still insisting on its imbrication in the natural world.

Goldensohn's warning in her investigation of race, sex, and gender in Bishop's work bears repeating: "In Bishop's poems the only references to homosexuality, whether hers or anyone's else, are quite oblique or allegorical in nature" ("Body" 73). So, too, is the volume's quotation from Camoes that frames and to some degree makes legible these moments of desire. Already foreign to her American readership, it is left untranslated. Even when referring to the allusion in private, Bishop downplayed its significance in a letter to friends, apologizing that "it doesn't sound quite as corny in Portugese [sic] as it will to you, when you get it translated." (ntd in Monteiro 13). What is not oblique is "It's marvellous to wake up together..." however. The mid 1940s poem—written in Key West during the fading days of her relationship with Marjorie Stevens, discovered in Brazil by Goldensohn in the famous Nemer notebooks, and never published in Bishop's lifetime-is Bishop's strongest statement of the desire that obtains

in the Global South Atlantic, literally anticipating the Brazilian context in its archival discovery, and more important, in its setting of another electrical storm.

The central project of Bishop's Brazil in *Questions of Travel* involves "driving to the interior," as she concludes "Arrival at Santos" (Poems 87-88), Brazil providing a lens that extends her exploration of the Global South Atlantic to subjectivity writ large, as well as these constituent aspects of identity. Perhaps inevitably, this involves exploring the "interior" of selfhood, an old story for which Conrad provided the first modernist statement. With characteristic irony, Bishop guards against the risk of lapsing into the same colonial phantasmagoria for which Conrad himself has stood accused, instead critiquing the privileged Western perspective that enters the tropics.

When Bishop trains her eye on the horizon of Santos to unleash her celebrated powers of observation, precisely identifying all the features that come into view as she makes landfall—the church, the warehouses, and the palms—she roundly undercuts the gesture. In a series of misleading deictics that refer less to the landscape than her apperception of it, Bishop offers the following crabbed view:

Here, after a meager diet of horizon, is some scenery: Impractically shaped and—who knows?—self-pitying mountains,
Sad and harsh beneath their frivolous greenery.

She is not criticizing the landscape, but rather the expectations of the speaker, a fact she makes clear when she asks later in the poem:

Oh, tourist,

Is this how this country is going to answer you

And your immodest demands for a different world, And a better life, and complete comprehension Of both at last, and immediately, After eighteen days of suspension. These unrealistic demands are no less prevalent when Bishop travels further inward in "Questions of Travel" (91), her observations devolving into full complaints: "too many waterfalls," "crowded streams / [that] hurry too rapidly," "so many clouds." Nor, however, is the attempt to understanding absent from the poem either, her irony paradoxically deepening a metaphysical speculation that complicates, to a degree said irony did not, the legitimacy of her project. She questions the ethics ("is it right to be watching strangers in a play?"); the use-value ("What childishness is it that [...] we are determine to rush / to see the sun the other way around."); and the very possibility ("must we dream our dreams / and have them, too?") of the enlightenment sought in the voyage inward, finally leading her to wonder, in the often quoted end, "should we have stayed at home, wherever that may be."

Despite this ambivalence that provides a kind of disclaimer to the volume's mission of understanding, Bishop is committed to mapping a Brazil where the impressions of history and contemporary reality operative in the Global South Atlantic obtrude, whatever mistakes might be made. Even "frivolous," the descriptor that redounds most pejoratively to the speaker's authority in "Arrival in Santos," belongs to such an aim. From the Latinate *friare*, meaning "to rub away, or crumble," the term evokes a landscape familiar to us from Key West in which histories and material conditions have been rubbed away and crumbled only to be deposited in the sediment that has remained. One layer of such sediment can be found in a sense of "meager" belonging to mineral classification. Referring to harsh and dry minerals, such as clay and standstone, the term evokes a Brazil rich in mineral deposits—if not in meager

ones, then certainly those that are "friable" ("frivolous"). Sharing the same etymology as frivolous and holding purchase on mineralogy, friable refers to material that can be reduced by pressure and friction: that can, simply put, be rendered into powder ("friable"). "fr The "Feeble pink, or blue" evoke the rose quartz and cobalt classified in this way.

Even Bishop's surprise at finding a modern state in Santos—complete with a flag and currency—reflects less condescension on the poet's part than an accurate acknowledgment of a world emerging into modernity. As Robert Levine, in his history of the nation, notes:

By the 1950s, Brazil's government had bureaucratized at the national, state, and local levels to a degree that would have been unheard of a generation earlier. United States air bases built for hemispheric defense during World War II had become the basis for a modern civilian aviation industry, compensating for the nation's lack of railroad tracks and paved highways. Brasilia, the new national capital carved out of the forests of central Brazil, rose out of nothing as the result of a massive airlift that flew in thousands of tons of cement, steel, and supplies. (Levine 121)

Along with the currency, postage stamps, soap, and automobile depicted in the poem, "the twenty-six freighters / waiting to be loaded with green coffee beans" reflect this larger backdrop of global trade that defines midcentury Brazil. Like the automobile that transports Bishop to the interior, these freighters and the ship of Bishop's conveyance telegraph a modernity where tourism and trade have converged to reveal shared economies of scale, tourism depicted as equivalent to the circulation of the nation's staple crop.

Meanwhile, the cruise ship recalls the steam ship from "Edgar Allan Poe & the Juke-Box" to reveal an undercurrent of potential social discord. On the surface, the

middle-class luxury imagined here is relatively benign, transporting not only Bishop but her traveling companion, Mrs. Breen. From Glens Falls, New York—the upstate town deemed "Hometown USA" by *Look* magazine in 1944, for showing "what the towns back home were doing for the war effort" (ntd in Bayle 7) —this "retired police lieutenant ... / with beautiful bright blue eyes and a kind expression" represents secure middle-American values in the midst of alien tropics. Yet she is herself alien, "six feet tall" and member to a male profession. Thus, if luxury descends into violence in "Street by the Cemetery" on account of class tensions that are not operative here, this poem is nevertheless not without its own shadow of the same:

Please, boy, do be more careful with that boat hook! Watch out! Oh! It has caught Miss Breen's

Skirt! There!

Although providing a comic interlude, the moment approaches tragedy. The repeated imperatives—culminating in the powerless "Oh!"—reflect real danger to female travelers particularly unprotected, class failing to ensure their safety. The accident also betrays a veiled resentment on the part of the Brazilians rendered subservient for their North American guests who called them, as Bishop's speaker does here, "boy."

Bishop's interest in Brazil's modernity hardly means she has jettisoned the hemispheric past central to her understanding of the Global South Atlantic. In "January 1, 1502," a poem that depicts the Portuguese landing in Brazil, she provides a history much more extended than the ironic reference to the Spanish discovery of Florida in

Florida. Whereas the earlier poem identified only the place's etymology ("the state with the prettiest name"), "January 1, 1502" poem renders the violence and subjugation by which the name was finally formed. The context that Lowell called, eliding these forces, "jungle into picture into history and then jungle again."

Moreover, Bishop doesn't merely juxtapose the past and present in these two poems by placing them side by side in the volume; the two are linked, less subsequent than consequent. The January from the epigraph of "Arrival at Santos" is literally echoed by the title. The shared month is also set against an eerie congruence in the additional coordinates Bishop has chosen for the two poems, 1952 and 1502, respectively. That dating of "Arrival" appeared in its original periodical appearance in *The New Yorker*, but was dropped from publication in book form, when it provided the penultimate poem of *Poems: North and South—A Cold Spring*, the digest edition of her first two books. Only upon the poem's inclusion in *Questions of Travel* did the epigraph return, leading Kalstone to argue for an explicit linkage between the two poems (ntd in "Presence" 103), Bishop brings that history emphatically to the present in another way, the second person singular and plural of "you," "we," and "ours" directly implicating the present in the past.

Before the Portuguese conquerors enter the frame, "Nature greets our eyes," and to underscore our complicity, "exactly as she must have greeted theirs," the conquerors'. At first, this nature depicted through the form of tapestry familiar to us from the "Seascape" of Florida—and presaged in the epigraph from Sir Kenneth Clark's Landscape into Art: "... embroidered nature ... tapestried landscape" –reveals a beauty where Brazil offered the promise of Eden to beleaguered Europe, a potential escape

from history. The minutiae of the landscape's coloration (blue-green, rust red, purple, silver gray), texture (lighter veins and edges, satin underleaf), and size (big leaves, little leaves, and giant leaves) Bishop obsessively records, an amateur naturalist, with sensual pleasure.

But that vividness and abundance, as this anxiety of qualification and striving for precision indicates, is only superficial. Thus, while the description grows less fevered in the second strophe, with "A blue-white sky, a simple web," and "brief arcs," a "few palms" all revealing a simpler rendering of the tropical lushness, the neutral signification breaks down, becoming endowed with alien values. "The big symbolic birds kept quiet" are literally silenced, and more fatally, rendered unreal.

Joined by an allegorical Sin embodied in "five sooty dragons," "moss" in "lovely hell-green flames," and a dangerous female lizard—"her wicked tail straight up and over / red as red-hot wire"—whom all the male lizards covet, the landscape finally reveals that the Eden has been constructed according to the religious and cultural values of European colonialism all along. Even the language of empire has been brought to bear on the landscape—"one leaf yes and one leaf no' (in Portuguese)"— through a parenthetical statement in English that restates our complicity by positing the Anglophone world as the next invading force. The Portuguese, nonetheless, have their own crimes to answer for, as the poem retrospectively makes clear—and they consist of more than projection. Or put another way, those projections legitimate violence.

Conflating Eve and the serpent, Bishop creates in the dangerous lizard an impetus for the scene of sexual violence and conquest that concludes the poem. After

finding there was no scene of courtly love of "lovers walks and bowers" in this New World, only one "corresponding to a dream of luxury,"

the Christians, hard as nails,
[...]
ripped away into the hanging fabric,
each out to catch for an Indian
himself—
those maddening little women who
kept calling

Chivalry descends to rape, Christian allegory to Church-sanctioned militarism, the soldiers "Directly after Mass, humming perhaps / L'Homme arme." In this way, the "ripped away" tapestry reveals the commission of their crimes as much as it represents them. As we've seen, James Longenbach is surely correct to argue that "the poem is more than an unveiling of Portuguese colonialism; it is also a recognition of the possibility of Bishop's—or anyone's—complicity in the continuing imposition of these values." But what has been left unremarked upon by readers of the poem, Longenbach included, is that Bishop also provides an indictment of aesthetic form. These are not merely "sexual metaphors" (Longenbach 30), after all, but ones born from artistic traditions that conflate nature with its representation without real acknowledgment. Even the Clark title of the epigraph ("Landscape into Art") elides the fact that landscape is art, and more, a site of power. As W. J. T. Mitchell argues in Landscape and Power, "landscape circulates as a medium of exchange, a site of the visual appropriation, a focus for the formation of identity" (Mitchell 2).

The tapestry provides the locus of imperial violence in the poem, destroyed by the same desire it incites, and we are its future readers, the pictorial form corresponding to the poem that is read, and the broader traditions of travel accounts and ethnographies that defined the New World. The cyclical "Januaries" predicts the recurrence of this impulse to aestheticize and exoticize experience that "Arrival in Santos" and "Questions of Travel" both confirm remains an incipient danger, each poem beset by the same anxieties inherited from "January 1, 1502" that they gamely try to defuse. Like Florida, Rio was formed on the basis of a misnaming which, as Jeffrey Gray argues, "tells us more about the expectations of the traveler than it does about reality" (Gray 37). As Bishop herself noted in her Time-Life book *Brazil* that "at least as early as the 9th century a land called 'Brasil' was already a legend in Europe" (Prose 174). What "January 1, 1502" hazards is an unsparing exposure of such fabulism. In its place, the remainder of the volume aims to unearth the reality that at the end of the poem is "retreating."

THE PEOPLES OF BRAZIL

That is a Herculean labor, Bishop quickly learns, for even more difficult than accessing Brazil as such is understanding the individuals who form the basis of its culture. In the absence of providing access to their interiors, Bishop examines the retreat through a series of figures—"The Riverman," "Manuelzinho," and Balthazar, the "black boy" of "Twelfth Morning; or What You Will"—without trying to arrest such withdrawal on their part. Many readers of Bishop have felt that in these poems. To quote C.K. Doreski:

she was not very successful in empathizing with people of distinctly different ethnic or racial backgrounds, and the voices and personae derived from her observations of the inhabitants of Brazil, for example, are not always effective or convincing (xii).

George Monteiro has gone further, locating in the aesthetic failure a personal one on Bishop's part (Monteiro 3). Brazilian readers have tended to agree, with "Manuelzinho" singled out for condescension. Even Frank Bidart, an admirer of Bishop's who felt that her Brazilian poems were "often radical in perception and feeling" (Brazeau 140) thought "Manuelzinho" suffered from a "whiff of noblesse oblige" (Brazeau 141). But "Manuelzinho" (Poems 94-97)—an account of the relationship between a tenant farmer and his patrician landlord—distances Bishop from that position of patronage, the latter subjected to irony, the former spared sentimentality.

Formulated as a dramatic monologue, the poem reveals that the landlord—"the friend of the writer" from the epigraph representing Lota—comes to realize her failings in the treatment of her subordinate. At the end of the poem, she apologizes for subjecting him to the mocking sobriquet of "Klorophyll Kid," "takes off [her] hat to him," and "promises to try," to show him more respect. Whether these gestures truly represent some "subtle truce between the social classes" (Cleghorn 194) George S. Lensing locates, the willingness to accept blame forces us to think critically about the invective she directs at him throughout the poem.

Manuelzinho is called "the worst gardener since Cain," but he has crafted a verdant expanse eerily reminiscent of Jerónimo's lovingly described house, where the pink flowers of the earlier domicile find a counterpart in "red carnations" that "edge the beds of silver cabbages," and where "the lettuces mix with assylum." The interspersal of these red and white flowers with the functional vegetables the landlord actually desires

reflects his aesthetic stature that critics have noted, aligning him with a Jerónimo who provides a proxy for the supposedly absent Bishop in the equally delicate way he adorns his modest space, and especially since carnations are rich in signification. The red varieties, in particular, telegraph a love and admiration that Manuelzinho may wish to deploy strategically.

But they have a practical use, too. Noted for their durability and easy growth, carnations are often used in vegetable gardens, adding color and scene. Assylum, meanwhile, wards off lettuce hungry rabbits. More, it is clear that the speaker *does* appreciate this beauty, despite her carping, saying that these "gardens / ravish my eyes."

Subsequent complaints are rendered no more fairly. The accusation of theft that the speaker makes ("you steal my telephone wires") cannot be substantiated, Bishop cleverly undermining her with enjambment ("or someone does"). Likewise, her later accusation that "The strangest things happen to you" appears not only unreasonable, but given the nature of the things that happened to him (e.g. the death of livestock and his father), unusually cruel.

Utterly silent himself in the poem, he is seen, if at all, through "rain" and "wisps of fog." That drear haziness leaves room for the landlord to manufacture these charges and a set of imaginative projections casting him as a descendant of Cain and a fairy prince. If the landlord cannot see Manuelzinho, revealing class divisions in the Global South Atlantic are as intranational as transnational, neither finally can Bishop. For though she may find in his person an aesthetic analogue, she does not represent him

any more deeply than the landlord really speaks to him. She may subject the landlord to irony, but occupying the same class position, still ventriloguizes her voice.

Still, it seems unfair, as Charles Tomlinson acidly has remarked, that Bishop was simply one of the "better off [who] have always preferred their poor processed by style" (ntd in "Home" 130). The poem connects with Manuelzinho beyond the terms of a paternalism that reduces him to local color. After he shows the landlord his "Dream Books," serious common ground emerges: "In the kitchen we dream together / how the meek shall inherit the earth" that at once equalizes, uniting the two in the space of domestic service, and exalts his poverty.

Owing to a Bishop who herself kept dream books, this moment also binds her to Manuelzinho, underscoring how she sees him not merely, or even primarily, as a function of poetry, but a co-creator—if not full author—of his own art. This becomes evident at the end of the poem in an aestheticism that extends beyond the figurative gardening to a more literal sense of the term. Emerging with "limbs draped in blueprints" and attired in "patch upon patch upon patch" sewn by the co-creator of his wife, he is one who paints.

This is not to say that perfect comity between Manuelzinho and the landlord, or even between him and Bishop, has been achieved. The Dream Books quickly disappear, the landlord's psychology replaced by usual suspicion. Even his painting is qualified, the speaker claiming "heaven knows why" he does so.

This is only to say that Manuelzinho is not consigned purely to trope and what he does lack in speech and subjectivity is acknowledged by a poem that foregrounds the speaker's inattention. Even "her efforts at humility" at the conclusion, as Najmi Samina

notes, "are inescapably mixed with her sense of being the superior provider and protector" (Najmi 182), Manuelzinho remaining a "helpless, foolish man." Thus, in the final analysis, "her uncertainty about her professed love for [him] and her promise 'again' to try to change contribute to the sense that the class barrier between them is impossible to overcome" (Najmi 182).

Elsewhere in *Questions of Travel*, divisions still more intractable emerge. "The black boy Balthazar" from "Twelfth Morning, or What You Will" (Poems 108-109) lives in a world intolerable in its poverty mandated by his racial difference. The fog obscuring Manuelzinho performs no such office for the "housewreck" that this young man inhabits:

Like a first coat of whitewash when it's wet the thin gray mist lets everything show through: the black boy Balthazar, a fence, a horse, a foundered house

Quite the opposite, in fact, proves the case. By providing a contrast to his blackness, these monochrome screens throw him and his poverty into sharp relief. The detritus prefacing a house already "foundered" only serve to underscore the ruinous character of such subsistence cynically exploited by a "Company [who] passes off these white but shopworn / dunes as lawns." Whiteness also reflects a world that racially conspires against him. The poem tells him, "Don't ask the big white horse, *Are you supposed* / to be inside the fence or not." Bishop exalts Balthazar, to be certain, framing him in Shakespearean comedy, transforming him into another artist, and having this same detritus—even the horse—enchanted. The horse, "an ancient mixture of tin, lead, and silver" is "bigger than the house," the fence "comes forward hopefully" and at the finale, "Balthazar is singing," claiming for himself the sainthood of his namesake: "Today's my

Anniversary," he sings, "the Day of Kings." But if Balthazar "wears his poverty lightly" (Travisano 158), as Thomas Travisano has argued, the poem does not allow us to glibly escape the cost, offering these as compensations for a social reality all too bleak and placed clearly in view. Even the landscape is largely indifferent: "the sea's off somewhere, doing nothing."

"The Burglar of Babylon" (Poems 110-115) lives in a world more darkly rendered still. Drawing on the contemporary story of the outlaw Micuçú, who escaped from prison and returned to the *favelas* only to be hunted down and shot by the police, the poem "grows directly out of the political chaos and concerns of these years" (Cleghorn 145), reflecting a worsening situation in the Brazilian state that witnessed the suspension of democracy. While Balthazar's world offers the promise of redemption rendered in painterly terms, set against an aurally rich soundscape where "the sandpipers' heartbroken cries" betray nature's sympathy, and placed under the twinned auspices of Shakespeare and religious allegory that produce this titular character's ultimate exaltation, the burglar's world offers no such release.

This remorselessness is evident at the level of form, with the ballad central to the poem subverted. Pity for the unfortunate criminal has been replaced with scorn for the fortunate—the Brazilian "rich with binoculars." More, by evoking a specific version of the ballad, Bishop only deepens the critique. As Jacqueline Vaught Brogan has explored in her reading of the poem, Bishop turns the "good-night ballad" of the late nineteenth-century—a form consisting of a criminal's last words and his warning to society before his execution—"inside out, revealing it to be society and its scripting of the situations that is the actual criminal" (ntd in Hicock 147).

Ironically, Bishop reveals the insidiousness of that outside world through its totalizing surveillance. "The rich, with their binoculars," "the Army helicopter," "the buzzard," "the lighthouse [that] stared back at him," "the children [who] peeked out of their windows," "the women with market baskets"—all keep watch, Bishop implicating the social, political, and even natural world. Set upon ironically "fair green hills" where the rank *favelas* reside, and which the Burglar exists literally in the shadow of, the all-seeing gaze of the poem bears a striking resemblance to the Panopticon that Bishop occupied in Paris, the uniquely grim vantage point from which a prisoner can be viewed at all times.

Is it any wonder that a fugitive thus encircled—his death predicted by no less an authority than himself—turns his eyes upon his jailers? The "mulata / Carrying water on her head" to whom he says, "If you say you say me, daughter, you're just as good as dead," offers him the most explicit hope of power against the walled in monolith. But there are other moments equally as strong, if not stronger: the buzzard who "flapped so near him / He could see its naked neck," and the "Army helicopter" where "He could see the two men inside it / But they never spotted him." Each moment renders the death that hovers above him precarious, weak, and unprotected, with the soldiers, in particular, deprived of sight. He can at least verify the nature of the surveillance that constrains him, which Bentham's prisoner cannot.

At the same time as Bishop renders the Burglar a victim of larger social forces who gamely mounts some form of resistance, she humanizes him. He has murdered but even society—the "they" of the poem—has to admit he never raped, he loves his "auntie" and acknowledges her care, and perhaps most significantly, commands a deep

self-knowledge, all too cognizant that he is a "doomed man." Moreover, Bishop extends such sympathy without sentimentality. As Cheryl Walker has observed: "even his auntie said he was 'always mean'" (Walker 113).

Not since "Cootchie" has Bishop been so savage in her critique of the vast, impersonal forces beneath which the underclass must labor, nor so emphatic on the finality of their terms. Micuçú is not the last burglar—by the end of the poem, when he is "buried already / They're after another two." Nor are burglars the only victims: the *mulata* who incurs Micucu's wrath, the officer mistakenly shot by one of his fellow soldiers, figures who "wanted to stop the search" in the first place, the "babies [who] cry," and "his auntie [who] / Wiped her eyes in grief" all find themselves caught in this crossfire brought about by a systemic poverty possibly linked, as Cheryl Walker has suggested, to the Babylon captivity (Walker 113).

For larger than the context of this pursuit is the poverty that produced it, the urban space depicted one where

On the fair green hills of Rio There grows a fearful stain: The poor who come to Rio And can't go home again.

Here and elsewhere, the poem's naturalism is mediated through a self-consciously deployed literary history that both corresponds to, and depends upon, this social critique. The ironized ballad and its mock pastoralism, the mythic Babylon, the abstracted hills with their allegorical names, all turn inside out European tradition by placing it in this service of the urban poor.

Brazil is not all remoteness and critique for Bishop, however. "The Riverman" (Poems 103-107) offers a powerful avatar for her poetic self whom she feels liberated enough to speak through with real authority. On the one hand, the first-person perspective of the poem—recurrent, declarative, active—Bishop powers with a syntax that recalls the plain description from "The Fish" in its predicate-verb narrative depicting a figure who "listens," "hears," "stands," "looks," in his rapprochement with the Dolphin that wakes him from slumber.

On the other hand, with shamanism providing an analogue for the imagination, she indulges in a lyric mode that reveals the Dolphin is a "man like myself" and a "beautiful serpent / in elegant white satin" is the river spirit "Luandinha." The narrative thereby crystalizes the two halves of her poetics—the dialectic between fact and fancy. In doing so, Bishop is not simply using the space to comfortably work out her aesthetic concerns, as readings have generally held. Rather, she is employing these aesthetic concerns to represent Brazil as neither wholly symbolic nor wholly naturalistic, evading the false lures of essentialism and verisimilitude as privileged sites of access to the nation's interior.

Regarding the former, the setting of the poem does not find itself reduced to local color. The details of this world instead belong to a larger aesthetic context. Rendered broadly by Bishop, these features evoke mainstays of European poetic tradition, such as the dolphins of Yeats, the Lady of Shallot's mirror ("I need a virgin mirror"), the Romantic moon ("the moon shines on the river"), and the Stygian River, amongst many other connections, with the last, in particular, connecting the poem's fable to the archetypical quest narrative.

It was precisely this symbolic character that made Bishop unhappy with the poem. She wrote to May Swenson that "If one thinks of it as a sort of fairy tale, maybe it's all right" (ntd in Harrison 157) and after having taken a trip to the Amazon, planned to write a "much better [...] post-Amazon Amazon poem" (OA 382). Despite Bishop's disapproval, she needn't have worried: the poem isn't all fairy tale. The Riverman remains wedded to the particularities of his world. He is a man who "drank cachaca," finds himself taken to "Belem," interacts with the spirit "Luandinha," and most significantly, positions himself in the socially specific role of sacaca that is also an aesthetic one, with predecessors in "Fortunato Pombo, / or Lucio, or even / the great Joaquim Sacaca." As the epigraph from Charles Wagley's *Amazon Town* suggests, he is no mere legend, instead inhabiting the same modernity of Bishop, a space where there are "river steamers," and "a steady stream of light / like at the cinema." Neither purely anthropological nor fantastic, Bishop fuses the social reality of Brazilian culture with a mysticism of the sacaca tradition. Drawing affinities to European tradition, she decouples the latter from any taint of exoticism—and regarding the former, ensures that the poem isn't merely a handmaiden to the discourses of anthropology and ethnography.

Bishop went beyond Brazil as subject, exploring the country's own literary traditions. She authored and along with Emanuel Brasil, anthologized translations from the Portuguese and the Spanish, formed poetic correspondences with major figures such as Manuel Bandeira, João Cabral de Melo Neto, Carlos Drummond De Andrade, and Vincius Moares, translated prose such as *The Diary of Helena Morley* and the stories of Claire Lipsector, and developed an intimacy with Brazilian literature and

culture more broadly, admiring *samba*, Carnival, and the prose-writing of Machado Assis, Euclides de Cunha, and Rachel de Quieros, among others.

If Bishop's use of Brazilian subject matter has been criticized, her connection to the country's literary milieu has met perhaps with an even greater skepticism. Paulo Henriques Britto, her Brazilian translator, has been the most severe: "unable or unwilling to learn Portuguese properly, Elizabeth Bishop was a most ineffective (and reluctant) cultural intermediary" (Britto 429).

Bishop herself maintained 'I am a completely American poet," disavowing any effect on her work from the country's "literary milieu" (Brown 290). Less important than any discernible influence, the significance of her translations, or even the accuracy of her judgments on the country's poetics, is that this contact on Bishop's part brings to the fore questions of affiliation between the two countries and the wider Americas, revealing a shared poetics that has been little acknowledged.

Anglo-American modernism and Luso-Hispanic *modernismo* play central roles on either side of the hemisphere, each alike "the topic of innumerable theoretical disquisitions" (Infante 196). But despite this shared nomenclature and wealth exegesis each has attracted, critics on both sides of the equator have agreed, when they have acknowledged each other at all, that the two modernisms remain fundamentally incommensurate. To be certain, whether viewed through the lens of style or periodization, they diverge in significant respects. But there remains enough contact to merit consideration of a hemispheric modernism.

Although a nineteenth-century phenomenon that drew upon an earlier phase of French poetics (namely, Parnassianism), where formal language and form are

paramount, Spanish America modernismo, like modernism, has come to be recognized by critics of Latin America as its own fundamental response to modernity after suffering years of neglect and dismissal from earlier critics and poets. In formulating such a response through a French poetic inheritance and representing the first poetic movement in the region that "asserted Spanish-American emancipation in cultural and intellectual terms from Spain" (Poplawski 393), it bears even stronger comparison with its Anglophone counterpart. For all their English sources, the modernists contended with their own inheritance of French poetics and forged an analogous emancipation from England to produce, like *modernismo*, a style that attracted the attention of Europe for perhaps the first time. Even the differences are less significant than they may initially appear. Modernismo had long been held as too beholden to the nineteenth-century and therefore derivative, but modernism owes more to the nineteenth-century than histories and theorizations often concede. Robert Duncan, a postwar American poet of the Black Mountain School, "read Modernism as Romanticism (ntd in Gelpi 14) and a number of American poets – Stevens, Crane, H.D., Pound – were "sometimes described, sometimes condemned as Romantic" (Gelpi 14)—even, in Stevens's case, by himself. Exposing Eliot's indebtedness to the same nineteenth-century poetic tradition he disavowed has become the equivalent of critical parlor game. Louis Menand showed in ample detail in Discovering Modernism: T.S. Eliot and His Context, that such "revisionism works so well with Eliot because Eliot was a reshaper of attitudes and not, by design, a redefiner of things" (Menand 133). In effect, Eliot did not reject the poetic patrimony of nineteenth-century English poetics—despite his often quoted critical

devaluations of Tennyson, Shelley, and Browning—than refigure that inheritance for his own aesthetic demands.

Moreover, through modernismo's paradigmatic figures of José Martí and Rubén Darío, each of whom engaged with modernity of *notreamericano*, the Spanish American movement intersects with the trans-American ideal of the nineteenth-century that informs the Global South Atlantic, each seminal figure looking toward the equally seminal Whitman and Poe. Critics of Latin American literature, such as Raymond L. Williams, Donald Shaw, George Yúdice, and others, have attended to the question of the resemblance between the modernisms of North and South, but more might be done in studies of modernist poetics in the United States. The kinship of Brazilian *modernsimo* with Anglo-American modernism are the most compelling, however. The formation was contemporaneous, indebted to a similar legacy of French poetics that persisted into Bishop's early Surrealist work, and marked by comparable innovations.

But despite Brazilian *modernismo* "attracting ever-increasing critical attention, on a scale far beyond that accorded to its Spanish American equivalents" (Bethell 906), this relationship has been left unexplored even in Latin American poetics, much less in studies of American modernist poetics and readings of Bishop. This is a mistake, for during the same annus mirablis of 1922 in New York and London where Pound and Eliot "made it new," the Modern Art Week of Sao Paulo witnessed Brazilian aesthetics drawing upon currents from the European avant-garde (chiefly Italian futurism and Cubism) and adapting them to a New World reality.

It is precisely this shared literary history that Bishop acknowledged in "An Anthology of Twentieth-century Poetry" co-edited with Emanuel Brasil. She drew a

comparison at the level of modernism's broader cultural context by averring "[Modern Art Week] has become as much a landmark in Brazilian culture as the New York Armory Show of 1913 is in the culture of the United States" (xix), and despite relying on an early and extraliterary phase of modernism for the basis of that comparison, also acknowledged that Brazil and the United States followed an analogous poetic trajectory:

Its development is more or less predictable, in that its movements parallel those of western Europe, especially France, with a time-lag of ten, twenty, or more years. As in American writing, this time-lag has decreased over the years, growing always shorter, until at present sometimes Brazilian poetry actually seems more advanced than that of the countries it formerly derived from (xvii).

Regardless of what complications we might pose to this account, it succeeds in reflecting their parallel development and the sense that each modernism offered a *break* from the past. As the introduction reveals the broad contours of a shared cultural context, the poems Bishop and Brasil selected and translated reveal a *modernismo* in pursuit of the same goals as modernist poetics and Bishop's own, in particular. She identified them in the following way:

The Modernist poetic movement repudiated French and Portuguese influences, and, as in other countries, it rejected the ideas of the Romantics, Parnassians, and Symbolists. It believed in using the material of everyday life, and attempted a complete honesty, bringing the anguish and conflicts of the period into poetry for the first time (xx).

Like modernism, *modernismo* has many different strands, phases, and impulses, but the break with French poetics and the incorporation of everyday experience are both central. To these, we might add stylistic features that correspond to such impulses: "value on the free association of ideas, pedestrian, colloquial, and familiar expressions, vulgarity, and logical disorder" (Coutinho 243). Cassiano Ricardo—a noted poet-critic who appears in Bishop's anthology—also identifies on a more formal level, "the victory of free verse and the incorporation of the subconscious, with the lesson of the surrealists" (ntd in Coutinho 243). Both aspects are central to Bishop's poetics.

Charles A. Perrone, who puts it most succinctly, also notes contradictions in the pursuit of these aims that are relevant to the modernist context Bishop draws upon: "The dual impetus of *modernismo*—formal liberty and the search for Brazilian identity—had inherent potential for contradiction, surging from both cosmopolitan and local sources." This productive tension, where writers drew on the avant-garde, on the one hand, and on the other, offered "a nationalism of resistance to the foreign" (Perrone 5), are also central to Anglo-American modernism. T.S. Eliot and William Carlos Williams famously staked out antithetical positions in their approach to European tradition and the American vernacular, however opposed they were in truth, and this tendency was one Bishop inherited in her oscillation between a more plainspoken rhetoric characteristic of Williams and the culturally mandarin commitment to "the mind of Europe" that defined Eliot.

Across the anthology, this commitment to the everyday, the vernacular, and demotic that arises in reaction to the excesses of French poetics and of European poetic tradition more broadly emerges. In Manuel Bandeira's "My Last Poem" (1930), the seminal modernist poet known for early attachments to Parnassianism and Symbolism sheds them for a pared down rhetoric where the poem has "the beauty of

scentless flowers" and "the purity of the flame in which the most limpid diamonds are consumed" (3), loosing himself from the same artifice Bishop disdained. What also likely prompted Bishop to translate the poem herself is Bandeira's emphasis on a restrained emotional expression—"ardent like a tearless sob" and "gentle saying the simplest and least intended"—that corresponds to her own preference for "passions covert and implied," as Susan McCabe has observed (McCabe 101). In "Brazilian Tragedy," Bandeira incorporates the Brazilian life of the street into a baggy prose poem populated by "syphilitics" and "civil servants," abundance proffered in quotidian experience of street names, slang, proper names, occupations, rather than in the luxuriance of trope.

Joao Cabral De Melo Neto's "The Life and Death of a Severino" is equally demotic, documenting "the desolate existence of a peasant from the poor northeastern region where Cabral himself was born and raised" in the words of his obituary from the *New York Times*. Underscoring this connection to ordinary Brazilians, this became a poem that "millions of Brazilians can recite at least some of the verse" and went through various iterations: play, a musical composition, and a television drama ("Jaoao").

Not only are the poems in the anthology committed to the demotic that forms a mainstay of a Bishopian and broadly modernist poetics, but they inhabit her same imaginative terrain. The cemeteries, suicides, and domestic scenes in selections from Joaquim Cardozo and Carlos Drummond De Andrade in the volume belong to the same ravaged sea- and cityscapes of Bone Key upon which history has deposited its maimed victims. Even the teeming populace of Bandeira's "Brazilian Tragedy" occupies this space of decrepitude, rendering "ulcerated fingers" and "teeth in the last stages of decay" that presage the death at the end of the poem.

But no longer willing to simply excavate skeletons, Bishop finds partners in Brazil who add flesh to bone through familial relations that confer upon the actors of the Global South Atlantic personalized histories. In such poems as Andrade's "Travelling in the Family," "The Table," "Family Portrait," and "Intimacy," the poet stages dramas of reconciliation between the generations, renovating a Bishopian backdrop where the speaker's voyeurism produces only uncomprehending estrangement and self-alienation.

Beyond these literary relations to the Southern hemisphere, to her contemporaries and predecessors in the United States, or even a younger generation of feminist poets, like Adrienne Rich, who viewed the "Miss Bishop" championed by Robert Lowell" with notorious ambivalence, it is time to acknowledge her affiliations with the Afro-Caribbean poets Audre Lorde and Derek Walcott. Major figures of American and Caribbean poetics, they also mapped the Global South Atlantic through the lens of Key West, ranging across time, space, and identity.

Walcott's act of re-mapping the hemisphere—which I will discuss in detail later—involved dissolving national borders and boundaries, challenging the supposed division between social reality and the imagination, and rewriting literary history to better reflect a New World reality, but doing so from the burdened perspective of colonial subjectivity marked by racial difference, giving voice to the voiceless subjects depicted in an Anglo-American poetics of the Global South Atlantic. That required identifying with the African-American poets of this modernist formation, such as Langston Hughes and Jean Toomer, as well as drawing upon the resources of epic mediated in part through Hart Crane's, to forge a distinct cultural history where none is presumed. This is a story in some measure told by Walcott himself, his poetry expressly, even programmatically,

designed to refashion European tradition for the Caribbean. This is also a story expanded upon by the critics Charles Pollard and Anita Patterson, who have each situated him in relation to the literature of the Caribbean (e.g. Kamau Braithwaite and Wilson Harris) and to the United States (T. S. Eliot, Hart Crane), moving away from the relationship to Europe that his work more clearly foregrounds, Pollard theorizing a New World Modernism on this basis. But the story of such investments on Walcott's part that really began in earnest with his arrival and part-time residence in the United States also requires acknowledging his imbrication in a Global South Atlantic of which Bishop, among others, forms a part.

While Bishop and Walcott have at least been connected through biography—Bishop admired his early poems, Walcott has long testified to his admiration of her work, each shared a close friend in Robert Lowell—no connection has ever been, to my knowledge, admitted to Audre Lorde. It is not hard to see why. Poetic relations between the two seem impossible: what congress could take place between Lorde, who proudly and routinely declared "I am a black feminist lesbian poet" and challenged white feminists throughout her career, and Bishop, who referred disparagingly to herself as a "minor female Wordsworth" and once told poet Frank Bidart—also gay—that she wanted "closets, closets, and more closets." Even the complicated relationship with Adrienne Rich each woman had arises from opposing bases that illustrate the yawning chasm of their divide. Bishop was unsympathetic to "feminist tract poetry" (Starbuck), while Lorde, loathing Rich's white feminist allies, felt her friend wasn't radical enough. Even if opposition wholly defines this triangulation, the relationship of these seminal poets merits further attention, as does Lorde's relationship to a Walcott whose

representations of women have long been contested. And opposition is not the only basis for comparison.

Mirroring Walcott's trajectory in growing up as the child of Caribbean immigrants in New York to a transnational poet who returned "home" in the 1980s, when she participated in delegations of black feminists to Cuba and St. Croix, Lorde forged a Global South Atlantic that blurred lines of geography and identity with greater fervor and ideological zeal, preferring a full-throated rage to Bishop's decorum and reserve. The Southern hemisphere had long played an important role in Lorde's development as a poet that has been little acknowledged. In 1954, at twenty years old, the young Lorde visited Mexico City, and "from the first days of her arrival," in the words of her biographer Alexis De Veaux, "Mexico cast light upon Lorde's relationship to her poetry and to herself as lesbian" (De Veaux 49). By the time she returned to New York in the summer, her experience in Mexico City, Cuernavaca, and Oaxaca extended to her "a brief glimpse of a community of women, and of how a shared sense of being outsiders shaped that community. She had a new understanding the potential of poetry to connect her feelings with words [and] a deeper sense of herself as a lesbian" (De Veaux 53). Enrolling in classes at the University of Mexico in Mexican history, ethnology, and folk song, Lorde had her earliest encounters with the cultural practices that not only informed her two poems about Oaxaca written in 1968 and 1976, but which came to fruition in her focal interest in African religion and history in *The Black Unicorn*.

It wasn't until thirty years after this crossing south and ten years after the watershed volume which, in the words of Beverly Threat Kulli, "spans three centuries of the black diaspora to reclaim African mythology the basis for her themes about women,

racial pride, motherhood, and spirituality" (Kulli) that Lorde entered imaginatively as well as literally the Global South Atlantic. In *Our Dead Behind Us* (1986), she synthesizes the explorations over the course of her career to create a fluid, transnational space.

Throughout a work where Lorde, as Gloria Hull has brilliantly argued, finds herself "living on the line" (Hull 150), she reshapes them to her purposes, "fascinated by what happens as they cross and recross, touch, and intersect with one another" (Hull 155). Rejecting the pencil that has been figured as "white, Western, and phallocentric" in favor of a "colored pen ... authorized to inscribe her [the black woman's] own law—an order that valorizes dreaming, speaking, and kissing the mother, and above all, does not seek to hide its hand in a transparently cloaked objectivity" (Hull 151), Lorde valorizes Bishop's map, sharing her belief that "more delicate than the historian's are the mapmaker's colors." Through "delicate ... colors," distinct rather than gauzy, she troubles the same distinctions in Bishop between home and elsewhere, raises "questions of travel" that challenge its use, value, and efficacy, and re-imagines the world as it has been constructed historically as well as spatially by the prevailing, patriarchal order. As she asks rhetorically in "On My Way Out I Passed Over You and the Verrazano Bridge": "so where is true history written / except in the poems?"

In this poem so central to the volume that Lorde considered it for the title and her own iteration of "Florida," Key West and the larger Global South Atlantic loom large. Against a wider backdrop preoccupied with place, these poems provide the strongest statements of her transnational geography, crystallizing the disruptions enacted across "all the hot and troubled spots which engage her" (Hull 155) in the volume, a map etched with street names, countries, and capitals alike.

Lorde's "Florida" (CP397-398)—like Bishop's—collapses the boundary that distance represents, armed with a perspective oscillating between an aerial view ("renting a biplane to stalk the full moon in Aquarius") and one closer to earth ("firedamp sand between my toes") that sees no need for a transition, logically or spatially, from a world where "she rose under Venus between propellers" to one where she finds herself "feasting on frozen black bans Cubano from Grand Union / in the mangrove swamp." Indeed, she has none of the same anxiety as her precursor about these radical shifts, nor about the death

For Lorde not only forsakes the animal familiars "embarrassed by their flashiness" for her lyric pose, but proves willing to subject the wider white world to an animal form that cuts against it with irony. "Huge arrogant cockroaches," mainstays of the urban ghetto that draw on the region's role as a byword for the black underclass, are charged "with white people's manners," while "Canaveral lizards [who] launch themselves / through my air conditioner" witness "the space shuttle" from the start of the poem degraded into a low, reptilian, and grasping creature "chasing equally determined fleas."

Such shifts that undercut the presumed authority of white American power and morality are joined by an interest in examining those "black people" who to Bishop remained only "black specks." The poem begins *and* ends with African-American life made visible, placing black bodies squarely at the center of Lorde's gaze:

Black people fishing the causeway
Full-skirted bare brown to the bellyband
atilt on the railing near a concrete road
where a crawler-transporter will move

the space shuttle from hangar to gantry.

In these lines, Lorde offers an acknowledgment of the labor effaced from earlier visions of the Global South Atlantic, the contiguity of those "fishing" to a "concrete road" across which a "space shuttle" is being transported throwing into sharp relief how American culture writ large has sidelined such figures for other national priorities. The lizards provide a redress, to be sure, but critique—while central to Lorde's poetics—is not the only mode. There is a sensual delight that affirms those who have been marginalized, evident in the alliteration of "bare brown" flesh, the unrepentant nakedness of such figures, and the contradictory lushness of "full-skirted" dress. Elsewhere in this Florida vista, there are other stirrings of the same pleasure, with black identity written into the landscape.

It can be found in what she consumes—"the feasting on frozen black beans," the "flagrant and raunchy / fire-damp sand between my toes"—and what she only sees: the "sweet-ugly fruit" of "avocadoes tomatoes / and melon in the mango slot" and the "hibiscus spread like a rainbow of lovers/ acred stamens waving." It is no wonder she regards nature with the same delight; the two are in some measure linked. In "The frozen black beans," Lorde transforms those black bodies into nourishment and into emblems of Caribbean-ness ("Cubano") that are as connected to the social real as their host bodies, having originated from "Grand Union," a supermarket chain operated in the Southeastern United States and the Caribbean. Likewise, the "sweet-ugly fruit"—recalling Billie Holliday's torch song, "Strange Fruit"—and the "hibiscus spread like a rainbow of lovers" help encode racial difference, with both but particularly the latter reflecting sexual difference in addition.

From this placement of black life at the center of a Florida rendered transnational by its recognition of distance as a construct and its Caribbean character that remains legible at the level of flora ("palmetto," "jacaranda," "hibiscus") emerges, crucial for Lorde, the placement of black, feminist, lesbian writing at the center. In migrating north to Gainesville from Cape Canaveral at the end of the poem, Lorde moves further away geographically from the Caribbean, but curiously, becomes less wedded to the Global North. Before the black women to whom she stands reading, there is no sign of officialdom or statehood, only the fulfillment of a promise made to her by one of them on a prior visit:

I'm gonna remember your name And the next time you come there'll be Quite a few more of us, hear?

"And there certainly was," Lorde quietly but triumphantly remarks, having seen a "warm pool / of dark women's faces / in the sea of listening." In this way, the poem's foregrounding of black bodies that built and continue to build the United States ends by foreseeing a communal world where they might reshape the entire region, through the imagination, into a Global South Atlantic.

"On My Way Out I Passed Over You and the Verrazano Bridge" (CP 403-406), a journey from New Jersey to the Caribbean, constructs a fuller map that emphasizes the human cost, preferring the Global South over the American West once preferred in an earlier version of the poem.

Leaving leaving the bridged water beneath the red sands of South Beach

silhouette houses sliding off the horizon

requires a breathless appeal to "love" that forestalls an anticipated "anger." The hope is to leave this "bridged"—or demarcated—water behind, and the verbal gerundive seems to place Lorde at least halfway toward that desired escape. But beyond the feared anger, it is the gap and repetition, the infernal sands and the flirtation with apocalyptic thinking that imagines "silhouette houses sliding off the horizon," which give pause about how the "arcs of this journey" might be drawn across the horizon. Other signs that quickly emerge—the "landscape of trials," the "sulfur fuels [which] burn in New Jersey" the rendering of the plane as a "shuttle between nightmare and the possible"—confirm Lorde is chartering no routine passenger flight. But even with these forewarnings, we are hardly prepared for the seismic violence that accompanies her ascent and departure from the Global North:

So do we blow up the longest suspension bridge in the world
Up from the middle
Or will it be bombs at the Hylan Toll Plaza
Mortars over Grymes Hill
Flak shrieking through the streets of Rosebank
The home of the Staten Island ku klux klan
While sky-roaches napalm the Park Hill Projects

"The bridged water" cannot simply be left behind: it must be leveled, razed to the seafloor. The neighborhoods of Staten Island, where Lorde had a home, must also be taken down with this feat of American engineering and exceptionalism, drowning the racial terrorism of the KKK, the housing projects under siege, the tollbooth that regulates movement, and given its linkage of Brooklyn and Staten Island, the fiction of a unified New York, with its melting pot.

Fire burns, and what also finds itself consumed in the conflagration is the European discovery of the New World that the bridge provides an emblem for. Giovanni da Verrazzano, an Italian explorer who preceded the more famous Henry Hudson in discovering New York and arrived in Florida, the Bahamas, and the Antilles, subsquent to Spanish and Italian contemporaries like De Leon and Columbus, bridged the North and South Atlantic in one way. Audre Lorde has chosen another

writing these words as a route map an artifact for survival a chronicle of buried treasure a mourning for this place we are about to be leaving [... from the dull wharves of Tompkinsville to Zimbabwe Chad Azania

Roaming more widely still—to "Soweto," "Pretoria," "past darkened windows of a Bay Street Women's Shelter," "through the streets of Marazan," amid the "northeastern altars of El Salvador," to "Philadelphia Atlanta San Francisco / and even ancient London," "outside Capetown"—Lorde links these disparate spaces of South Africa and the Americas, mobilizing them on behalf of a world history where Europe does not stand at the center.

Wintry Poland survives the bastardized prose of the New York Times, while Soweto is a quaint heat treatment in some exotic but safely capitalized city

but not in Lorde' articulation. Later, in the next strophe, Lorde says, "yes, I tell you, Italians owned Britain and Hannibal blackened the earth from the Alps to the Adriatic,"

reflecting an alternate history where the success of the imperial center was far from assured. Nor is the contemporary United States absolved of imperialism, when she finds herself

scanning a borrowed *Newsweek*where american soldiers
train seven year old Chilean boys
to do their killing for them.

"History is not kind to us," Lorde concludes, so

we restitch it with living past memory forward into desire into the panic articulation of want without having or even the promise of getting

Simply the hope of the Global South Atlantic seems enough, Lorde's act of repairing the peoples and places indelibly marked by a history of subjugation revealed as equal part panic and desire. Even if this restorative vision is not achieved, even if there is no expectation it will be, the poem clings to this radiant, luminous sense of radical possibility, articulating in the final stanza a dream borne of the imagination, experienced in the body, and finally unmoored from the safety of the map entirely:

And I dream of our coming together encircled driven
Not only by love
But by lust for a working tomorrow
The flights of this journey
Mapless uncertain
and necessary as water

From the 1940s to the 1960s, across a hemisphere where Key West and Brazil focused her transnational exploration, Elizabeth Bishop mapped a Global South Atlantic that collapsed divisions at once conceptual and geographic, sought to acknowledge those whom official history had erased, and challenged her own privileged position upon which such omissions had been constructed. Twenty years later, Audre Lorde, more than the Adrienne Rich to whom Bishop is typically linked, re-imagined the Global South Atlantic from the perspective of her multiple, intersecting identities.

With an unsparing rhetoric and visionary mode, Lorde animated the histories Bishop tentatively excavated to re-bridge the divide between Africa and the Americas and put black female writing at the center of this mythmaking. Through the Caribbean and the Americas, she joined her more famous mission of recovering an African cultural, religious, and spiritual inheritance from *The Black Unicorn* to an expanded diaspora that necessarily included but also extended beyond race, thereby revealing another affiliation within American literature, as well as without, between Bishop and Lorde that has gone unrecognized.

DEREK WALCOTT'S POETRY OF HOMECOMING IN A GLOBAL SOUTH ATLANTIC

Drawing on the central metaphor of *Omeros*, Philoctete's wound, Jahan Ramazani in his reading of the multivalent and layered epic has pointed to "a wound of postcolonial history" that Derek Walcott both exposes and sutures by "turn[ing] [it] into a resonant site of interethnic connection," "vivifying the black Caribbean inheritance of colonial injury and at the same time deconstructing the uniqueness of suffering" (50). But "puzzling out what it means to love the English language yet hate English imperialism" (CP 49), as he did in "A Far Cry from Africa," takes place alongside, and

indeed in conjunction with, asking what it means to love American poetics yet hate its own imperialism. Resolving that equally deep ambivalence means remaking the hemisphere along a new set of vectors that cut against nation and region first undercut by modernist poets who intuited that the social, cultural, and aesthetic reality of the United States's reality was inseparable from that of the Southern hemisphere's. In the process, Walcott and his modernist antecedents recast the relationship of the North American continent and the Caribbean with both respect to each other, and to the European and African parents from whence both came, shifting the trans-Atlantic waterway fundamentally and irrevocably South, forming a Global South Atlantic theorized by Slaughter.

That process began around the island of Key West, a site still largely unrecognized by geographies of American literary history, in a modernist poetry that dissolved national boundaries and borders to reveal the shared aesthetic aims that obtain across the southern hemisphere. The largest site of a North American archipelago with outlays further South brings to the fore unacknowledged investments in nation, difference, and history held by poets for too long disconnected from the social real and reveals affinities between Anglo-American, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean poetics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In this "fragrant portal," Wallace Stevens found a liminal space to re-imagine the American South within the context of a Cuba defused of its exoticism, while Elizabeth Bishop reframed the polar New England and Nova Scotia of her childhood against the backdrop of Brazil and the Caribbean (Galapagos, Bermuda, and Haiti) that both extend from a Key West—she was always careful to remind her students at Harvard—closer to Havana than Miami.

Together, with other Anglo-American contemporaries Robert Frost and Hart Crane, this phalanx of poets forged a "comprehensive island hemisphere," where the animating dialectics between "North and South" and "Here and Elsewhere" in the work of Bishop and Stevens, in particular, deserve to be read more literally than they are by critics of either poet. These connections reveal a wider imbrication in transnational flows on the part of the entire group that redraws the map of twentieth-century American poetry. At once complementing and complicating this hemispheric turn, the black modernists Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, and Claude McKay converged on the transatlantic space to delineate the Afro-Caribbean integument of the United States, revealing an experience of the agrarian South and the urban North no less inflected by a tropical imaginary that offered resources for black expression and subjectivity white modernism could not imagine and an African diaspora that dissolved the same national boundaries and borders. In Michael North's The Dialect of Modernism and Vera Kutzinski's The Worlds of Langston Hughes: Modernism and Translation in the Americas, notable attention has been paid to McKay's and Hughes's modernist and transnational affiliations, but the two poets have not been juxtaposed along these vectors, instead confined to the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Atlantic where they play outsized roles. Nor have their poetic practices been linked to a Toomer equally invested in destabilizing the nation, albeit more emphatically at the level of region, through modernist strategies also placed too fully under the aegis of the Harlem Renaissance.

The importance of recognizing the extended borders and boundaries under the impress of the island of Key West and its poetic avatars for what has too long been

rendered as an insular American modernist poetics draws a through line of continuity with the cross-cultural poetics and poetries of Walcott's poetry of the 1980s and onward. The tortured agon with European poetic and aesthetic traditions rightly recognized as central to his poetic project—"I am a colonial upstart / at the end of empire"—is joined by an engagement with an American culture and poetics Walcott had thus far seen as indivisible from those older traditions. This same widely-cited declaration of colonial identity arises in his experience of the United States, after all, another empire coming to inform an already fraught relationship with tradition. As Walcott re-draws "the map of Europe" (CP 66) for the benefit of the New World, finding in Vermeer's paring away of artifice a congenial model for the Caribbean poet, so he redraws the "map of the New World" (CP 413) in service of a similar renovation. Integrating the United States within a more capacious geography than the one produced by social reality, Walcott finds in the other America a partner to realize the "comprehensive island hemisphere" Stevens and his modernist contemporaries imagined from another Anglophone-Hispanophone nexus in Key West, where, in a valediction to the "Archipelagoes," "slowly the sail will lose sight of the islands" (413).

Anita Patterson has noted that Walcott's relationship to American poetics has drawn increasing attention from critics such as Charles Pollard, Rei Terada, Paula Burnett, and John Thieme, who have all examined his "selective reshaping of Eliot's poetics" (Patterson 160). On this Eliotic basis, Pollard, in particular, has imagined a New World Modernism for both Walcott and a Kamau Brathwaite equally influenced by the arch-modernist, an idea first put forward by Jahan Ramazani. Theorizing a "comparative American poetics," Patterson herself has widened this frame to include Walcott's

"relations with American antecedents from Poe to St.-John Perse," exploring how he has drawn on their stylistic and thematic resources for his "emerging self-conception as a New World poet" (160). But, with the exception of Hart Crane, what this American matrix imagined elides are Walcott's antecedents in Key West, poets who collectively imagined a South Atlantic framework that challenges the parameters of nation and region. Even Crane's influence has been largely confined to style that required exorcism, despite the fact that each poet—Crane in *The Bridge*, Walcott in *Omeros* sought a mapping of their respective regions that placed each in situ. For Walcott, that meant a spatial imaginary refracting various parts of Europe and the United States through St. Lucia, while for Crane, a New York refracted by the Midwest and its Native American past. Each poet instantiates a Global South Atlantic where American and Caribbean history might be rewritten to acknowledge their shared fates that started in a Key West for Crane that was already Caribbean, an island from the start—if not exclusively—viewed from the Isle of Pines that produced both *The Bridge* and the lesser known Key West sequence.

Walcott's engagement with the Global South Atlantic inherited from Key West dissolves boundaries within the Caribbean as well as without. Drawing on the same express dialectics of North and South and Here and Elsewhere from Bishop and Stevens, Walcott in the "Tropic Zone" (CP 496-502) sequence of *Midsummer* (1984) voices an extended pan-Caribbean identification with Puerto Rico—"This is my ocean" (i.496)—and more obliquely, to its larger, sister island, with "vines [that] grip the seawall and drop like olive-green infantry / over from Cuba" (i.496) at the same time as he recognizes the difficulty of the enterprise. The already existent division imagined within

the Spanish Caribbean through this ironically rendered margin—the Cuban military power in the region exerting the pressure of the absence—is unsurprisingly greater still for the Anglophone Walcott, who promptly runs aground on the shoals of linguistic difference: "but it is speaking / another language, since its accent changes around / different islands" (i.496). Both the enjambment of "another language" and "different islands" only serve to underscore this separation, as does the plural phrase of the latter, having situated the linguistic disjunction between the two islands against a wider set of ones, where St Lucia stands potentially estranged from more islands still than these Hispanophone neighbors that have been at once conjoined and demarcated. But despite the "testy Spanish" (i.496) that impels him to relearn "our S's / as the surf says them" (i.496), much remains the same—"you'll recognize hovels, / rotting fishnets. Also why a dory was shot / for being a gringo" (i.496).

Even without the poetic collaboration Langston Hughes undertook in 1930s Cuba with Nicolás Guillén and the wider poetics of *negrismo* Guillén formulated, or that Wallace Stevens forged with the *Grupo Orígenes*, through an understudied correspondence with Rubén Rodriguez Feo in the subsequent decade, Walcott amplifies his Anglophone and Afro-Caribbean St. Lucia beyond the ken of his Franco and Anglophone connections elsewhere in the region. Well-documented affinities with Kamau Brathwaite, Édouard Glissant, Aimé Césaire, Jean Rhys, and Wilson Harris should be read alongside Walcott's forays into the Hispanophone parts of the region. Unlike his Anglo and African-American predecessors, Walcott reveals the divisions as well as affinities that exist within the Caribbean—a Hispanophone island that greets the Anglophone speaker with "testy' linguistic difference—and even within the

Hispanophone islands, the more militarily consequential Cuba whelming Puerto Rico with "vines ... like olive-green infantry."

Even the affinities St. Lucia holds with the Hispanophone Caribbean depend on a different basis than those Hughes and Stevens imagined for the United States and Cuba. Like them, Walcott unites the two islands on the basis of their shared landscape—"seas of cane / as deep as my island" (ii.497)—but he also reveals an affinity that depends on their shared position as satellites of United States capital and markets as the sequence develops. Whether turning an acerbic eye on the "exhausts of limousines idling outside the hotels" (ii.497), or within these hotels, where the island's folk culture becomes co-opted to satisfy the demands of international luxury—"if the white architectural mode is / International Modern, the décor must be Creole" (iii.498) at once binding and suspending them through the conditional—he unsparingly reveals the resort economy obviating the poverty that produced it. Even the "seas of cane" evoke a slaving past, both in their own materiality and in the Middle Passage the sea metaphor reflects.

The rotting hovels and fishnets find themselves done no better service by the offices of culture. "The indigestible sorrow / of the Indian" (ii.497) has been consigned—like the "corals" (ii.497) that form the abstracted figure's watery grave—into "bits for the National Museum" (ii.497) anthropology operating as the handmaiden of commerce. Each of these conditions has been underwritten by a larger "colonial fiction" where "evil remains comic and only achieves importance / when the gringo crosses the plaza, flayed by the shadows of fronds" (iv.499)—by a literature of the Global North, in other words, that Walcott's sequence offers a corrective for. Theirs is a unity, then, largely

founded on a shared estrangement from the United States, with whom they form the contact zone theorized by Mary Louise Pratt, "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived in the world today" (Pratt 34).

In his subsequent book, *The Arkansas Testament* (1987), Walcott extends this transnational crossing through forays further afield, into Martinique and Central America, drawing in the Francophone as well as the Hispanophone, the American continent as well as the archipelago, to reveal a Caribbean containing more of the hemispheres than its own chain of islands. Such sites exist "Elsewhere," but as critics have noted, the term is strategically deployed. As in Elizabeth Bishop's employment of the same schema in *Questions of Travel*, Walcott undermines the distinction throughout the volume, conflating the two spaces in poems such as "Marina Tsvetaeva," and "A Latin Primer" (Guiness 164) in order to "enact the realization" that Elsewhere—in the poem of the same title—is always "already here" (Baugh 178). Placed under a US aegis through the titular Arkansas, Walcott's Caribbean extends to encompass a Southern United States that resonates with the energies of larger, global South. He links the two sites most forcefully amongst these other multiple geographical connections.

As his modernist predecessors imagined a United States continuous with the Caribbean and the Americas, so Walcott envisioned a North America shaped by the contours of the Global South as well as shaping them, albeit with greater friction. "Falling in love with America"—as he announces at the beginning of *The Fortunate Traveller* in "Upstate" (CP 401-402)—signals the beginning of a lover's quarrel with the

region that proves no less tortured than the larger division "between this Africa and the English tongue I love" (CP 18). Against a scene of the prairie where the rural poor of Walker Evans have been elevated over the pneumatic "billboard model" to fulfill the inspiriting role of "American Muse" (FT 7-8) the interloping Walcott acknowledges both his separateness from an iconic American identity—"she wouldn't let you in / she'd soon be phoning / the State Police"—and his begrudging praise for the subject and her unsentimental stoicism: "I pity her. / I guess I would like her well" (8). With the specter of race providing at least part of the ballast for Walcott's avowal that she would "soon be phoning / The State Police" if he sought more than the barest encounter, identification has especially stringent limits for the black poet. The second person pronoun employed at this moment indicates how far the foreclosure of sympathy extends by intimately implicating the reader in that experience. Warily eyeing and eyed by the American citizen, Walcott seeks an entrance that remains blocked.

"Upstate," on the other hand, offers a stronger brief for the permeability of such boundaries. Set against the same backdrop of a bus depot, an intimate group ("a few of us") counts among its members "a stale-drunk or stoned woman in torn jeans, / a Spanish-American salesman, and, ahead, / a black woman folded in an overcoat" (401) that dissolves divisions of nation and race, setting these nonwhite subjects alongside a normatively white one that passes without an identifying epithet. By means of the connective hyphen; the delineation of, if not conflation to, dress; and the socially outlaw drug and alcohol abuse, she partakes of their marginality, solidifying her membership to the group.

Even here, however, the community Walcott imagines is far from unbroken and whole. The nameless woman stands at a remove, abrogating to herself the trappings of privilege. For unlike her fellow travelers, she is not confined to a fixed position ("staledrunk or stoned"); nor to an economic one, like "the Spanish-American salesman"; nor to the demands of bourgeois propriety that preclude both companions from the use of either illicit substance; nor the expressly feminine expectations of the black woman in her overcoat, in which jeans, torn or otherwise, can form no plausible part. The multicultural tableau reaches a limit point, however meaningful the "emptiness [that] makes a companionable aura" (401) for these passengers. The white woman's marginality is a trope, not a social reality dictated by the pressures of race, national identity, and economic conditions—a choice, not a culturally constructed role—and all are silent, frozen, and anonymous figures, reflecting a voiceless populace unable to articulate its own subjectivity. Like the gallery posed in Wallace Stevens's "O Florida Venereal Soil," Walcott's bus depot provides a way station of difference at the center of the American nation, a presence foregrounded only to reveal a spectral absence. Like Walker Evans's woman—a representation who refuses the easy accession to the inspiriting role Walcott seeks to place her in—this woman also provides a stumbling by enacting a version of the reverse problem: a representation who refuses her full part of social reality. But if she remains fundamentally separate, she is not wholly so, sharing both the same space, and tellingly, the same silence.

Walcott's aesthetic crossings into the United States prove less vexed than these more broadly cultural encounters, providing the self-staged Caribbean interloper with sources of strength and opportunities for critique. Strength comes in the form of an

American optimism inherited from Emerson and Thomas Wolfe. "American Muse" and "Upstate" lionize the "trailways fantasist" (FT8) "through whose transparent profile / the meadows and towns revolve / who still believes in wingless angels" (FT8). These lines evoke Wolfe's Look Homeward, Angel (1929), with their references to angels and fantasist, the latter of which recalls the equally wandering and rootless Eugene Gant's depiction as a "fantasist of the Ideal" (Wolfe 319), and of course, Emerson's transparent eyeball. Critique, on the other hand, can be found in the Walker Evans of "American Muse." She provides Walcott with a vision of the landscape that refuses to gloss over its poverty, the billboard model framed against her grittier visage. In "Upstate," Walcott undertakes the same objective by reframing another form of romance at once aesthetic and cultural. He expands the open road of the Beats available in the poem's bus ride to encompass a multicultural population that this tradition—and the nineteenth-century lineage in Whitman and Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis underpinning itfailed to adequately acknowledge. More fundamentally, at the same time as Walcott makes this homogenous site reflective of the nation, he challenges its sentimental glamour in "American Muse," with a hitchhiker "thumbing a ride from the surge / of ignorant traffic" (FT 7). Matthew Arnold's sinister vision of late Victorian gloom in "Dover Beach," "where ignorant armies clash by night" (Arnold 86) deprives this moment of its alluring mythos.

"Old New England" (CP399) and "Piano Practice" (CP403) prove less sanguine about this hybrid landscape's transformative strength, preferring other, more decrepit poetic analogues, to reveal how intersections between North and South remain mediated through Europe. The latter imagines an Eliotic New York where "the old

LaForguean ache" of "metropolitan April" (CP403) reminds him "Today is Thursday, Vallejo is dying" (CP404), North and South both overwhelmed by the Old World. The former, meanwhile, acidly indicts American power, linking the devastation of Native Americans to the carnage of the Vietnam War to suggest New England is not so New, after all, resembling the empire that bore it.

However vexed, the hybridity is no less apparent; in fact, it is far more overt. "Piano Practice" re-imagines the touchstone of modernist epic, Eliot's *The Waste Land*; the culture capital in "Belle Époque Manhattan" (CP403), Symbolist poetics, a broad context of high European culture ("byzantine mosaic," "fin de siècle," "Impressionist clichés"), and in the dedication to Mark Strand, contemporary US poetry, through a Caribbean lens. Europe partakes of this fecund hybridity. The "Byzantine mosaic" (CP403) sets the backdrop for this alternate poetic genealogy and thereby places Walcott, Strand, and César Vallejo in conversation with the European and North American metropole where they all stand imbricated. Indeed, against the patent decay overhanging this urban center, the vitality of a renovated European tradition is implicit throughout the poem, evident in a diction replete with eroticism, flâneurie, music, and luxury. The carousing drive of the poem becomes nearly explicit when Walcott commands his companion thus: "come, girl, get your raincoat, let's look for life / in some café behind tear-streaked windows," and muses that "perhaps the fin de siècle isn't really finished" (CP404), routing the Spenglerian conceit central to the decadent pose in a conversationally American speech.

By the end, where "near the Metropolitan a steel tenor pan /dazzlingly practices something from old Vienna, the scales skittering like minnows across the sea" (CP404),

Walcott fully undercuts the affectation of decay, perhaps recalling the figure from Stevens's "Man on the Dump" who "sits and beats an old tin can, lard pail / One [who] beats and beats for that which one believes" (CPP 404). In the image of this equally inauspicious figure, along with the larger trajectory of the poem that produced his apotheosis, the hybridity imagined for Europe, the Caribbean, and the Americas defers Vallejo's death and Walcott's alienation. Rather than revealing a Europe whose hold cannot be loosened, Walcott imagines one that might be renovated by the New World. Through this street musician's performance, "something from old Vienna" has been renewed by its submergence in the sea that defines Walcott's experience of the New World, the "scales" at once of musical creation and fish.

This final transformation from decrepitude into a resurgent force was anticipated by his implicit challenge to the preeminence of the culture capital *par excellence* mere moments before: "Maybe the Seine outshines the East River, / maybe" (CP404). Even the mournful cry that begins the stanza—"I'm sorry I've never gone to the great city that gave Vallejo fever" (CP404)—returns the Peruvian poet to the hemispheric tableau, situating him within this triumphant turn in the poem and reuniting the two voices of the Global South ironically at the moment they seem farthest apart. Deepening the irony, the paradox arises from the same shared geographical displacement, Walcott here referring to the fact Vallejo died in Paris. As Edward Baugh notes, "the correspondence being made between Manhattan and Paris points to Walcott's own homesickness and exile from his South" (Baugh 155). Walcott may be "alone," his reaching for a *carpe diem* mode ending in stale convention ("I could offer her nothing but the predictable /

pale head-scarf of the twilight's lurid silk"), but it is loneliness shared with another exile of his South Atlantic.

"Old New England" offers a more dour view of the United States. Walcott imagines a transhistorical and transnational space that emphasizes the genocide the U.S. is responsible for. Linking the extermination of the Native Americans to the Vietnam War veterans, the poem reveals the nation belongs as much to the Global North as South. But the kinship drawn between the "crosses of green farm boys back from 'Nam" and the totems of dead Native Americans imagines a hybridity forged from the cauldron of naturalized violence where "Seasons are measured still by the same span of the veined leaf and the veined body" (CP 399).

To critique the violence that produced this hybridity, Walcott draws upon the nation's literary history. He evokes Melville from the first line ("Black clippers, tarred / with whales' blood, fold their sails") and Lowell throughout, particularly in the reference to "Old Glories," choosing a tradition that—at its most canonical and rooted in New England—stands uniquely poised to "speak back" to the same empire of which it forms a defining part. Like Glissant who employed Faulkner to navigate his own experience of the Americas along the Mississippi River, Walcott enlists the American Renaissance and its afterlife to follow "the Indian trial / [that] trickles down [the hillside still wounded by the spire] like the brown blood of the whale" and resurrect, if only as another spectral remnant, "the stone-feathered icon of the Indian soul" (399) through both the excavation of these images and the transposition of them to contemporary warfare. This historical tradition is one visible in the aesthetics of Melville and Lowell in addition. The novelist's gothic view of the sunnier national narrative preferred by Gilded Age America takes into

sober account the dispossession of indigenous peoples, "the natives' fate in the midst of the American republic causing him to meditate deeply on the ethical shortcomings of the nation" (Marr 156). From his popular sea-stories, Typee and Omoo, to the harpoonists Queeque and Tashetego in *Moby Dick*, from "The Metaphysics of Indian Hating" in *The* Confidence Man, to the slave trade depicted in Benito Cereno, Melville struggled to situate American empire in the context of the both the nation's indigenous and African peoples and those of the wider Global South. What Timothy Marr deems an "ethnic cosmopolitanism" (Marr 161) was not without its limits, but it was not without its strengths, either. Melville undermined stereotypes—along with the broader exoticism of difference that bore them—at the same time as he indulged in them. Lowell's own dark alarums from the sanitized national past made ample use of the this bleak vision from the nineteenth-century tradition. Lowell complemented Melville's interest in native dispossession with a critique of the Vietnam War through his role as a public poet—a critique Walcott revives by memorializing the fallen soldiers likely already being forgotten by 1980 when the poem was written.

The Afro-Caribbean Walcott draws on more than Anglo-American sources to recover the violent subtext of American hybridity. The ships of New Bedford depicted here allude to Frederick Douglass's famed vision of the port city's harbor, where seafaring vessels of commerce carried a far different, happier valence, embodying for the self-emancipated slave efficient and honest Yankee industry, adding another and wider juxtaposition of the Native American and African-American. Here, the triumphal ships of commerce that the rapturous Douglass encountered have been thrown into decidedly harsher relief. Walcott has them transformed into "black clippers" that evoke

their conveyance of human cargo as much as their role as whaling ships which are already grim enough with the *Moby Dick* intertext, the same slaving associations Douglass is intent on divorcing them from. Likewise, the "splendid churches, beautiful dwellings, and finely-cultivated gardens" Douglass surveys in the city have become, in the form of "a white church spire," "a rocket [that] pierces heaven," a "spire / of the white meetinghouse" an object which "the hillside is still wounded by," and a "spring [that] lances wood and wound" (CP 399). The representation of the church spire as a "rocket" also provides a way of linking the slave past to the warfare of the poem's present, the New England staple Douglass found so attractive transformed into a weapon of death at an increasing time of nuclear armament in the U.S. Cold War.

Despite subverting Douglass's optimism, Walcott nonetheless affirms—through the same blackness of these clippers—the escaped slave's central authorship in the same literary and national imaginary from which black faces are conspicuously absent. The centrality extends beyond Douglass, however. The escaped slave's subtext belongs to a wider blackness deeply embedded within the poem's *donnée* of an indigenous past. The same images from the Indian trail evoke the racial site of Jim Crow violence. "Logs burnt black as Bibles by hellfire" (CP399) signify the fungibility of burnt black flesh and the trees from which such bodies found themselves hung from in lynchings and the religious order that grimly authorized these macabre spectacles. "The brown blood ... in rowanberries bubbling like the spoor" (CP399) enacts a similar dissolution between blood and trees reflective of dead black flesh. The aestheticizing of this state-sanctioned violence reflects the lynching postcards that themselves aestheticized the practice during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

When regarded alongside spoor, a word that names "the trace, track, or trail of a person or animal, esp. of wild animals pursued as game" ("spoor")—the Indian trail itself also encodes blackness, suggesting the fatal hollows of the slave escape. That same image can be found in the bestial "spoor" that encrypts at once the escaped slave and the bloodhounds who, to his chagrin, track him. Ironically, the slave itself can even been found in the Anglo-Saxon etymology of the same term (spoor means *footprint*), as well as in a South African usage that refers to a similarly policed trail of black subjects.

In embedding blackness into the poem in these ways, Walcott reveals an American Renaissance that belongs to Douglass as much as Melville and Hawthorne, redefining that nineteenth-century lineage in the same way that Walcott and his excursions in a larger Global South Atlantic redefine modern and contemporary American poetics. With Melville and Lowell offering problematic antecedents, this move thereby creates a space for Walcott's own poetics through a Douglass that situates him squarely within an African-American tradition. Culturally, in excavating their shared histories and twinned fates, Walcott hybridizes the black and indigenous subject in addition to having done the same for these subjects and the Vietnam veterans.

Walcott's deepest investment in the American landscape and history and deepest affiliation with its literary history arises in Book IV of *Omeros*. Through an aerial exploration of the Dakotas, he embeds both the literary and social historical strands of the United States within the Caribbean archipelago to form a transnational space that—in staging and resolving the multiple tensions within his hemisphere—makes possible his journey to Europe in Book V.

Many critics have called this section the weakest and most peripheral section of the poem, but the incursion north extends beyond Walcott's ambivalent relationship to European tradition ingrained into the epic form itself, but carries on his work from the previous decade to mark a larger and more permanent shift in his mapping of the hemisphere. Henceforth in Walcott's work, the United States comes to inform an integral and yet vexed part of an already challenging encounter with imperial power and its literary tradition.

As important as Homer, Dante, and Virgil are to the poem, then, so is Hart Crane. His influence on Walcott, as I noted earlier, has largely been confined to style particularly in a rhetorical excess that had to be unlearned—but the kinship extends beyond their wrought, and some would say, overwrought language. The Bridge, Crane's own national epic that has garnered no less ambivalence from critics, proves indispensable for understanding an Omeros engaged in its own ambitious project of mapping and national formation. Aside from Line Henriksen, who has drawn out affinities between Ezra Pound's Cantos and Omeros, the modernist epic inheritance of Walcott's epic remains as unacknowledged as the broader legacy of the American poetics that operates through Key West upon his conception of the Caribbean and Americas. In keeping with this dismissal of modernist epic, aside from Charles Pollard's New World Modernism, critics also confine poetic modernism more broadly in Walcott's work to a *jejune* influence he outgrew to develop into his mature style. Walcott quickly discards "apprentice work" derived from Eliot, Pound and Crane, the consensus holds, in pursuit of a polyvocal and hybrid style that aligns him with postcolonial and postmodernist discourse.

The elision of this early twentieth-century heritage is a mistake, for Crane's and Walcott's poems, in particular, do not stand merely in analogical relation, each poet undertaking an epic for regions purported not to have one—or at least without any obvious, paradigmatic example—but also resemble each other in a deeper way. The expansive, panoramic vistas of the vast regions that their poems instantiate into social, cultural, and literary history converge on the indigenous character of the United States (Crane in the Midwest, Walcott in the Dakotas) to reveal the mutual implication of North and South: their twinned histories and indeed shared fates. Similarly, modernism writ large remains a live issue for Walcott. The standard features of its poetic practice radical and self-conscious revision of tradition, the fragmentation of subjective experience, the temporal shifts and spatial dislocations encoded in a non-linear narrative, the aesthetics of collage—all play a role in developing this mature style regarded by many as a so-called break. More germane to his project of remapping the North-South divide, however, is the fact that modernism can be found in the same geographical superstructure refracted through Key West in which Omeros stands imbricated. Such a poetic region thereby renders the poet of hybridity more hybrid still by situating him amongst an alternate poetic genealogy that has remained even less acknowledged than his connections to Pound, Eliot, and Crane.

In that way, Walcott remains a live issue for modernism and its later twentieth-century afterlives, retrospectively revealing the elided indigenous and the hemispheric context as available to the twentieth-century literary tradition as the nineteenth and revising those depictions from the critical perspective of a Caribbean subject. Put

another way, Walcott foregrounds a modernism omitted from standard accounts of the formation, in an effort to re-imagine it.

In the second section of *The Bridge*, "Powhatan's Daughter" (CP51-68), Crane seeks out the nation's indigenous past through the figure of Pocahontas and eventually the chieftain Maquokeeta who joins her in "The Dance" (CP62). "Designed, so Crane told Waldo Frank, to serve his poem as 'a basic center and antecedent of all motion" (August 3, 1926)—that is to say, it's core—"its five subsections fill[s] nearly a third of the printed text" (Berthoff 99). The troped Pocahontas provides, in the words of Brian Reed, "quite literally the embodiment of U.S. history and geography" (Reed 151). As Crane himself said in a letter to patron Otto Kahn, she represents the "physical body of the continent" (ntd in Berthoff 99). Such primitivism relies on a myth of origins where the feminine body performs an outsized role, finding its logical conclusion in her sexual union with Maguokeeta that returns the nation to the "pure and mythical smoky soil at last" (ntd in Yingling 219), as he also remarked to Kahn. However problematic in its essentialism and romanticization of genocide, Crane's effort "to possess the Indian and his world before it is over" (ntd in Yingling 219) nonetheless offers an act of historical recovery that locates an obscured past in the context of a teeming present.

Elsewhere in the poem, he imagines the Indian princess in the context of the modernity depicted in "Harbor Dawn" (CP53) ("the woman with us in the dawn") and "The River" (57) ("a body under the wide rain"). Situated amidst the spaces of popular culture, telegraphy, the railroad, and the schoolroom, a "modernized" Pocahontas undermines the binary between the civilized and primitive, even as Crane represents her personhood according to the cultural logics of the latter. The mutual implication

even complicates what Gordon A. Tapper terms—borrowing from James Clifford—"the allegory of salvage" (Tapper 111) at work in Crane's poem, whereby the ethnographic observer recuperates the other on the verge of supposed extinction ("dead echoes" of "redskin dynasties")—a move especially essential for a modernist poet, since it allows him to break from Victorian convention by reclaiming a "purer" relationship to origins. But far from being aboriginal, much less prelapsarian, the origin point is always already present—a concealed reality requiring disclosure, rather than an artifact excavation.

As Tapper richly explores over the course of "The Invented Indian of *The Bridge*: Hart Crane and the Ethnographic Idea of Culture" (Tapper 101-148) ethnographic discourse provides a profitable social-historical lens for understanding the poem's engagement with the nation's indigenous history, extending the depiction beyond romantic troping to connect with contemporary intellectual trends in anthropology as well as ethnography that intersected with the vogue for the Indian in modernist poetics. Tapper locates an even greater challenge to primitivism in the skepticism of "The Dance" for these ethnographic and tropological conceits. If "Powhatan's Daughter" depicts Crane throughout the section "looking back wistfully at an idealized past," it also shows him "being cognizant of its idealization" (127) through a perspective which "views the primitive as a projective fantasy, a product of subjectivity itself" (102). Following Eric Sundquist's reading of the poem, Tapper argues that the famous couplet where Crane calls out, "Medicine-man, relent, restore — / Lie to us, acknowledges the fictive nature of the "tribal morn" in its imperative to lie. Likewise, Tapper sees in the "conjunction of immediacy and elusiveness" in which "a dialectic of presence and absence plays itself out [...] in a series of disappearing acts (125) a "primitive [which] remains an extremely elusive, mercurial object of desire" (128).

But like Pocahontas who appears *sub rosa* before emerging fully into view alongside Maquokeeta, Crane's skepticism concerning her romantic primitivism also precedes "The Dance." Indeed, a form of such irony precedes even Pocahontas herself, appearing in the guise, ironically, of the forces that lead to her displacement. In "Ave Maria" (CP 45), a dramatic monologue voiced by Columbus on his voyage to the New World, Crane creates a proxy for Pocahontas in the entreated Mary, invoking her through the traditional prayer of the title only to have her immediately disappear, rendered irrelevant by the body of the poem. Like the shadowy Indian, her status in the poem is equally fictive.

Mary fails to appear until a third of the way into the poem and the figures who are present from the outset and occupy a more meaningful role throughout are the male financiers of Luis de San Angel and Juan Perez. This usurpation of the poem's female religious conceit has been effected by secular and patriarchal authority that only underscores her irrelevance. Even Queen Isabella who one might expect to assume Mary's mantle, or at least play a more significant role, has been displaced by an Angel praised as the one "who reined my suit /Into the Queen's great heart that doubtful day" (CP 45). The belated "O Madre Maria"—itself a transformation of the Latinate phrase to Spanish that only underscores the actual Mary's absence—makes little difference. For as Berthoff notes, "the title notwithstanding, the sustained prayer that forms the poem's second part is directed not to Mary but an ocean god of a 'plenitude' and 'holocaust' combined" (Berthoff 99). The fact that the entreated divine turns out finally to be pagan

hardly preludes that same god being female. In fact, set against the tradition which Whitman would have been the most salient example for Crane, the Columbine sea might very well be Mary by another name, churning with a libidinal force rivaled only by *Voyages*. The epigraph from Seneca's *Medea* certainly gives us cause to think so, the Tethys of Tethysque it refers to an ancient Greek sea goddess at once the sister and wife of Oceanus.

But even if the sea provides as much a proxy for the absent Mary as Mary herself performs for Pocahontas, her survival within the poem solves less than it seems. As if Tethys's own doubleness has been written into Mary qua Sea and Queen Isabella qua court instrument, each woman—like her antecedent—is revealed to be a construction mediated through endless screens—in Seneca, in the Latinate title, in Luis De San Angel and Juan Perez, in Columbus himself. In addition to rendering the feminine void in this way, Columbus also ends up talking to and about men: the Chan, the Moor, the Doge, Fernando, Isaiah, Elohim.

Mary is a self-consciously rendered fiction that anticipates Pocahontas's equivalent status. Further, owing to the journey she authorizes, she is the lie that *literally made Pocahontas possible*. The conventional invocation never fully effected facilitates both the subsequent Anglo-American encounter that Columbus heralds, and through the extinction these landfalls produced, the romanticization of the figure's death—a lie Crane himself adopts in the "dead echoes" in "screamed red skin dynasties that fled the brain" (59). Already, after all, "the Indian emperies lie revealed, / Yet lost" (CP 47).

Such a linkage between the two women casts into doubt the authenticity of indigenous materials in a far more damaging way than had Pocahontas alone been approached ambivalently. For in rendering the pair inseparable, the poem demonstrates—before this part of the journey even properly begins—that an already tenuous binary between culture and nature in a poem where the modern and indigenous co-exist never had a chance.

Also undermining the troping of Pocahontas is the fact that her self-reflexivity exists within a larger framework of history as poetic fictions. "Van Winkle" (CP 55), juxtaposing Irving's figure with Cortez, Pizarro, and Smith, explicitly identifies that all agents arise from the same metatextual integument, each belonging to the schoolroom copybook that in Smith's case, means a representation in Longfellow—i.e., American poetics.

In acknowledging and even deconstructing the imagined nature of history he himself is trying to trope another way, this is not to say Crane acknowledges Pocahontas as an entirely false construction. He is too committed to the gendered exoticism lodged in both flesh and earth that she offers his project of national formation. Nor I am suggesting that the sequence imagines anything approaching subjectivity or social reality on her part. Even Maquokeeta was chosen for the appearance of authenticity rather than any specific social-historical context, as Tapper notes. This is only to say that, by acknowledging her cultural construction at all, Crane gamely resists the unreflective vogue for the primitive evident in his contemporaries. His Pocahontas, simply put, is not Vachel Lindsay's, however much she might owe to the poet's rendering. Maquokeeta is perhaps less fortunate in this regard, but the rules of custom

applied to his orgiastic performance noted by Tapper ensures he is not reducible to primitivism either. So, too, does the fact that the overpowering erotic energies at work through his person—energies that allow Crane to represent his own desire, albeit obliquely, through the homoerotic myth of St. Sebastian—remain incomplete, wedded as much to a disembodied heaven as any fecund earth. If the poem offers an eroticism unhampered by Victorian sexual mores, it doesn't quite reach fruition: neither for Crane—"I could not pick the arrows from my side" (CP64)—nor for Maquokeeta, however resonant with sparking, sprouting, electric energies, and possessed of "splay[ed] tongues" (CP63) the chieftain might indeed be.

Lawrence Kramer's annotated edition of *The Bridge* posits that the chieftain consummates his encounter with "thy bride immortal in the maize" (CP65) and thereby successfully produces Crane's own expansive view of the nation ranging from "High unto Labrador" to the "winds across the llano grass" in South America (Kramer 15). The subsequent stanza bears out the coupling, its final two lines ("Thy freedom is her largesse, Prince, and hid on paths thou knewest best to claim her by") casting Maquokeeta as her Prince and placing their relationship under the aegis of patriarchal matrimony evident in the diction of dowry ("her largesse") and ownership ("claim her"). The rest of the poem—including the subsequent "Indiana" (CP66) that distills this departed Indian essence into the American heartland—justifies this view of the larger poem.

But whether "div[ing] to kiss that destiny" (CP64); "squiring the glacier woman down the sky" (CP62); or "gaz[ing]" upon the maize Pocahontas "through [...] infinite seasons, / across [...] bivouacs of thine angered slain" (CP64-65); Maguokeeta's erotic

office appears noticeably less robust. The lover finds himself confined to chaste acts—kissing, squiring, gazing—that find justification in the chastity ironically arising from the same courtly framework motivating its more obvious aim of courtship. They are nuanced further still by being cast in the interrogative mode ("Who squired the glacier woman down the sky?"), as pursuit rather than an accomplished fact ("dives to kiss"), and as seasonal screens that—in their references to "infinity" and "slaughter"—diminish by distancing the bloodier history behind this beneficent union.

Indeed, it seems as if Pocahontas—the torrent and the singing tree/ and [...] virgin to the last of men," with a body "fanned / O stream by slope and vineyard—into bloom" (CP65)—might be able to fulfill her own desire. Even this self-generated access to fertility Pocahontas offers becomes less straightforward than it seems. More than merely mediating her union with Maquokeeta, the observing Crane comes to supplant her as bride. These avatars of the Pre-Columbian past may have borne the nation in the poem's telling, dying self-sacrificially in the act of its creation, but it is Crane who finally takes ownership of the eroticism Maquokeeta, in particular, incarnates: "We danced, O Brave, we danced beyond their farms" (CP65).

In contrast to the eroticism shared with Pocahontas, Crane's and Maquokeeta's is non-procreative, placed "beyond" the promise of harvests reaped. Through his insertion into the dance, Crane defuses the erotic primitivism of each figure he has constructed according to the same cultural logic, undermining their larger union in the process—and with it, possibly the nation. Seen this way, the next and final poem of the sequence, "Indiana," might very well distill an Indian essence into the heartland as much for ironic effect as to fulfill a fecund United States indebted to an indigenous past.

Kramer's gloss in the poem may reveal itself as incomplete both in the short and long term, with Crane, for all his sunny triumphalism and grandiose myth-making, divided to the core about the source of this myth and triumph.

Even here, the "lost" Indian remains an uncomfortable reality, revealed at once as neither lost nor quite so transcendent. The speaker of the poem, a beleaguered woman straight out of Walker Evans or Dorothea Lange—a figure originally designed to be yet another proxy for Pocahontas—encounters a "homeless squaw— / Perhaps a halfbreed" (CP67) with little of the romantic detail in Whitman's "The Sleepers" that Crane reworks. Unlike the source, she is no mythic interloper. Nor is she another pioneer, despite being "bent westward" (CP67). On the contrary, deprived of her lands, she resembles a prisoner of war whose "eyes, strange for an Indian's, were not black / But sharp with pain" that "seemed to shun the gaze / Of all our silent men—the long team line—" (CP67).

With the pioneer mother, the squaw enjoys a happier fate, to be sure, one that is consistent with the trajectory of a transfigured Indian essence evident from "The Dance." Each holding a baby, the two women forge a shared maternal role that binds them through the awakened gaze of the pioneer and nodding reply of the Indian. If we can credit Crane's gloss, the bond signals the "pioneer mother's succession to the nature-symbolism of Pocahontas" (ntd in Irwin 82). But it is the devastation of the preceding lines that proves finally more compelling, unhampered by the admittedly maudlin sentimentality of this mute understanding between the two women. "Riding without rein" (CP67), it is that Indian—dispossessed, traumatized, and unprotected—who refuses the reader, and the nation, any consolatory romance.

Additionally, when set against "The Dance" and the broader context of "Powhatan's Daughter," the fact that the Indian appears at all in the poem as anything save a phantom or *genius loci* only to be politically displaced signals a recurrent loss that destabilizes Crane's project by calling into question the pastness of that past upon which the present has been erected. The poem anticipates these losses elsewhere, such as in "the bison thunder [that] rends [the pioneer mother's] dreams no more" and the "firecat [that] slunk away" (CP66), borrowed from Stevens.

While Crane spends the majority of *The Bridge* imagining the nation's Indian intertext in the Middle West (Indiana, Illinois, Ohio), South (Memphis, Tennessee, Louisiana), and the liminal space where the two regions converge (the Ozarks, Missouri), in Book IV of *Omeros* Walcott explores the Dakotas only glimpsed briefly by his forbear in "The River" to reveal an Indian unadorned with primitivism and instead rooted in historical time.

Crane's passing depiction nonetheless bears meaningful comparison. "The last bear, shot drinking in the Dakotas / Loped under wires that span the mountain streams" (CP57) situates the disappearing Indian past within a modernity that inflects Walcott's own rendering of the Dakotas and Colorado from Chapter XXXIV of Book IV in *Omeros*. The confluence of telegraph "wires" and "mountain streams" finds an analogue in the "palomino mountains" that Walcott "mistook for lakes" (174).

So, too, does the "last bear" sacred to the Plains Indians which "loped under" these wires echo Walcott's "Crow horsemen [who] pointed his lance at the contrail / high over the Dakotas" (Om 174). Walcott stages an equivalent meeting between the indigenous past and modernity—and extends the convergence further. In this moment,

he evokes both the Indians themselves, rather than merely their totemic animals, and underscores a newer modernity by literally affixing the jet fuel to its object—"icy contrails scratched on the Plexiglas" (Om 174)—that still must grapple no less with the past for standing at a further remove from it. The "scratched" contrails derived from the Crow horsemen's lance leave a formidable and lasting impression, whatever the distance in space and time.

This deeper implication of the Indian past in the late twentieth-century that marks Walcott's aerial exploration is evident in a metaphorical framework where the "palomino" mountains describe lakes or mountains and the horses such Crow horsemen might ride. Ironically, the same horses were called *isabellas* by the Spanish, after the Queen Isabella who loved them, and brought to the New World by the sixteenth century conquistadores dispatched as her emissaries. The term thus encrypts the imperial heritage of a U.S. history Walcott will explore in the subsequent chapter of Book IV. Within this context, even the yoking of these horses to the lakes is instructive, recalling another relevant yoking of the two in the "horse latitudes." Describing "the belt of calms and light airs which borders the northern edge of the N.E. trade-winds" ("horse latitudes"), "the horse latitudes" has a folk etymology drawn from a supposed practice where Spanish sailing vessels—to incite becalmed waters and hasten their journey—tossed the equine cargo overboard.

In a wider discussion of aviation's relationship to American poetry of the 1970s and 1980s, Marit J. McArthur has observed that Walcott's "poetry of passenger flight, especially in the early years of the jet age, articulates how difficult it is to apprehend a global perspective" (McArthur 15). But in the subsequent decade, air travel allowed the

Caribbean poet to reflect upon and reshape that global perspective productively through the vector of historical time in *Omeros*, recovering an elided Indian past in the United States and revealing the Caribbean's implication in that same past and its elision. His "face frozen in the ice-cream paradiso / of the American Dream, like the Sioux in the snow" (Om 175), signals the latter. This image aligns Walcott with the chief of the Lakota Sioux, Big Foot, who had been left frozen in the snow at "The Battle of Wounded Knee" in 1890—the symbolic last stand between Native Americans and U.S. forces. At the same time, Walcott's willingness to "let him [the Crow horseman] pass / into the page" (Om 175) offers the Crow a measure of resistance to the historical eclipse, expanding upon this gesture toward inclusion in the historical record over subsequent sections of Book IV and the poem more broadly.

Still, despite claiming "Manifest Destiny was behind me now" (Om 175). Walcott does not exempt himself from the legacy of its imperial violence, leavening the statement with heavy irony. It is precisely this ideology that has made possible his plane ride in the first place, after all, however recuperative the errand. Walcott acknowledges as much in what he omits from a trajectory where "I saw the white waggons move across it [the same page], then the railroad track and the arrowing interstate" (Om 175): namely, flight. "Frozen in the American Dream," then, does not merely serve to depict him as a proxy for the victim, but owing to this privileged vantage point that stands indebted to the pioneers of westward expansion, casts him as defined by such movement. It is, after all, a paradise—"ice cream" underscoring its luxury, the Italianate form of *paradiso* its indebtedness to European empire via the Dante underwriting the larger poem's metrics of *terza rima*. In that way, "the icy contrails scratched on the

Plexiglas" portend an accusing fingernail at Walcott himself, a skeletal digit sharply drawn across the chalkboard of history.

Even if Walcott exposes himself to 'charges of self-aggrandizement' by comparing his divorce to the obliteration of the Sioux Nation (ntd in Breslin 262) in the next chapter, he has thrown in his lot with the Indians victimized by a westward expansion effected through the railroads that form an ironic counterpoint to Crane's depiction in "The River," where the transcontinental system expresses democratic possibility. Walcott expressly attends to their history, responding to a guide's almost perfunctory identification of its arguably most central moment—"somewhere over there," said my guide, "the trail of Tears / started" (Om 177)—with a deeper, more lasting attention:

[...] Then I made myself hear the water's

language around the rocks in its clear-running lines and its small shelving falls with their eddies, 'Choctaws,'
'Creeks.'

Choctaws.' [...]

Moreover, he does so to express a profound investment in that past. The Adamic method deployed in the Caribbean to such great effect has been repurposed to waters no less determined by historical pressures for being bounded. In the poem's consequent lines, these recovered names recall other consequences of imperial mapping, with misnamings in the slave south taking the place of names lost. "Towns named Helen, / Athens, Sparta, Troy" (Om 177) connect one form of European imperial violence with another for ironic effect, broadening the historical frame of the slave trade to the cultural center that provides the supposed basis of the West's freedom. But

Walcott does not diminish the North American role, invoking the "Jeffersonian ideal" (Om 177) in the construction of this new slave Europe with its "baying echoes of brutality" (Om 178). Closer to home, he invokes his own Caribbean context, placing his "Hectors and Achillieses" on the "plantations" (Om 177) of the past and amidst the rural poverty of the present:

[...] From the window I saw the bundles of women moving in ragged bands like those on the wharf, headed for Oklahoma; Then I saw Seven Seas, a rattle in his hands (Om 177).

In the "prairie" and the "wharf," "Seven Seas" and "the bundles of women," the interweaving between the heartland and the archipelago has grown so intermeshed that "those on the wharf" are as grammatically oriented to Oklahoma as the "bundles of women" who actually reside there. Likewise, Catherine Weldon provides a North American avatar of this interconnected history and offers to the more pernicious forces and actors depicted in the poem.

A nineteenth-century artist from New York who became committed to the cause of Native Americans during American expansion, Weldon offers an American who did not choose Manifest Destiny. Her interaction with the Native Americans is not rendered unproblematically—her love was sparked after "work[ing] as a hand in Colonel Cody's circus" (Om 179), Indians thereby staged as spectacle—but her commitment to the these indigenous peoples, to their way of life and the unspoiled land of an increasingly shrinking inhabitation, to the need for United States to respect agreements bitterly revealed as nothing more than "treaties changing like clouds, their ink faded like wind"

(Om 180), is sincere, genuine, and often moving. Weldon raises important questions about the relevance of Christianity to Native American life, the hypocrisy of the Christian church, and the character of both the Native American landscape and the culture that constructed it. It seems not for nothing that Walcott compares Weldon to "Achille on the river" (Om 180), and, more suggestively still, uses her to directly rebuke his earlier bathos: "Catherine Weldon rose in high relief / through the thin page of a cloud / making a fiction of my own loss" (Om 181).

Although succumbing to a degree of sentimentality in his engagement with indigenous past, Walcott takes even further Crane's ambivalent America's understanding of Native American and their placement within the histories of the United States and the Caribbean. Moreover, through the masque of Catherine Weldon—a post-romantic quester who honors the poetry of Native American experience without condescending to it—he underscores this rewriting of an earlier tradition, selfconsciously revising not only a modernist forbear in Crane, but the nineteenth-century poetic tradition in Whitman, Longfellow, and the larger American Renaissance. The latter rewriting reappears in the Melville of the subsequent section, invoked—as in "Old New England"—to both foreground and reinscribe the Other constitutive of the American literary tradition. Walcott discusses "Massa Melville" (Om 184) in dialect, both quoting a line from Moby Dick expressing white supremacy and responding acidly to this racism. And yet, in casting himself at the end of the section as the harpoonist Queequeg and the racist taxi drivers who refuse to pick him up as a modern day Ahab, reappropriates these fictive terms.

Walcott also widens the frame to encompass the Caribbean within this North American frame, but this departure from Crane is less of one than first apparent. Firstly, as Tapper has noted, Crane's interest in Native Americans was not confined to those in North America. Living in Mexico from 1930-1932, a year of which was spent on an ill-fated Guggenheim Fellowship, he was also committed to understanding and representing poetically the Indian of the Southern Hemisphere. That interest yielded a "handful of short poems dealing with the indigenous cultures of Mexico, such as 'The Sad Indian' and 'The Circumstance' (dedicated to Xochipilli, the Aztec god of flowers) [and] letters from Mexico [that] often touch on what he calls 'the nature of the Mexican Indian' (Tapper 108). As R.W.B. Lewis astutely observed, concurring with Tapper, the Indians in Mexico "sometimes mingled, not unnaturally, with the legendary American Indians of *The Bridge*. 'The Circumstance' [...] is an echo, almost a plagiarism, of the 'The Dance'" (Lewis 406).

Less productively, and more famously, "Crane planned a never-realized poetic drama on Montezuma, Cortez, and the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, 'a blank verse tragedy of Aztec mythology' for which he looked forward to 'study[ing] the obscure calendars of dead kings" (Tapper 108-109). Even in what he produced, Tapper nevertheless concludes, "the Indian Crane met in Mexico was not very different than the one he invented for *The Bridge*" (143). But Crane's Indian was not entirely different than Walcott's in his geographical moorings either, existing beyond the borders of the United States in a way that reveals a mutual implication of their histories.

Much less commented on is that for Crane the borders themselves proved more malleable than immediately apparent as well, reinforcing their shared conception of

South Atlantic. The contemporaneous but understudied "Key West" sequence—written during the same summer on the Isle of Pines that produced The Bridge—forms an undersong and ironic complement to the more public act of national formation the modernist epic augurs, if not realizes. "O Carib Isle!" (CP 11) encodes a "tropic death" both of trope and the tropics—that has been elided from a larger poem of regenerative dawnings and the imaginative transformations that transpire over the course of them. The space also complicates the desire and fecundity so constitutive of the larger poem, and nation, from which the sequence stands orphaned—"fertile /Albeit in a stranger tongue" (CP 111). "Dry groins" (CP 111) "fiery blossoms [that] clot the light" (CP 111), an "Air Plant" "that thrives on nothingness" (CP 123) a "Royal Palm" "forever fruitless" (CP 122)—all contribute to a landscape that at one invites and forecloses the expected eros of a Caribbean island that might serve to unleash the energies oriented ultimately toward procreation—rather than pleasure—in The Bridge. This is not to say we should read the sequence as a mere extension of Crane's epic project; only that they "anagrammatize" (CP111) a baroque cipher of decrepitude into his conception of the North American continent that at least nuances, if not subverts, his epic ambitions. Below the nation's fields and rivers "death's brittle crypt" resides submerged; above its cityscapes and skylines, hovers "the wind that knots itself in one great death" (CP111). In poems such as "Imperator Victus" and "Bacardi Spreads The Eagle's Wing," Crane also surveys the imperial violence and its aftereffects with an unsparingly satirical eye. The former lays bare the decimation of the pre-Columbian world at the hands of imperial Spain through the minstrel dialect of a conquered Indian, "Big guns" forming a refrain for the extinction of Pre-Columbian gods and culture.

Positioned closer both in time and space, the latter poem has Crane critiquing the racial and cultural condescension of a contemporary United States that patronizes Cuba, in both senses of the word, as a pleasure resort. The speaker of the poem, a putatively white tourist who might in some measure represent Crane himself (Brunner 299), reduces the desperate situation of "Pablo and Pedro, and black Serafin [who] / Bought a launch last week" (CP120) and nearly drowned after the shoddy craft capsized to a comic interlude with a Jazz Age punchline. Having almost lost their lives, "they're back now on that mulching job at Pepper's. / —Yes, patent-leather shoes hot enough to fry / Anyone but these native high-steppers!" (CP120). Conscripting them into performance for white spectatorship, the speaker trivializes their near death and resumption into service-industry poverty. The Afro-Caribbean identity of "Serafin" evokes minstrelsy in particular, with an abstracted, quasi-allegorical name indicative of a stock character consistent with such a context. Through the same performative lens, Serafin's Hispanophone and putatively white companions ("Pablo and Pedro") are similarly constructed, akin to a vaudeville duo with their generic, alliterative, and assonant names.

Walcott at once builds on and sharply departs from Crane's voyage into the liminal Key West and Isle of Pines. He peoples a space that had been essentially blank for his forbear while at the same time deepening both the modernist subversion of American borders and boundaries and the indictment of imperialism that constructed and reified those same demarcations in the first place. Most crucially, Walcott forges this transnational space through the same peoples he has brought to the fore, creating a diasporic identity through the shared dispossession of the Afro-Caribbean and the

Native Americans elided from the historical consciousness of the United States. This fundamentally reparative project on Walcott's part emerges in Book 5, when, reminded of Catherine Weldon, the poet bears witness to the end of the Plains Indians (Om 213), drawing an express parallel between the abduction and enslavement of Africans and the decimation of the Native Americans in the subsequent section (1-15/215). As Don Barnard notes, the stanzas provide a "direct echo of [the first five stanzas from] XXVII.ii, where Achille sees a chain of men and finds in the deserted village a child and a fanged mongrel, then sees Sevens Seas and thinks him deaf as well as blind because his head never turned"—the same scene unfolding here, in a different context (Barnard 50). To buttress this connection between the two contexts, "the dry rattle / in one hand" of Omeros himself emits "the same sound I had heard in Cody's circus" (216). Linking the Caribbean Omeros this directly to North American kin, Walcott can finally pass into Europe proper. Having created a New World avatar to meet the European dimension of Omeros and the larger poem he inhabits, the European continent becomes transformed in turn. In Portugal and Spain, decaying London, Joyce's Ireland, the Mediterranean, the Europe Walcott now puts on display belongs—to borrow a term from Emmanuel Wallerstein—the semi-periphery, even London modified by the periphery that has returned. Bookending his journey between the Caribbean and Europe in this way, North America abrogates a central role in his geographical trajectory, at once acting as a conduit between the two larger spheres of his geographical imaginary and a point of mediation that shares with St. Lucia the predicament and power of colonial identity, however different the stakes, where the two halves of the hemisphere combine to shape Europe from whence they emerged.

The poem principally crosses the Atlantic to confront the slave trade and the garish phantasmagoria of the Middle Passage, with Portugal—"the first to exploit African slaves in the early 1400s" (Barnard 195)—providing a useful point of entry to perform this re-enactment of psycho-historical trauma. But what the voyage of homecoming also enables Walcott to imagine is a "map of Europe" much less monolithic than such an imperial history suggests. Lisbon is "Ulissibona" (189) apocryphally founded by and named after Ulysses—except, that is, until it "was no longer Lisbon but Port of Spain" (190). Likewise, the personified Sunday is at once reminiscent of the Conrad's Anglophile accountant from the *Heart of Darkness* and "like a negative of Baron Samedi (Baron Saturday), the voodoo figure in black tailcoat and top hat," endowed with analogous powers: Saturday able to raise the almost-dead, Sunday able to rewind time (Barnard 196). The Portuguese have also been rendered into exiles in Walcott's rendering. Sunday's description as "an old Portugee leathery as Portugal" encodes a history where the Portuguese of West Indies emigrated from Madeira owing to the decline of the wine industry and religious persecution in the nineteenth-century (Barnard 196).

Moreover, having come from their own archipelago peripheral to a European nation that would itself become increasingly semi-peripheral, they also carried to the region their own quasi-colonial status. By the next section, Portugal is already losing its place as hegemon. "Once the world's green gourd was split like a calabash by Pope Alexander's decree" (Om 191)—a reference to Treaty of Tordesillas that divided the world between Spain and Portugal in 1492—introduces another European power, and

the note of territorial squabbling from which London, the next empire depicted, would emerge victorious before itself falling into disuse.

The mention of the treaty also introduces a note of doubleness that elicits thoughts on Walcott's own "crossed [...] meridian" (Om 189): "Now I had come / to a place I felt I had known, an antipodal wharf / where my forked shadow swayed to the same brass pendulum" (191). That doubleness contains within it the seeds of Portuguese decline, a riven Caribbean identity, and the vagaries of imperial conflict. It also dramatizes a larger dialectic of European decline that cuts against the continent's role as center in a fundamental way. Over the course of Book 5, a decaying London is attended by an Ireland itself divided, "the gun on its shoulder / still splitting heirs (Om 199); Greek citizens become Roman slaves (Om 206); the crossroads of Istanbul "swathed like a Saracen" (Om 204) stands alongside the high Renaissance watermark of Venice that the same Turkey—via the Ottoman Empire—displaced, both conveying "the weight of cities that I found so hard to bear" (Om 204).

Each vision of Europe stands inflected by the exotic other that the "black crew" serving Ulysses (Om 203) and the derelict Omeros turned out by the church warden (Om 193) in London distills. Even within Europe, in other words, Europe has colonies. And these colonies offer a source of strength for a Caribbean poet otherwise estranged from the tradition. As Jahan Ramazani pointed out, Walcott identified with the Irish writers of Yeats, Joyce, Synge, seeing in them "colonials with the same kind of problems that existed in the Caribbean" (*Hybrid Muse* 49) Walcott memorably calling them "the niggers of Britain" (ntd in *Hybrid Muse* 49).

Unsurprisingly, the United States has colonies in the expected way as well in Omeros, with Greek slaves prompting a meditation on slavery in the US (Om 206), and the eventual return to America only serves to underscore, the devastation of the Plains Indians completed with a disturbing finality in which a "blizzard" — belonging to a larger system of signs conveying a whiteness that doubles for race and nullity — "slowly erased their swirling cries" (Om 215). But if the North American context presaging this journey to Europe laid the groundwork for reshaping Europe in a way that acknowledged its submerged histories internal as well external to itself, Walcott's meditations on the ghastliness and twilight of European imperial power allows him to more fully see the imperial character of the United States that took its place. Walcott reaffirms the connection between the enslavement of Africans and the decimation of the Indians, unsparingly represents the massacre of these Indians at the precise moment they attempt to challenge the United States government, and reveals the persistence of a European legacy in North America. In depicting a United States that remains caught up in its imperial parentage no less than the Caribbean—here as elsewhere—Walcott not only reveals another point of contact between the two hemispheres, but refutes any notion we have moved beyond the cultural and historical terms of our history. We are as belated, in other words, as our partners in the South.

These African and European survivals instantiate a violence and subjugation arguably surpassing any in Europe, but they also create a space for solidarity, in the continued connection forged between Africans and Native Americans; for the insurgency of the Ghost Dance; and for even a beneficent legacy in Nina the Polish waitress Nina who Walcott meets in Toronto—a figure whom evokes for him the poets

who resisted Communism—"Zagajewski. Herbert. Milosz." (Om 212)—and an exile analogous to his own. Such spaces create the same kind of colonial status Walcott identified the Irish writers—the Native Americans the *other* niggers of the United States, and all such peoples of the both center and periphery set in comity and collision through the turbid transnational circulations and flows of the Global South Atlantic.

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