

After Independence: Melancholia and carnivalized culture

Susan Harewood
University of the West Indies
Draft please do not cite

“In short, Caribbean freedom has become ossified” (Henke, 2001: 416)

There are moments when, behind the confident pronouncements of political projections and economic trajectories, it seems as if political leaders are not sure what they are supposed to be doing. Lacking any clear vision of how to make life better and the future possible for the vast majority of people, leaders are wont to fall back on the fundamentalist theology of market forces. Thus it seems as if one of the most difficult tasks is to imagine what “freedom” could possibly mean. Frequently the concept of freedom has been reduced to the freedom to purchase, or it has been tainted by the aftertastes of revolutions that have gone horribly wrong. Paul Gilroy mourns this trivializing of the idea of freedom. He rejects the desire to think of freedom in small ways, to encamp the very concept within nationalist/racialized boundaries and, instead, articulates a vision of a cosmopolitan future. Gilroy’s vision is one that is both transnational and national in its focus. On the one hand, he has drawn upon aesthetic and intellectual practices lived in motion across the Black Atlantic in order to attack patterns of race thinking that are equally mobile. Yet, on the other hand, his analysis maintains a metropolitan focus, particularly its focus on the future of Britain.

Those of us whose work focuses particularly on the Caribbean are drawn to Gilroy’s analysis at the same time that we are consternated at how rapidly the experiences of the Caribbean *in* the Caribbean drop out of his work. His Atlantic focus, whilst astoundingly comprehensive, tends to background the experiences and meaning making practices of Caribbean people in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, he consistently provides academia with the analytical tools needed to interrogate a variety of lived experiences. It is for this reason that, in this article, I have turned to the analytical insights provided by *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture* (2004). This

is arguably Gilroy's most English work to date. Work such as *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993) and *Against Race: Imagining Politics Beyond the Color Line* (2002) seem more transatlantic in their focus – though the dialog tends to be between England and the United States, between Black Britons and African Americans. However, Gilroy admits that *After Empire* emerges from his ambivalent love for England and seeks to advance a way for England and other European powers to deal with their brutal colonial past and plot a convivial future. Nonetheless, Gilroy's use of the concept of melancholia in *After Empire* offers unexpected possibilities for thinking about democracy in the Caribbean¹. For me it illuminates the ways in which the current mood of defensive nationalism emerges from a (largely middle class) yearning for the period immediately following independence. The optimism of that period has largely been lost as more and more citizens have grown impatient with the political leaders' inability to live up to the promises of independence. The desire to re-create the mood of heroic possibility that followed independence has not been accompanied by any concomitant will and/or ability to satisfy or even acknowledge the needs of the Caribbean constituency. Rather, attention has been diverted to returning to the independence enthusiasm and disciplining those who are identified as getting in the way of "how things used to be." In this paper I will explore the challenges facing the pursuit of freedom by examining colonial history and its melancholic effects on the contemporary Caribbean.

¹ As Norman Girvan (2001) ably shows there are many different ways to define the Caribbean. The region demonstrates the ways in which national borders are both fluid and have material significance. Surely there is nothing quite so concrete as the border of an island nation-state. However, for survival particularly in a world governed by trading blocs, these microstates of the Caribbean fashion a myriad of state alliances. These formal state groupings are reinscribed and refashioned by the familial relationships lived in constant circulation across the region and into the Caribbean communities into the North. In this article, however, I will be using Caribbean to focus most specifically on the Anglo-Caribbean – those territories which used to be British colonial possessions. The rigidity of thinking about the region exclusively within the groupings set up by the European powers is a problem with which Caribbean studies continues to wrestle.

Is there melancholia after independence?

Gilroy draws upon social psychological analysis of post War West Germany to explain melancholia. He describes it as a feeling of loss over the nation's moral legitimacy which results in an inability to take responsibility for the horrors and brutalities perpetuated in the name of the nation and to act to rectify those injustices. Gilroy's interest is with the way in which this analysis of West Germany can be applied to England; however, he points out that it is an analysis which is applicable to any of the European former imperial powers. It is melancholia, he argues, that prevents these former imperial powers from mourning the loss of their empires and addressing the injustices that they have perpetrated on the former colonies and the formerly colonized peoples. It is melancholia, he further states, that leads to the iterative invocation of past glories on the battlefields of the World Wars and the careful plotting of history so that the multicultural pasts of the European nations can be avoided in the construction of some bygone homogeneity. The loss of this mythological homogeneity gives energy to the resentment directed at Europe's multicultural present.

Melancholia, therefore, is about loss, resentment and an inability to face up to guilt. Clearly, there are potential hazards in taking a concept that is used to describe the neuroses of the colonizer and using it to describe problems in the formerly colonized world. It would be very easy to give the impression that there is no difference in terms of culpability between the colonizer and the colonized. One could find oneself pandering to Europe's desires to appear blameless and claim the status of victims which, Gilroy states, has been given expression in some revisionist histories. This is certainly not my objective. Rather, my initial goal is to

illustrate the point, found in Gilroy and elsewhere, that the anticolonial movement and independence project that emerged from it are built on the same notions of authority found in England's imperial project. Many of the symptoms of postcolonial melancholia have corresponding symptoms in the Caribbean, though on a significantly different scale and directed at different targets. There is a sense of loss in the legitimacy of the nation which is masked in an iterative plotting and re-plotting of history in order to reaffirm the legitimacy of the Black middle class male political directorate. Whereas Gilroy's examination of melancholia points to a fantasy of omnipotence which the Europeans are trying to recreate, in the case of the Caribbean it might be more accurate to write of a fantasy of inheritance as much of the political energy has been spent in ensuring that the middle classes are accepted as the legitimate inheritors of the Enlightenment project.

Fantasies of inheritance

The Caribbean anticolonial movement has largely be based on a contradictory relationship with its colonial inheritance – trying to break away from England whilst retaining English racialized and gendered notions of authority. To understand that contradictory logic, it is important to examine the way in which creolization has been deployed as part of the anticolonial movement. Certainly creolization has been an important means for analyzing the processes of cultural exchange and creation that take place when different peoples come together or are forced together. It is an analytical framework that appears to be growing in popularity in some quarters as global ethnoscaapes mean that all lives are characterized by heterogeneity. Thus creolization offers a way to analyze this heterogeneity. However, my concern here is less with creolization as analysis in art and in the academy and more with its use as an ideological framework for

Caribbean nationalisms as it suffuses government documents and national policies. In this use it tends to lose some of its complexity and contention².

Caribbean nationalists have adopted creolization for a number of different reasons and with a number of different effects. For example, creolization ascribes positive value to African and European mixing where colonial knowledge had identified such mixing (or miscegenation as colonialists defined it) as indicative of the degenerate nature of Caribbean culture. In a related manner creolization permitted nationalists to challenge the idea that all African cultural practices and beliefs had been lost during slavery and that the Caribbean was, therefore, merely a poor copy of English culture. Nationalists have argued that, in fact, the Caribbean is the site of the creative development of a new culture, Caribbean culture, which is a mix and modification of African and European retentions.

In its positive manifestations creolization has therefore emphasized creativity and cultural bridges. However, what is increasingly being acknowledged is that creolization often retains the residue of colonial purity discourses. For example, Percy Hintzen (2006) points out that historically creole carries with it the traces of biological notions of race that emerged from colonial practices and knowledge production. “Creole” works to produce two pure races – the African and the European. These race categories are catch-all phrases that bring together phenotype, culture, temperament, skill-set, history and location into unified core essences. Creolization posits that on entering the Caribbean these two stable races are changed or creolized. The Afro-creole emerges from the mixture of African cultural content with European

² For example, Shalini Puri (2004) argues that creolization’s critical edge has been lost because of what she has called its complicity with nationalist projects.

institutional structures –understood in the colonial period as the positive influences of the European. The European-creole’s creolization on the other hand, was used to identify white degeneration due to the negative influences of the tropical environment and contact with Afro-creoles: “When applied to Europeans, creolization implies the taint of savagery. When applied to Africans it implies a brush with civilization” (Hintzen, 2006: 12). There is, therefore, a racial hierarchy that privileges whiteness in this discourse of mixing. Thus, idealized national Caribbean identities are constructed on the notion of intermixture which seems, at one level, to be a contrast to the purist nationalisms that characterize European nationalism and which Gilroy consistently challenges. However, examination of the Caribbean example shows that race and hybridity have not necessarily become ordinary in the way that Gilroy desires to see them becoming in his model of everyday conviviality in British urban communities (Gilroy, 2003 & 2004). In fact, the Caribbean example might make us cautious about the significance of this model of conviviality. Certainly the types of sharing of cultural experiences that Gilroy sees in urban England have long been taking place within the region. This can be witnessed in the faces, foods, sounds, faiths and arts of the Caribbean. Nevertheless, these exist within discourses of white supremacy which continue to position the region as the hinterland of Europe and the United States. Thus a desire like Gilroy’s to do away with race, therefore, must take into consideration how the effects of race continue to make themselves felt, for example, in economic relations.

For example the purist discourse and the notion that Caribbean culture is comprised of black content and white structure imagines Caribbean nation-states in such a way as to map social roles onto relations of race and produces particular legitimacies. It has traditionally placed Blacks in

control of the symbolic life of the nation-state and Whites in control of the economic life. The Black non-capitalist, non-propertied intellectual class has been charged with managing politics, the state bureaucracies and the aesthetic practices. They have been the brokers of the symbolic capital of the nation. The White propertied, merchant class has been charged with brokering the Caribbean's engagement with international capital.

It is possible to see this racial hierarchy in a variety of areas of Caribbean life, including the three cultural practices that form the triumvirate of oppositional discourse in the region – the West Indian novel, the West Indies cricket team, and calypso criticism. For example, in *Making Men* Belinda Edmondson (1999) explores the relationship between the West Indian oppositional novel and the privileging of Englishness. She argues that the anticolonial West Indian novel sought to challenge English colonial power by proving that West Indian men were equal to the task of performing the role of author/leader. In other words, Edmondson says that for the West Indian man to prove himself worthy he had to make himself, or the English grammar school system imported into the Caribbean had to make him, into an English gentleman author. Edmondson's argument is persuasive and demonstrates the ways in which the English inheritance can be seen to be a structural part of the Caribbean anticolonial writing. If we take Edmondson's argument then see in the West Indian novel the traces of vindicationist nationalism of which Gilroy writes – the desire to prove oneself human enough (English enough, gentlemanly enough) for equal rights and justice. However, this reading of the anticolonial strategies can benefit from some engagement with C.L.R James (1963) and Homi Bhabha (1994). At the moment it assumes a transmission of values between the colonizer and the colonized that is too easy, too one directional, too complete. James however, seems to express a ritual of communication in which,

he is able to read in Thackeray, for instance, and write in *Beyond a Boundary*, for example, his own transnational vision of class liberation. Bhabha, too, conveys a ritual in which the mimicry of the English Book reveals the imperial powers' protestations of purity and authority over knowledge to be a charade.

These two different perspectives on the repercussions of including the terms of Englishness into the anticolonial struggle account, perhaps, for the differences between Paul Gilroy and Laura Chrisman (1997) on the political possibilities of nationalist movements in former colonies. Gilroy has an "antipathy towards nationalism in all its forms" (Gilroy, 1999: 184). Chrisman argues that his conceptualization of nationalism is too narrow. She states that he presumes, "that nationalism can only be ethnically purist and exclusivist, and is incapable of pluralisation". At the risk of being accused of trying to have my cake and eat it, both Chrisman and Gilroy offer something useful to the careful consideration of the nationalism.

Chrisman's perspective allows us to recognize nationalism is not a one dimensional term. Like all discourses nationalism can be re-accented and it has served as a tool of political mobilization as a *precursor* to liberation (Miller et al 1999). This viewpoint permits an historically sensitive assessment, for example, of nationalist attainment of constitutional sovereignty in the Caribbean. One cannot deny that, from all accounts, this was a heady time. Charismatic leaders challenged the planter/merchant elites (at least in the political arena) and won. They set up governments that were dedicated to social welfare and the transformation of the lives of the poor. Cultural policies assigned value to the artistic talents of the local populations where, before, only the art of the metropole was considered worthy. They formed alliances with rogue nations who were willing to

thumb their noses at the international super powers. At times, those alliances afforded the region greater bargaining power. Not only does Chrisman's perspective permit an assessment of what was achieved, it also offers the possibility that, if the meaning of "nationalism" is not always already settled, then perhaps there are ways in which it can be re-accented in the future to offer those who find themselves grouped together under the sign of the nation-state ways of building more just solidarities.

In contrast to this perspective, Gilroy's perspective shines the light on the inequalities and injustices that are glossed under the banner of nationalism and nationalist unity. For example, creolization posits Black male heroic struggle against white power. Missing from this narrative is the depth and breadth of Caribbean citizenry. The region is ethnically diverse, yet creolization posits only a two pronged inheritance – African and European. Creolization has received growing criticism for the ways in which of Indo-Caribbean citizens are marked as eternally external and foreign (see for example Khan, 2004, Munasinghe 2001, Munasinghe 2006, Reddock, 1999). Other descendants of nineteenth and twentieth century indentureship and migration – Chinese, Lebanese, Syrians, and Portuguese - are also made invisible by the narrow conceptualization of politics though this has not received as much attention. Perhaps the most invisible population is the indigenous population of the region. Women also are invisible in this heroic narrative. C.L.R. James was able to write eloquently about race, class and West Indian self government, but seemed unable to write effectively about women. He is not alone. The oppositional creole narrative recounted in histories, the West Indian novel, calypso criticism and sports and sports policy, for example, consistently discounts the presence, contribution, and interests of Caribbean women. In fact, as is often the case, women are the symbols of the creole

nation rather than agents within the nation and thus the ideal nation is particularly marked on the body of the “mixed race” brown female (Barnes 1997, Mohammed 2000, Edmondson 2003).

My point is that the Caribbean nationalist project has been conceived very, very narrowly as a struggle between Black gentlemen and White gentlemen and there has been growing impatience from those who have found that this struggle has not transformed and will not transform their lives. Not only have the promises of independence not been kept, but, as the region is forced to follow the rest of the world in the rapid retreat from welfare and a politics based on the needs of the poor, the promises of independence are being made to seem foolish. This has given rise to a great deal of disillusionment and I would link this disillusionment to Gilroy’s description of a nation’s loss of moral legitimacy. Perhaps this disillusionment is not as dramatic as the death of a dictator or as the end of a three hundred year empire, but it is significant nonetheless. Cracks are appearing in the façade of unity. The taken-for-granted alliances do not hold. The political leaders’ responses have been similar to the general responses Gilroy describes in Europe –the past is reinvigorated and called on to assuage the anger and resentment felt among the populace, particularly the youth. The glory days for the Caribbean, as already suggested, are the decolonization period and that small post independence window when the potential for the future was possible to imagine. The political leaders, therefore, use national hero days and unveil new statues; they festoon their election campaign platforms with images of whichever deceased “father of independence” is most beloved by the electorate; national awards are bestowed on like-minded members of their own class all in an effort to relive the glory days. What they do not do is develop strategies that will address the problems of the electorate. However, this is not only as a result of a neurotic inability to act, it is also compounded by the dominant

interpretations of what globalization means which tells citizens and their governments that it is rather old fashioned and quite dangerous to try and imagine anything beyond the free market.

In order to illustrate all of this more fully and demonstrate lines of connection that draw together relations of racialized and gendered power in the Caribbean to those in the North I would like to use Cricket World Cup 2007 (CWC2007) as a kind of entry point to these issues. In 2007 nine territories in the Caribbean hosted the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Cricket World Cup the premier event on the international cricketing calendar. The hosting of this event can be understood in part as an attempt by the middle class political directorate to recreate the nationalist triumphs of the West Indies cricket team from the 1970s to the mid-1990s. Hosting CWC2007 was a bid to recapture those glory days and demonstrate that, despite evidence to the contrary, the West Indies were still a cricketing world power. Thus CWC2007 is part of the melancholic recreation of history. The World Cup was also a way for the West Indies Cricket Board to generate revenue to invest in redeveloping regional cricket. Finally, the tournament was part of the Caribbean investment in sports tourism development. However, the tournament does not stand alone. In what follows I would like to use CWC2007 as a central figure in a broader examination of power relations in the Caribbean. I set this examination in dialog with a number of Gilroy's key concepts. It is my contention that by effecting this dialog not only is Gilroy's analytical rigor brought to bear on the region, but the Caribbean examples can add some nuance Gilroy's ideas.

Party politics and/or biopolitics

On April 1st 2007 cricket fans, especially West Indies cricket fans were told by Cricket World Cup officials to “Let de music play!” (Spooner, 2001). This summons to party in the cricket stands seemed to be a reversal of earlier assertions that fans’ musical instruments would be dangerous security risks. This particular effort to monitor the use of musical instruments can be seen as an meeting point of a number of discourses about threat such as the historical prohibitions on Black music practices during the slave period, the fears left over from sports disaster such as Heysel Stadium in 1985, or the reflex to monitor all manner of behavior since 9/11. However, the initial terror of sports fans drums, conch shells and bugles during Cricket World Cup 2007 seemed to evaporate in the face of stuttering ticket sales: “After watching the first stage of the Cricket World Cup turn into a lifeless flop, the ICC has urged fans to "bring in the noise" and party at the upcoming matches” (Spooner, 2001). The initial prohibitions and subsequent call to perform reveal much about how we might think of the word “constituency” at this time. The meaning of the word constituency seems to have become stretched and political leaders, especially from microstates, find that they owe a duty to corporate entities prior to the citizens of their countries.

As implied above, the close monitoring of musical instruments at international sporting events is nothing new. The rules issued for CWC 2007 have been issued at other Cricket World Cup events before. Nevertheless, in the urge to control, the parliamentary and media debates on the control, and in the eventual decision to loosen the rules it is possible to see the ever growing importance of aesthetic practices as an arena for the contestation, negotiation and imposition of power. In these rules were contested the limits of citizenship and to whom or to what is duty

owed. The lead up to Cricket World Cup 2007 resulted in the standard flurry of activity that is associated with staging a mega sporting event. Caribbean citizens got used to the phrase “until after the World Cup” as hiring new staff in government departments, new initiatives in the public sector, advertising and sponsorship budgets in the private sector and a whole myriad of day to day matters were put on hold “until after the World Cup.”

Hosting the games was sold to Caribbean citizens as a way of “putting the region on the map.” The phrase, which has become a common way of accounting for all manner of political decisions seems reminiscent somehow of the role cartography played in colonial expansion. The newer global economy requires a new mapping, and microstates like those in the Caribbean need to be constantly vigilant to ensure that they do not drop off the map. Be that as it may, the hosting of CWC2007 literally changed the internal landscape of the region. Twelve new or refurbished cricket stadia resulted, in some instances, in the displacement of communities to accommodate expanded facilities. In other instances the new stadia meant a shift in the traditional centers of cricket as some of the older, city grounds could not meet international standards and new stadia were constructed outside of the cities. Extensive road works were carried out and new hotels were constructed. Caribbean citizens are quite used to representatives from the overdeveloped countries and international organizations staring over the shoulders of their political leaders, and with Cricket World Cup they became used to the ICC monitoring the progress of plans for the hosting the competition. Media accounts of scheduled ICC inspections were both anxious and self-congratulatory. Anxious because news reports tended to emphasize that hosting the games could be pulled at any moment if the region did not meet the requisite standards; however, self-congratulatory when there was any praise big or small from any ICC or World Cup official.

Caribbean governments displayed similar responses when they got down to the business of debating the legislation that would enable CWC2007. Often the parliamentarians demonstrated that they were unwilling and unable to actually enter into democratic debates of the legislation and its repercussions for their putative constituents – the Caribbean people; and by debates I mean careful discussion of pros and cons of hosting CWC2007 in which the final decision is not a foregone conclusion. The impression given across the region during the different parliamentary debates was that there was no possible way to make the decision *not* to host the games. “Pass It or Else!” read one headline in the Barbados in reference to the CWC2007 draft bill. In the Hansard record of parliamentary proceedings in Trinidad and Tobago the Minister of Sport seemed very careful to present the problems that would result in not passing the legislations. The legislation included a host of changes that seemed to highlight how unstable the idea of sovereignty has become. Journalist Albert Brandford described the legislation as including “blanket tax waivers sweeping temporary powers, perhaps approached only by the Emergency Powers Act, and heavy fines of up to \$75000 for offences including the feared and hated ‘ambush marketing tactic’ (Brandford, May 21 2006). Certainly it seemed that the ICC had proven the sovereignty of the Caribbean nation-states was in question when members of the Royal Barbados Police Force were photographed being searched by ICC security guards before being allowed to enter the Kensington Oval cricket ground. Caribbean governments seemed willing to pass legislation for CWC2007 that they were cautious about passing for Caribbean citizens. Thus for the period of the games the Caribbean was converted into a Single Domestic Space to facilitate movement for fans going from a game in one territory to a game in another territory. This was part of sunset legislation which only had effect February 1 to May 15

however, Caribbean integration has been on the books in the region since before the failed West Indies Federation experiment in 1962. There was fleeting talk after CWC2007 about keeping the Single Domestic Space, but it was not seriously considered. It would seem that leaders have proven themselves more willing to trust sports tourists than their own citizens.

Those familiar with the hosting of megaevents will probably find that the decisions taken in the region on behalf of CWC were not especially different from other international sporting megaevents in other parts of the world. These types of law regularizations are standard operating procedure. They perhaps seem more obvious in this case because the legislation had to be regularized across nine different nation-states. Nevertheless, something does not have to be highly unusual for it to be remarkable. What seems remarkable, or at least, should be remarked upon is the fact that what corporate organizations like WIBC/CWC³ Inc., the ICC or New Corporation's Global Cricket Corporation which held the rights to broadcast the Cricket World Cups in 2003 and 2007 are seeking and receiving a host of guarantees about their profits at the same time that citizens in the region (and across the world) are being admonished that it is unreasonable to expect the guarantees of care that were traditionally associated with citizenship under the social welfare system.

The legislation that seemed to engender the greatest attention of the media and most dissent in parliament were the laws affecting fan behavior. It is interesting to note that it was on the point of spectatorship that most people felt that they could voice their concerns. Though the question of local vendors and their livelihood received *some* attention, it was on the question of the

³ WIBC/CWC was the corporate entity developed by the West Indies Cricket Board to manage Cricket World Cup

performances in the stands that there seemed to be the greatest debate. A question that seems to come readily to mind is why was it in the area of spectator performances that citizens, politicians, and media felt there could be a legitimate debate, whereas other, deeply intrusive issues slipped by largely unnoticed.

In part this can be understood as related to the ways in which race is mapped on to social relations in the region, which I discussed above. The right to bring what was often referred to as “Caribbean flavor” or “calypso cricket” to the ICC event⁴ was defined as a cultural issue, an issue of whether some authentic core would be on display during the games. Thus it was deemed right and proper for the political directorate and majority voters to debate this issue. However, in addition to this, this situation should also be understood as part of an international aestheticization of politics. It was the deployment of “cultural authenticity” in an effort to impose a type of order that could serve both political and economic elite interests (see Bourdieu, 1984; Bennett, 1992; Miller & Yudice, 2002). This “cultural authenticity” can be understood in the ways in which “calypso cricket” has been a phrase that has been used to mark the limits of Caribbean and English culture and masculinity.

The West Indies have been known for some time as the calypso cricketers. The meaning of the phrase “calypso cricket” has changed over time in keeping with the changing status of the West Indies cricket team on the world stage and, very specifically, their relationship with the English cricketing establishment. When the team was first promoted to test cricket status, the phrase

⁴ It should be stressed that when objections were brought about any changes that were needed to facilitate CWC2007 Caribbean citizens were swiftly reminded by their parliamentary representatives that Cricket World Cup is a ICC event, it did not belong to the Caribbean people, their governments or the WICB. There were ways, therefore, that the Caribbean citizens were being asked to accept that the region and its people were merely the backdrop to the tournament.

calypso cricket was used to code racialized notions of West Indian inferiority. The West Indian was seen as happy go lucky and lacking seriousness. Any failures by the side were seen as stemming from an innate inability to analyze the problem, buckle down, and get the job done. From the mid 1970s to the mid 1990s when the team was practically unbeatable “calypso cricket” was re-accented to signal the team’s success, style and flair as well as the carnivalized spectator performances in the stands. Caribbean people in the Caribbean and in the diaspora, therefore, took “calypso cricket” as a signal of West Indian cricket superiority and a rejection of the style of play and spectatorship that were privileged by the English cricketing establishment. This was not necessarily how it was viewed by the English sports journalists. They described the West Indian players in often overtly racist terms and called on the cricketing officials to ban the “jungle drums” of the West Indian fans. When the West Indies started losing from the 1990s many of the same journalists were barely able to contain their glee – “from calypso to callapso” is a phrase that is frequently used. Nevertheless, with some modifications and adjustments the partying has continued in the stands. In some ways it would seem as if, with West Indian fortunes falling there has been a hardening around the party identity. Gilroy describes a similar hardening around the hip hop identities and also in the mythological construction of White homogenous Englishness. He says, for example, not only is hip hop seen as Black culture, it is in fact seen as the *Blackest* culture. Similarly the party culture has also solidified becoming not only Caribbean culture but the *most* Caribbean culture available.

Paul Gilroy’s discussions of biopolitics might seem to be a natural analytical fit to examine the ways in which “calypso cricket” has been and continues to be used. However, it must first be recognized that Gilroy’s examinations of the uses made of the body has changed. His earlier

work focuses on the importance of the body in the Black public sphere. He emphasizes the importance, not only of the sounds of black music, but also the performances the body and movement are communicative. Thus in *Aint No Black in the Union Jack* Gilroy spends some time examining what he saw at that time as embodied critique in dancehall performances. This type of masculine display seems to link quite naturally to the cricket performances outlined above. However, what is interesting is the hard line Gilroy draws between the dancehall performances which he celebrates in *Aint No Black* and the basketball performances which he mourns as indicative of the contraction of the black public sphere in *Between Camps*. In a related manner, Gilroy's early discussions of sexuality in Black vernacular cultures seemed to argue that the performances of sexuality were transgressive in that they reclaimed the body from the world of work. However, he claimed for himself the ability to differentiate between what he termed the degeneration to slackness in the Jamaican reggae dancehall and the progressive use of sexuality in other music forms. This characterization of dancehall slackness is also mirrored in his distaste for the "freaky sex" of contemporary hip hop.

Certainly the fact that an academic's thinking changes over time is not surprising. It would certainly be sad if he were stuck in the same place he was in twenty years ago. In addition to this, the contexts have changed and when one examines Gilroy's contention that musical analysis must include analysis of form that form most often seems to mean contexts. The main contextual difference which Gilroy examines is what he sees as the anti-commodification stance of Black vernacular cultures before the new millennium which he says contrasts greatly with the heavily commodified culture since that time. Thus the interaction between people in the dancehall has been replaced by the perpetually writhing bodies on BET.

I have a lot of sympathy with Gilroy's argument. However, two things trouble me. First the way that performers such as Snoop and RKelly are asked to stand in for all of hip hop and ultimately for all Black vernacular culture. Whereas in *Aint No Black* Gilroy attempted to cover a range of underground and overground forms, by *Between Camps* the shadows of the millionaire misogynists have blocked out many other forms of expression. It could be argued, of course, that the "success" of Snoop means that it is his image that is replicated over and over again and spread all over the globe. However, as Robert Stam suggests it the critical task must be to draw attention "to the voices at play in the text, not only those heard in aural 'close up', but also those voices distorted or drowned out by the text" (1993).

My second concern is related to this. Gilroy seems to argue that the body has lost the ability to communicate anything except the monologic message of fascists. Again, the unrelenting presentation of writhing bodies might account for this. However, if we return to Glissant's point that the body is as communicative as speech, then in the same way that every word can be re-accented (Bakhtin, 1994) this seems to be equally possible for gesture, dramaturgy and enunciation. It seems unproductive to draw a line and declare possibilities as over rather than making oneself open to the ambivalences of performances in popular culture. Considering the ambivalences need not necessarily lead to wholesale celebration of the routinized displays but it can lead one to examine both the spectacularization of the body *and* the strategies to reclaim the body. I will start with the spectacularization.

Clearly the efforts to monitor and ultimately exhibit carnivalized performances in the stands at CWC2007 is part of the governmental efforts to discipline bodies and make them available to global capital. The hardening around the identity of *the* party people of global cricket seems to have solidified this identity into a type of brand. The brand has been adopted as part of the commercialization of cricket. The use of that brand was important to the promotion of CWC2007. For example, Managing Director and CEO of ICC/CWC 2007 Chris Dehring in his speech at the opening ceremony for the games said, “(The world) will see exciting cricket inspired by the rhythm and soul of the West Indies. For cricket in the Caribbean has few competitors when it comes to sheer enjoyment and passion.” Advertising touted the party stands especially at Queens Park Oval in Trinidad and Sabina Park in Jamaica. Additionally, the party brand is able to travel even without the direct reference to West Indian fans. Thus Cricket World Cup 1999 in England was called a “Carnival of Cricket” and the ticket application form featured “a caricatured image of an African-Caribbean man, with brightly colored shirt and beaming smile” (Crabbe & Wagg, 2000: 71).

The brand, therefore, makes the Caribbean available to be easily consumed, particularly by tourists from the North. When the foreign press lamented the lack of atmosphere at games - for example the *Sunday Telegraph* correspondent quipped, “Hospitals in Britain should seriously consider asking the organizers of the World Cup to take control because they are world-class experts in creating sanitized, indeed sterile environments” (Berry, April 10 2007) - what it seemed they were yearning for was ready access to the Caribbean brand. The importance of the sports tourists and other tourists cannot really be overstated. The significant growth of tourism has been a major impact of globalization and with the conservative economic profile of many

political and economic elites in the Eastern Caribbean especially (Marshall 1998, 2001, 2002) not only has tourism become a major plank of Caribbean economies, but the region has followed the trend to service the mobile rich with the conversion and development of condo-hotels and villas in addition to the traditional hotels. The region is often, therefore, viewed as real estate and satisfying the tourists' needs is a primary motivation. I have already pointed to the fact that the CWC2007 tourists were given greater freedom of movement through the region than has been afforded citizens. In addition to this, although some Caribbean leaders have been leery about allowing Caribbean citizens free movement across the region, they lobbied the United States government attempting to get the US to rethink its decision to require American citizens to have passports fearing that the need for passports would make the Americans less likely to travel outside of the US.

Despite all of this, I believe there is something more to be considered in the carnivalization of bodies. There is a growing literature on strategies to reclaim the body and reject the elites' efforts to claim exclusive rights to, not only to display bodies in nationalized carnivals, tourism literature, sports, news stories etc, but also to determine the meanings of those bodies (see for example, Cooper, 1995, Niah, 2004, Dikobe, 2004, Harewood, 2006, Hope 2006). The transformational politics of these performances are open to rigorous debate. However, this literature does highlight the fact that the meanings of the body are not exclusively commanded by the desires of elites for revenue and political power. Perhaps some of the most illuminating literature in this area is Pamela Franco's (2000) work on early masquerade in Trinidad. Her examination of the pissenlit protest mas' and the women stickfighters seems to suggest a number of issues. It highlights the importance of street protest as part of the early pursuits of freedom in

the Caribbean and that these modes of protest and the diversity of the protesters have largely been overshadowed⁵ by histories that emphasize the triumph of the Black intellectual class. It also highlights that this form of embodied critique has been delegitimated by the move towards genteel bourgeois democracies (Gilroy, 1993). Gilroy in writing of his disappointment with present day freaky performances refers to this contemporary moment as a contraction of the Black public sphere. I am pushed to wonder if this evacuation of gesture, enunciation and dramaturgy cannot also be thought of as a contraction of the public sphere, one that has led to the incrementally increasing gap between the political elites and their constituents.

Concluding thoughts

Plotting paths and strategies towards freedom in the Caribbean requires a careful assessment of the ways in which nationalist projects in the region have ossified around the memories of the independence period. This has not been an easy task. Finding the critical tools to reexamine a project that transformed the region in a number of positive ways but still left sections of the population out of the process requires a double focus. Melancholia provides a way of undertaking that assessment and considering the ways in which the terms of English authority continue to hold sway within the region. The result is that Caribbean politicians are growing ever more distant from the electorate. The lore of global capital requires that they consider the interests of corporations first with the *hope* that this will lead to a better life for the people. CWC2007 was an example of the ways in which the Caribbean constituency is placed in the background.

⁵ Interestingly enough Gilroy quotes Daniel Miller's discussion of pissenlit masquerade in *Between Camps*. Although Miller mentions that women took part in pissenlit mas' he reiterates his informants assertion that true mas' is male mas.

Where then is the hope, and what might one be calling for when one calls for freedom? This an extremely difficult question to confront. . Remembering alternative histories of the Caribbean nation state has potential in some areas. It offers the possibility of disturbing the traditional lines of authority posing the possibility of greater political participation. However, all of these dynamics have been overlain by the international push for profits. This push for profits has been converted into a global demand for lean, governments and flexible economies. Both of these demands are difficult for territories in which politics and the economy continue to be shaped by compromises made at the time of independence.

References

- Barnes, N.B. (1997). 'Face of the nation: Race, nationalism and identities in Jamaican beauty pageants', In *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*, ed. C. Lopez Springfield, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, pp. 285-306.
- Bennett, T. (1995). *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. London: Routledge.
- Berry, S. (2007) 'How not to host a World Cup', *Sunday Telegraph*. 1 April.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, New York.
- Bhola, R. (2007) 'World Cup bans stump Grenada fans', *BBC News*. April 8.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. (R. Nice, Trans.) Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Brandford, A. (2006) 'CWC2007 draft bill is tough love'. *Sunday Sun*. May 21.
- Chrisman, L. (1997). 'Journeying to death: Gilroy's Black Atlantic,' *Race and Class* vol.39 no 2.
- Cooper, C. (1995). *Noises in the Blood: Orality , Gender and the 'Vulgar' Body of Jamaican Popular Culture*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Crabbe, T., & Wagg, S. (2000). "'A carnival of cricket?": The Cricket World Cup 'race' and the politics of carnival', *Culture, Sport and Society* vol. 3 no.2 pp. 70-88.
- Dikobe, M. (2004) 'Bottom in de road: gender and sexuality in calypso', *Proudflesh: A Neww Afrikan Journal of Culture, Politics and Consciousness*, vol. 3, <http://www.proudfleshjournal.com/issue3/dikobe.htm>, downloaded June 2, 2005.
- Edmondson, B. (2003) 'Public spectacles: Caribbean women and the politics of public performance', *Small Axe*, vol. 7 no. 1, pp. 1-16 <http://iupjournals.org/smallaxe/sm13.html> downloaded June 3, 2005.

- Franco, P. (2000). 'The 'Unruly Woman' in Nineteenth-Century Trinidad Carnival', *Small Axe*, vol. 7, pp. 60-76.
- Gardiner, M.E. (2004). 'Wild publics and grotesque symposiums: Habermas and Bakhtin on dialogue, everyday life and the public sphere,' In *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, ed. N. Crossley & J.M. Roberts, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, pp. 28-48.
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness.*: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Gilroy, P. (1999). 'Between camps: Race and culture in post modernity an inaugural lecture', *Economy and Society* vol. 28 no. 2, pp. 183-197.
- Gilroy, P. (2002) *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Gilroy, P. (2003). 'Race is ordinary Britain's postcolonial melancholia', *Philosophia Africana*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 31-45.
- Gilroy, P. (2004). *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* Routledge, Oxfordshire.
- Gilroy, P. (2005) 'Could you be loved? Bob Marley, anti-politics and universal sufferation'.
- Girvan, N. (2001). 'Reinterpreting the Caribbean' In *New Caribbean Thought: A Reader*, eds. B. Meeks & F. Lindahl Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, pp. 3-23.
- Harewood, S. (2006). 'Transnational soca performances and gendered re-narrations of Caribbean nationalisms', *Social and Economic Studies*, vol, 55 nos. 1 & 2, pp. 25-48.
- Henke, H. (2001). 'Freedom ossified: Political culture and the public use of history in Jamaica', *Identities*, vol. 8 no.3, pp. 413-440.

Hintzen, P.C. (2006). 'The Caribbean: Race and creole ethnicity' In, *Cultural Identity and Creolization in National Unity: The Multiethnic Caribbean*, ed. P. Misir, University Press of America Lanham, Boulder, NY Toronto, Oxford. pp.9-32.

Hope, D.P. (2006). 'Passa Passa: Interrogating cultural hybridity in Jamaican dancehall', *Small Axe*, vol. 21, pp. 119-133.

James, C.L.R. (1963). *Beyond a Boundary*, Pantheon, New York.

Khan, A. (2004). 'Sacred subversions? Syncretic creoles, the Indo-Caribbean, and "Cultures in-between."' *Radical History Review* vol. 89, pp. 165-184.

Marshall, D. D.(2001). 'Gathering forces: Barbados and the viability of the national option,' In *The Empowering Impulse: The Nationalist Tradition of Barbados* Eds G.D. Howe & D.D. Marshall, Canoe Press, Barbados Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, pp. 269-300.

Marshall, D.D. (1998). *Caribbean Political Economy at the Crossroads: NAFTA and Regional Developmentalism*, St. Martin's Press Inc. New York.

Marshall, D.D. (2002). 'At whose service? Caribbean state posture, merchant capital and the export services option. *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 21 no. 4, pp. 725-751,

Miller, D. (1991). 'Absolute freedom in Trinidad', *Man* vol 26, pp. 323-341.

Miller, T., & Yudice, G. (2002). *Cultural Policy*. Sage Publications, New York, London, New Delhi.

Miller, T., Lawrence, G., McKay, J. & Rowe, D. (1999), 'Modifying the sign: Sport and globalization', *Social Text* vol. 60, pp. 15-33.

Mohammed, P. (2000). "'But most of all me love me browning": The emergence in eighteenth and nineteenth century Jamaica of the mulatto woman as desired.' *Feminist Review*, vol. 65, pp. 22-48.

Munasinghe, V (2001). *Callaloo or Tossed Salad?: East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad*. Cornell University Press Ithaca, NY.

Munasinghe, V. (2006). 'Theorizing world culture through the new world: East Indians and creolization.' *American Ethnologist*, vol. 33 no. 4, pp. 549-562.

Puri, S. (2004). *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post/Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Reddock, R. (1999). 'Jahaji Bhai: The emergence of a dougla poetics in Trinidad and Tobago'. *Identities*, vol. 5 no. 4, pp. 569-601.

Spooner, P. (2007) 'Let de music play!' *Sunday Sun*. April 1.

Stam, R. (1993). 'Bakhtin, polyphony and ethnic racial representation,' In *Real and Imagined Women, Gender, Culture and Postcolonialism*, eds. R. Sunder Rajan, Routledge, New York & London, pp. 251-276.

Stanely, S.N, (2004). 'Kingston's dancehalls a story of space and celebration', *Space and Culture*, vol. 7, pp. 102-118.