

the prolonged preoccupation with transnationalism. Already Stephen has moved the subject forward by placing the migrant community inside a broader context that includes those who are left behind and native residents of the communities that immigrants join.

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THOMAS GLAVE (ed.): *Our Caribbean: A Gathering of Lesbian and Gay Writing from the Antilles*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

“... he is dancing, a poet, a black boy / in a culture where masculinity is code,” says the voice of Kevin Everod Quashie, a poet from St. Kitts, in his 2003 poem “Genesis”. What is said and sung by Quashie may well stand for the root emotion and intellectual drive behind this gathering of queer presences from the region where, according to the late Antonio Benítez Rojo, the island repeats herself (Antonio’s island is female), but is not quite the same in becoming identical with being beside herself. I refer to the desire and cognitive need to reclaim cultural and political ground denied to gays and lesbians by codes and norms, written and unwritten, aimed at immunizing the representative nation and community against the human species misrecognized in any gathered queerness.

In saying “misrecognized”, I echo Lacan’s term *méconnaissance*, in this case as the prejudiced and often loud and bashing failure to acknowledge and to recognize oneself in the other because of being so injured by one’s own hate and fear. The specific phobia at work in prejudiced misrecognition widens the inherent gap at the heart of knowing (and of knowledge of) the other: knowledge warped by disavowal, by the denial of the other’s twisted and queer siblinghood with and within oneself.

So clasped in each other’s enactment of knowing and grasping embodied difference (of catching one’s identity caught in one’s difference), the ontology of recognition and misrecognition involves possession and dispossession and the polemics of *ownership*; as in Thomas Glave’s allegory of native growth, “Whose Caribbean? An Allegory, in Part” (2005), a representative and pivotal essay and the recommended starting point for sampling the anthology (177-190). Memory is conjured up by Glave and sublimated and queered into a tryout of scriptural themes. The essay is one among several in which “theory” veers into testimony and biographic confession, under a signature phrase like: “this is what was mine to live” or *esto es lo que me tocó vivir*. The elegiac tone and substance found in these pieces transform the actuality of the gathering into an occasion to glance back at the past in the spirit of affirmative mourning for lost lives.

These lost lives are not only those lives lost to death as a biological outcome, or to life's random chances, but also those lives that the very character of queer living acknowledges in the twist it puts on surrounding claims to unbending normalcy among its detractors.

In wholeheartedly recommending this anthology, I have decided to abjure the genealogical rule of Noah's Ark name-keeping by not naming authors, except for one poet and the editor, to whose post-patriarchal elegance we owe the gift of this floating and flying vessel island. Readers interested in further consideration of the book can simply click on this link to peruse the gathered authorships:

<http://www.dukeupress.edu/Catalog/ViewProduct.php?productid=13172&viewby=author&lastname=Glave&firstname=Thomas&middlename=&sort=newest>

On the practical side, the book is reader-friendly and, for the most part, free of unnecessary theoretical baggage. It has connectivity with music, literature, the visual arts, and public culture at large in the Caribbean and its various lingual domains. It could well anchor a course on the region as a textbook upon which to assemble added materials.

On the polemical side, I wish to quote at length the editor's regrets for authors lost to refusal:

The words *lesbian* and *gay* in the title lost this gathering at least two titles: one a woman of Caribbean background who, while erotically interested in other women, has long refused to call herself a lesbian and ... wishes not to have her work involved with any text that would categorize her writing as either lesbian in content or as authored by a lesbian ... the word *gay* in the title gave pause to the executors of the estate of Severo Sarduy, the marvelous Cuban writer whose work I have long admired for, among other things, its formidable experimentation with form and content. I wished very much to include his work here, and would have done so but for the objections raised by those who, now overseeing his work, did not wish any of it to be associated with a gay volume. (9)

The editor finds such refusals "painful and frustrating, even enraging," and concludes that "the very powerful unwillingness ... to be associated with anything lesbian, gay, or 'queer' illustrates dramatically and often sadly the very need for this book" (9).

In agreeing with Thomas Glave, one may regard such a disavowal of perceived "lesbian" tokenism as a simple act of snobbery. And although the same could be said about Sarduy's posthumous executors, deeper issues lie in his

case, dictated by the character and ontology of a writer as blissfully and erotically absorbed in theory, simulation, and the pleasures of earnest dissemblance as he was. For it is not so much excluding Sarduy from the gay label and dress as preventing him from adopting and wearing them even for fun; not so much offering a testimony to his presumed refusal to adopt the *gay* label in life as issuing the authoritative disavowal—on his posthumous behalf—to abjure one among many roles he did (and was delighted to) play. There is no better and dismal misrecognition—or a more accurate queer recognition—of what *gay* at large means to us all than the disavowal in-the-name-of-Sarduy imposed by his executors by refusing to have Sarduy's writing included in this Caribbean gathering of errant siblings.

Nietzsche once said that zealots had finally managed to translate Wagner into German. Other custodians have sealed off an ego as porous as Sarduy's into foreclosure against the play of labels which he neither feared nor could consider mere tokens—he the transformer demon of all that “tokens” us into living.

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GEOFFREY BAKER: *Imposing Harmony. Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

Si algo positivo hemos obtenido de la época “postmoderna”, se trata del redescubrimiento del pasado, uno que sigue hoy tan vigente como el eterno presente. Son muchas las atrocidades que pasaron, si no desapercibidas, silenciadas por los patronos oficiales de la historia, entre los que tienen sitio importante los Cronistas de Indias, incluso aquellos que nunca pisaron el supuesto “Nuevo” Mundo en el lado occidental del Atlántico desconocido hasta entonces. Para muchos de ellos, los seres que habitaban las tierras recién descubiertas no eran sino aliados del diablo, vacíos de alma y, por ende, dispensables en la gran empresa imperial de conquista y colonización en nombre de Dios y el Rey, con la cruz en una mano y una espada en la otra.

Desde 1950, cuando aparece la obra seminal de Aimé Césaire *Discurso sobre el colonialismo*, son muchos los estudios que de una u otra manera han dado voz a quienes por siglos se les mantuvo cerrada la boca; en el mejor de los casos, se les quemaban sus códigos y libros; en el peor, se los mataba sin piedad. Tomó siglos continuar abiertamente las denuncias empezadas por Las Casas sobre el maltrato hacia los habitantes de las tierras violadas por el hombre blanco. En marzo del 2000, el Papa Juan Pablo II ofreció excusas generales a todas las víctimas de atropellos perpetrados por miembros de la Iglesia: acusó, denunció