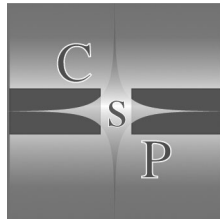


Celebrations and Connections
in Hispanic Literature

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Edited by

Andrea E. Morris and Margaret Parker



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CELEBRATIONS AND CONNECTIONS: A PREFACE

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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The 25th Anniversary Edition of the Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures was held at Louisiana State University in February of 2006. Participants gathered together under the rubric: “Celebrations and Connections.” To mark an occasion, to do something enjoyable, to give praise or recognition, these three connotations of the term “celebration” are eminently applicable to this event. The event certainly marked an occasion, and it was most gratifying to witness the vibrancy and cogency of this conference twenty-five years after its inception. Twenty five years of exciting scholarship and convivial sharing of ideas have brought people together, helped to develop ideas and come up with new notions and questions. Numerous printed volumes have helped to mark such occasions. And this one was no exception. Or was it? I think it was an exceptional conference in that the sense of celebration and connection was even more pronounced. As one of the founding members, I found it particularly gratifying to see so many people present who were there at its inception twenty-five years ago. And it was also a pleasure to see so many new faces, so many new connections being established. The term celebrate is also derived from the latin *celeber*, renowned – and there were many renowned scholars here. They were here to honor the continuous and joyous process of learning, of sharing knowledge, and *celebratum* means to honor. This was not a conference where intellectual rigor meant long faces, unreadable theoretical passages, or political positionings which disallowed discussion -- quite the opposite. It was about the pleasures of the text and the desire to know. And I celebrated as I saw so many former students, former colleagues and indeed, former professors! They all came together in a true Academy of learning. Unforgettable teachers such as Janet Pérez; colleagues such as Emily Batinski, Robert Chumbley, Carmen del Río, Margaret Parker, Joseph Ricapito, Christopher Soufas; former and present students such as Lydia Barovero, Kim Borchard, Jason Cortés, Gemma Delicado Puerto, Juan Pablo Gil Oslé, Javier Lorenzo, Margaret Marek, Carmela Mattza, Amanda Meixell, Glenda Nieto, Julio Vélez-Sainz.

It was easy to coexist and to share with different disciplines and points of view. It was challenging to bring together notions of Puerto Rican colonization and Spanish imperial imagery from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was also challenging to bring together continents, peoples and differing media, to discuss Afro-Hispanic studies and then turn to evoke Renaissance imagery; to attempt to understand trans-Atlantic connections while focusing on Puerto Rican identity. But it was all done with ease and brightness. Those who sought to connect history and literature listened with keen interest to others whose task was, for example, to bring together word and image. As a Renaissance scholar, events at the conference brought to mind, in a ludic yet apt manner, the 23rd entry in Cesare Ripa's *Iconology* (1593; first illustrated edition 1603).ⁱ Under the title "Academia," the curious reader can view this allegorical figure that holds in one hand: "a wreath of laurel, ivy, and myrtle, the plants of Apollo, Bacchus, and Venus, and pomegranates, the symbol of a group brought together out of common interests." And indeed, the conference has always been dedicated to reason and festival. After all, it is most often held at the time of Mardi Gras in order to remind us that feasting is an integral part of literature, that it is through carnival that we come to question our assumptions about social relations. But in addition to Apollo and Bacchus, Ripa's Academy turns to Venus, to beauty and the search for its meaning at a time when she is considered to have been exiled from the Academy and from the arts.ⁱⁱ But most importantly, the pomegranate brings us all together, veteran participants and new ones, established scholars and graduate students, in a search for new ways of knowing, and new ways to see the past so as to construct a better future.

Notes

ⁱ Cesare Ripa. *Baroque and Rococo Imagery. The 1758-60 Hertel Edition of Ripa's Iconologia with 200 engraved illustrations*. Ed. Edward A. Maser. New York: Dover Publications, 1971.

ⁱⁱ On this subject see: Wendy Steiner, *Venus in Exile. The Rejection of Beauty in 20th Century Art*. New York: The Free Press, 2001.

INTRODUCTION

As suggested in the preface, the volume *Celebrations and Connections in Hispanic Literature* is itself a celebration of a tradition of scholarly dialogue in a relaxed, festive atmosphere. The articles included here began as papers presented at the 25th Anniversary Edition of the Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures, held in Baton Rouge Louisiana, February 23-24, 2006. A reflection of the spirit of the conference, where over the years scholars from around the globe have considered one another's work in comparison, each of the authors included responded in innovative ways to the idea of connecting texts, contexts, and genres, as well as to the disconnect that is often present between what we perceive as "Hispanic" identity and the experience of those left on the margin. For those who have attended the conference over the years, it has meant the opportunity to renew ties and remain in contact with new approaches to literature and culture.

The Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures was first envisioned in 1979 when six Spanish professors, three from Tulane University and three from Louisiana State University, met to develop a plan for collaboration between the two universities that led to the proposal of a conference to be held in alternating years at each university. The inaugural meeting of the conference was held at Louisiana State University in February 1980. Despite its name, the scope of the conference has never been regional, and from its inception it has attracted scholars from all over the United States and Canada, as well as Venezuela, Chile, and other Spanish-speaking countries. Tulane discontinued the organization of the conference in 2001, but LSU has continued to host meetings in even-numbered years.

The Louisiana Conference has been recognized over the years for the quality of the papers presented, which have been collected and published as selected proceedings. Gilbert Paolini of Tulane University edited the first volume, a collection of 38 papers presented in New Orleans in 1981. Thereafter, Paolini for Tulane and various professors for LSU issued volumes of selected proceedings printed at their respective universities. In 2004 Yvonne Fuentes, co-director of the conference, proposed moving away from the format of in-house proceedings and pursued the possibility of a book publication through an independent press. As a result, the bilingual volume *Leading Ladies: Mujeres en la literatura hispana y las artes*, edited by Fuentes and Margaret Parker, was published by LSU Press in 2006. With the present volume, the editors have

again sought to move beyond the proceedings format to encourage contributors to expand on their ideas presented at the conference, and to combine the articles in a way that brings out the often unexpected links between diverse literary works.

The 2006 conference theme of “Celebrations and Connections,” while serving to commemorate the conference and the connections that have been made there over the years, opened up a number of possibilities for scholarly focus. These two broad areas reach beyond the obvious associations to encompass recent trends in literary and cultural studies, as well as the questioning of those trends. The very idea of commemorating an event or person’s life and work, for example, has been theorized by French philosopher Pierre Nora and others as closely bound to place and the creation of a collective identity. For scholars engaged in subaltern or post-colonial studies, celebration evokes the assertion and reconsideration of Hispanic identities from the pre-Colombian period to the present. This approach to difference and diversity has sought to valorize the contributions and practices of marginalized cultures by taking into account past and present voices that speak from within those cultures. This shift in perspective, which challenges Euro-centric notions of national identity in Latin America and Africa, represents the focus of Part I of the volume: “Celebrating and Rewriting Difference: (De)colonized Identities.” This section opens with Dorothy Odaty-Wellington’s study of colonial literature in an underrepresented region of the Spanish-speaking world: Equatorial Guinea. Her article sheds light on the Spanish dimension of European literary constructions of Africa and Africanness in the early 20th century. Articles by Dorothy E. Mosby and Sheridan Wigginton examine the role of ethnicity in shifting definitions of citizenship, which have been used as a means to control participation in the political, social and cultural life of Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, respectively. Debbie Lee-DiStefano studies this idea of belonging in a broader sense, by questioning the application of term “mestizo” to represent Spanish American writers of Asian descent.

In relation to the second component of the conference theme, “connections,” we requested papers that crossed disciplinary borders as well as those of genre, geography, time, and text. The rich and varied response we received provided a wealth of material for the following sections, the first of which juxtaposes articles on the detective novel by Janet Pérez and Jeffrey Oxford, providing a transatlantic perspective on this recently revived literary trend. In Part III, intertextuality is examined in a variety of contexts, including Amy George-Hirons’s study of the encounter between Maya and Spanish cultures. Mark R. Malin examines the influence of *Don Quixote* on the work of nineteenth-century Spanish author, Benito Pérez Galdós. Likewise, Carmen M. del Río’s article treats intertextuality in Sandra Cisneros’s rewriting of popular religious

expression. Part IV, “Word and Image in the Spanish Golden Age” includes the work of scholars who capture the importance of art in the production of well-known authors of the period. Margaret Marek examines the dialogue between Francisco de Quevedo’s sonnet, “Painting the Trojan Remains of Beauty” and the theme of “Memento mori,” common in literature, painting and song. Ekphrasis also takes the forefront in Gemma Delicado Puerto’s article, which traces links between Francisco Delicado’s *La Lozana andaluza* and artistic representations of Mary Magdalene. The work of Miguel de Cervantes provides the focus of the remaining two articles. While Javier Lorenzo considers the significance of the author’s portrait included in his *Exemplary Novels*, Carmela Mattza explores the modern interests and values revealed in a few of the numerous websites dedicated to the 400 year anniversary of *Don Quixote*.

The third type of connection that emerged as a central focus of the conference was the link between literature and politics. These articles are divided into two sections, the first of which focuses on the politics of empire as manifested in Renaissance and Baroque literature. Amanda S. Meixell and Henry W. Sullivan demonstrate how plays by Lope de Vega and Andrés de Claramonte reflect on the conflict surrounding succession in the German Empire at the turn of the 17th century. The subsequent article, by George Antony Thomas, engages the use of imperial imagery as a means used by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to negotiate her status among the political and religious authorities of colonial Mexico. The articles in Part VI are united by a specific focus on how Latin American authors comment on the political situation in which they live. The topics range from early struggles in the consolidation of Colombian nationhood, studied by María del Pilar Melgarejo Acosta in the work of José Asunción Silva, to Griselda Gambaro’s theatrical rendering of the state-sponsored violence suffered in 1970’s Argentina, analyzed by Katherine Ford. Orosman López Bao takes on a more contemporary situation in his discussion of the trope of the monster, a device central to Mayra Montero’s novelistic critique of U.S. imperial presence in Puerto Rico. The texts studied in this section place political discourse and action in a new light, and in the case of Lynn Walford’s reconsideration of Mario Vargas Llosa’s *The Real Life of Alejandro Mayta*, go so far as to expose the role of political bias in scholarship.

The combination of a broad theme with focused sections has allowed us to assemble a collection of articles demonstrative of current trends in Hispanic literary and cultural criticism, which are increasingly less bound by traditional regional and temporal constructs. While each author’s research is rooted in a specific socio-historic context, their combined contributions to the present volume provide a far-reaching perspective that expands the notion of “text” to go beyond the literary and engage a multitude of disciplines.

Part I:

Celebrating and Rewriting Difference: (De)colonized Identities

CHAPTER ONE

LITERARY EXPRESSIONS OF COLONIZATION IN THE COLONIAL PRESS OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

DOROTHY ODARTEY-WELLINGTON

References to Equatorial Guinean colonial literature are often limited to a few works such as *Cartas de Guinea* (Augustín Miranda, 1940) and *En el país de los Bubis* (José Más, 1919), written by Spanish colonials, and to the following two novels written by Africans: *Cuando los combes luchaban: Novela de costumbres de la Guinea Española* (Leoncio Evita Enoy, 1953) and *Una lanza por el Boabí* (Daniel Jones Mathama, 1962).¹ These and similar works published during the colonial period by no means offer an exhaustive resource for researching the literary expression of colonization in the former Spanish colony. Considering that colonial governments and institutions invested very little in the publishing industry, it is unrealistic to rely on published books as the only source of colonial creative expression. Instead, one could turn to the newspapers and magazines that were more prevalent because of their utilitarian value in the colonization process. In what was then known as Guinea Española, certain colonial institutions such as the Claretian Missionaries and the Patronato de Indígenas published magazines and newspapers which they used to educate, inform, indoctrinate and proselytise. Since these newspapers and other periodicals were more accessible to the average colonial and to some of the colonized subjects, they served as a common medium for the literary expression of the colonial experience. It is to these literary works published in the colonial newspapers that I turn to examine what this relatively late colony meant for Spain and how its transformation into two Spanish provinces overseas undermined the possibility of anti-colonial discourse in the colonial literature of Equatorial Guinea.

All the newspapers and magazines cited in this analysis were published by religious, political or commercial institutions that participated in the colonial enterprise. The fortnightly paper, *La Guinea Española* was the voice of the Claretian missionaries in the colony. The missionaries arrived there in 1883 with the approval of the Spanish Government of the time to “cooperar con el

Gobierno español á la instrucción, moralidad y salvación de aquellos habitantes”² [collaborate with the Spanish Government in the instruction, the morality and the salvation of those inhabitants].³ *La Guinea Española* ran from 1903 to the end of the colonial period, making it the longest running and most influential paper during its time. *La Voz de Guinea Continental* was the mouthpiece of colonials with commercial interests in the African territories. It was originally established to provide news to sports enthusiasts in the colony. Indeed, its original title was *Rotativo Deportivo*. After 35 issues, however, it was renamed *La Voz de Guinea Continental* to reflect a more comprehensive content. A financial column was added at that time to bring to the colony “cuantas noticias tengamos de la Metr poli econom as y financieras”⁴ [any financial or economics news that we receive from the Metropolis]. * bano* was the voice of the Francoist regime in the colony. Its masthead displayed the Francoist coat-of arms, the five arrows and yoke of the *Falange*,⁵ and it declared the paper as “ rgano de Falange Espa ola Tradicionalista y de las J. O. N. S. en Guinea Espa ola.”⁶ It was introduced in 1939, following Franco’s victory in the Spanish Civil war, and ran until 1968. The weekly paper *Potopoto* was published by the Delegaci n de Asuntos Ind genas, one of the paternalistic colonial institutions that was created to protect the interests of the colonized subjects. The paper was established to give a voice to the African population in the colony and it ran from 1952 till 1969. Since each of these publications was really established and run by colonial institutions or representatives of the metropolitan government, their content, including the literary works that were published in them, sanctioned the colonial perspective.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the Spanish possessions in Sub-Saharan Africa provided Spain with an opportunity to reclaim the image of the great imperial nation that it had lost in the previous century. This nostalgic sentiment was captured in many of the poems that the Claretian missionaries published in the first issues of *La Guinea Espa ola*. The following poem in which Fernando Poo⁷ is described as a jewel in the imperial crown provides a typical example of this anachronistic imperialist discourse:

 Fernando Poo diamante
Que a n despides destellos
En la eclipsada corona
De Espa a, mi caro suelo!⁸

[Fernando Poo, diamond
That still sparkles
In the eclipsed crown
Of Spain, my dear land!]

This poem and similar ones that appeared in *La Guinea Española* resonate with the imperialist vision expressed in the maiden issue of the paper. In it, the editors recalled the exploits of Spanish heroes of past centuries and declared themselves to be their collaborators in the colonization process as guardians and defenders of those “riquísimos Territorios del Golfo de Guinea”⁹ [extremely rich Territories of the Gulf of Guinea].

The obvious attention to these African lands as a potential source of wealth also inspired many poems such as the following which establishes an affinity between the poet and these lands that promise him abundant wealth:

¡Isla de Fernando Poo,
yo te amaré mientras vivas [sic]!
¿y cómo no amarte yo,
si tu seno me acogió
cual una patria adoptiva?

.....
Aunque soy en Zoología
y en Botánica profano,
comprendo la gran valía
de este rincón africano
casi virgen todavía.¹⁰

[Island of Fernando Poo,
I will forever love you!
and how could I not love you
if you embraced me
as if you were my native land

Although I am not an expert in
Zoology or Botany,
I understand the great value
of this corner of Africa
which is still almost untouched.]

This imperialist discourse, which was certainly anachronistic at the beginning of the twentieth century, was adopted in some literary writings supposedly submitted by Africans later on in the century. In 1947, *La Voz de Guinea Continental* published one of such celebrations of colonization apparently written by an African subject. The editor of the paper advised readers that the narrative, a brief account of the Spanish occupation of the Equatorial territories, was a “prestigiosa memoria indígena copiada literalmente del original enviado” [an important native report copied literally from the submitted original]. At a time in African history when the dominated populations were already questioning colonization, this so-called historical account was

suspiciously silent on the possible resistance that the Europeans might have faced or the acts of intimidation that the latter might have used to gain control over the African lands. Rather, the account suggests that the Africans delivered themselves voluntary to the Europeans as subjects of the Spanish crown:

Estas [las familias africanas] por conducto del Rey Bonkoro, que entonces su jurisdicción era desde Corisco hasta Rio Campo, manifestaron que deseaban ser españoles y que el pabellón español les protegiese....

El Sr. Larena, ante deseo tan espontáneo y unánime expresado por aquellos indígenas, les preguntó si reconocían por reina y señora a España y querían ser españoles desde el momento, a una vez contestaron que sí.¹¹

[These African families, led by King Bonkoro, whose jurisdiction at that time stretched from Corisco to Rio Campo, expressed the desire to become Spaniards and they wanted the Spanish flag to protect them....

Mr. Larena, when he heard such a spontaneous and unanimous wish, asked them if they recognized Spain as their queen and if they wanted to become Spaniards from that very moment; altogether they answered yes].

This piece of writing which was ostensibly contributed by an African evidently served to justify Spain's presence in Africa in the face of local or international condemnation of colonization.

As part of the colonizing process, the Spanish settlers pursued a civilizing and proselytizing agenda which engendered a genre of African literature that one might call Europeanized or Christianized African folktales. These were folktales of African origin that were filtered through the norms, values and prejudices of the colonizers before being published in the papers. In 1908, for example, one of the Claretian missionaries began to publish a column devoted to "Cuentos Africanos" [African tales] in *La Guinea Española* in order to inform readers of the indigenous customs in the colony. Before he published the stories that he collected from the Africans storytellers, however, he modified them to make them more acceptable to his readers. These modifications were necessary, in his opinion, because unlike the stories from what he called the "civilized" countries in which "se revelan acciones nobles y sentimientos muy delicados" [noble acts and delicate sentiments], in the African tales "sobresalen las guerras, robos, matanzas y mil actos de barbarie"¹² [wars, robberies, murders, and thousands of barbaric acts abound]. Thus, convinced that African creativity was morally and aesthetically inferior, he transformed the African folktales into Christian parables.

A good example of this new folkloric genre is a story called "El camino de la fortuna"¹³ [The path of fortune]. Although the paper claims that it is a Bubi folktale, it is obviously told from a European perspective. This is immediately evident when one notes, for example, that the "fetichero" [fetish priest or witch

doctor] in the story is described as a “ministro del diablo” [minister of the devil] and the “spirit” to whom one of the characters has to make a sacrifice is called a “diablo” [devil]. In addition to modifications of theme and content, the story ends with a Christian moral and a Bible verse in Latin:

Lo mismo que á la mujer del cuento y á su desafortunado hijo, pagará Dios á los ambiciosos, á los opresores del pobre, de sus criados y á todos aquellos desventurados cristianos que no cumplen sus deberes con Dios. En este mundo padecerán humillaciones sin cuento y en el otro serán devorados sin compasión por los demonios eternamente. *Et ibunit hi in suplicium aeternum* (Math. XXV.46)¹⁴

[As he did with the woman and her son in the story, so will God punish ambitious people and people who oppress their servants and the poor, and all those unfortunate Christians who do not carry out their duties for God. In this world they will suffer untold humiliation and in the other they will be eternally devoured without compassion by demons. *Et ibunit hi in suplicium aeternum* (Math. XXV.46)]

A variation of this genre of Europeanized African folktales can be found in a collection of stories and sociological articles supposedly written by Africans in *La Guinea Española*. In reality they were written by Europeans who signed the stories with pseudo-African names like Mosameanda¹⁵ Mobiahoma¹⁶ or Motéheté.¹⁷ Unlike the African stories signed by Spanish missionaries, these do not have a moralizing or proselytizing tone. In addition there appears to be no attempt to modify them to suit the bourgeois taste of the readers. One notes for example the scatological references in the story “Origen de las enemistades entre el perro y la nieva”¹⁸ [Why the dog and the *nieva*¹⁹ are enemies] in which the *nieva* is punished with a case of “el mal de piedra” [renal colic]. This ailment, according to the story, explains why “cuando [la nieva] emite la orina, según aseguran los bubis, siente dolores atroces y ésta es la causa, dicen, por qué se desgañita con prolongados y estridentes alaridos al evacuar la orina”²⁰ [when the *nieva* passes urine, according to the Bubi, it suffers atrocious pain and this is why, they say, it screeches itself hoarse with prolonged and strident shrieks when it urinates].

These stories might have been signed with African pseudonyms because of the Church’s criticism of stories considered to be immoral. Indeed, shortly before these stories began appearing in the papers, the Apostolic Vicarage of Fernando Poo had published the full instructions issued by the *Santo Oficio* regarding reprehensible literature. Although these instructions were not meant especially for the colonies nor directed against folkloric tales in particular, the missionaries would have been careful not to take responsibility for stories that could be condemned by the Church. Otherwise they could fall in the category of

those authors, who according to the Church, “pintan hechos impúdicos con brillantísimas imágenes; narran lo más obsceno, unas veces veladamente, despreciando toda ley de castidad”²¹ [They describe shameless acts with extremely brilliant images and write about obscene things, sometimes surreptitiously, disregarding all principles of decency].

Apart from the modified African folktales written by the Europeans, folktales contributed by the colonized Africans formed a significant part of the narratives published in the newspapers, especially from the late 1940's. Although these folktales were submitted by Africans, it cannot be assumed that they represented the voice of the colonized. The young men who sent them to the newspapers were mostly seminarians whose views tended to reflect the values of the colonizer.

Indeed, the publication of the African submissions was significant in the colonizing project. First of all, the colony was viewed by the colonizers as a significant resource in anthropological and ethnographic studies. In this regard, by publishing the stories told by Africans, the colonials were able to fulfill the task of collecting and disseminating knowledge about African culture. Secondly, the publication in Spanish of stories by young men who were going through the colonial education system served as an indicator of the success of the civilizing agenda from the colonials' point of view. It therefore served as a means of justifying the continued domination of Africans by Europeans. This would be the literary equivalent of the photographic representations of the “civilized” African published regularly in *La Guinea Española* to serve as examples to the larger African population. Such photographs, often published on the front page, would show an African or a group of Africans made to appear Europeanized by indicators such as clothing, occupation, or family. They are put forward as morally upright citizens who should serve as role models for their race. Indeed a caption beneath one of such photographs of four young men boasts that: “asistimos con gozo al paso de avance de su desarrollo: no es inútil ni vano, el trabajo que en ellos se pone”²² [we happily witness the progress in their development: the work that we invest in them is neither useless nor futile]. The missionaries would say the same of the first young men to publish folktales in their newspaper.

There was little room in the Equatorial Guinean colonial press for anti-colonial discourse since the press was controlled by colonial institutions. It became even more unlikely to find protest literature in the press from 1956 when Spain began to deny the existence of their Equatorial Guinean colony altogether. In response to International pressure to end colonization, the Francoist regime in Spain declared that its sub-Saharan possessions were not colonies but rather Spanish provinces overseas (Río Muni²³ and Fernando Poo). While in other colonies Africans were taking steps to rid their country of the

yoke of colonization, in colonial Equatorial Guinea the colonized/colonizer relationship that continued to exist between Europeans and Africans was being denied by the former. In the second half of the twentieth century Guinea Española began to be known as “Territorios españoles del Golfo de Guinea” [Spanish Territories in the Gulf of Guinea] and literary creations generated during this period began to reflect this denial of colonial status.

Although the colony continued to exist as such in spite of the metropolitan government’s proclamations and laws, the colonial newspapers worked hard to suggest the contrary. If the so-called Spanish overseas provinces did not exist in reality they materialized through certain cultural inventions or creations in the press. *Ebano*, for example, played a significant role in the literary construction of Río Muni and Fernando Poo through the tourist reports and essays that it began to publish. One such report titled “Turismo tropical” [Tropical Tourism] that appeared in *Ebano* in 1960 serves as a typical example of this strategy. Its introduction does not only paint the colony as an attractive tourist destination but also suggests that it is an exotic extension of the Peninsula:

Todavía hay islas desiertas con fondo de palmeras - gentes con labios frutales y risas de marfil - cataratas de saltos mortales - tiburones y reptiles. - cayucos, baleles y malangas sin crepúsculos. - Como explicación de todo esto Fernando Poo, nueva provincia española.²⁴

[There are still deserted islands with palm trees - people with fruit-like lips and ivory smiles. - somersaulting waterfalls - sharks and reptiles. - canoes and unending drinking and dancing. - As an explanation of all this, Fernando Poo, the new Spanish province].

The article following this introduction continues the attempt to link Equatorial Guinea to the Spanish geographical territory, which is evidently different from it spatially, ethnically and environmentally. To this end the author of the article transforms the African regions into Edenic destinations of domestic tourism where Spanish citizens can go in search of rest and recreation.

These journalistic constructions of the African Spanish provinces have a literary equivalent in a series of works that began to appear in *La Guinea Española*, especially, from 1959. In these poems and narratives, the African landscape inspires in the writer a celebration of the wonders of nature as in the following prose narrative that appeared in *La Guinea Española*:

Estos paisajes son momentos cumbres del poema de la creación. En ellos todos los sueños sobreviven al amanecer. Porque en la visión poética de estos contornos se conciben siempre las sirenas y las ninfas rimando con el bosque sombrío y con las aguas rizadas ... En estas aguas y riberas soporíferas, en el embrujo cordial que emanan estos juegos de bosque y mar, en el libre misterio de

esos panoramas que se adentran por las salidas de los grandes ríos, se interpreta el recreo de todos los espíritus africanos esperando la hora de salir a hechizar las noches de luna.²⁵

[These landscapes are key moments in the poem of creation. Through them, all dreams survive the dawn. Because, in the poetic vision of this environment one conceives of sirens and nymphs rhyming with the dark forest and with the rippling waters ... In these waters and on these soporific shores, in this warm spell that gives rise to these forestal and marine games, in the free mystery of these panoramas in which one enters through the great rivers, the recreation of all the African spirits are performed].

This image of the African landscape as a *locus amoenus* is notably contradicted in the more common colonial perspective of the colony as a wild, threatening and insalubrious space that needed to be civilized and brought under control.

In addition to creative works that continued to be published regularly during this period, some of the significant writings in *Ebano* were the results of literary competitions, known as “Juegos Florales”, that were held in the new provinces. It is remarkable that these works written by both Africans and Europeans and published at the height of the independence movement in Africa in the 60’s continued to reflect a semblance of peace and harmony that contradicted the undercurrents of local and international resistance to European dominance in African territories.

“Canto a Santa Isabel en seis sonetos,” which won the first prize in the I Juegos Florales de Fernando Poo, provides a typical example of this seeming absence of cultural and political tension between the European writer and the colonial environment. Like a poetic rendition of the tourist articles cited above, the poet appears to feel right at home in the Equatorial capital. He glorifies it as a place that gives him direction and evokes peace and serenity in him:

Te llevo en mí Santa Isabel, isleña
de pura concepción y absorto vuelo
como un camino que conduce al cielo,
-serenidad del alma que te sueña-

.....
Ciudad donde la gracia se hace cierta,
isla de paz y siglos de marineros
rosa y timón del pensamiento mío.²⁶

[You are within me, Santa Isabel, island dweller
of immaculate conception and contemplative flight
like a path that leads to heaven,
-serene is the soul that dreams of you-

.....

City where one is bound to find grace
 island of peace and centuries of marine adventure
 compass and rudder of my thoughts.]

Furthermore, in keeping with the official vision of the times the poet extends the frontiers of Spain to include the colony by recasting the Equatorial territories as the battlements that separate Spain from the rest of Africa:

De Africa balcón: arco y almena
 en abierta y flagrante geografía;
 corazón de esta España en cercanía
 donde tu voz es voz que en ella suena.²⁷

[Balcony of Africa: arch and battlements
 on a wide and open landscape;
 heart of nearby Spain
 where your voice reverberates.]

Meanwhile “Kon (el blanco)”, one of the prizewinning works submitted by an African, curiously continues in the vein of colonial discourse that celebrates European cultural and moral superiority over African customs and traditions. Its author inadvertently reveals the supposedly equal relationship between the African “provinces” and the metropolis to be false. “Kon (el blanco)” tells the story of how a white missionary, who was initially mistaken by the Africans for a ghost, saves a young girl from the punishment customarily meted out to widows. The missionary brings to the “benighted” Africans a message of salvation and deliverance from their pagan practices: “[V]ine por estas tierras a enseñaros el camino del cielo y daros a conocer a Dios, Criador de todas las cosas. Vine a enseñaros la luz de la verdad y bautizaros”²⁸ [I came to these lands to show you the way to heaven and to let you get to know God, the Creator of all things. I came to show you the truth and to baptize you]. In addition to the proselytizing message “el Kon” also brings a message of equality and human rights. Upon saving the young woman from being hanged he asked the men: ¿por qué hacéis esto? ... ¿por qué maltratáis así a las mujeres? ¿No sabéis que son lo mismo que vosotros, que yo, seres humanos con iguales derechos que los demás?”²⁹ [Why are you doing this? ... why do you maltreat women in this way? ... Do you not know that they are just like you and me, they are human beings with equal rights like everybody else?]. This message of equality plays a double role. On the one hand it suggests the equality of all regardless of race and thus insinuates the dissolution of the racial barrier between the African provinces and those of the peninsula. On the other hand it echoes the human rights concerns that had begun to creep into the official

discourse to criticize African traditions and practices and thus justify Europeans' continued presence in African lands.

Indeed, the competitions which generated these works themselves served as an apt metaphor for the ongoing attempts to deny the barriers between centre y margin, metropolis and colony, Spain and Africa. Unlike previous competitions, the first Juegos Florales that were organized in Santa Isabel during this period, for example, did not establish separate categories for Spanish and African entries. Similarly, unlike previous publications of creative material in the papers, the works submitted by Africans were not separated under special headings such as "La colaboración indígena" [Native contribution]. There appeared to be a suggestion, in the way the papers and the competitions avoided racially identifying the individual works, that all the participants were considered to be undivided citizens of one nation.

Even until the eve of the Independence of Equatorial Guinea, creative writing in the papers continued to deny the existence of the colony. However, the following poem that appeared in *Potopoto* in honour of Rio Muni suggests that all is not well with the relationship between the mother nation and her new Equatorial daughters:

Ya la civilización
te brinda su luz fulgente
de fecunda protección
y España, la Madre Patria
te ofrece su Gran Corazón,
del que te rige prudente
si tu le ayudas
con entusiasmo leal.³⁰

[Civilization already
offers you her resplendent light
of productive protection
and Spain, the Motherland
offers you her Great Heart
by which you will be guided
if you help her
with loyal enthusiasm]

By urging Rio Muni to be loyal to the motherland in order to benefit from her protection, the poet is reacting, no doubt, to the ongoing local and international efforts to dismantle European domination in Equatorial Guinea³¹ and the rest of Africa. Since the most accessible communications media, the newspapers and magazines, were all run by colonial institutions, however, the creative works published in them are remarkably silent on discourses of protest.

During the period of nearly a century of active Spanish colonization, the region known today as Equatorial Guinea went from being “las últimas perlas de [la] Corona [española]”³² [the last pearls in the Spanish Crown] to becoming “[un] milagro Ecuatorial de España”³³ [a Spanish Equatorial miracle]. These poetic observations capture the official history of the colony which is neatly summarized in the title of an article published in *Ébano* to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Franco’s victory: “ESPAÑA AL DARSE EN GUINEA HA RECOGIDO DOS HIJAS: De colonia a provincia”³⁴ [Spain found Guinea and in doing so has also adopted two daughters: from colony to province]. This official version of the relationship of Spain to its colony is what generated the latter’s imperialistic poems; proselytizing tales inspired by African oral tradition; African folktales retold by African seminarians and finally poems and narratives denying the colonial relationship altogether. With the colonial press controlled by the metropolitan government and the colonial institutions, alternatives to the official discourses in Equatorial Guinean literature had to wait until well after Independence.

Notes

¹ For an overview of Equatorial Guinean colonial literature see Carlos González Echegaray, “El África Ecuatorial española a través de la novela y la poesía actuales,” *Archivos del Instituto de Estudios Africanos* 17 (1964): 67-107.

² In a letter sent by the Superior General of the Claretian Missionaries to the Spanish government. Dated 6 May 1882. Cited in Marcos Ajuria Gallástegui, “Nuestras bodas de plata,” *La Guinea Española*, November 13, 1908.

³ Unless otherwise noted all translations are mine.

⁴ *La Voz de Guinea Continental*, September 26, 1947.

⁵ *Falange Española* was a fascist political party created in 1933 by José Antonio Primo de Rivera.

⁶ Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las J. O. N. S. (Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista) was the only legal political party in Franco’s nationalist Spain. It was created in 1937 through the merger of the *Falange Española* and another right-wing party, the *Comunión Tradicionalista*.

⁷ The Portuguese ceded the island of Fernando Poo (named after the Portuguese navigator Fernão do Pó) to Spain in the 15th century. Today it is known as Bioko and it is the island on which the capital of Equatorial Guinea, Malabo, is located.

⁸ G. R., “A la Pilarica,” *La Guinea Española*, June 12, 1903.

⁹ Guineófilo, “España y sus colonias,” *La Guinea Española*, April 1, 1903.

¹⁰ Juan Luis Sabino, ¡Levántate y anda!,” *Guinea Española*, Abril 12, 1905.

¹¹ Pablo Buendía Rongo, “Una parte ‘DEL ANTANO’ de La Guinea Continental,” *La Voz de Guinea Continental*, August 26, 1947.

¹² León García. “Cuentos Africanos: Introducción,” *La Guinea Española*, July 25, 1911.

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- ¹³ Leon García, "El camino de la fortuna," *La Guinea española*, August 25, 1908.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ "La culebra y el cangrejos," *La Guinea Española*, August 25, 1928.
- ¹⁶ "Fidelidad de un amigo," *La Guinea Española*, May 10, 1928.
- ¹⁷ "Botuku justiciero," *La Guinea Española*, April 10, 1928.
- ¹⁸ Mosameanda, *La Guinea española*. October 10, 1928.
- ¹⁹ The word "nieva," referring to an animal, does not appear to be Spanish. Justo Bolekia Boleká, Equatorial Guinean author and critic, has suggested to me that it could be a Hispanicization of the Bubi word "nëbba" which means "iguana".
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ "Instrucciones a los Arzobispos, Obispos y demás Ordinarios acerca del género literario sensual y místico-sensual," *La moral en la literatura, La Guinea Española*, October 25, 1927.
- ²² *La Guinea Española*, May 24, 1931.
- ²³ The colonial name of what is today mainland Equatorial Guinea.
- ²⁴ *Ébano*, "Turismo tropical," August 29, 1960.
- ²⁵ "Paisajes del Muni," *La Guinea Española*, October 15, 1959.
- ²⁶ José Cervera Pery, *Ébano*, November 17, 1961.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Marcelo Asistencia Ndongo. "Kon (el blanco), *La Guinea Española*., January 15, 1962.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Lebobo, "Río Muni," *Potopoto*, March 26, 1968.
- ³¹ For information on anti-colonial activities in Equatorial Guinea see Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo, *Historia y tragedia de Guinea Ecuatorial* (Madrid: Editorial Cambio 16, 1977)
- ³² Guineófilo, "España y sus colonias," *La Guinea Española*, April 1, 1903.
- ³³ José Cervera Pery, "Santa Isabel, milagro Ecuatorial de España," *Ébano*, August 29, 1960
- ³⁴ "Veinticinco años de la historia de la Región Ecuatorial," *Ébano*, July 20, 1960.

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CHAPTER TWO

BLACK CAPITAL/WHITE CAPITAL: REPRESENTATIONS OF PUERTO LIMÓN AND SAN JOSÉ IN AFRO-COSTA RICAN LITERATURE

DOROTHY E. MOSBY

In the fictional worlds created by Afro-Costa Rican writers, the province of Limón and the Central Valley city of San José figure as prominent sites not only because of their historical significance, but also because of their symbolic importance in the configuration of Afro-Costa Rican identity. As descendants of West Indian immigrants, three generations of Afro-Costa Rican writers negotiate their cultural and ethno-linguistic difference using their claim to Limón's Caribbean culture and asserting place within the dominant national culture embodied in San José. In works by Dolores Joseph (1904-1991), Quince Duncan (1940), Shirley Campbell (1965), and Delia McDonald (1965), these two locations become critical points of generational expressions of Afro-Costa Rican identity. The Atlantic province of Limón is constructed as the "black capital" in opposition to the nation's political center, the Central Valley's San José represented as the "white capital."

Puerto Limón is the site where thousands of Afro-West Indian laborers arrived during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to construct a transcontinental railroad and work for the United Fruit Company. Although many workers returned to their islands of origin or moved on to other economic prospects in Panama and elsewhere, thousands remained in Puerto Limón and Limón province and formed an English-speaking community. In Afro-Costa Rican literature, Limón is characterized as the locus of cultural and economic activity involving West Indians and their descendants, thereby constructing the region as the "black capital." This is counter to the national capital territory, San José, as the "white capital." Historically, between 1872 and 1948, large numbers of West Indian Blacks did not reside in the nation's capital until after

the 1948 civil war. In the decades that followed the conflict, many *afrolimonenses*, taking advantage of recent citizenship, migrated to the capital in search of opportunities in education and employment.¹ Costa Rica's national myth of whiteness and homogeneity, or *la leyenda blanca* [the white legend], is solidified in San José for domestic consumption and export: Costa Rica is a white, Catholic, Spanish-speaking nation founded by democracy-loving peasants.² This image of a Costa Rican citizen resists the inclusion of the descendants of Black, Protestant, English-speaking West Indian contract laborers who were once British subjects.

Different generations of writers express a deep connection between blackness and Afro-Costa Rican culture and Limón as well as conflict with the capital San José. Afro-West Indian culture in Limón is of critical importance in the ethnographic fiction of first generation writer Dolores Joseph. To Joseph, Limón is "home." In the novels and short stories of third-generation writer Quince Duncan, Limón is also the ancestral home of Afro-West Indian culture in Costa Rica, but San José is a space of bourgeois opportunity, as well as a space of unease. Following their literary predecessors, Limón occupies an important place in the work of the younger poets Campbell and McDonald. Although the port city is recognized for its historic and cultural significance to Afro-Costa Ricans, in the poetics of Campbell and McDonald Limón figures more as a rhetorical home. Strikingly, Delia McDonald illustrates anxieties produced by racially-marked difference in her poems about "unbelonging" in San José.

Dolores Joseph Montout, one of the foundational figures in Afro-Costa Rican literature, does not explicitly explore San José in his three-story collection, *Tres relatos del caribe costarricense* [Three Tales from Costa Rica's Caribbean, 1984]; nevertheless, the impact of the national Hispanic culture is a central feature in his writings about Limón. Although *Tres relatos* carries a Spanish title, the three stories about Afro-West Indian culture are written in English and Creole.³ The first story in the collection, "Limón on the Raw," in particular offers an intrinsic perspective on changes that have occurred after the 1948 civil war that have influenced West Indian and Afro-Costa Rican identity in the region. The story as a work of ethnographic fiction portrays a day in the life of Puerto Limón and follows Amanda Jackson, a second generation Afro-West Indian in Costa Rica, on her errands from her neighborhood to the city's center.

The author-narrator informs the reader that Limón is the site of many historical events and cultural transformation by giving a "tour" as we trail "Miss Amanda." Passing landmarks, neighborhoods, and people signal significant moments that are explained to the reader. The growing number of whites is a reminder of the "old time Cartago poors" who had difficulty finding work with