

FRANCIO GUADELOUPE: *Chanting Down the New Jerusalem: Calypso, Christianity, and Capitalism in the Caribbean*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Early on in my Virgin Islands research, one of my hosts helped explain the pervasive Christian rhetoric I experienced in my travels. “Closer to church, further from God,” she said, humorously noting a seeming contradiction between residents’ religious talk and the realities of island life. Similar observations appear to have inspired Francio Guadeloupe to write this fascinating study of “Calypso, Christianity and Capitalism in the Caribbean.” To Guadeloupe, Christian discourse serves as an “all-inclusive category of belonging” (218) through which a diverse and mobile population can participate in Saint Martin/Sint Maarten’s major tourist industry. Applying this lens to three of the island’s radio disk jockeys, Guadeloupe offers a strikingly new scholarly model of Caribbean culture and economy. Softening more parochial discussions of Western domination and local repression, Guadeloupe unapologetically portrays the largely middle-class island society as actively suppressing internal conflict through Christian talk, so as to continue enacting the “money-tie” system that has given many their prosperity.

*Chanting Down the New Jerusalem* follows recent scholarship that frames religion pragmatically rather than phenomenologically. Fostered in part by the work of David Chidester, this approach nicely counterbalances previous studies of Caribbean religious populations (such as Timothy Rommen’s 2007 book, *Mek Some Noise!*). To Guadeloupe, “SXM” Christianity provides a means of social inclusion rather than an opportunity to renounce the world: a way to build society rather than create communal division. While churchgoing is reserved mostly for children and the elderly, he argues, those directly involved in the money-tie system invoke it to keep society in line and to avoid jeopardizing tourist dollars, contributing to a communal outlook Guadeloupe describes as a “One Love ideology” (20).

Guadeloupe examines the double-sovereignty island of Saint Martin/Sint Maarten through the local lens of tourism. Island history, for example, has many versions depending upon what visitors wish to hear. Most “SXMers” lack a direct connection to the island’s period of slavery, instead making up histories as necessary to fit with tourists’ expectations. Hardly subversive, Guadeloupe argues, such activity shows how SXMers reflect Édouard Glissant’s idea of “relation identity” (33), freely switching identities to keep the money-tie system running smoothly. This and the following chapters establish Guadeloupe’s incisive, wide-ranging, and detailed, if sometimes chatty, writing style. Deftly merging a scholarly perspective with the voices of the people with whom he

interacts, he opens a window onto island culture that intentionally avoids the class-based rhetoric that has largely driven existing scholarship. Guadeloupe's discussions of local politics in chapter 2, and local attempts to enact a playful and inclusive form of Christianity in chapter 3, speak both to the author's skill as an ethnographer and to the advantages of a small island as a field site. It is indeed more plausible for a single researcher to make broad claims about local dynamics in this setting than it would be in much larger societies that are routinely used as examples.

The center of Guadeloupe's book comprises detailed accounts of three island disk jockeys, each specializing in a different form of music/talk radio. Practicing a medium Guadeloupe claims to be universally received on the island, these figures are proffered as "organic intellectuals" who "have articulated the existing possibilities of belonging by employing a Christian metalanguage" (108). In each case, intricately wrought presentations of one or two radio shows are interwoven skillfully with interview material, descriptions of the goings-on in the studio itself, and general island discourse. At its most successful, this approach makes lively and convincing connections between regional musical genres (in particular calypso and "conscious reggae"), local Christian discourse, and island life. In the chapter on DJ Fernando Clarke, for example, Clarke's pragmatic juxtaposition of calypso Saturdays and church Sundays serves as background for a calypso show with audience interaction on gender difference, appropriately reflective calypso recordings, and vague resolutions with Christian ideology (121-136). Similarly, Guadeloupe's account of DJ Shadow in chapter 5 beautifully illustrates a comfortable relationship between Christianity, Rastafari, and Shadow's upper class background, all in the service of resisting potentially deleterious nationalist rhetoric on the island.

There is one DJ profile where the book seems to lose its way temporarily. With a hip-hop-based message of social change promoting proper education for the children of illegal residents, DJ Cimarron offers little material for analysis and oddly no mention of Christianity. Instead, Guadeloupe attempts to use this material as a springboard for reconsidering a broad scholarly understanding of capitalism. DJ Cimarron's urging islanders to expose class inequity represents a welling up of "stifled speech," Guadeloupe claims, that was not trusted by most islanders due to Cimarron's own history, and that could not be supported by the vulnerable populations he championed. While Guadeloupe had previously been successful in paralleling his associates' own language with that of his chosen supporting scholars, there are several logical leaps here that seem to strain.

Guadeloupe concludes with a grand statement that is partly convincing: based on his SXM example, he argues, capitalism needs to be seen less as an imposition of power than as a pragmatic interchange between heterogeneous peoples

among whom “bridges of communality have to be continuously built” in order to achieve prosperity (215). In *SXM*, Guadeloupe avers, Christianity serves as a key mode of interchange: a companion to and medium for the money-tie system. It is a provocative message, delivered with some swagger; Guadeloupe aims to connect his local observations to “the global South” (46), thus challenging long-held beliefs in social science scholarship. Does he succeed? If nothing else, Guadeloupe’s bold insistence on the relevance of a small island in addressing major issues of our time deserves notice. The massive shift in scale that concludes his book is as uncomfortable as it is necessary: perhaps by keeping our research frames tight and our local knowledge deep, he suggests, a small, oft-overlooked island may have more to add to the conversation than we initially thought.

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RAQUEL Z. RIVERA, WAYNE MARSHALL, and DEBORAH PACINI (eds.): *Reggaeton*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009.

Driving a mortal stake through the censure of its most dismissive critics, the editors of *Reggaeton* offer the first comprehensive overview of a genre that “has emerged in recent years as a prominent, potent symbol for articulating the lines of community” (1). Therefore, this compilation provides not only different histories of reggaeton and its origins but also discusses a variety of theoretical issues in relation to politics, national and transnational identities, race, and gender.

The first article, by Wayne Marshall, presents a sonic “archaeology” of reggaeton’s origins and its crystallization in the late 1990s in Puerto Rico while it also traces its gradual differentiation from hip hop. This text exposes the role played by New York City, and hence, the role of migration in reggaeton’s history. Marshall also argues that the increasing commercial success of this music and its break into mainstream culture have moved it away from racial politics to stress Latin/Pan-Latin symbols.

The contributions to reggaeton that derived from a variety of genres—hip hop, *underground*, dancehall, *bachata*—are explored. In the section addressing its links with music-making in Panama, two interviews are of special interest: one with Renato, a key developer of reggae *en español*, and another one with the popular rapper “El General.” These two interviews help to deconstruct the widely spread association of *reggaetoneros* with “lack” of knowledge or culture. Indeed, the contributions of the performers themselves, even if scarce, is the most valuable element in the book: Tego Calderón contributed a piece called *Black*