



Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

Neither Here nor There:

Exiled Identity in Gisèle Pineau's *Exile According to Julia*

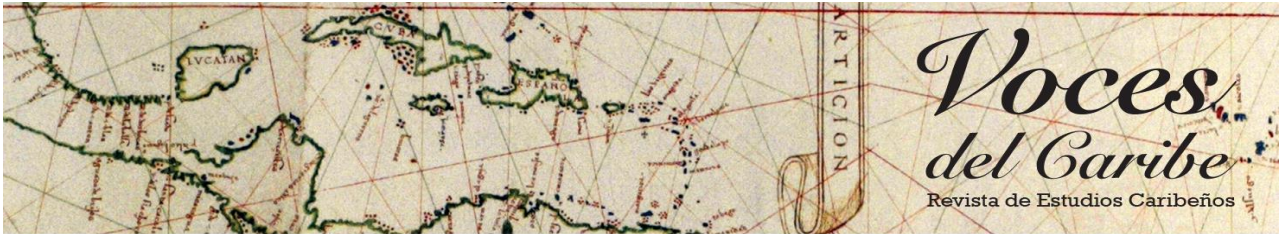
Trauma theory distinguishes between traumas caused by a natural disaster versus traumas caused by systemic failure (e.g. social trauma). In the case of the Caribbean, historical trauma has aided in failing to produce a social structure in which all individuals are equally valued entities. The psychological effects of this social structure and faulty interpersonal relations have perpetuated over time, have been passed from generation to generation, and are still prominent in the social relations of the Caribbean at this time – many of which are portrayed in literary representations. The perpetuation of slavery trauma through generations has recently been termed Post Traumatic Slavery Disorder (PTSlaveryD) or Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, which psychologically manifests itself in ways similar to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), further complicating the social functions of those affected [1-2].

For an individual suffering from PTSlaveryD, there is a clear division between the psyche of the individual before the traumatic event and after. Prior

Jaclyn N. Salkauski



210



to trauma, there are few to no signs of the disorder. When confronted with a stressful situation, the individual – for whatever reason – is passive or non-reactive. However, the individual presents with increased signs of disorder after the event. The after-effects of the traumatic situation manifest in emotional, psychological, and dietary ways, ultimately leading to a paralysis of the individual’s personal development and health – both physically and psychologically. On a larger scale, the effects of PTSD can (and do) affect a whole nation of individuals when confronted with a cultural, systemic, or historical trauma.

The implications for identity formation for those affected by PTSD are further explained by trauma theory. This study explores these implications as portrayed in the 1996 novel, *Exile According to Julia*, by Gisèle Pineau. While exile and assimilation offer one outlet from a society affected by PTSD, the consequences for fleeing can be equally damaging to the individual’s identity formation. Throughout Pineau’s novel, the experiences of the Paris-born Guadeloupean protagonist, Gisèle, serve as an insightful representation





of the difficulties of the path to identity formation in an exile situation. Foremost, the path that she takes while forming identity embodies one such possibility for overcoming the PTSD of her homeland.

PTSD manifests itself in many ways. Initially, before a stressful event, few to no signs of the disorder are present. The individual either chooses to be passive or non-reactive for the duration of the stressor – or in the case of slavery, the individual has little resource or ability to be reactive or aggressive. However, in both circumstances, the individual is susceptible to a wide range of after-effects, both in type and severity. Those suffering from PTSD face emotional, psychological, and dietary disorders which lead to paralysis of personal development and health (Reid, Sekou and Higginbottom 53). While PTSD deals with the clinical state of individuals, likewise, I propose that this same disorder can and does manifest itself in entire societies, specifically Caribbean nations as represented in fictional contemporary literature. Similarly, the society will suffer widespread emotional, psychological, and





dietary disorders leading to a stunted development and unhealthy alternatives for growth and progress.

To further explain trauma, Dominick LaCapra theorizes that trauma victims (first generation or not) deal with their trauma by either “acting out” or “working through” [3]. An example of acting out would be the case of PTSD, where there is a cyclical suffering that prevents the individual from separating from the traumatic event, whereas working through inherently requires a self-awareness or identification. The abundance of individuals that are systemically affected by slavery, as well as its perpetuating socio-economic structures, creates a profusion of representations in postcolonial Caribbean literature that convey the individual’s identity process. While the individuals represented studied here grapple with individual identity issues, the nation and culture as a whole are simultaneously grappling with the same difficulties.

One such illustration of this conflicted identification process is the aforementioned novel *Exile According to Julia*. While Paris-born Guadeloupean





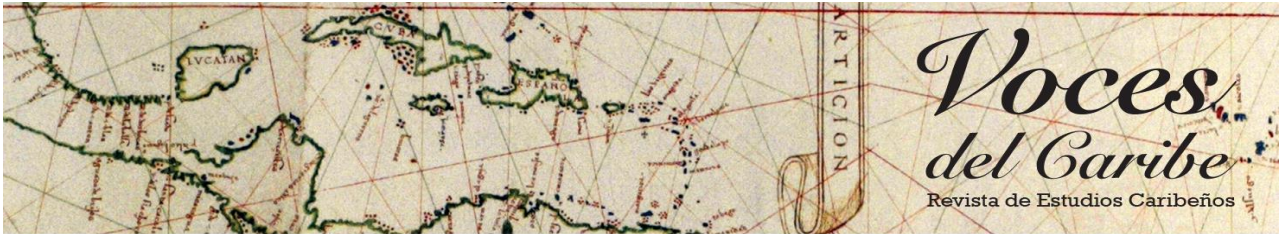
Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

protagonist, Gisèle, suffers from the inability to fit in amongst her cosmopolitan Parisian friends, she experiences similar feelings of exclusion upon visiting Guadeloupe. The cultural stripping Gisèle experienced as a means to assimilate is a common experience for many exiled individuals. In a turn of events, Gisèle's grandmother, Julia, moves into the family home and begins sharing stories from the past. It is through her grandmother's stories that Gisèle is healed from the cultural trauma that she has inherited.

How does one inherit or come to embody a cultural, systemic, or historical trauma? One such explanation of a manifestation of the embodiment of inherited cultural, systemic, or historical trauma is an inability or lack of desire to be fully engaged in either of the influencing cultures. Rather than allow the entirety of one to embody only one specific culture and to define oneself with one element or portion of their cultural make-up, these individuals straddle two or more influencing cultures. This straddling of cultures serves as a method of self-preservation, but also inadvertently prevents the individual



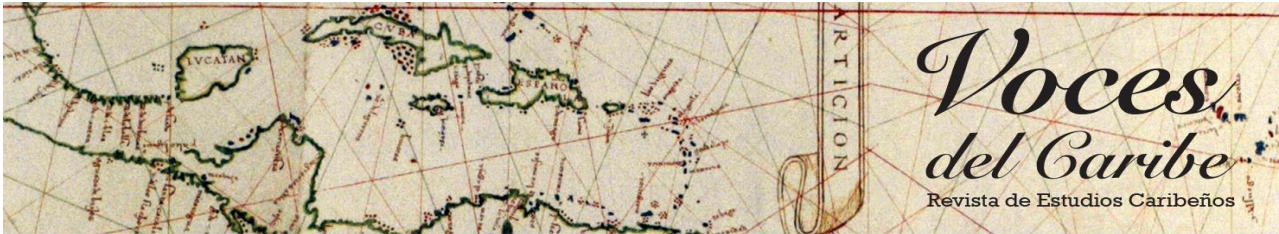


from being fully accepted by either culture. This new way of being, of dealing with a traumatic experience, is learned and emulated by future generations.

Paul Gilroy explains this straddling of cultures and identity while in exile as the development of a double consciousness, originally pertaining to the needs and desires of African slaves who were brought to the Caribbean region as slave laborers who desired to be connected to their African roots while assimilating to their European counterparts enough to survive [4]. While the African slave trade is not still in practice, the after effects of the trauma it created are still experienced and are further exaggerated when an individual migrates or is exiled and must then negotiate the assimilation of yet another culture.

On a larger, national scale, Guadeloupe maintains a straddling of two cultures as it has remained a Département d'Outer-Mer (DOM) since 1946. This relationship allows the citizens of these two islands to freely travel between Guadeloupe and France. This relationship allows for the perpetuation and continued extensions of French politics, society, language, and culture. One





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

point of view states that due to the DOM status, “Antillean literature does not yet exist, because Antillean writers write with a foreign audience in mind rather than for their own people” (qtd. in Suk 21). The DOM status is what also has delayed the use of the term *postcolonial* to describe francophone Caribbean literature. Suk laments that the implication toward an end to colonialism “is misleading given continuing struggles against economic and cultural neocolonialism” which both have “special relevance for the Antilles, where a relationship of dependence upon the métropole persists” in daily functions (19). As with individual straddling of cultures, a national or societal manifestation of the same can also cause a similar sensation of being stuck in the middle.

As a result of this cultural straddling, Homi Bhabha alludes to a third space. Bhabha is very clear when he indicates that rather than declaring it a hybrid space, this “‘third space’ ...enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority” allowing for change (qtd. in Murdoch 5) [5]. This interstitial space





that allows for change and adaptation is especially pertinent to the identity issues faced by postcolonial individuals and nations suffering from double consciousness.

Representative of the issues related to Bhabha and his ilk, Pineau's novel presents the reader with a representation of three generations of women from the same family, and how each deal with the changes they undergo upon leaving their place of birth, relocating to the country of their colonizer, and then returning to their homeland. *Exile According to Julia* is a novel about the deconstruction of exile and all the components that contribute to identity formation. In this novel, exile, as well as the historical and prejudicial traumas that are affected or are the effects of exile, point to and are predicated on the importance of memory and the female lineage. The family's history is eventually passed from grandmother to granddaughter through the female storytelling practices that are commonly shown in Caribbean literary representations. It is only through the passing of the grandmother's, Julia's, knowledge to her granddaughter, Gisèle, that her lived experience can be



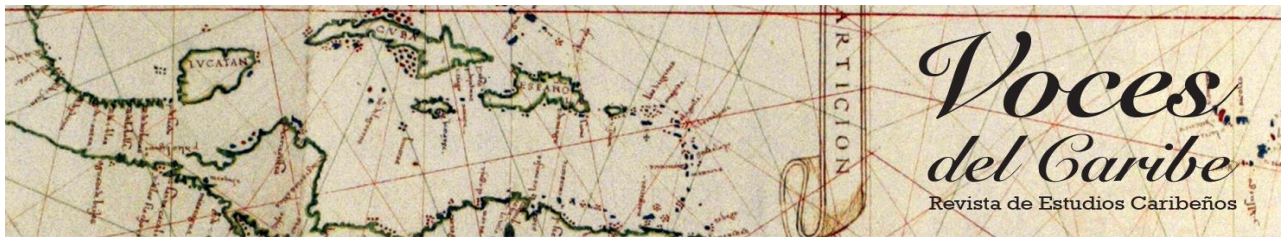


considered a true representation of history when compared to canonical historical literature. As many representations of the Caribbean female's identification process, Gisèle can only begin to understand her search for identity, stability, and a sense of belonging through her grandmother's experiences and knowledge.

In addition to the present exile, it is also necessary to note the effects of the past. Specifically, historical trauma in the form of slavery and the subsequent colonial rule significantly affect both Julia and Gisèle; however, it is also important to note that each woman's exile experience is different. Julia has a strong understanding of her individual identity when in Guadeloupe, but becomes lost when in France. From an early age, Gisèle is lost in France and finds stability in her grandmother. For Gisèle, her grandmother is her homeland. Once coming to this conclusion, Gisèle understands the role that familial roots and relations play in collective identity formation.

The importance of familial roots and relations takes the forefront in *Exile According to Julia*, an autobiographical novel about marginalization and a

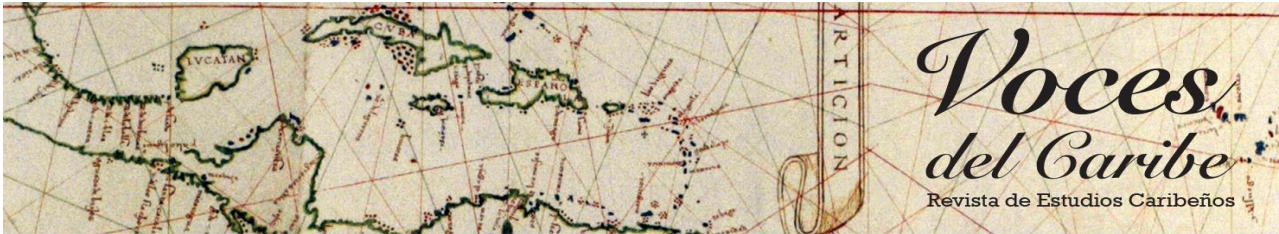




search for belonging. Just as many Guadeloupeans migrated to the French *métropole* after World War II, the protagonist, Gisèle, and her family also choose to relocate. Although dual citizens of both France and Guadeloupe, the family were confronted with constant racial prejudice and was relegated to the margins of society – both geographically and socially – upon their arrival in France. Gisèle’s parents grew up in Guadeloupe, but chose to deny their heritage and Creole language upon moving to France in an effort to assimilate with fewer obstacles. Gisèle especially feels as though she does not belong and is searching for stability, which she finds when her grandmother, the Julia of the title, is exiled to France.

Julia does not want to leave Guadeloupe, but her family feels that it is in her best interest to kidnap her and take her to France in order to escape her abusive husband. When Julia arrives in France, it seems to Gisèle that they have nothing in common, but gradually the two women begin to form a deeper understanding of each other. When Julia returns to Guadeloupe years later, Gisèle feels a deep longing to return to the Guadeloupe that she knows only





through her grandmother's stories. This relationship between Julia and Gisèle – as well as the relationship the two women share with Guadeloupe – are defining factors in their identity formation.

When dealing with the exile of Julia that is referred to in the title of Pineau's work, it is first necessary to understand the context in which the term exile is being used. Amongst types of exile are political, social, and psychological [6]. In the case of Julia, she did not choose to leave Guadeloupe, but neither was she expelled from the country due to political or social requisites. While the title of the novel indicates to the reader that Julia's account of her experiences is representative of an exile situation, it is necessary to be familiar with various interpretations of exile. For Myriam J.A. Chancy, exile is much more complicated than an individual being removed from her homeland, but rather

to begin to define exile, then, is to acknowledge its irrevocability. That is to say, that exile brings with it an irreparable fissuring of self from homeland. And yet...it cannot be defined simply as the expulsion of individuals through overt, political, governmental force from one's homeland. (Chancy 3)





Chancy indicates that the experience of exile should be considered to include many more situations including “the threat of governmental/political persecution or state terrorism; poverty enmeshed through exploitative labor practices that overwork and underpay; social persecution resulting from one’s dehumanization because of color, gender, sexuality, class standing; the forever lack of choice of one’s profession; the impossibility of imagining moments of leisure, moments for the nurturance of the soul; the nickering wick of home extinguished through despair” and “self-imposed exile, that is, emigration” to a foreign land (3). Thus, Chancy has a wide variety of defining factors that contribute to the understanding of the experience of exile. However, Chancy is not the only critic to have put forth a definition of exile.

Edward Said has also robustly engaged in the debate on exile. For him, “[exile] is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and it’s true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted...the achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever” (173). While Chancy believes that the



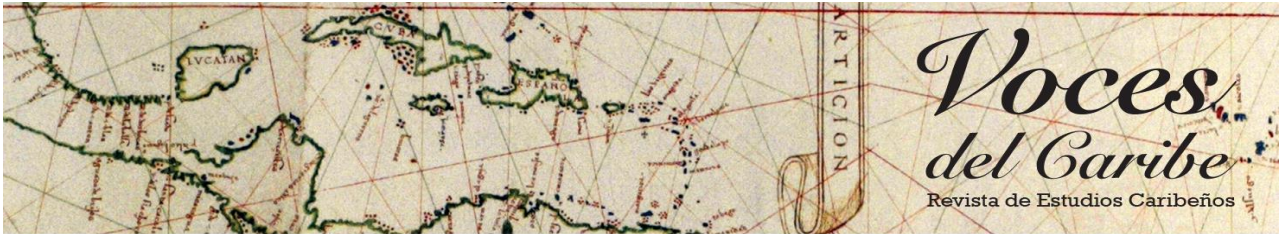


separation of individual from her homeland does not necessarily have to be forced to constitute exile, Said also indicates that the ability to make gains in the new culture and society are significantly less valuable when an individual has been exiled. Also according to Said, the exile experiences of our time are occurring on a large scale; it “is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration” (174). While previous cases of exile were on a smaller scale and were clear cases of political or social exile, an issue of contemporary times is that removal from one’s homeland - whether by choice or not – has risen both in quantity and frequency.

Alternatively, Said indicates that a forceful separation is necessary for the condition of exile. In Said’s narrower description of exile, he also indicates that “although it is true that anyone prevented from returning home is an exile, some distinctions can be made among exiles, refugees, expatriates, and émigrés,” which can be defined in the following ways:

exile originated in the age-old practice of banishment. Once banished, the exile lives an anomalous and miserable life, with the stigma of being an outsider. Refugees, on the other hand, are a creation of the twentieth-century state. The word ‘refugee’ has





become a political one, suggesting large herds of innocent and bewildered people requiring urgent international assistance, whereas 'exile' carries with it, I think, a touch of solitude and spirituality. (181)

Therefore, expatriates then are individuals who

voluntarily live in an alien country, usually for personal or social reasons...expatriates may share in the solitude and estrangement of exile, but they do not suffer under its rigid proscriptions. Émigrés enjoy an ambiguous status. Technically, an émigré is anyone who emigrates to a new country. Choice in the matter is certainly a possibility. (181)

While there are some unclear situations of individuals who choose to live as an exile, under the conditions of exile, they have not necessarily been banished, whereas those who have been banished live in exile out of necessity rather than choice.

And, in yet another understanding of exile, Brodsky indicates that exile is not necessarily just the physical removal from one's homeland but also the psychological implications that accompany this relocation, making it somewhat of a "metaphysical condition" (Katrak 652). It is this combination of definitions that can be seen in *Exile According to Julia*. Specifically, Julia's exile





lies in the combination of historical trauma, an abusive spouse, and geographical relocation whereas Gisèle's trauma lies in the combination of historical trauma, geographical relocation and an identity struggle.

As seen with Gisèle and Julia, although an individual may have escaped the circumstance of her homeland, the systemic marginalization of the dominant culture, class, and gender continues to prevent her from entering the in-crowd, even if she has the same citizenship as her counterparts in the métropole. The separation from one's homeland – whether by choice or not – becomes a practice in psychological strength. According to Ferlosio, the success of an exiled individual depends heavily on whether or not she was afforded the opportunity to say goodbye to her family and friends because “departure creates the tension of belief that ‘we will meet again’ and the tension of fear that ‘we will never meet again’” (qtd. in Grinberg and Grinberg 156). The ability to bid farewell offers some sort of closure for the individual, however “the traveler who leaves without saying goodbye is spurred on by impatience, a state of uneasiness, and apprehension” that gradually becomes all-consuming





in their new location, effectively preventing them from a successful transition (156). This type of exile can be observed in *Exile According to Julia* when Julia was not able to give her farewell to her husband before being taken from the island, and the resulting impatience, uneasiness and apprehension that Grinberg and Grinberg discuss can be observed in her depressed and sometimes neurotic PTSD behaviors while in France.

Representative of her neurotic behaviors, Julia is constantly consumed with memories of her husband and is forever making comparisons between Guadeloupe and France. Confronted with the difficulty of adjusting to French culture and mode of life, Julia is concerned by the lifestyle that her grandchildren are growing up with. She makes it her personal mission to show the children her experiences: “up early in the early hours of the morning, she never stops going until the sun has set. Sweeping, preparing soup, scouring an earthenware pot, polishing, washing, ironing” (Pineau 46). Because her grandchildren are not familiar with the life that Julia is used to, she takes on the task of modeling these virtues for them. Julia’s actions and desire to share



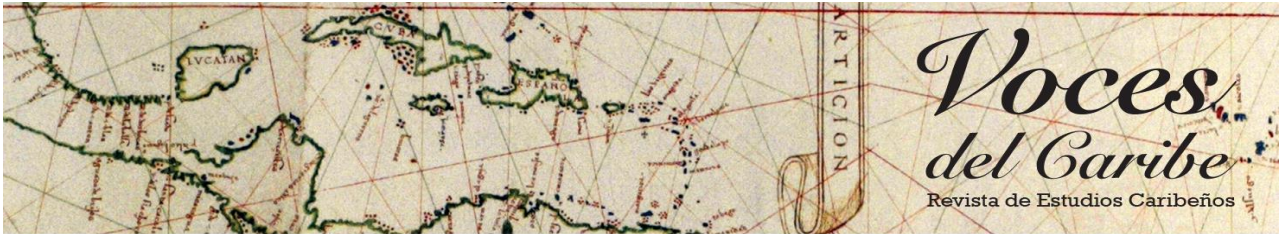


her experience of Guadeloupe with the children becomes an obsessive behavior.

While not necessarily neurotic behavior, an added element of Julia's exile is that, in addition to a strong desire to be with her husband again, she fears dying in a foreign land. Rebecca and León Grinberg explain that "in primitive fantasies, death is conceived as reunion with one's ancestors...to die far away from home 'in a foreign land' is considered a double death because it makes the fantasized return impossible" (161). Psychologically speaking, "these concerns show up either latently or overtly in the material of patients who have experienced migration, and more so in cases where the migration itself was an exile" (161). As Julia was neither politically nor socially exiled from her homeland, she did not leave by choice and consistently shows representative signs of psychological trauma for having been forcibly relocated.

While the psychological effects of exile are many and varied, it is clear that one of the most effective ways for individuals to overcome the trauma of





displacement – or in Dominick LaCapra’s words “working through” - is to write their story. In this circumstance, literary representations “serve to rewrite the past but provide [female Afro- Caribbean authors] with renewed options for the future in continued resistance to oppression and in the reclamation of, or return to, [their] own identities, which, in effect, are themselves [their] ‘homes’ away from home” (Chancy 121). According to Chancy, the process of confronting exile includes four phases: “alienation, self-definition, recuperation, and return” (xxi). However, after passing through the first three phases of exile, a return to the homeland does not necessarily refer to a physical return, but can also refer to a psychological return to one’s roots. Therefore, exile allows for a relation to the future allowing the individual to look “forward to a state of equilibrium wherein alienation from the self and the past will be brought to an end and backward to an understanding of where we have come from and how past generations have sought to prevent the struggle with which we are faced in the present” (214). For both Gisele and Julia, the feelings of





displacement that they experience while living in France is exactly this link that identifies them with both the past and the future.

Exiled identity is an individual process based on both internal and external factors, as well as the identity of the collective. While each individual must decide which factors most strongly affect her individual identity, Jorge Duany indicates that there are some external factors that are relevant in the identity process. According to Duany, there are hard “cores” and “rough edges” that contribute to the overall formation of identity [7]. These hard “cores” refer to language, religion, the canonized literature, and other island-centered cultural practices, while “rough edges” refers to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or diasporic locations. That being said, there remains a strong emotional and psychological attachment with the women’s previous lifestyle and who they were in Guadeloupe.

This dichotomy of hard cores and rough edges is only one of the many hurdles that make it so difficult to completely separate oneself from her native culture. Julia does not assimilate well to life in France. She especially does not





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

like to live behind doors or windows and “she does not feel at home in Ile-de-France, in the narrow confines of an apartment. But it’s either that or death Back Home, they tell us in whispers” (Pineau 8). In addition, she is grappling with the loss of her lover, no matter how destructive their relationship may have been. Rather, Julia appeals to her “cores” in the form of language, religion, canon literature and other island practices such as food. In addition, she cannot separate herself from her race, ethnicity, and gender, all of which play an integral role in defining herself. While it is observed that while the other adults relocated in France and “they loved their country, yes, but with an ambivalent love, like a love from one’s youth that one cannot manage to forget even though it bore no fruit,” Julia does not feel this way, even after many years in France (17). Julia’s love for Guadeloupe is pure and unwavering, just like her love for her torturous husband. Although Julia’s family referred to her exile as “Deliverance,” or a chance to escape, she never felt this way (18).

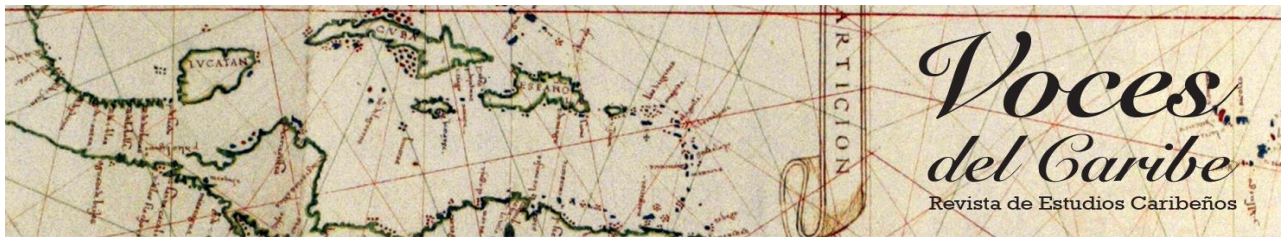
While the novel accounts for two very different exile experiences, the case of Julia is a multi-faceted representation of exile. Her nostalgia for the life





she once lived in Guadeloupe, in addition to her utopian view, have idealized Guadeloupe and her life there to such an extent that she is not able to recognize the negative aspects of this life. Regardless of Julia's attempts to assimilate in France, she just ends up feeling more lost each time she parts with one of her "core" or "rough edge" Guadeloupean values. Julia has faced trauma of varying degrees and from three different sources. First, she has lived her whole life in post slavery Caribbean society, still experiencing the traumatic effects of colonial rule. Second, she is physically traumatized through repeated beatings from her husband who attacks her for the same reasons he reportedly married her: dark skin and lack of education. Third, by repeatedly accessing a "core" of identity, her repeated appeals to God to heal her husband to turn him into a loving being have not garnered change in her husband, leaving Julia to continually be let down and psychologically scarred. This psychological trauma does not end when Julia is exiled but rather she continues to maintain strong ties to her religion and continually prays to God on behalf of her husband, Asdrubal. As always, she asks for "only the strength not to give up

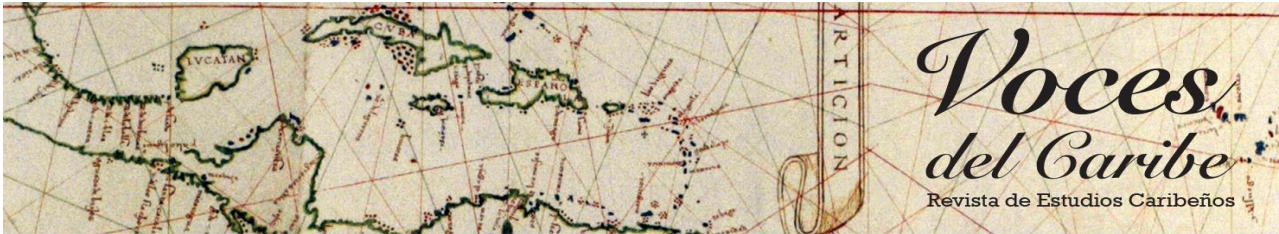




before returning” to Guadeloupe and her abusive husband. While this specific incident of abuse is not similar to most exile situations, the desire and longing to return to the homeland is a common occurrence.

As for Gisèle, the novel’s second perspective on exile, one of the keys in her pursuit to access her family’s roots are the stories her grandmother shares with her and the hybridity that her grandmother teaches her to embrace. Gisèle only develops nostalgia for Guadeloupe, a land she has never visited, upon her grandmother’s arrival from the Caribbean island. For Gisèle, her idea of home is only developed through her grandmother’s stable grounding. Gisèle comes to know her grandmother as home, and therefore as the base of her identity. Gisèle again deals with many of the same issues of assimilation and language choice when returning to Guadeloupe. Gisèle has a strong sense of self and identity through her relationship with her grandmother and her heritage, so her arrival in Guadeloupe is one of strengthening and stabilizing her understanding of identity, rather than the unstable experience she had in France.





As supported by Stuart Hall, identity is determined by circumstances, in place and time, allowing for changes from time to time, as either circumstances or personal beliefs and feelings change. Thus, it would be expected that Gisèle question her identity in some fashion once her circumstances had been altered by the arrival of her grandmother. Although these changes in the identity process can function as a safeguard to aid in the assimilation process, it can also leave an individual feeling unstable, or without roots.

Oftentimes in Francophone literature, the metaphor of a tree is used to represent roots and a stable location, and the leaves to represent changes in seasons or stages of life [8]. Gisèle reflects on her own identity process and how difficult it was to understand her own identity process when she felt as though she were not grounded or rooted to anything specific. She explains that:

in one brief moment, you understand that you have never known the person you were, what you came to seek on this earth. You hang your life on the thick lianas that the trees throw to you. You run, you keep going. Dead leaves cry out under your feet. You pick up stones in order to get back to your house, your lost family. Have they





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

abandoned you? You don't know. A river is calling you. You want to go back up it, walk in its waters encumbered with rocks. Fall. Get up again. And then let yourself be carried away (39).

Again, the reference to trees throwing lianas in an attempt to rescue a lost individual and return them to their roots indicates a need to return to one's heritage and homeland in order to find her true identity. One such way that an exiled individual can reconnect with the homeland while simultaneously overcoming the trauma of separation from the homeland is to write the experience – to give voice to the trauma of exile.

While in France, Gisèle deals with these feelings and thoughts by beginning to “write to invent existences for [her]self” (140). It is at this point that Gisèle begins to write her grandmother's stories and her own identity. Gisèle spends the remainder of her time in France writing about and dreaming about her return to Guadeloupe. She imagines what her life in Guadeloupe would be like and how she could more easily assimilate to life in Guadeloupe and recapture the years she lost there than staying in France and trying to integrate into the cultural norm. Gisèle spends the remainder of her time in

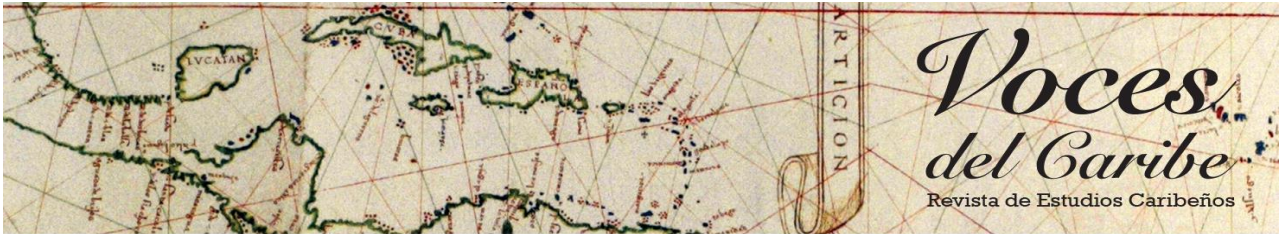




France writing about and dreaming about her return to Guadeloupe. Once her family has decided to return and makes the voyage back to the Caribbean, Gisèle feels similar to many who have immigrated and eventually returned to their homeland: “at last we have reached our destination, understanding that indeed our feet are treading this soil, dreamed of for so long, [it] is a painful and violent mental exercise. We are really in the West Indies. In Martinique. Guadeloupe is very near” (132).

Conversely, throughout the novel, the adults continually inundate the children with ideas of Guadeloupe as a terrible place with nothing to offer, so it is surprising to Gisèle that she could find such fulfillment in her Guadeloupean heritage. As a child she is introduced to the traumatic collective national memory when told that “sleep is stronger than death. It transports you to an unknown world brooding within you. It unearths and reawakens forgotten eras, old wounds, and faceless fears. It makes you a spectator, mutilates you, bleeds you, tears you apart” (32-3). Trauma survivors oftentimes have recurring memories and anxiety due to the experiences they have had [9].





The way that the adults in the generation of Gisèle's parents deal with this trauma is by reminding their children that long ago "[Guadeloupe] was a land of slavery, which no longer has anything good in it" and are told to avoid asking "about the past" but rather to "take advantage of France" and all the good things it has to offer (16).

In regards to the traumatic memory of slavery, the nation suffers as a whole, but in Julia's case, she suffers a second degree of trauma due to her abusive husband. Firstly, she suffers the aftereffects of colonization, such as poverty, lack of access to education, and racial prejudice. This trauma is exacerbated by her relationship with Asdrubal, the Torturer. Julia is aware that her husband never loved her, but chose her to upset his father because her skin is so dark. Asdrubal "never spoke to [her] like a person. Always like his slave" (7). For Julia, slavery has never ended and neither have the traumas associated with it because she relives them every day.

Due to the traumatic memory and systemic after-effects of slavery, the nation suffers as a whole, but in Julia's case, the after-effects of slavery are ever-





present in her daily life. Just like slavery had been abolished and reinstated more than once in Guadeloupe, Julia continues to deal with this cyclical pattern of hope and disappointment. These learned emotions plague Gisèle as well. For her, “the idea of slavery occupied [her] nights” and the nation as a whole, as “they remained paralyzed in a sort of mistrust, always expecting the return of the hard times of slavery” and the pain and open wounds that would accompany its reinstatement (83). More so than other Caribbean nations, and in different ways, Guadeloupe and its people keep the trauma of slavery in the forefront of their minds.

According to Lucia M. Suárez, “writing functions as the ideal weapon against the loss of a history that is not official” (10). This goal is clear for Gisèle. By writing her family’s history, Gisèle hopes to put an end to the trauma of slavery and postcolonial rule. She also hopes to create a new beginning for herself, for her family, for Guadeloupe and for the Caribbean. For Gisèle, her Guadeloupean identity cannot be separated from her Caribbean identity.





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

Pineau's *Exile According to Julia* represents many of the common threads of experience germane to the literature on exile and troubled identity. While the exile experience can be as unique as each individual, the common elements of exile, such as marginalization, difficulty assimilating to a new culture, nostalgia, and the importance of one's homeland in developing a stable collective and individual identity are prevalent in postcolonial Caribbean literature. It is also important to note that in the Caribbean experience, trauma and colonial rule play an important role in the identity process. While the relocation experience affects racialized postcolonial hybrid Caribbean females in a similar way, the case of migration from the Francophone Caribbean offers a distinct experience, especially due to the DOM status of Guadeloupe. While dislocation has many common physical, social, and psychological factors, each dislocation is significantly different depending on the individuals involved, as well as the events that lead them to flee their homeland. It would be beneficial for further studies to be done on the validity and complexity of PTSD, allowing for an official entry in the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual*, further

Jaclyn N. Salkauski



237



Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

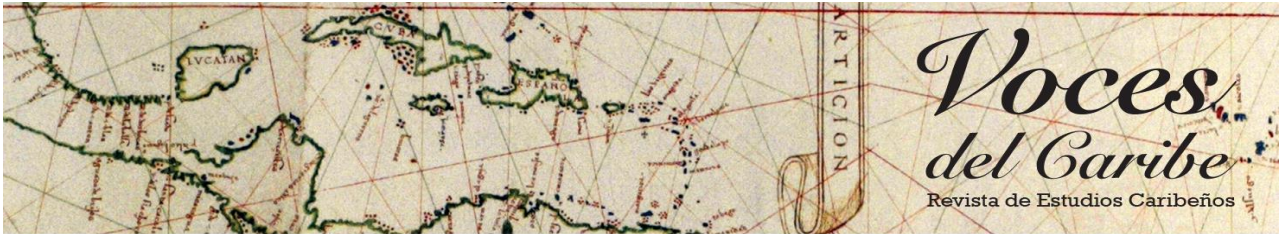
strengthening the diagnosis and bringing more attention and care to suffering individuals. Above all, without doubt, the removal from one's homeland – by choice or not – plays a significant factor in the identity process.

Jaclyn N. Salkauski
University of Mississippi

Jaclyn N. Salkauski



238



NOTES

1 Reid, Sekou, Higginbottom. Post Traumatic Slavery Disorder: Definition, Diagnosis and Treatment. Conquering Books: 2009. Web.

2 DeGruy, Joy. Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome. Joy DeGruy Publications Inc.: 2005. Print.

3 LaCapra, Dominick. "'Acting-Out' and 'Working-Through.'" Trauma. Amos Goldberg. 9 June 1998. Print.

4 Gilroy, Paul. The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993. Print.

5 Bhabha, Homi. "The Third Space." Community, Culture, Difference. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990. Print.

6 For further definitions of exile, see: Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora"; Schmitter Heisler, Barbara. "The Sociology of Immigration"; Kaminsky, Amy K. After Exile: Writing the Latin American Diaspora; Rushdie, Salman. Imaginary Homelands; Cioran, E.M. "Advantages of Exile"; Hugo, Victor. "What Exile Is"

7 Duany, Jorge. "The Rough Edges of Puerto Rican Identities: Race, Gender, and Transnationalism." Latin American Research Review 40.3 (2005): 177-90. Print.

8 In Haitian literature, the image of the tree is often used as a metaphor to represent the importance of roots and connections to the past. With origins in West African tradition, the Caribbean Voodoo religion, it is believed that the loa (divine spirits) and spirits of ancestors





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

past inhabit the branches of the tree. Therefore, the tree is an important entity when it comes to keeping connections to the past. In the novel, Julia does not want to die in France because she must be surrounded by the trees that her ancestors inhabit in order to maintain contact with them and, in turn, her roots.

9 LaCapra postulates that “a crucial way of attempting to allay anxiety is to locate a particular or specific thing that could be feared and thus enable one to find ways of eliminating or mastering that fear” (“Trauma” 706-7). Although an attempt at removal of all anxiety can be made, LaCapra is clear that oftentimes the victim must learn to live with it.





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

WORKS CITED

Bhabha, Homi. "The Third Space." *Community, Culture, Difference*. Ed. Jonathan

Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990. Print.

Chancy, Myriam J. A. *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in*

Exile. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1997. Print.

DeGruy, Joy. *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*. Joy DeGruy Publications Inc.: 2005. Print.

Grinberg, León and Rebecca Grinberg. "Exile, a Specific Kind of Migration."

Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile. New Haven: Yale UP, 1989. 156-65. Print.

Katrak, Ketu. "Colonialism, Imperialism, and Imagined Homes". *The Columbia History*





Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

of the American Novel. Eds. Emory Elliott and Cathy N. Davidson. New York: Columbia UP, 1991. 649-78. Print.

LaCapra, Dominick. "'Acting-Out' and 'Working-Through.'" Trauma. Amos Goldberg.

9 June 1998. Print.

Murdoch, H A. "Conceptualizing Creoleness: French Caribbean 'Postcolonial' Discourse." Creole Identity in the French Caribbean Novel. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2001. 1-18. Print.

Pineau, Gisele. Exile According to Julia. Betty Wilson, trans. Charlottesville: U of

Virginia P, 2003. Print.

Reid, Sekou, Higginbottom. Post Traumatic Slavery Disorder: Definition, Diagnosis and

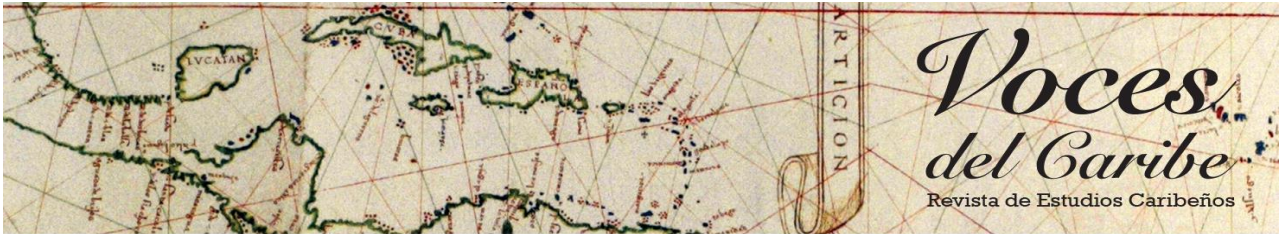
Treatment. Conquering Books: 2009. Web.

Said, Edward. "Reflections on Exile." Reflections on Exile and Other Essays. Cambridge:

Jaclyn N. Salkauski



242



Volumen 7, Número 1

Primavera 2016

Harvard UP, 2002. 173-86. Print.

Suárez, Lucia M. "Gisèle Pineau: Writing the Dimensions of Migration." *World*

Literature Today 75.3-4 (2001): 8-21. Print.

Suk, Jeannie. *Postcolonial Paradoxes in French Caribbean Writing: Césaire, Glissant,*

Condé. Oxford: Clarendon, 2001. Print.

