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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Happy Holidays from the team at CSA!

The Executive Council of the Caribbean Studies Association takes this opportunity to wish the entire CSA membership happy holidays!

CSA Program Team – Visit to St. Martin

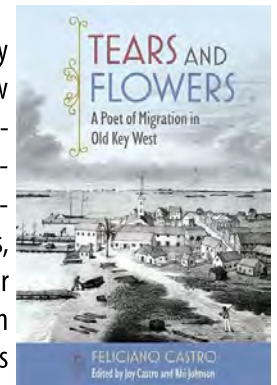
The President of the CSA and your CSA Program Team are working to ensure that the CSA Conference next year in St. Martin will be a success. To that end, a visit was made to the conference location, St. Martin, and the planning team made of the CSA President, Vice-President and Program Chair made visits to The Simpson Bay Beach Resort - the conference site, The University of St. Martin, several radio stations to promote the conference and the offices of Government Ministers who are involved in the sponsoring of some events for the 2025 conference. See photo gallery in column for further details.



Meagan Sylvester

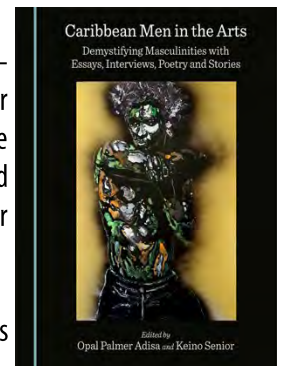
New Book

Tears and Flowers : A Poet of Migration in Old Key West which is edited by Feliciano Castro, Edited by Joy Castro and Rhi Johnson is our featured new book for December. A rare glimpse into the history of the Cuban community in Key West in the early twentieth century, this book makes the poetry of Feliciano Castro available in English for the first time. A Galician Cuban who lived for decades in the southernmost city of the United States, Castro worked as a *lector* reading to cigar factory employees, a newspaper editor, a printer, and a writer. He published *Lágrimas y flores*, a collection of his poetry, in 1918. Translated here by Rhi Johnson, Castro's poems provide a window into an overlooked literary culture.



New Articles

Caribbean Men in the Arts: Demystifying Masculinities with Essays, Interviews, Poetry and Stories edited by Opal Pamer Adisa and Keino Senior chronicles how different forms of manhood perform in artistic spaces. The selections take an in-depth review and exploration of the emotional and artistic landscape of Caribbean men who dare to carve out a place for themselves in the visual and performance mediums.



One of the featured articles was written by Meagan A. Sylvester and is entitled, *Perspectives on Masculinities, Culture and the Carnival Aesthetic: The Trinidad and Tobago Experience*.

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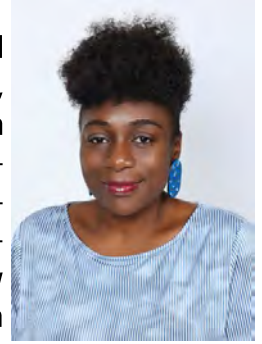
Executive Council

- Oneil Hall
- Rita Keresztesi
- Geneve Phillip-Durham
- Maggie Shrimpton Masson

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR cont'd

Member Highlight

This month we feature a sister from the soil of Grenada, Dr. Candia Mitchell-Hall. Candia's academic sojourn began at the University of West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in Barbados where she secured a Doctor of Philosophy in History with a strong emphasis on Heritage, the first of its kind and a Bachelor of Arts in History with First Class Honours. Her groundbreaking dissertation on the Built Heritage of St. Georges explored the memories of Afro-Grenadians through the lens of the built environment, pioneering new perspectives in Caribbean studies. Currently, she is an emerging scholar in Caribbean Culture, History, Heritage, and Memory at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus.



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Rhoda Arrindell

Dear CSA Members,

As we prepare to end 2024 and look toward the new year, I am sending warmest of holiday wishes to all our members. May you and your loved ones indulge in the things that bring you closer together in the spirit of love and peace.

On another important note, I've shared this information here before, but to help clear up some queries, I am resending this information, not just for our visitors at the CSA 2025 conference in St. Martin, but also for the benefit of our general membership, especially those who may teach about the history and culture of the island.

Precisely which European power first used the name St. Martin to refer to the island is not certain, but as early as 1630, both the French and the Dutch were referring to the island as St. Martin, using the English spelling, even in Dutch texts. The Dutch spelling (Sint Maarten/St. Maarten) does not appear until 1936 in a Dutch document, apparently to lay the Netherlands' claim to its "own" half of the island, since the English and French spellings were identical.

Today the Dutch spelling appears more prevalently in print, due to the main port of entry and tourism growth and promotions taking place on primarily the southern territory. Sometimes, ostensibly trying to show balance or highlight the territories individually, some people write "St. Maarten/St. Martin." This phenomenon seems to appear around the 1980s, mostly for tourism promotion, and not used by indigenous St. Martiners until recently. Because the slash is a symbol of conflict, division, and violence, and the people are historically one, others refrain from this use as they view the division as a contradiction of the values of the St. Martin people and their cultural heritage.

Like you, I look forward to a more peaceful 2025 as we step up our activities to be with each other in person in St. Martin. Happy holidays.

Rhoda Arrindell
President CSA 2024-2025

Español

Estimados miembros de la CSA:

Mientras nos preparamos para finalizar el año 2024 y miramos hacia el nuevo año, les envío mis más cálidos deseos navideños a todos nuestros miembros. Que ustedes y sus seres queridos disfruten de las cosas que los acercan en el espíritu de amor y paz.

En otra nota importante, ya he compartido esta información aquí antes, pero para ayudar a aclarar algunas dudas, estoy reenviando esta información, no solo para nuestros visitantes en la conferencia CSA 2025 en St. Martin, sino también para el beneficio de nuestros miembros en general, especialmente aquellos que pueden enseñar sobre la historia y cultura de la isla.

No se sabe con certeza qué potencia europea utilizó por primera vez el nombre de San Martín para referirse a la isla, pero ya en 1630, tanto los franceses como los holandeses se referían a la isla como San Martín, utilizando la ortografía inglesa, incluso en textos holandeses. La ortografía holandesa (Sint Maarten/St. Maarten) no aparece hasta 1936 en un documento holandés, aparentemente para reclamar a los Países Bajos su "propia" mitad de la isla, ya que las ortografías inglesa y francesa eran idénticas.

Hoy en día, la ortografía holandesa aparece con mayor frecuencia en la prensa, debido al principal puerto de entrada y al crecimiento turístico y las promociones que se llevan a cabo principalmente en el territorio del sur. A veces, aparentemente tratando de mostrar equilibrio o destacar los territorios individualmente, algunas personas escriben "St. Maarten/St. Martin". Este fenómeno parece aparecer alrededor de la década de 1980, principalmente para la promoción turística, y no fue utilizado por los indígenas de San Martín hasta hace poco. Debido a que la barra es un símbolo de conflicto, división y violencia, y el pueblo es históricamente uno, otros se abstienen de este uso ya que ven la división como una contradicción de los valores del pueblo de San Martín y su herencia cultural. Al igual que tú, espero que el año 2025 sea más tranquilo, ya que intensificaremos nuestras actividades para estar juntos en persona en San Martín.

Felices fiestas.

Rhoda Arrindell
Presidenta de la CSA 2024-2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT cont'd

Français

Chers membres de la CSA,

Alors que nous nous préparons à terminer l'année 2024 et que nous nous tournons vers la nouvelle année, j'adresse mes vœux les plus chaleureux à tous nos membres. Que vous et vos proches puissiez vous adonner aux choses qui vous rapprochent dans un esprit d'amour et de paix.

Sur une autre note importante, j'ai déjà partagé ces informations ici, mais pour aider à clarifier certaines questions, je les renvoie, non seulement à nos visiteurs de la conférence CSA 2025 à Saint-Martin, mais également au profit de nos membres en général, en particulier ceux qui peuvent enseigner l'histoire et la culture de l'île.

On ne sait pas exactement quelle puissance européenne a utilisé en premier le nom de Saint-Martin pour désigner l'île, mais dès 1630, les Français et les Hollandais faisaient référence à l'île sous le nom de Saint-Martin, en utilisant l'orthographe anglaise, même dans les textes néerlandais. L'orthographe néerlandaise (Sint Maarten/St. Maarten) n'apparaît qu'en 1936 dans un document néerlandais, apparemment pour revendiquer la moitié « propre » de l'île par les Pays-Bas, puisque les orthographes anglaise et française étaient identiques.

Aujourd'hui, l'orthographe néerlandaise apparaît plus fréquemment dans les textes, en raison du principal port d'entrée et de la croissance et de la promotion du tourisme qui se déroulent principalement sur le territoire du sud. Parfois, essayant ostensiblement de montrer un équilibre ou de mettre en valeur les territoires individuellement, certaines personnes écrivent « St. Maarten/St. Martin ». Ce phénomène semble apparaître vers les années 1980, principalement pour la promotion du tourisme, et n'a pas été utilisé par les autochtones de Saint-Martin jusqu'à récemment. Parce que la barre oblique est un symbole de conflit, de division et de violence, et que le peuple est historiquement un, d'autres s'abstiennent de cette utilisation car ils considèrent la division comme une contradiction des valeurs du peuple de Saint-Martin et de son héritage culturel. Comme vous, j'espère que 2025 sera plus paisible et que nous intensifierons nos activités pour être ensemble en personne à Saint-Martin.

Bonnes fêtes.

Rhoda Arrindell

Président de l'ASC 2024-2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIR



Meagan Sylvester

CSA2025 Pre-Conference Site Visit Schedule

Monday, November 25, 2024

Time	Entity/Event	Present
10:30 am	Meeting with Simpson Bay Resorts; rooms inspection	CSA EC members; LOC members; DLG events planner
1:00 pm	Lunch	Kay-Cees Restaurant
2:00 pm	University of St. Martin	USM representatives; CSA EC members; LOC members
3:00 pm	Courtesy call, Ministry of TEAT	The Honorable Grisha Marten-Heyliger; St. Maarten Tourist Bureau director May-Ling Chun and staff; CSA EC members, LOC members
4:00 pm	Full Team Meeting	CSA EC members, LOC members

Media Appearances

- Saturday, November 23
 - VP Donna Hope on One SXM radio program @ 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 24
 - PCC Meagan Sylvester on Culture Time @ 1:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 26, 2024
 - Radio Interview on People's Voice with Wendell Moore on PJD2 @ 12:00 – 1:00; PCC Meagan and LOC member
 - Appearance on Online with Fernando Clark on SOS Radio @ 9:00 p.m. PCC and LOC



MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIR cont'd

Saturday, November 23, 2024

- VP Donna Hope on One SXM radio program @ 6:00 p.m.
- LOC members and CSA EC members at Radio Station
- President Rhoda Arrindell, VP Donna P.Hope and PCC Meagan A. Sylvester planning meetings



Sunday, November 24, 2024

Program Committee Chair Meagan Sylvester and Vice President Hope interview on Culture Time.



- Courtesy call, Ministry of TEAT The Honorable Grisha Marten-Heyliger
- Meeting with the University of St. Martin
- Full Team Meeting CSA Executive Council members, Local Organizing Committee members



MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIR cont'd

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

- Radio Interview on People's Voice with Wendell Moore on PJD2 @ 12:00 – 1:00 with PCC Meagan Sylvester and LOC member
- Appearance on Online with Fernando Clark on SOS Radio @ 9:00 p.m. PCC and President Rhoda Arrindell
- President Rhoda Arrindell and PCC Meagan A. Sylvester meet-up with St. Martin publisher of House of Nehesi Publishers and historian Lasana M. Sekou



Inside and outdoor view of the rooms for Simpson Bay Beach Resort - The CSA Conference 2025 Host Hotel



MEMBERSHIP



Donna Hope



Maya Freeman

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IS ACTIVELY SEEKING MEMBERS!
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Membership Rates before January 31, 2025

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NON-CARIBBEAN RESIDENTS – \$195/YEAR

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ANNUAL CSA CONFERENCE, JUNE 1-7, 2025 IN SAINT MARTIN

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MAYA I. FREEMAN and DONNA P. HOPE

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<https://www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/executive-council-2024-2026>

CSA MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Candia Mitchell Hall is an emerging scholar in Caribbean Culture, History, Heritage, and Memory at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. She is Lecturer of Caribbean Civilisation and Material Culture and Campus Coordinator of the multidisciplinary foundation course, Caribbean Civilisation situated at the Mona Campus, Western Jamaica Campus and tertiary centres in Jamaica and across the Caribbean including St Vincent and the Grenadines and St Kitts and Nevis.

Candia has been recognised for her excellence in teaching and has won notable awards for Teaching Excellence at the UWI, Mona Campus where she continues to shape minds on the experiences of Caribbean peoples from an insider Caribbean perspective inspiring students to dismantle and disrupt colonial narratives. At the Graduate level, she has supervised several graduates whose works focus on slavery, resistance, memory and heritage.

Candia's academic sojourn began at the University of West Indies, Cave Hill Campus in Barbados where she secured a Doctor of Philosophy in History with a strong emphasis on Heritage, the first of its kind and a Bachelor of Arts in History with First Class Honours.

Her groundbreaking dissertation on the Built Heritage of St. George's explored the memories of Afro-Grenadians through the lens of the built environment, pioneering new perspectives in Caribbean studies.

An avid researcher, Candia is co-founder/chief researcher of CO Research Consultancy which is a private research-based enterprise offering archival research services to scholars, lecturers, government agencies, and businesses. Various institutions and scholars have benefitted from this research initiative including Professor Charles Carnegie from Bates College in Maine, USA who commissioned research on the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) of Jamaica and Professor Deborah Thomas from Pennsylvania State University who enlisted the company for research on the Kingston Pen Lands and USAID allocation to housing development in Jamaica from 1940 to 1980.

Her contribution to public and community outreach across the Caribbean has been quite significant. She has served as chairperson of the Grenada 50-50 Commemorative Independence Committee and Academic Planning and Programme Committee and holds membership in the Caribbean Studies Association and Grenada Diaspora Group etc.

A dedicated Caribbeanist and proud Grenadian, Candia has shared her research with audiences worldwide through conferences, television, radio appearances and with students studying CESC History. Additionally, she has delivered several keynote addresses, invited lectures and presentations on various topics related to Caribbean history, culture, memory, heritage tourism, heritage preservation and national identity where she underscored her commitment to advancing Caribbean and Grenadian scholarship.

Candia's commitment to public scholarship and bringing her work to the people has contributed to the works she has published in journals, newspapers and short reviews. These include published works in the Journal of Caribbean History, for instance "Memory, Memorialising and Martyrdom in Post-Revolutionary Grenada" and journals like Caribbean Quarterly, Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies etc. Candia's ongoing research focus delve into the histories of resistance, popular culture, revolution and national identity as part of a reparative approach agenda to think about the memories of Afro-Caribbean peoples across time and space.

Candia's contribution to the academic and wider community is well aligned with the mandate of the University of the West Indies. Candia is carving out an important space for Grenadian and Caribbean scholarship, especially the aspects related to Reparative Memory, Heritage, History and Culture.

Candia, the CSA wish you well in all your endeavours and pursuits!



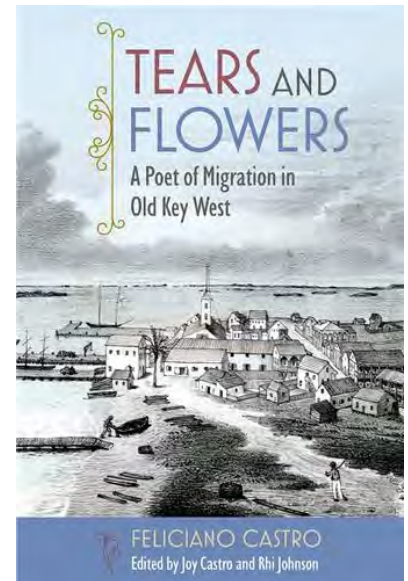
NEW BOOK

Tears and Flowers: A Poet of Migration in Old Key West **Feliciano Castro, Edited by Joy Castro and Rhi Johnson**

A bilingual edition of poetry that provides a unique window into Cuban émigré life

“These poems collectively constitute a vivid Rivera-esque mural of the place, time, and people in which and among whom they were written, bringing an early twentieth-century period in the history of Key West vividly to life.”—Esther Allen, translator of Antonio Di Benedetto’s *Zama*

“Offers readers an intimate glimpse into the life and work of a cigar factory reader and poet in Key West and Tampa. Castro’s poetry, like the man himself, straddles the Old World and the New, revealing with poignant elegance his nostalgia, love of country, wonder, and joy. *Tears and Flowers* opens a window onto a world long gone. Thanks to its thorough introduction and skillfully translated poems, we, too, can journey back to Castro’s time and experience what he saw and felt through his words.”—Kenya C. Dworkin y Méndez, coeditor of *Spanish and Empire*



A rare glimpse into the history of the Cuban community in Key West in the early twentieth century, this book makes the poetry of Feliciano Castro available in English for the first time. A Galician Cuban who lived for decades in the southernmost city of the United States, Castro worked as a lector reading to cigar factory employees, a newspaper editor, a printer, and a writer. He published *Lágrimas y flores*, a collection of his poetry, in 1918. Translated here by Rhi Johnson, Castro’s poems provide a window into an overlooked literary culture.

Johnson and Joy Castro open this bilingual edition with an introduction detailing the writer’s biography, literary context, and cultural milieu. *Tears and Flowers* highlights questions of national identity, migration, belonging, and courtship in Cuban émigré society, connects Florida to the Spanish-speaking communities of the Caribbean and Spain, and recovers the literary archive of a rich moment in US and Latinx history for a contemporary audience.

Feliciano Castro (1892–1982) was a poet, printer, editor, and lector who was born in Galicia, raised in Cuba, and lived for over six decades in Key West. Joy Castro, Willa Cather Professor of English and Ethnic Studies at the University of Nebraska, is the author of many books, including *One Brilliant Flame* and *Island of Bones*. She is the granddaughter of Feliciano Castro. Rhi Johnson, assistant professor of Spanish at Indiana University, Bloomington, is the editor and translator of *Because I Want to See the Sea: Poems by Rosalía de Castro*.

Publication of this work made possible by a Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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NEW PUBLISHED ARTICLES

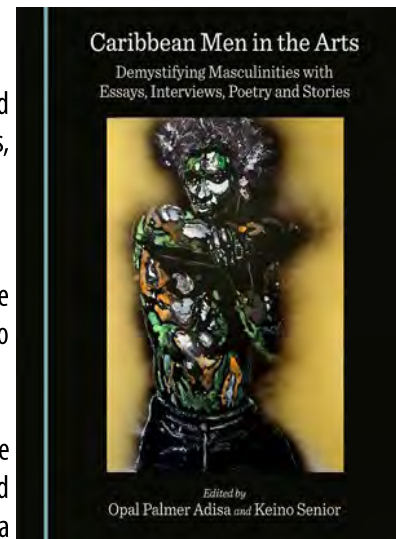
Book Chapter

Sylvester, Meagan. 2024. Perspectives on Masculinities, Culture and the Carnival Aesthetic: The Trinidad and Tobago Experience. In *Caribbean Men in the Arts: Demystifying Masculinities with Essays, Interviews, Poetry and Stories*. (eds) Opal Adisa and Dr-Keino Senior.

<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-0364-1562-4>

This collection showcases how different forms of manhood perform in artistic spaces. The selections take an in-depth review and exploration of the emotional and artistic landscape of Caribbean men who dare to carve out a place for themselves in the visual and performance mediums.

The pieces demonstrate that Caribbean men are forging more varied and wholesome ways to describe their masculinities, where they are allowed to thrive and engage in the same spaces without violence and exclusionary attitude, just as they can do in the arts. The manuscript also sets up a nucleus that will allow a progression of essential advances in the scholarly scrutiny of Black men and Black masculinities.



MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS



Gabriela Quijano

Español

La noche del 5 de noviembre, comenzaron a llegar noticias de que Jennifer González, candidata a la gobernación por el Partido Nuevo Progresista (PNP), había ganado las elecciones en Puerto Rico. Como he mencionado en columnas anteriores, el PNP representa un importante bastión de políticas conservadoras y neoliberales en el archipiélago.

Aunque en los días posteriores surgieron denuncias significativas sobre irregularidades en el proceso electoral, el candidato de la Alianza, Juan Dalmau, aceptó los resultados y se comprometió a mantenerse atento al desarrollo de los procesos de escrutinio.

La victoria en sí del PNP no representa un cambio transformador para Puerto Rico. Más bien, confirma su control sobre importantes estructuras gubernamentales y sistemas burocráticos, herramientas que ha utilizado para deslegitimar procesos democráticos alternativos. Un ejemplo es la prohibición de candidaturas coaligadas, así como la descalificación de cuatro candidatas del Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana (MVC) por parte de los tribunales en Puerto Rico. Asimismo, el resultado de las elecciones subraya la necesidad de continuar trabajando políticamente en torno a la construcción de valores alternativos y resistiendo campañas de miedo. Esto incluye fomentar discusiones en contra de la misoginia, la xenofobia y el capitalismo como sistema dominante, temas importantes en estas campañas electorales.

Reflexiones compartidas por miembros del MVC reconocen que los resultados obtenidos por Dalmau cumplen con el objetivo trazado: convertirse en la segunda fuerza electoral y alcanzar más del 30% de los votos a la gobernación, una meta calificada como "realizable." En este contexto, es crucial reflexionar también sobre el descenso del Partido Popular Democrático (PPD) a tercera fuerza política. Este partido no solo ha sido uno de los pilares del bipartidismo en Puerto Rico, sino que también fue responsable de concebir y materializar la condición territorial actual, el "Estado Libre Asociado." En ese sentido, la caída del PPD en estas elecciones puede interpretarse como una señal crítica sobre la condición colonial de Puerto Rico y la insuficiencia evidente de este modelo político.

Desde los frentes electorales críticos, las discusiones sobre el futuro nos invitan a celebrar los avances logrados, el creciente respaldo de los sectores más jóvenes y a perseverar en la lucha desde los espacios comunitarios y de trabajo sociopolítico. La meta es doble: reconocer lo alcanzado y mantener la esperanza como motor de acción. Este último punto es fundamental.

A dos semanas de los comicios electores en Puerto Rico, mientras participaba en una conferencia de antropología, escuché a una colega decir: "Cualquiera haciendo trabajo anticolonial sabe que la descolonización es *non-sense*." Si consideramos que vivimos en un mundo donde la libertad en todas sus dimensiones se nos presenta como una lucha inacabable, sus palabras pueden resonar fuertemente. Sin embargo, para aquellas personas que experimentamos la colonización y la colonialidad no solo como fenómeno político, sino como experiencia vivida y determinante del ser, la descolonización se convierte en un proyecto lleno de posibilidades y esperanza. Así, pues, mi invitación también es a observar el proceso con el optimismo que inspira ver a nuestro pueblo en lucha.

English

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MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

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Julien Merion

Français **LA MOBILISATION** **SOCIALE EN MARTINIQUE** **POUR QUEL** **CHANGEMENT ?**

Depuis le mois d'août 2024, la Martinique vit au rythme d'une mobilisation sociale de grande ampleur contre la vie chère et pour un alignement des prix pratiqués dans la distribution sur ceux de la

France. Il est vrai que les différences sont énormes. Par exemple, un paquet de pâte alimentaire peut coûter 2 fois plus en Martinique qu'en Guadeloupe. Il en va de même pour bien des produits de première nécessité. La revendication d'un abaissement des prix a reçu un bon accueil dans une grande partie de la population. Rappelons que plus de 27% de la population vit au-dessous du seuil de pauvreté en Martinique et 34% en Guadeloupe.

Cette revendication est portée par une organisation qui a vu le jour en juillet de cette année et est composée en majorité de jeunes. Il s'agit du RPPRAC (Rassemblement Pour la Protection des Peuples et des Ressources Afro-Caribéens).

Son titre est déjà évocateur d'un choix. Le RPPRAC s'adresse aux afro-caribéens pour la défense des personnes et des ressources. Il n'est fait allusion à aucun projet politique d'émancipation. Cependant, les mobilisations sont toujours accompagnées du drapeau martiniquais ce qui pourrait laisser penser à une option nationaliste.

De grandes manifestations, des blocages de routes, souvent accompagnés de scènes de pillage se sont développés en août, septembre et octobre dans toute la Martinique. Malgré plusieurs tentatives, le mouvement n'a pas touché la Guadeloupe et la Guyane. Mais il a donné lieu à d'importantes manifestations à Paris, notamment le 10 novembre où des milliers de personnes ont défilé dans les rues.

Face à une telle mobilisation, des négociations ont été engagées avec les élus, l'Etat et différents acteurs privés pour aboutir à un accord le 16 octobre prévoyant la baisse des prix pour 6 000 produits. Le RPPRAC a refusé de signer cet accord.



Aujourd'hui son leader Rodrigue Petitot est emprisonné et de nombreux membres sont poursuivis.

Quels enseignements tirés de cette mobilisation ?

- 1) De nombreux intellectuels ont considéré que les vrais problèmes n'étaient pas posés. Ils déplorent que la production locale n'ait pas été mise en avant et que le résultat sera une plus grande tendance à la consommation de produits importés. D'autres regrettent que la question des liens coloniaux ne soient pas mis en avant car ils seraient la raison principale de la cherté de la vie
- 2) Cette mobilisation a mis en lumière ce que l'on savait déjà. La mainmise d'une poignée de descendants de colons « béké » sur l'économie et principalement le commerce, le foncier. Ils sont les « maîtres de la Martinique »
- 3) L'orientation assimilationniste a été aussi pointée du doigt. Plutôt que de rechercher la responsabilisation, ce mouvement réclame une égalité qui avait été promise dès 1946 avec la Départementalisation et qui n'a jamais pu se réaliser. L'heure ne serait-elle pas à la rupture du lien colonial ?
- 4) Ce mouvement révèle cependant l'existence d'une crise profonde dont l'issue ne peut être que politique.
- 5) Qu'en est-il de l'intégration caribéenne ?



MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGE SUB-EDITORS cont'd

English

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION IN MARTINIQUE FOR WHAT CHANGE?

Since August 2024, Martinique has been living to the rhythm of a large-scale social mobilization against the high cost of living and for an alignment of prices practiced in distribution with those of France. It is true that the differences are enormous. For example, a packet of pasta can cost twice as much in Martinique or Guadeloupe. The same goes for many basic necessities. The demand for a price reduction has been well received by a large part of the population. Let us recall that more than 27% of the population lives below the poverty line in Martinique and 34% in Guadeloupe.

This demand is supported by an organization that was created in July of this year and is composed mainly of young people. This is the RPPRAC (Rally for the Protection of Afro-Caribbean Peoples and Resources). Its title is already suggestive of a choice. The RPPRAC is aimed at Afro-Caribbeans for the defense of people and resources. No reference is made to any political project of emancipation. However, the mobilizations are always accompanied by the Martinican flag, which could suggest a nationalist option.

Large demonstrations, road blockades, often accompanied by scenes of looting developed in August, September and October throughout Martinique. Despite several attempts, the movement did not reach Guadeloupe and Guyana. But it gave rise to major demonstrations in Paris, notably on November 10 where thousands of people marched in the streets.

Faced with such a mobilization, negotiations were initiated with elected officials, the State and various private actors to reach an agreement on October 16 providing for a price reduction for 6,000 products. The RPPRAC refused to sign this agreement.

Today its leader Rodrigue Petitot is imprisoned and many members are being prosecuted.

What lessons have been learned from this mobilization?

- 1) Many intellectuals considered that the real problems were not posed. They deplore that local production was not put forward and that the result will be a greater tendency to consume imported products. Others regret that the question of colonial links is not put forward because they would be the main reason for the high cost of living
- 2) This mobilization has highlighted what we already knew. The stranglehold of a handful of descendants of "béké" settlers on

the economy and mainly trade and land. They are the "masters of Martinique"

- 3) The assimilationist orientation has also been singled out. Rather than seeking accountability, this movement demands equality that had been promised since 1946 with the Departmentalization and which has never been achieved. Is it not time to break the colonial link?
- 4) This movement, however, reveals the existence of a deep crisis whose outcome can only be political.
- 5) What about Caribbean integration?

Inside St. Martin: Discovering the Island and Its Locals [Marcellia Henry]



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