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GRENADA: HISTORY, NEOCOLONIALISM, AND CULTURE IN THE CONTEMPORARY CARIBBEAN*

I welcome this opportunity for moving, by way of a fraternally critical dialogue, toward a sharper appreciation of developments in the Caribbean and the ways in which issues of culture, cultural development, cultural definition, and cultural production are intimately related to the particulars of social and political history.

The October 1983 invasion of Grenada by a final total of approximately 6,000 U.S. marines, paratroopers, and Rangers, supported by heavy artillery, tanks, and the most sophisticated weaponry, occurred in the context of that history. It was in a direct line of continuity with the more disturbing aspects of that history. It, simultaneously, marked an important turning point. To the extent it added another to the more than 135 direct U.S. military interventions in the Caribbean and Latin America over the last century, it represented no more, and no less than “business as usual.” That the occasion and pretext should, in this case, have been provided by the outrageous behavior of those who participated in the assassination of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and his colleagues in government and labor made it, of course, especially painful and ironic. Their unconscionable and ill-fated actions brought to a tragic end the achievements and continuing promise of a Grenadian revolution already under siege. They must also bear significant responsibility for the consolidation of conservative power and opinion throughout the region, which their actions precipitated, and for the relative success of a jingoistic anti-communist American campaign that rivals anything one can point to since the Joseph McCarthy era.

There was, however, something distinct—and telling—about this particular intervention. The country being invaded, with such heavyhanded and disproportionate force, seemed, at one level at least, hardly to justify the expenditure of time, energy, money and personnel. Smaller than the state of Massachusetts, populated by barely 110,000 people (fewer than the current inhabitants of Manhattan), and with an army totalling barely 2,000 men and women, Grenada was hardly a match for one of the world’s military giants.

*Delivered as the keynote address at a symposium, *After Grenada: Caribbean Writing in the Face of Intervention*, held at Northeastern University, May 14, 1984.

It could only, by the widest stretch of the imagination, be considered “a military threat to U.S. national security.” The timing of the invasion, though, argues that, in a very real sense, it was actually an assault on the revolutionary and anti-colonial temper of an entire epoch. It represented, in tactical terms, a genuine “holding action.” It was meant, as one senior Reagan administration official put it just a few days into the operation, “to keep the United States from being perceived as a ‘paper tiger’”¹ in the wake of Iran, Lebanon, and the general collapse of American invincibility and prestige in the post-Vietnam era. The invasion of Grenada was, therefore, as eminently symbolic as it was real. As a symbolic act it was unwittingly instructive. It was, in the final analysis, an implicit denial of what it sought most to affirm: that the erosion of U.S. “supremacy” and “power” in the Caribbean region, and in the world, was illusory. It was a *prima facie* confession that exactly the opposite was true. Like the recent mining of Nicaragua’s harbors, it made dramatically clear how dangerously desperate the United States had become in the face of its lack of moral authority and the increasing untenability of its imperial presumption.

The invasion of Grenada, further, underscored the link between “politics” and “culture.” It was, after all, Admiral Westley McDonald, Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Forces, who made plain that the imposition of a “culture” is intrinsic to American imperial designs in the Caribbean. The real purpose of the invasion, he averred, was to guarantee that, its own priorities and perceptions notwithstanding, Grenada would henceforth have a government “more sympathetic to the American way of life.”² That that way of life presupposed not only the violation of international law, and Grenada’s rights as a sovereign nation; that it required the island’s political, economic, cultural, and ideological subservience seemed, evidently, to be irrelevant. It was, indeed, the challenge the Grenadian revolution posed, in the words of Aime Cesaire, to “this [interventionist] habit of making our arrangements, this [presumptuous] habit of thinking in our behalf, this [seigniorial] habit of contesting our right to initiative . . . which is ultimately the right to a personality of one’s own”³ that ultimately made it so critically portentous and forbidding. It was the portent of that challenge that made Grenada’s revolution, despite the island’s lilliputian size, an event of pan-antillean and world-historical importance and impact. It brought into even starker relief the salient and comprehensive character of the clash between American imperialism and the emergence of an authentically Caribbean society and consciousness. The need to see that clash and its consequences in

¹ *N. Y. Times*, October 28, 1981.

² *N. Y. Times*, October 29, 1981.

³ *Letter to Maurice Thorez*. Paris: Presence Africaine, 1957, p. 12.

clear historical perspective becomes all the more compelling in the wake of the events of October 1983.

The Cuban Revolution is undoubtedly the single most significant event to have taken place in the Caribbean in this century. It marked a crucial juncture in the region's perception of itself. It unambiguously announced the passing of the predominant, mimetic paternalism, and patrician legacy of the creole middle-classes that, only two decades earlier, had replaced the hacendados and plantocrats as local arbiters of the domestic antillean scene. The limits of the solutions the former proposed to the most pressing of our many problems became increasingly exposed. Despite the unfavorable circumstances in which it was compelled to carry them out, Cuba's successes in health, education, and welfare, its effective mobilization of the masses of its people behind the Revolution, made the failure of "The Puerto Rican Model of Development" all the more striking. The latter's "modernizing" proponents and beneficiaries throughout the Caribbean—Munoz Marin, Norman Manley, and Eric Williams are perhaps the most representative figures of that liberal generation—were suddenly put as much on the self-justifying defensive as the Trujillos, Duvaliers, and Somozas of the region. The restive alliance they had managed to forge, in the forties, between their own and the working classes, already in considerable decay, became definitely undone. It was indeed the collapse of that temporary alliance that forced them all, to a greater or lesser degree, to rely increasingly on "police measures" and "riot control" to ensure "stability." That so many among the younger, university-educated members of that middle class, at once the inheritors and critics of the world their elders made, identified increasingly with the need for change and a redefinition of terms only deepened the crisis.

Cuba also radically accelerated the process of rejection of the neocolonial arrangements that, over the course of that same period, had become the *status quo*. It revived as it redefined the terms of the anti-colonial movement in the hemisphere. By so doing, it gave a new dimension and vitality to the cultural articulation of the area. One of its real achievements was, precisely, the inauguration of what amounted to a cultural renaissance. During the period between 1898 and 1959, Nicolas Guillen recalls, "the American way of life became (especially for the middle and upper bourgeoisie) a 'Cuban' way of life." The revolution, the poet continues, made it possible to "cleanse and strengthen our spirit, as we recognized ourselves in the midst of a victorious jubilation."⁴ Mario Benedetti, the Uruguayan novelist and poet, is even more comprehensively eloquent:

⁴ *Prosa de Prisa, 1929–1972*. La Habana: Editorial Arte y literatura, 1975. vol. III, pp. 375–76.

The Cuban Revolution forever put an end to some of the balances that appeared to be stable, with the routine resignation of certain sectors on the left; it similarly did away with the most accepted schema created or publicized by the empire, destined for the neocolonial slum. Fundamentally, the Cuban Revolution showed our peoples that the picture of Latin American man proposed by the empire was a caricature, a deformation that only served its plunderous intentions. With the Cuban Revolution there began . . . a new way, experimental and imaginative, of moving ahead with an anti-imperialist politics.⁵

Aesthetic conventions were not uneffected:

Curiously, Latin American literature (in particular, the narrative, but also, though to a lesser degree, poetry and theatre) also broke the old molds, with the old rhetoric, with the old routine, and began enthusiastically to experiment.⁶

Edward Brathwaite argues that its impact on the English-creole islands, of which Grenada is one, was equally significant:

Not since the revolution in Haiti in 1792, had a West Indian territory gained world significance *and* local integrity through the courage of opposing, and defeating, the jagernauts [sic] of Western mercantilism. . . . the success of the revolution was based upon a reliance on native resources in a way that illuminated and expanded them from West Indian island to Caribbean matrix and from this to a resonant contribution to the aspirations and ideas of the entire family of nations. Cuba, then, . . . recalled us from isolation to Caribbean responsibility, and though at first our various establishments tried to prohibit our contact, they could not effectively censor our listening and understanding. . . . by the middle sixties, Cuba had become an ideal for most of the progressive thinkers in the Caribbean: why look abroad when the pride and practice of revolutionary change was *indeed* at home?⁷

One immediate consequence was the discovery and reappropriation of the work of the West Indian writers and poets who, in the forties and early fifties, had found it necessary to emigrate to the metropolitan areas. The list includes practically every West Indian writer of note over 45. The lack of a sustaining infrastructure at home left them very little choice at the time. They had to leave, George Lamming recalls,

if they were going to function as writers since books, in that particular colonial conception of literature, were not—meaning, too, are not supposed to be—written by natives. Those among the natives who read

⁵*El escritor latinoamericano y la revolución posible*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Nueva Imagen/Editorial Alfa Argentina, 1977, p. 94.

⁶*Ibid.* p. 95.

⁷"The Love Axe/1: (Developing a Caribbean Aesthetic 1962–1974)," *Bim* 16, No. 61 (June 1977), p. 54.

also believed that; for all the books they had read, their whole introduction to something called culture, all of it, in the form of words, came from the outside: Dickens, Jane Austen, Kipling and that sacred gang.⁸

Relying primarily on the overseas service of the BBC and English publishing houses, these writers had virtually to smuggle their work back into the area. The airwaves over which they so effectively transmitted their "Caribbean Voices" became the effective equivalent of the heroic little magazines edited by Frank Collymore and A. J. Seymour. The orality of the medium made it all the more accessible to a largely unschooled population. It, therefore, contributed, in its way, to the self-conscious articulation of an indigenous audience for West Indian literature. The pressures consequent upon the emergence of that audience would not finally be felt until the late '60s. It was then, too, that the pioneering re-examination of the region's historiography undertaken by the early Eric Williams, Elsa Goveia, C.L.R. James, and later Walter Rodney would achieve their popularity. The passionately humane intransigence of the Martinican, Frantz Fanon, gave urgency and immediacy to the need to "turn over a new leaf, . . . work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man."⁹

The (at first gradual) influence of their critically reassessive assumptions upon a reluctant University of the West Indies provided important new points of departure for an entirely new generation of writers, teachers, students, and scholars. The various manifestations of the Black Power movement extended at the same time that they partially reflected that influence. Recognition of the imperative for an inversion of perspective and the centrality of the primarily black underclass in the historical evolution of a peculiarly Caribbean ethos were the common emphasis of this multivalent restiveness with the old regime.

The Cuban Revolution, acting as catalytic example, confirmed and intensified this long-brewing discontent. Institutions like *Casa de Las Americas*, moreover, by increasingly extending their compass to include the non-hispanophone countries of Our America encouraged the re-emergence and consolidation of a genuinely pan-caribbean outlook. N. D. Williams, Angus Richmond, Harry Narain, Shake Keane, and John Agard are among the names its annual prize introduced to the hispanophone islands and a wider international audience. Guyana's inauguration, in 1972, of a periodic, Caribbean-wide Festival of the Arts of changing venue, Carifesta, is a tribute to the growing currency of that outlook, the demise of the West Indian Federation a decade earlier notwithstanding. It, too, contributed to a greater cross-fertilization in the popular and creative arts. The revival of the PNP's

⁸ *The Pleasure of Exile*. London: Michael Joseph, 1960, p. 27.

⁹ *The Wretched of the Earth*. N.Y.: Grove Press, 1963, p. 316.

moderate socialism, Michael Manley's identification with the masses of unemployed and appropriation of Rastafarian symbology—all part of the sympathetic appreciation of the change in conditions since his father's time—were indicative and symptomatic. His "Third World" vision and friendship with Fidel Castro were wholly consistent with that appreciation.

This was the socio-political landscape and cultural climate in which the Grenadian revolution was fertilized and nourished. Maurice Bishop himself testified as to its importance: ". . . we must acknowledge the most important fact about our relations with Cuba," he announced on the first anniversary of The People's Revolutionary Government. "The greatest debt of gratitude owed to the Cubans is that if there had been no Cuban Revolution in 1959 there could have been no Grenadian revolution in 1979."¹⁰ He was clearly referring to the compelling power of its example and the forces it accelerated or set in motion.

The Grenadian revolution was, nonetheless, a direct response to specifically local realities. The facts of the Gairy years, since, conveniently placed in the background, were the subsoil in which it germinated.

Eric Gairy emerged in the aftermath of the black middle-class protest against crown colony government and the emergence of a working class movement that covered the period between the end of World War I and mid-century. It was the pioneering liberal T. A. Marrayshow's "cooperationist" Grenada Labour Party and the city-centered trade unions, inspired by the subsequent example of Tubal Uriah Butler, that were the immediate precedents for Gairy's organization of the rural peasantry in the early fifties. Having thus contributed to the erosion of planter power and the patrician, pigmentocratic leadership of the middle class, Gairy went on, in the period 1952–1979, to reach an accommodation with his erstwhile adversaries, to establish his own political dominance, and, in the process, to turn Grenada into his own personal fiefdom. Patronage, the exacting of sexual favors in exchange for jobs, malfeasance, public corruption, the harassment of uncompliant officials, and domestic repression became increasingly common. The rigid centralization of the administrative bureaucracy and neglect of the public sector became typical of his regime. The infrastructure of roads, medical and other supportive services were allowed to deteriorate as the *patrón* enriched himself. The economy, in an effort to gain Gairy support in the face of a progressively more disenchanting populace, came more and more under the control of the foreign and domestic capitalists with whom he allied himself. Unions outside the official circle, despite Gairy's increasingly hollow populist rhetoric, were muzzled or disabled. Unemployment, by 1978, stood, officially, at 49%. Those fortunate enough to find work, how-

¹⁰*Selected Speeches 1979–1981*. La Habana: Casa de Las Americas, 1982, p. 109.

ever modest, fell victim to the rapid decline in real wages as the cost of living rose with the profits of the local elite and the multinationals.

The personalization of state power brought with it a frantic, opportunistic anti-communism and Gairy's unambiguous identification with the right. Accepting military aid and training in counter-insurgency techniques from Chile, he became, early on, a defender of Augusto Pinochet's and other fascist regimes.

The cultural situation was equally disheartening. A conscientiously antieducational policy did nothing to lower the illiteracy index. Teachers, in general, were regarded with suspicion as a threat to Gairy's rule. His refusal to pay Grenada's share of the cost to the regional University system denied Grenadians access to that system. This cut them off from an important locus of creative activity and intellectual renewal. It contributed significantly to the island's growing isolation from even its sister islands in the anglophone Antilles. Censorship of ideas, most particularly those which the overwhelming majority of the area's writers were espousing, became the order of the day. Newspapers were either in the pay of the government or subject to its whims. Magazines and literary journals, where they existed, were, for all intents and purposes, practically underground affairs. Publishing houses of any consequence were nonexistent. The traditional link to Trinidad, which made Gairy noticeably uneasy, became all the more important. The example of its emerging national theatre, its established and budding novelists and poets, critics like Gordon Roheler, the comparatively vigorous tenor of its literary and cultural life, to the degree they managed to filter through at all, became Grenada's primary connection to the creative ferment then sweeping through the Caribbean. Grenada was increasingly unable to shake its image as a cultural backwater. The ambiance was decidedly uncongenial to the encouragement of indigenous talent. For Gairy, intellectuals were, *tout court*, the enemy. Writers and poets, aspiring men and women of letters, were, like the working classes, given very few choices: complacency, disillusionment, emigration, or silence. Unavoidably, they passed into the opposition.

When Grenada eventually became independent, in 1974, it did so under a dictatorship that rivaled Papa Doc's Haiti. It even had, in the thugs of the Mongoose Gang, its own equivalent of the dreaded *Tonton Macoute*. Gairy, like Duvalier, would also envelop himself in an aura of quasi-divine mysticism. His notorious obsession with UFO's, moreover, made his country the laughing stock of the international diplomatic community.

The New Jewel Movement, which only a year earlier had brought together the most important elements of the intellectual, middle and working class opposition, offered a genuine alternative and represented the only

available hope for a ventilation of the atmosphere. The revolution it brought to power on March 13, 1979, was greeted, reasonably enough, with an enthusiastic popular support.

Its first priorities were, of course, political and economic: consolidation of the revolution, the strengthening of its popular base, and the task of reorientation and reconstruction of the country's economic infrastructure. Among its several accomplishments were the creation of an agro/industrial sector, reduction and stabilization of food prices as well as other essential commodities, and a dramatic decrease, to 13% by 1983, in the unemployment rate. Subsistence food production doubled by the end of 1982. Dependence on foreign food imports were, similarly, reduced to 12%. The creation of four new agricultural training schools, it was hoped, would help reduce that figure even further. There was an increase in the delivery—number and quality—of social services available. Free medical care and day care centers were established throughout the country. The principle of equal pay for equal work, regardless of race, gender or class background, along with two months paid maternity leave for female workers, became law. Public participation in the development of the national budget helped insure a democratic receptivity to popular demands. The mass organizations of the People's Power movement provided a vehicle for the increasingly active participation of women, youth and workers in the political process. Michelle Gibbs, an Afro-American poet who bore witness to some of these changes, captured the energy and optimistic spirit of the time in her poem "Pride of Bearing," to whose feminist emphasis a wider resonance is attached:

The women walk
bodies balancing
each day's measure
of history's weight.
Belly's birth
toil's triumph—
the fruits of our labour
early and late.
On hips
in hands
on heads held high,
each one's load
determines her stride,
paces her future,
becomes her pride,
yesterday's pressure,
the new day's guide.¹¹

¹¹Included in *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution*. Washington, D.C.: Epica Task Force, 1982, p. 97.

Tourism remained the island's single most important source of foreign exchange. It would continue to be encouraged. Its guiding assumptions, however, would have to be radically changed. The old tourism, Bishop pointed out,

was foreign owned and controlled, unrelated to the needs and development of the Caribbean people . . . it brought with it a number of distinct socio-cultural and environmental hazards such as the race question and undesirable social and economic patterns such as drug abuse and prostitution. . . .¹²

It encouraged imitation of consumerist metropolitan values, an enclave-like divorce from other sectors of the local economy, and a mutually detrimental inter-island competition. The policy of the new government sought to "break the relationship between tourism, class and colour [by] . . . consciously encourag[ing] non-white visitors, and particularly West Indians. . . ." and Latin Americans.¹³ It insisted on linkages to the domestic economy. It anticipated

the development of our handicraft, culture and other art forms as expressions of our own reality and aspirations, and tourist consumption following that expression rather than our culture being determined by some pre-conceived notion of what the tourist might expect.¹⁴

It was no more than the specific articulation of a more comprehensive vision.

Popular education was a crucial component of that vision. A massive campaign to wipe out illiteracy, the elimination of school fees, free books and uniforms to the most needy, the granting of more scholarships in the revolution's first year than the combined total of the preceding five years—these were all a part of it. The real goal, though, was an authentically radical, profound and lasting, transformation of the cultural and psychological *status quo*. "The institutions which left the most permanent scars," Maurice Bishop informed his audience during the inauguration of the National In-Service Teacher Education Program (NISTEP) on October 15, 1981,

were those associated with education. For those institutions scarred the minds and assaulted the intelligence of our people and wore them down for centuries. We were taught to look to Europe [and more recently the United States] for the answers to our problems. . . . we were taught to stare over the Atlantic Ocean . . . for our political institutions, our drama and songs, our poetry and literature, in the same direction as the boats steaming North-Eastwards full with our nutmegs, bananas and cocoa. . . . we are gradually realising the need for a *cultural* independence.

¹²*Selected Speeches* . . . , p. 71.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 72.

This realization entailed a creative, new departure:

We need to look to ourselves, our own land and people, to be the base of that body of knowledge and activity that takes place day by day in our classrooms.¹⁵

Grenada consequently required

A mathematics syllabus that can exploit our natural resources, and gives us an apprenticeship in building our industries, and agro-industries; a language arts syllabus that teaches our children to love and respect their own people, their workers and farmers, to give words and meaning to their hopes and aspirations and the basis to understand, discuss and criticise the many dimensions of experience and development around them; a history syllabus that seeks to analyse the process of emancipation of our working people and the struggles they have fought over the years, and continues to link that with the struggles of working people all over the world, . . . a science syllabus which sets out to investigate the potential in our own land and people, to establish an inventive, creative technology, whether it be bio-gas, beetle traps, new fishing techniques, the possibilities of hydroelectric power from our rivers or the development of new strains and flavours of our jams and nectars.¹⁶

Thus, from its earlier marginality, Grenada had suddenly catapulted itself into the forefront of the cultural movement that had helped to prepare its ground. It naturally became a magnet of attraction to the Caribbean intelligentsia. Its effect on the anglophone islands was, understandably, especially dramatic. Grenada, having chosen its own way, was now at the height of history. It could no longer be ignored. Writers, poets, and intellectuals of every calling converged on St. Georges as the U.S., Edward Seaga and the prime ministers of Barbados, Trinidad, and Dominica, themselves facing increasingly restless populations, looked on with undisguised anxiety. The Trinidad-born novelist Merle Hodge immediately put herself at the service of the revolution. George Lamming, Edward Brathwaite, Robin Dobru, Jan Carew, and Clive Y. Thomas, among those better known whose names come immediately to mind, also actively identified themselves with events in Grenada. Their solidarity effectively contributed to the erosion of Grenada's cultural isolation. It also contributed significantly, despite the press of more urgent difficulties, to enlivening the local literary scene. At least one Grenadian author was added to the list of *Casa* literary prize winners mentioned earlier. A quick glance at the available bibliography confirms, too, the considerable degree to which Grenada's currency as a subject of serious scholarly interest, though hardly equal to that of the Greater Antilles, had

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 238–239.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

risen in value, at home and abroad, after March, 1979.

The integration of the socio-economic with the cultural goals of the revolution acquired still greater prominence. The first Conference of Intellectual Workers for Regional Sovereignty of the Caribbean Peoples, held in St. Georges in November, 1982, which Lamming *et al.* helped to organize, brought together some of the area's most prominent authors, artists, sociologists, economists, and historians. It underscored the island's growing stature as a protagonist in the articulation of "a comprehensive definition of culture" and in the debate on the role of the intellectual in contributing to that articulation. It, in addition, established a line of continuity with the policy on culture intimated by Bishop's remarks, quoted earlier.

A false concept of culture has made for a serious division between the masses of the Caribbean population and the work of those individuals and groups we refer to as the intellectual workers of the region. This division has not only deprived the majority of our people of a true consciousness of their struggle, it has also retarded the development of the intellectual workers themselves.¹⁷

The Grenadian revolution was conscientiously reaching out and at the same time issuing a fraternal challenge to the region's intellectuals. They willingly took up the gauntlet. A second conference, pursuing the same theme, met a year later, once again in St. Georges. It struggled to articulate ways to confirm, encourage, promote, and safeguard the cultural vision of the revolution and to forge more enduring links between its intellectuals and the ordinary people without whom their work had little meaning and would not flourish. It was a time of fertile ferment. It was a time, too, of contradictory omens. Michael Manley's electoral defeat in Jamaica radically shifted the configuration of forces in the area; the continuing escalation of the U.S. campaign of propaganda and destabilization also gave a dramatic urgency to those meetings: the end of the revolution would, after all, make the removal of "the great barriers which an external mass culture has created between them [the intellectuals] and their people"¹⁸ all the more difficult.

The murder of Maurice Bishop and the end of the Grenadian revolution has, as a matter of fact, widened the breach. It has simultaneously plunged the country back into the depressing morass of its former predicament. Indeed, the temporary—and only apparent—assumption of power by Governor General Scoon, the local representative of Her Britanic Majesty and a former Gairy associate, virtually trumpeted the fact. That Gairy himself should return to claim his former estate was predictable and is entirely

¹⁷From text of letter of invitation to Second Conference of Intellectual Workers for Regional Sovereignty of the Caribbean Peoples.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

consistent. Unemployment has once again risen to pre-1979 levels. At the same time, not quite a month after the invasion, the *New York Times Sunday Magazine* and Travel Section, respectively, announced the improved climate for investment, cheap labor, and travel to Grenada. The Reagan Administration, meanwhile, has completed the airport at Point Salines it so bitterly—and inaccurately—denounced as a military base, and uses it as another potential staging area for counterrevolutionary incursions into Central America. The racist chauvinism of a white supremacist image, evident in media projections of the invasion, is once again in vogue. The self-esteem of a people who, having taken the initiative, were emerging into self-reliance, and contributed with their example to the liberation of the Caribbean as a whole, is now once again systematically assaulted. The articulation of a genuinely anticolonial Caribbean cultural ambiance has, to be sure, suffered an important setback.

The struggle against that image, and the society for which it stands as metaphor, though momentarily stunned and disconcerted, nonetheless goes on. The cathartic, declarative starkness of the young Grenadian Peggy Anthrobus' verse, despite its lack of polish, fuzzy religious idealism, and occasional confusions, perhaps even because of them, eloquently synthesizes both dimensions. Speaking, with great poignancy, out of the pain, she concludes the epic historical sweep of "Grenada—October 1983: A Work in Progress" with the following lines:

Somehow, out of these ashes
We Caribbean people
will find truths and strengths
to forge our own ideology,
born of our experience and survival
To rebuild our shattered unity,
our dignity,
our faith,
our dreams.

It was precisely that conviction which, seventeen years earlier inspired the more accomplished Edward Brathwaite to conclude his famous trilogy of bitter journeys, *The Arrivants*, with the almost identical sentiment. The poem, "Jou'vert" acknowledged the encouraging existence of:

. . . men now
hearing
waiting
watching
in the Lent-
en morning
hurts for-

gotten, hearts
no longer bound

to black and bitter
ashes in the ground

now waking
making
making
with their

rhythms some-
thing torn

and new.¹⁹

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and the Grenadian revolution were the offspring of and meant to represent and serve such people.

It was the message of that trilogy that each of our defeats, in addition to being temporary, was also not without some element of lasting victory.

¹⁹*The Arrivants: New World Trilogy*. N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978, pp. 269–270.