

extra-European colonization was to bring into existence the new sociopolitical structures of today's Caribbean. In turn, these structures were to be themselves founding, both to the world system in which we now find ourselves and to the single history within whose dynamic we all now live. At the same time, as both Foucault and Pandian show, the degodding of being, the institution of the post-1943 Caribbean politics and the initiation of modernity, were themselves to be inseparable from the invention both of Man and of its human Others, first that of the indio/negro complex, later, that of the nigger/native complex.¹⁷

The major point is that if Latin Christian Europe secularized itself in the 15th and 16th centuries, as the West, eventually secularizing all human models of being and behaving, it was to do so in the transumed specific terms of its own "local culture." This is nowhere more evident than by the term "secular" itself. For as will be noted, I have used the term secular several times here and used it interchangeably, with the term degodding. The term "secular," as given in the Oxford English Dictionary (O.E.D.) is a meaning specific to the religio-cultural field of Judaeo-Christianity, and therefore, to its behavior-motivating Grand Narrative of Emancipation (Lyotard, 1989), based on the explanatory schema of enslavement to Original Sin/Emancipation from Original Sin through the-mediation-of-baptism, and of behaviours oriented toward the goal of Spiritual Redemption. The O.E.D. gives the etymology of the English word "secular" as coming from the Latin term *saecularis*, that is, from the adjective correlated with the noun *saeculum* which means "generation, age" and more generally the "World" as opposed to the "Church" (O.E.D. 1971, p.365). By the nature of our shared response to the meaning of the word secular, we are therefore already responding within the terms of a specific cultural field, as enacted by the formal rules of a now global and purely desupernaturalized variant of the original feudal Judaeo-Christian culture of Western Europe.

This semantic shift had entailed the increasing hegemony of the secular World at the public levels of existence, together with increasing privatization of religion, and therefore of the Church (in the wake of Luther's "Reformation"). With this shift, the term secular now came to be applied to "literature, history, art" not "concerned with or devoted to the service of religion" (O.E.D., 1971, p.365). In consequence, the new doctrine of secularism which followed from this step, came to function as the new narrative schema on which modernity was to be based. However, although the term secular would now come, within the terms of its new

narrative-schematic field, to signify reality as contrasted to the increasingly negatively marked irreality of the Church, it did so in terms that were themselves generated, as variant forms, from the matrix narrative schema that had been founding both to the culture of the Judaeo-Christian West, and that of its precursor, the still polytheistic cultural and philosophical system of the ancient Greek polis.

The new discourse of civic humanism which effected this transfer of hegemony did this by transuming the matrix Judaeo-Christian Grand Narrative of Emancipation and its Augustinian "principle of explanation" of mankind's enslavement to Original Sin and its imperative quest for remission from this sin, and therefore of redemption in the other-worldly City of God. This new schema had been that of mankind's represented enslavement both to the pre-political "state of nature" and the irrational, particularistic and self-interested aspects of its own nature, with remission from this enslavement being only possible by subjecting oneself to the rational order of the political state. Seeing that only the state-as-universal was now empowered to secure the "common good" as against the threatening chaos and disorder of the war of each against all, of the particular and private self interest of the one, against those of the others. It was this behaviour-motivating schema and the correlated "understanding of man's humanity" from which it derived, that had therefore served to revalue the terms of the former Church/World opposition, i.e., to revalue the world as the sphere of a fixed and stable, although temporal, reality—at the same time as it relegated the Church to the private sphere as an increasingly "spiritual" realm of "irreality."

It was to be in the context of this process (one of whose effects was also that of the transformation of the Church into the spiritual arm of the state, as the state had earlier been the temporal and military arm of the Church), that the terms of legitimation on whose basis Spain expropriated the New World, were prescribed and enacted—that is, as terms which although found by the Cenù Indians from their culturally-external observer perspective, to be "mad" and "drunken" and therefore non-sense, were to be indispensable to the specific culture-historical dynamics out of which "Modernity," the contemporary Caribbean, and the Americas were to emerge and on the basis of whose "ground" Europe's conquest of the Americas was both effected and made to seem legitimate and just.

Our shared understanding of the word secular (as academics and scholars all of whom, whatever our cultures of origin, have been *disciplined* in Foucault's sense of the word, in the conceptual models of the

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epistemological order derived from the original basis of the *studia*), is only made possible by our already enculturation in the specific culture systemic categories in which this word has come to have the same transcultural meaning as other such terms as degodding or de-supernaturalization. However, within the shared field of our mutual understanding, the expression itself, i.e., culture systemic categories, cannot help but strike a jarring note. In that given the acultural premise on which our present shared mode of comprehension is based, i. e., the premise, specific to our present now purely secularized variant of the matrix Judaeo-Christian culture, that we are not in a culture at all, and that our native model of reality (Legesse, 1973, p.274) is reality-in-itself, the term "culture-systemic categories" cannot be "heard" or normally understood to make sense for us within the Foucauldian "regime of truth" of our present order of knowledge and its disciplinary paradigms. At the same time, because our present episteme or order of knowledge elaborates itself on the basis of a now purely biological description of the human, in whose terms, man had been invented in its second form, on the model of a "natural organism" (Foucault, 1973, pp.310, 351), and with this model serving as a non-questionable rhetorical a priori (Grassi, 1980), this aprioristic model then enables our present disciplinary paradigms to represent their "local culture" conception of the human as if this conception were isomorphic with the human species itself. This conflation of Man/human then enables the well-being of this specific category of the human, man to be represented as if its well-being, too, were isomorphic with the well-being of the human species as a whole; and by extrapolation, as if the well-being of the West, and of the Westernized "developed" enclaves, were, are, or could ever be, isomorphic with the well-being of their "underdeveloped" satellite areas such as Haiti.

The crisis of the Caribbean as vividly exemplified these past few weeks in the Haitian situation is, therefore, like the overall crisis of modernity, the crisis, too, of our present order of knowledge, as the elaborated expression of our present understanding of man's humanity, and its correlated behavior-motivating schema, in which the culture-systemic conception, Man, is mis-represented as if it were the human itself. If this crisis is to be fundamentally resolved, therefore, this misrepresentation, together with the founding rhetorical strategy which makes it believable, must be deconstructed.

Franz Fanon, Aimé Césaire and other major thinkers of the ex-slave Caribbean have challenged the ostensibly supracultural and therefore

value-free nature of the "objective knowledge" of our present episteme. From their liminal perspective of alterity—they have shown that by means of its disciplinary paradigms, one "local culture's" conception of the human Man, is strategically presented as if its referent were the human species itself, as if its culture-systemic "world" were the new "Church," its ground of actuality, supracultural, its speech not as mad and drunken, as inside that ground it is rational, logical, and alone experiential as true.

In this context and against the central premise of modernity with respect to the *non-homogeneity* of our contemporary Western industrialized order which represents its own actuality as supracultural as contrasted with the *culturality* of all other human orders, we can put forward the following hypothesis: that our contemporary culture, together with the actuality of the Westernized modernity to which it gives rise, functions according to the same laws by which all other cultures, and their behaviour-motivational belief systems, including that of Vodoun, function.

CULTURE AS ACTUALITY: THE EX-SLAVE CARIBBEAN AND THE DISENCHANTING OF CONSCIOUSNESS/BELIEF/IDEOLOGY

the child does not know
the map of spring has always to be
drawn again ...
the undared form ...
o fresh source of light
those who unveiled neither
gunpowder nor compass
those who tamed neither a steam nor electricity
those who explored neither sea nor sky
but without whom the earth would not be earth. (Césaire, 1938)

Given the role of alterity or of Human Otherness imposed upon the recently freed slaves of the Caribbean and of the Americas (Pandian, 1988) as a function of the West's 19th-century reinvention of Man on the model of a natural organism, it has been precisely this biologized understanding that the major thinkers of the ex-slave Caribbean have been compelled to call into question. This has been so because, as the educated elites of the majority ex-slave but still until the 1960s, colonized population,

they also had been socialized by the education system of the European colonial powers, in the terms of the same "understanding of man's humanity" and therefore of the order of consciousness to which it gives rise, that calls for their group negation as both the Native and the Nègre/Negro/Nigger Other to the Western bourgeois criterion of being human, Man. It was this "double consciousness" that led to the Copernican challenge made by the Martinican psychiatrist Franz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, to this "understanding." Faced with the regularity of the autophobic and reflexly aversive responses displayed by his black patients to themselves, their physiognomy, together with their equally reflex preference for "whiteness," Fanon proposed that such an "aberration of affect" could not be an individual problem to be dealt with by psychoanalysis. Fanon set in motion the disenchanting of our present understanding and conception of being human.

Even before Fanon, however, the Negritude poet, Aimé Césaire, had not only confronted the reality of this "aberration of affect" as he himself had experienced it, as the condition of attaining to human status in the terms of our present understanding, but had also called into question the imperative of the techno-industrial world task to which this understanding, and the mode of subjectivity which it embodies prescriptively leads. Césaire did this poetically in his 1938 *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, as well as theoretically in his 1955 *Discourse on Colonialism*, so that in the stanza of the poem cited as epigraph to this section, for example, what he reveals in these, normally very much misunderstood lines and the sequence that follows,¹⁸ is that Heidegger's (1977) prescriptive world task, to which all mankind is increasingly subordinated, is a task mandated by a single and relative criterion of what it is to be human, made into an Absolute.

Celebrating and revalorizing non-techno-industrial Agrarian civilizations, including centrally, those of Africa, in his poem "Notebook," as civilizations that the West has been able to see only as the negation and lack of its own techno-industrial imperative, Césaire refers to them, ironically, in the very terms of negation/lack through whose prism, contemporary Western scholarship has consistently seen them "those who unveiled neither gunpowder nor compass/who tamed neither steam nor electricity/who explored neither sea nor sky and yet without whom the earth would not be earth." Here, by his use of this series of inversions, Césaire uncovers the very techno-cultural fallacy that the ethnologist, Asmaron Legesse has also analyzed as the fallacy central to the self-conception of Western modernity. For while, as Legesse argues, it is abundantly clear that technologically inferior

societies such as those of the Stone Age Australians had sociologically more stable and viable institutions, contemporary scholars, thinking within the framework of the technocultural fallacy as well as of the evolutionary paradigm which underlies our present order of knowledge, remain unable to confront this fact. Because they use technology as their ultimate criterion of human value, they tend to magnify "tenfold those aspects of society that are ... dependent on the technological order," even going so far as to define culture itself as "an assemblage of tools and human patrimony as a tool-making tradition" (Legesse, 1973).

The duality of the challenge that Césaire makes in *Notebook of a Return to my Native Land* is therefore poetically logical. While the poem revolves about his exorcism of the depths of alienation of his own socialized consciousness—one that induces him to be reflexly aversive to his own physiognomic being, as well as to that of his always already stigmatized nègre population group—and as the prelude to his revalorization of his/their human *isness* or Negritude, this thrust which calls into question our present understanding of man's humanity is linked to its complement. That is, to the thrust which calls into question the effects to which this understanding leads. Following up on the series of ironical inversions cited in the epigraph to this section, Césaire in a great cadenced outburst, revalorizes the very agrarian civilizations and their quite different understandings of man's humanity that Western modernity posits as its Other, as the World to its techno-industrial Church. In doing so, Césaire here effects a radical discontinuity with contemporary Western thought, with therefore, the enabling fiction in the terms of whose behaviour-motivational principle of explanation, the one-sided techno-industrial goal of the mastery of nature/mastering of Natural Scarcity, has been made into the single Absolute criterion of being human:

Heia for the royal kailcedrate!

Heia for those who have never invented anything

those who never explored anything

those who never tamed anything

those who give themselves up to the essence of all things

Ignorant of surfaces but struck by the movement of all things

free of the desire to tame but familiar with the play of the world. (Césaire, 1938)

Humans, Nietzsche (1971) argued, know their reality only through specific modes of world perception that are the condition of our coming

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to know the world in a stable and consistent manner. These world perceptions and the consciousness to which they give rise are always, however, relative to specific "local cultures" and therefore to Fanon's always already culturally socialized, individual subject. It is only, therefore, because the individual subject is able to forget the fact of his/her being a represented subject, that he/she can "live with some repose, safety and consequence"; since were this individual subject to get out of the prison walls of his/her faith, even for an instant, his/her "self-consciousness would be destroyed at once." As a result, the human subject is enabled to experience himself/herself as a fixed and stable subject only by repressing the relativity both of his/her mode of being and his/her related mode of cognizing; while because it already "costs him some trouble to admit to himself that the insect and the bird perceive a world different from his own," (that, in effect also the Cenù Indians when culturally autocentric, and today's Haitian Vodouisants "perceive a world" that is also different from our now Westernized own), such a subject must, as the condition of its very being, perceive its world perception as the only possible one. Yet it is clear that the question, "which of the two world perceptions" (that of the Westernized subject, that of the Vodouisant, or that of a bird), is more accurate, is quite a senseless one, since to decide this question it would be necessary to apply a (transculturally and transpecies valid) standard of right perception, i.e., to apply a standard which does and can not exist.

The fact that the 16th-century Cenù Indians had been enabled to "hear" the discourse of the Requisition, within the terms of its own quite different world perception and its standard of right perception and, therefore, outside the terms of the world perception of the hybridly politico-religious 16th century variant of the matrix Judaeo-Christian "local culture" of the West, makes possible a parallel recognition with respect to the paradox of today's Haitian / United States crisis. It is from a parallel reoccupation of the place of both Church and State and their respective ethics, by a new reasons-of-the-economy ethic,¹⁹ and therefore from the "prison-walls" of the latter's world perception, that we must now be liberated. A liberation, however, that cannot be effected, either in the terms of Aristide's politicized and creolized Judaeo-Christian theology, nor, indeed, in that of Marx's revolutionary but still culturally Judaeo-Christian counter-ideology, but rather in the new cognitive terms called for in Césaire's *Notebook of a Return to my Native Land*, as well as in Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*; terms, on the one hand, of an exorcism, and, on the other of a sociodiagnostics of our present order of consciousness,

its "local culture" understanding of man's humanity, and related behavior-motivational schema, or belief-system. Terms that would therefore call for the disenchanting of all belief—from Vodoun, the "root of all belief" to our contemporary Westernized own.

CONCLUSION

Like the Cenù Indians who most fully paid the price for the "mad and drunken" speech of the then first secularizing variant of the Judaeo-Christian culture of 16th-century Europe, no one more pays the price for the now hegemonic speech and the related behaviour motivational-schema of its second purely secularized variant than the peoples of the ex-slave Caribbean islands. No people more so among these than the peoples of the island of Haiti who, mired in poverty, and in an accelerating environmental degradation (Wilenz, 1989), remain caught in the pincers of three belief systems, one neo-agrarian and religious (that of Vodoun), the other also religious and Judaeo-Christian (the official religion of Roman Catholicism), and the third the now totally hegemonic economic-techno-industrial belief system of our present "understanding of man's humanity," the one that increasingly impels us all to attempt to realize it.

"Islands," wrote Césaire in his "Notebook,"
 that are scars upon water
 islands that are evidence of wounds
 crumbled islands
 islands that are waste paper torn up and strewn
 upon the water
 islands that are broken blades driven into the
 flaming sword of
 the sun. (Césaire, 1938)

The ex-slave islands, the "waste paper existence" of whose peoples have been nakedly verified by United States coast-guard vessels which move to block all attempts on their parts to flee their "condemned of the earth" status, as those who most bear witness to the "hidden costs" of our present variant of the "mad" and "drunken" speech, will be compelled to move now, not just beyond the local dystopia of the by now anachronistic Haitian military elite, but beyond our now global and hegemonic

"understanding of man's humanity." The second "true victory" of a new science of the Word can only be possible when we are able to look at the world from the outsider vantage point of the 16th-century Cenù Indians. When that happens, we will recognize that the history of the last 500 years from the Requisition onwards has been a culturally and not an historically determined one. We will understand that our present behavior motivational constructs and their "programming language"—constructs such as "Natural Scarcity," the "Debt Mechanism," and the "cure" of the "world task" as imperatives of Material Redemption through economic growth—are no more "true" outside our present variant culture's "ground" of actuality than the pronouncements of the Requisition could have counted as true outside the "ground" of actuality of the earlier 16th-century form of the Judaeo-Christian culture of the West. In the same way, the Vodoun's anti-social workers of "witchcraft," irate ancestors and offended loas, and the "ethno-medicine" of hounsans and mambos²⁰ were only able to "cure" the afflictions within its Neo-Agrarian culture's mode of actuality; within the "root" of the Vodouisants' belief.

Human beings are magical. Bios and Logos. Words made flesh, muscle and bone animated by hope and desire,²¹ belief materialized in deeds, deeds which crystallize our actualities. "It is man who brings society into being" (Fanon, 1967, p.11). And the maps of spring always have to be redrawn again, in undared forms.

ENDNOTES

1. This article is the condensed version of a longer text that will be published at a later date. (Editor's note)
2. See for this Stephen Greenblatt's *Learning to curse: Essays on early modern culture*. New York: Routledge, 1974, pp.26-31.
3. Liberal historians tend to oversee the implications of the fact that in the variant culture of the 16th century, Europeans still thought in terms of just and unjust titles to sovereignty and slavery. See Sylvia Wynter, "New Seville and the Conversion Experience of Bartolome de las Casas," *Jamaica Journal*, 17: 2 and 3, May and August, 1984.
4. I use the term *Noiristes* to refer to the black Haitian bearers of the cultural nationalist discourse which functioned as the legitimating ideology of Duvalierism. Because "race" and "culture" are collapsed into each other in this discourse, the *Noiristes* were enabled to invert the racial supremacist theories of Europe and of Euroamerica into a counter-racial supremacy theory used to harness the energies of the popular Black majority of Haitians to the interest of this New class's overriding

aim, as members of the educated lower middle class, of displacing and replacing the hegemony of the traditional mulatto bourgeoisie.

- The Noiristes, although no less europhone than the latter, given the French system of education, sought to exploit the popular culture of vodoun, selecting out elements which it manipulated and harnessed to its own socio-political goals.
5. In his *The Order of things: An archeology of the human sciences*. New York: Vintage, 1973, Foucault traces the ways in which our present disciplines which were put in place during the 19th century, were, and still are, articulated on the basis of the new "understanding of man's humanity" on the model of a natural organism, (i.e., "Man" as one who lives (biology), labors (economics), and speaks (linguistics). See "Labour, Life, and Language," pp.250-302.
 6. See Jacques Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," *Writing and Difference*, where he argues that every system of thought (or logos) can only articulate itself as true through the mediation of the category of that which functions as its Fool. That is, as the category of the mad functioned for the Logos of the Age of Reason, and as Voodoo economics functions for our present hegemonic logos and its order of objective truth.
 7. See Wade Davis (1988). *Passage of darkness: the ethnobiology of the Haitian zombie*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 244-262. Duvalier was to harness elements of this system to the keeping in place of his dictatorship.
 8. See Harold Morowitz' (1991). "Balancing Species Preservation and Economic Considerations," *Science*, 253, AAAS. 16th August, for a discussion of the different modes of "reflexive thought" of the Agrarian and of the Industrial eras.
 9. Ibid., p.753
 10. In our present system of thought "democracy" is used as a term of commendation, while the fact that it is both a conception specific to a "local culture," that of the West, as well as to its now middle-class variant (rather than aristocratic and/or popular), is overlooked. See for a critique of this "fallacy" D.B. Redford (1992). *Egypt, Canaan and Israel in ancient times*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 372-373.
 11. See Peter Brown (1982). *The Cult of saints: Its rise and function in Latin Christianity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Hans Blumenburg (1983). *The legitimacy of the modern age*. (R.M. Wallace Trans.). Cambridge: MIT Press.
 12. Both the terms *indios* and *negros* were generated from the semantic field of the Judaeo-Christian culture of the West. See Sylvia Wynter (1992). *Do not call us negroes: How multicultural textbooks perpetuate racism*. San Francisco: Aspire Publications.
 13. The encomienda was a forced labor institution where, Spain in reconquering its territory from Islam, had entrusted large numbers of the Spanish Moors to the overlordship of a Spanish-Christian military commander. In the New World variant of this institution, Indian families were "serfs" rather than slaves, and entrusted as a workforce to Spanish settlers in exchange for their ostensible Christianization.