NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology

University of Roehampton
London

UNIVERSITÉ Clermont Auvergne

Choreomundus:
International Master in Dance Knowledge, Practice, and Heritage

Reimagining, Reclaiming and Continuity: Traditional Masquerade in Trinidadian Society

Kim-Lee Campbell

Word Count: 27,800 (97 pages)

June 10

2017

Preface

Finding a "field" perhaps is never easy; well it surely was not for me, a young, Black, queer woman, a novice to travelling, who, before my journey on this exchange program, had only once left the soil or shores of my homeland, Jamaica, a small, likkle but tallawah[1] island of the African Diaspora. My existence, a result of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the people to whom I belong/carry etched in skin, African blood and clenched behind teeth; the unheard of, invasive hands of white men and disgraced for their religions, languages and cultures forced with a smile to appease, down their throats. Anthropology, and my insides, were indeed building conflict as it was occupying a socio-political, historical, traumatic and overall problematic space in my head; a discourse layered in othering, and a questionable root, centered around the colonial gaze. Nevertheless, I clutched to the belief that my island in the Caribbean is filled with stories in need of voicing, by a narrator of the soil, who knows the curves of the mountains, the laughter of the people, the smell of the ocean, and knows all too well the guise of their grief.

It is critical for me to first assert my positionality as this has helped to shape the directions of this research, making this dissertation more of a questioning of self and the society in which I have conducted this study and, by extension, the society which I call home, and the other brother and sister postcolonial, African diaspora, Caribbean societies.

This dissertation has brought me to revisit the way in which I view the world and myself in it. It has molded me to always remember how critical it is to assert my positionality as the places to which we travel are not separate from ourselves once we are present. Where one stands in the eyes of another can and will shape us, so it is always important to not only adapt to where they will place us but for us to remember from what soils we are molded and for what purpose we are present; not alone in our differences, but together in our commonalities.

[1] This is a Jamaican colloquial expression meaning "Do not underestimate us, we are small **but** we are strong and fearless."

Acknowledgement

It is here I first bless my ancestors, for it is from them that I can be present. For the European Union's commitment to a unification in diversity, as the source of all that strengthens this programme. For the Choreomundus programme convenors who have and continue to hold up the foundations that they have laid. Egil Bakka, Georgiana Gore, Andree Grau, Laszlo Feldfoldi, Gediminas Karoblis, I bless you and I thank you. For the Choreomundus team who has booked every travel route, and has answered each email in grave detail to ensure the best state of our well being, my deepest appreciation. To my colleagues from whom I learnt many languages, cooked full table spread meals, unique in every plate, I take with me a little piece of each of the 15 countries, as every classroom we shared was nothing like worlds apart, though we indeed shared different cultural roots. It is from our friendship that I have continued to hold onto a hope of a unified world, beautiful in all our differences. To the family I have made in Trinidad, I do hope this dissertation will warm your hearts, though much of what I have learnt in our exchange cannot be matched with words. To Rawle Gibbons, Marvin George, Turunesh Raymond and all who shared their presence with me throughout the Jouvay Ayiti journey, Ase. For my Mother and brother in Jamaica, what would my travelling heart be without the traces of home in my memory and the messages that transcended time differences; thanks to you both I never forget where I am coming from. To my extended spirit family; Neila Ebanks, your wisdom and experience has held my head steady and my words clear; to the lionheart herself Renee Lynch, for all your energy and connections made I am forever grateful; the Larasi fam of 157, may you continue to be blessed, and know you are always loved. To Marai Larasi, for putting concepts to my words, power in my spirit and courage in my heart, reminding me that I have work to do and that only by me it shall be done, bless you my sister, mother, and friend.

Abstract

Carnival in Trinidad is one of the most studied by anthropologists, researchers and scholars of dance, theatre and drama. Not only is it an "exotic" phenomena, which is full of great festivities, but it is layered in complexities of conflicting parallels; of the social and political, the rural and urban, the past and future, sacred ritual and the secular, the community and the industry. Having engaged in a two months fieldwork process with Jouvay Ayiti, a new age masquerade group, I realized that not much continuity plan or structures are in place that support the carnival practices, that has the people as the foundation. Having the people 'practitioners' as the foundation is a 'bottom up model' which as Richard Schechner suggests, will ensure a sustainable safeguarding structure for the longevity to the practice, and will make for a better global product. This dissertation gives a process to procession documentation and analysis of the work of Jouvay Ayiti. Such documentation and analysis uses concepts from anthropologists Victor Turner, on symbolism and Richard Schechner as a narrative voice throughout the text, on Carnival in Trinidad. Turner's concept of symbolism along with dance scholars Brenda Dixon Gottschild, Kariamu Welsh-Asante and Yvonne Daniel, on African/diaspora moving bodies is used to analyse the masks and its embodiment, as performed by Jouvay Ayiti during procession on Emancipation Day. The documentation, is of the continuity model 'sustainability/ safeguarding' that is practiced by the group with efforts to give full respect to the bearers of the tradition. The overall dissertation in a synthesis of my ethnographic accounts in a poetic recollection and an analytical report.

Keywords:

Masquerade procession, Trinidad, ritual symbols, Jouvay Ayiti, safeguarding, carnival, mask symbolism, continuity, mas workshop

Content

Introduction **7**

Chapter 1: Reimagining Place **12**

A. **Postcolonial talk: Contextualizing twenty-first century Trinidad** **13**

a. Historical overview of the socio-political climate of the people 14

b. Historical background of Masquerade tradition in Trinidad 18

c. Social and surrounding context of Masquerade in Trinidad 20

B. **Jouvay Ayiti** **22**

a. Positioning self: framing purpose and action 24

b. Meeting the Visionaries: connecting with my fieldwork community 28

Chapter 2: Reclaiming Space: Shaping/Making/Creating **30**

A. **Jouvay Ayiti Summer Workshop:** **31**

a. Process framework 32

i. Workshop sessions 32

ii. Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) 32-33

iii. Collaboration: Caribbean Yard Campus 34

iv. Collaboration: New Waves Institute 34-35

b. Breakdown of workshop sessions: 35

i. Mask Making 37

ii. Character building 39

iii. Group Synergy 43

c. Positioning self: reframing purpose and action 46

Chapter 3: ReCalling: Playing Mas on Emancipation Day 48

A. **Reflections on Procession** **49**

a. Jab Se Yo Neg- 'Pay de Devil' 49

b. Mask as Symbol: its layered symbolisms ‘mask analysis’ 57

c. Movement analysis: Dancing a present, recalling fragments of the past 67

d. A moment of reflection: from process to Procession, a modern initiation? 74

Chapter 4: Continuity **79**

A. **Mas Tragedy: A funeral of a man or the death of a tradition** **80**

B. **Safeguarding Power Dynamics: Structure Implementation.....82**

a. Government 83

b. Jouvay Ayiti 87

Conclusion 89

Bibliography 92

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of the Caribbean, with Trinidad circled.....14

Figure 2: More detailed map of Trinidad.....15

Figure 3: Timetable of Jouvay Ayiti Workshop Sessions.....36

Figure 4: Cardboard technique..... 37

Figure 5: Papier mache mask from clay mould.....37

Figure 6: Wire bending technique.....38

Figure 7: Lecture demonstration; Mas History.....38

Figure 8 & 9: Still photographs from documentary, ***Our Soul Turned Inside Out*** (CITT), showing costume details.....40

Figure 10: Still photographs from documentary, ***Our Soul Turned Inside Out*** (CITT), showing shoe detail.....41

Figure 11: Whipmaster dressing the wounds of a Jab Jab.....42

Figure 12: Jab Jabs fighting.....42

Figure 13: Mask Analysis (Dominant Element).....57 & 58

Figure 14a & 14b: Jab Molassi ***Traditional***..... 59

Figure 15a & 15b: Fancy Jab ***Traditional***..... 60

Figure 16: Cow ***Traditional.***.....61

Figure 17: Anansi ***Contemporary***.....62

Figure 18: Headless hermaphrodite (on left) ***Contemporary.***.....62

Figure 19a &19b: Psychedelic devil ***Contemporary***.....63

Figure 20: Dragon devil ***Contemporary***.....64

Figure 21: Vampire devil (on left) ***Contemporary***, Old white devil (on right) ***Contemporary*****……**……..65
Figure 22: Tribal devil ***Contemporary.***.....66
Figure 23: Boned nose devil ***Contemporary***…….....66
Figure 24: Movement Analysis: Structuring from a movement pool.....70&71

Introduction

> Generally speaking, every major carnival is precariously poised between the affirmation of the established order and its rejection. It is, in the words of Miliband, a contested event. This is borne out by the histories of carnivals in Europe, the West indies and South America. It is a fact which is hidden by the formal conception of carnival and by popular ideas about it (…) **Through interaction in primary relationships and change of role in masquerading, individuals recreate their self-identity and so are enabled to resume their demanding social roles in ordinary daily life. Thus, carnival connotes sensuousness, freedom, frivolity, expressivity, merrymaking and the development of the amity of what Turner calls 'commmunitas', as contrasted with 'structure'.** [bold is not in original text] This, though, is only a formal, 'ideal type' of carnival. In concrete reality, carnival is always a much more complex phenomenon, characterised by contradictions between the serious and the frivolous, the expressive and the instrumental, the controlled and the uncontrolled, by themes of conflict as well as of consensus. Although it is essentially a cultural, artistic spectacle, saturated by music, dancing and drama, it is always political, intimately and dynamically related to the political order and to the struggle for power within it (Cohen, 1993, p.4).

The highlighted section from the quote above positions carnival within the perspective of social inversion and a number of twenty-first century carnival theorists such as Mikhail Bakhtin and Victor Turner share perspectives of carnival as a 'liminal festival that reverses social hierarchies'. (Riggio, 2004, p. 15) In the latter part of his quotation, however, Cohen does express that he understands that such a phenomenon as carnival is much more complex. It is for this very reason that I chose this field as the focus of this dissertation, to engage with carnival, gleaning more from its complex nature. I have chosen to focus on one of the biggest carnival-celebrating countries, Trinidad, not too far from my own home country. I would like to understand and uncover more of the things that happen in the spaces carnival asserts, and not necessarily only what it reveres (inversion) or attempts to transform (subversion). I am of the belief that carnival is a space of its own system and own social construct; it is not free from structure. I also believe that it suspends time and space, but within a traversing process, like

that of ritual. Such traversing is processual, a three -phase occurrence that flows between reversing social customs and transforming them while holding a position between phases. In trying to understand what takes place within this third space, which the carnival occupies, I followed the work of anthropologists who specialise in three-phase processes of ritual and performance, Victor Turner and Richard Schechner. Turner's 1975 proposition of a three-phase Ritual process; separation, liminal/liminoid (along which lines communitas was structured) and reintegration. Schechner, a close working partner with Turner, built a three-part model for performance processes - the proto-performance, the performance and the aftermath - which he argues can parallel Turner's three phases of ritual. It is around the foundation of these two anthropologists' theories that I have constructed this dissertation; Turner's ritual process has influenced the structure and inquiry regarding carnival as a ritual process and Schechner stands as a recurring voice throughout, although it is his second phase, the performance, which I borrow to analyse my field event.

The events that take place in a carnival create a space that highlights the daily realities of the people, almost putting the society on display rather than masking it; or escaping the space of the "ordinary" / "normal" daily life. I am not entirely convinced that such a space, which is a profitable global product for the society's economy (Schechner in Riggio, 2004), would be one of extreme release, 'sensuousness, freedom, frivolity, expressivity, merrymaking and the development of the amity' (see above quotation by Cohen). The carnival industries have grown much more widespread within the twenty-first century, expanding to the Caribbean diaspora across the world, as evidenced by the very popular Notting Hill Carnival in London, for example, which itself started from Trinidadian roots. As more and more structures of constraint intended to better manage carnival as a product have been established, I am swayed to think that not only would such structures be governed by high political powers, but that even among the carnival participants themselves there would exist a system of how to operate within the quickly-expanding scope of the form.

Whether reflecting believed truth (stories of the past and present) or 'false truthfulness' (myths) of its society, the Trinidadian cultural practice of Masquerade (mas) opens a layered space for (un)covering individual self, as well as group selves and the society on a whole. Within my prior research on the masquerade practice of Trinidad I noticed quite a few cross patterns; 1) the past/ traditional (colonial imprint) and the future/contemporary (artistic constructions/

feeding a global industry), 2) ritual and the social 3) the rural (agrarian) and the urban (highly industrial). While I understand that such crossings exist, it is not my intention within this dissertation to investigate them in deep description/ detail; I aim, instead, to make explicit my awareness that such crossings will inevitably arise throughout this work. My question of focus is; How does a mas structure look, from process to procession, in a twenty-first century Trinidadian mas group, and how do they sustain its continuity with such interest growing in the global market? To help me answer, I traveled to Trinidad and worked with Jouvay Ayiti **(**English translation, A New Day Haiti**),** a group of "new age" Masqueraders. The group takes their influences of character choice from the traditional, creating masks that are contemporary in nature and aesthetic. They are known to be deliberate in their use of mas as societal critique and mirror, using each manifestation of mas performed to bare (bear) a political theme. Their mas procession themes have been known to be anchored by issues affecting, the Caribbean, with one of their most popular topic being reparations, all to support, make visible by self-affirmation and influence change for such issues.

To structure their processes in all their complexities and to guide my reader through the journey of my field experience, I have separated the data into four Conceptual Chapters:

Chapter 1: Reimagining Place, consists of two sub-sections:

A) Postcolonial talk

This sub-section gathers information from secondary sources to give a) historical overview of the socio-political climate of the people in Trinidad, b) historical background of Masquerade tradition in Trinidad, and c) social and surrounding context of masquerade in Trinidad.

B) Jouvay Ayiti

This sub-section gives a detailed fieldwork plan including my field location, schedule, plan of action, methodology and structure for my fieldwork, prior to fieldwork. It also gives ethnographic accounts of my first encounters when arriving in my field, and meeting the members of the Jouvay Ayiti group.

Chapter 2: Reclaiming Space

This chapter is a compilation of ethnographic accounts and detailed documentation of Jouvay

Ayiti's process of preparing for the Emancipation Day procession. Such preparations took the form of a summer workshop, the analysis of which I have separated into three sections; a) process framework b) breakdown of workshop, and c) positioning self: reframing purpose and action.

Chapter 3: ReCalling

Chapter Three is one of reflection, which occurred after the field event 'Jouvay Ayiti in Procession' and further gives a) an ethnographic description of the field event, b) an analysis of the mask and its character, based on Victor Turner's theoretical concept of Symbolism, c) a movement analysis of the mask embodiment using the works of Brenda Dixon Gottschild, Kariamu Welsh-Asante and Yvonne Daniel, and Richard Schechner's theory on *Restored Behavior*, d) a reflection on my entire journey in the field, which raises questions about initiation.

Chapter 4: Continuity

Subsection a) Mas Tragedy, begins with an ethnography of the funeral of a Traditional Mas bearer, which raises concerns for the continued life of Traditional Mas. Subsection b) further explores Schechner's support for restoring the traditional as Chapter Four investigates and discusses the implementation of safeguarding measures, the different structures in which the measures exist and how they are practiced by i) the government of Trinidad and Tobago, ii) Jouvay Ayiti.

The dissertation then ends with closing thoughts and questions.

It must be understood that Carnival performance is widely studied by Caribbeanists, anthropologists, and researchers interested in Theatre and Performing Arts alike. Even within Trinidad itself, an established Carnival Institute exists and as do schools and universities with strong Theatre/ Carnival studies academic programmes. There has been quite a bit of documentation, both published and unpublished, of work in my field, most of which tends to be more descriptive and encompasses writings, character sketches and ethnographic accounts of the actual procession as experienced and practiced during carnival season. With this dissertation project, I am motivated to enter the conversation not only by myself but to lead the public into understanding more about Jouvay Ayiti's process in taking mas into the context of

the Emancipation Day Parade - what such a process is like, what its preparation is, what the period leading up to the procession entails, what the actual procession is like and what happens after a mas procession. I intend to encourage–other researchers investigating practices set in similar contexts to understand the form / elements of my research and to not only write descriptively, but to engage relevant surrounding frames of reference, in a processual nature so as to give credence to the element in its multilayered-ness, as discussed by its own bearers and practitioners, who remind all that mas is more than a masked procession of characters and is rather a layered, multi-medium and multi-dimensional practice.

Chapter 1

Reimagining Place

One cannot simply reimagine a space without understanding the space's current existence... And its current existence is one that has always been constructed by its past and stands as a preparational phase, marking the beginning of a process...

Postcolonial talk: Contextualizing twenty-first century Trinidad

The reimagining of space for a postcolonial society is always layered in the concept of "development" and encapsulates a constant fight for a world "better" than the one which it occupies, existing outside of the structures of oppression, inequalities and manipulation. Placing self and placing Trinidad in this way is critical to my choice to entitle this chapter ***Reimagining Space*** *because it is only within the context of the place in which we are positioned that we can begin to imagine anew, and to form new conceptions of its present state. The reimagining, however, for this chapter is being used as a concept to share the beginning of a larger process I engaged with during my fieldwork. It is a concept through which I explore the stages of such thinking, giving the historical background from which to birth the need for a new representation, one which carves a piece of land out of the vast mountains of the island, creating space for those who cannot carve such spaces for themselves[2]. In this chapter, I also mention those involved and share the process of such reimagining.*

Masquerade traditions have always caught my interest, with their concepts of play, ritual, theatre, mask, anonymity and identity. The Caribbean island of Trinidad is known across the world for its Carnival season, with the major highlight being ***Playing mas****[3], the elaborate masking and costuming in procession on the final day before Lent[4]. This highlight is and has been for centuries a practice that beats the heart of the Trinidadian society, and continues to do so in the twenty-first century, year after year. Upon every page through which my researching fingers scrolled was printed repetitively a two-word term,* ***Ole Mas****. This term, met during my search for a fieldwork location, was one I quickly learnt stirred much heated debate and had the potential to ruin spaces of good mood and amiability. It was, as such, never one used by traditional masqueraders themselves; instead their practice was to be correctly referred to as Traditional masquerade.*

---

[2] this is a mere metaphor and the space of which I speak of is making space within the place of Masquerade

[3] Claire Tancons writes: "Mas' is better known through, but by no means exclusive to, the Trinidadian vernacular. Indeed, Carnival found a linguistic alternative and a notable semantic reinforcement of the notion of masque and masquerade within vernacular languages across the Caribbean in mas': in French Creole, mas or mass is "masque," as used in Guadeloupe and Martinique in mas a congo, mas a Saint Jean, and mas a l'enmô; and in the Trinidadian colloquium mas', the preferred term for Carnival in the English-speaking Caribbean, where to participate in Carnival is "to play mas'." At any rate, the African diasporic imprint seems to press upon precisely the space created by the distance and distinction between Carnival and masquerade."

[4] The participants of mas in the twenty-first century or Trinidad as a country is not Roman Catholic, but given the history, the Roman Catholics impositions in the early beginnings of Trinidad's construction has left imprints on the society's governance.

Historical overview of the socio-political climate of the people

To begin to reimagine space, let us understand the context upon which the Trinidadian society is built and structured. The twin-island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is at the southernmost area of the Caribbean archipelago, and is geologically an extension of the South American continent, separated from Venezuela only by the 11-kilometre-wide Gulf of Paria.

Figure 1: Map of the Caribbean, with Trinidad circled

About half of the 1,364,973 person population resides '...in the urban East-West Corridor, a densely built-up belt stretching south of the Northern Range from the western suburbs of the capital, Port of Spain, to the small town of Arima some thirty kilometres to the east.' (Eriksen, 1990). This capital dominates public life in Trinidad and its cultural make-up and activity are central to Trinidadians' ideas of typical 'national culture'. Coming less commonly to mind are the Indo-Trinidadian villages spread out among the Caroni sugar fields, or the remote Northern fishing villages, or the south-west oilfields without which the economy would not be as prosperous. Instead, 'Trinis' definition of public self-links strongly with such cultural institutions as steelbands, calypso and carnival.

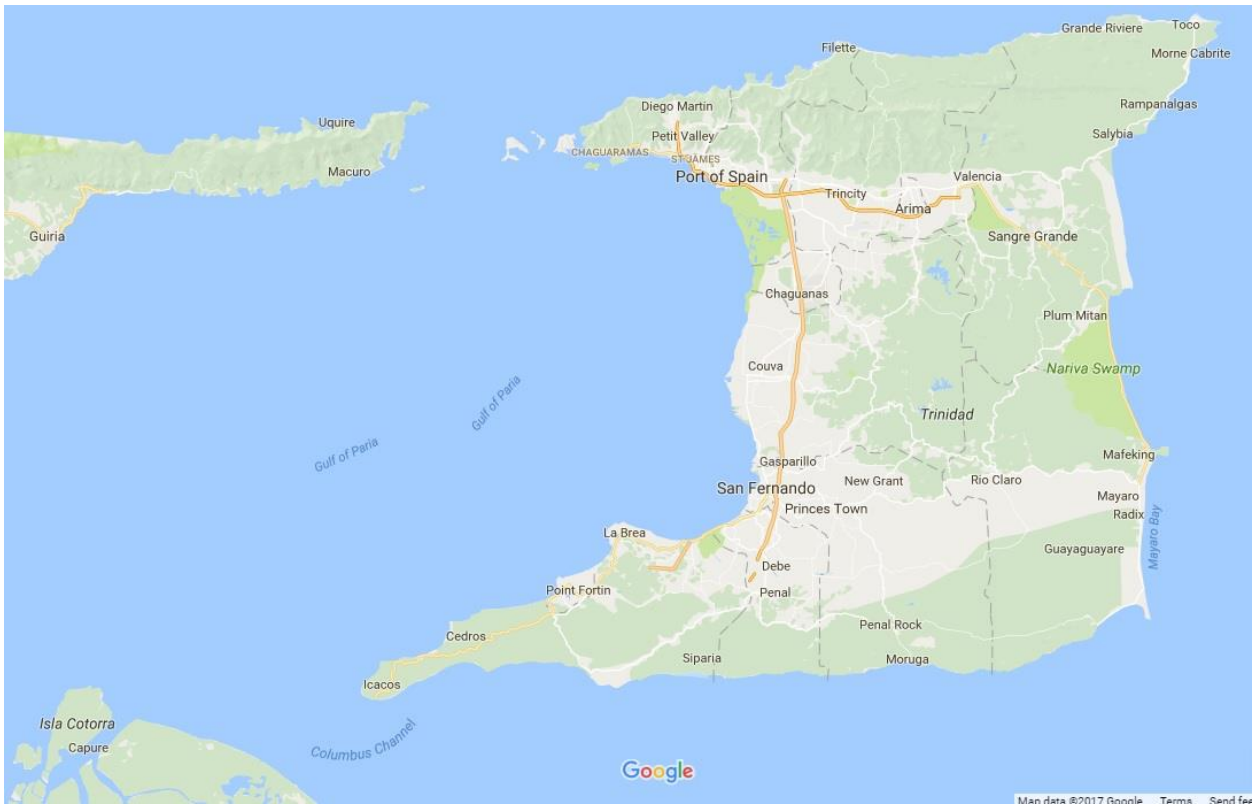


Figure 2: More detailed map of Trinidad

It is important to note that Trinidad, much like its neighboring sister and brother islands within the Caribbean, is a child birthed from a colonial past. Trinidad's colonial history, however, is not one of physical enslavement from the Triangular Trade system. The nation carries, instead, a historical memory of exploitation, land captivity, immigration and indentureship. First and early settlement in the island was that of the Spanish, led by Christopher Columbus, between 1498 and 1782, then in 1783 the Royal Cedula invited whites, who strictly professed Roman Catholicism, free blacks and mulattoes from the other Caribbean islands and French planters to occupy the island. A system of land distribution was made clear as the Spanish intention was to increase the sugar cane field production in Trinidad, and build a more profitable trade market. The whites and Spanish foreigners received more land and tax benefits while the free blacks and mulattoes received half the amount of land and had little to no waivers on the fees they had to pay. In 1797 the British then enslaved Trinidad, and started the period of indentureship bringing the first Chinese immigrants to the island, in 1806, the year before the slave trade was abolished. By the year 1811, Trinidad was full of the most non-white free people across the British Caribbean. The abolition of slavery was enacted on August 1, 1838 and seven years later, the first set of East Indian indentured laborers arrived in the island, along

with a new - and final - batch of Chinese indentured laborers. Also, important to note is the 1857 beginning of the Trinidadian oil industry. (Batson & Riggio in Riggio, 2004)

Tracing such historical landmarks allows us to gather that, much like in the larger Caribbean, Trinidad's population has been one of various mixes and combinations of race, ethnicity, religion and class. Its ethnic demography ranges from Amerindians (Trinidad's First Nations people) to Europeans, Africans, Asian Indians, Chinese, Syrians, Lebanese and Portuguese. Their religious influences, also varied, range from Roman Catholicism, to Protestant Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Yoruba and Ifa. It is important to note that calendars were timetables created to respect such diversity and so was the physical land spacings. The class divide is one that was set up from the Act within the Cedula regarding land distribution, because land is capital; it is then that the foundation of wealth and power began to be constructed.

As Caribbeanist Thomas Hylland Eriksen notes 'Although the standard of living has declined steadily during the 1980s, the GNP is still comparable to that of industrialised European countries; in other respects, however, Trinidad must be regarded as a part of the Third World.' The material standard of living has been considered as far superior to the average of the Caribbean area, its population benefiting particularly from the spectacular economic growth coming from the high oil prices of the latter half of the 1970s.

With oil factories expanding, marking the start of a transition between a once plantation and trade society to a highly industrial society, workers were in demand. Immigration of East Indian indentured labourers became frequent, and the society quickly had a more balanced divide of African-descended "free" slaves and East Indian peoples. The oil-rich territory's socio-political dynamics shifted into a very relevant non-ethnic social distinction, between 'the middle class' and 'the working class' (local terms), and between rural and urban people. The Trinidadian society has since given rise to an 'othering'[5] which, is often at the centre of person and group relations. Such structures have been maintained ever since.

[5] An othering based on race rather than color.. too different manifestations of classism.. Trinidad, like Jamaica, for example, is a diverse society of multiple races but has a strong binary division of two groups of people, the Afro-Trinidadians and the Indian-Trinidadians. The socio-political climate is structured around a more racial conflict similar to that which exists between Haitians and Dominican Republicans than one of the colorism which is more predominant in other Caribbean islands. Where the darker your skin the lower you are in the class system and vise versa.

Within the early periods of Trinidad's industrialisation, it was said that the binary divides had been between the working class and the middle class, the rural and the urban and the historical context in which such groups were existing had also set up an ethnic classification. As all the East Indian immigrants came contracted to work under indentured labour, I believe it goes without saying that this ethnic group built much of, the middle class in twenty-first century Trinidad. The working class would perhaps be a mixture of East Indians and African freed slaves, but not equal in ratio, the majority being of African roots. Trinidadian researcher with a focus on Education, Sabeerah Abdul-Majied, uncovers in a case study that within the twenty-first century such binary divides still exist and that it is indeed more of an ethnic one, between these two groups of people. She notes;

> The population ... is made up of many different races, religions and cultures. It is a diverse society which has traditionally prided itself on the belief of its national anthem that '…here every creed and race finds an equal place'. However, despite this motto one notes that throughout the Republic's history, race and cultural issues continuously arose between the two equally divided ethnic groups in the population: the Africans and East Indians. (Abdul-Majied, 2012)

It is here that we are even more strongly of the understanding that a binary sort of class system based on race has since emerged, and that, as indicated above, that the largest ethnic rift to be noted in the tussle for social dominance is between those persons of Asian (East Indians) and African (Free African peoples) descent. This fight for social dominance has been transferred into other structures governing the Trinidadian society of the twenty-first century. Such a history has not only molded the society's present state but seems to continuously dictate its future as seen through imprints still existing in some of the cultural heritage practices shared across the island.

Historical background of Masquerade in Trinidad

As mentioned earlier, my field event is described by most non-practitioners as 'Ole Mas, but I learnt that such a label is completely disrespectful, even in mere utterance. "*Ole mas? This ain't no ole mas, this is Traditional mas [sic]. They talking bout this thing like we dead… we not dead we still here, and we not dying either.*"[6] Traditional mas in Trinidad is a procession that takes place every year during the streets of Port of Spain. According to www.tntisland.com:

> Carnival has always been about social expression and the voice of society which is displayed on the streets of the country in a highly-spirited celebration of energy. Many people like to play traditional characters (mas) on the streets from the past which helps to preserve the various social customs (James, 2017)

Traditional Carnival as we know it, emerged in Trinidad in the 19th century, out of the celebratory rites of African enslaved peoples who were liberated from chattel slavery. It was on August 1, 1838 on Emancipation Day, where in celebration the freed slaves participated in a Cannes brulees (burning of the cane). Such celebrations, it is assumed, expanded into what is now known as canboulay.

It is suspected that carnival celebrations were learnt from French and Spanish colonisers, in the form of Mardi Gras, before the 19th century, during the 1783 - 1797 period of the Cedula de poblacion. It is also known that the enslaved Africans brought with them their own masquerade traditions (e.g. egungun masquerades from the Yoruba tradition) - practices which they would have been forbidden to embody during the period of enslavement. This does not, however, solidify that traces and fragments of their African heritage would not have been found in the European styles they were allowed to perform. Story has it that the carnival during the time of enslavement was one of irony as it was a celebration performed by both the enslaved and the *maasa*[7]; a performance of satire and mimicry of each other's culture. Carnival since then has expanded in Trinidad. Its twenty-first century celebrations are even more elaborate, displaying to the world an identity "free" from a colonial construct and one which upholds the face of a diverse, multi-racial society, expressing both its globality and uniqueness. There are, however,

[6] Tracy Sankar,(Traditional Mas player of "the one and only La Diablesse" and a few other Traditional Mas characters such as Fancy Jab, Blue Devil, Jab Molassie and Dame Lorraine.

[7] Jamaican patois for 'master'.

practitioners within these more elaborate carnivals who are bearers of masquerade traditions hailing from the periods during which it was being done by *maasa* and their enslaved, filled with political dynamics, mockery, mimicry, satire and irony. Such carnival practice is known in the twenty-first century as Traditional Masquerade, a division which lines up a coexisting binary, of the rural and urban.

Though such a practice can mostly only be witnessed in Trinidad's *Carnival Season;* a week before the Roman Catholic observance of Lent; imposed colonial imprint since 1783, Jouvay Ayiti has created a ritual in which they place Traditional Mas within Trinidad's annual Emancipation Day parade held on August 1. Although set apart as somewhat of a National holiday in Trinidad and Tobago, I observed this aspect of the country's history being memorialised mostly by the African-Trinidadian population, and, therefore, being proclaimed by many as one belonging to that ethnic group only.

My field, by extension, encompasses masquerade in the context of the Emancipation Day parade and celebrations. The mas is particularly significant as a representation of freedom and empowerment for the enslaved Africans and I will speak in detail later about the contradiction of this idea by two variant groups of stakeholders.

Emancipation Day across the Caribbean does not share mutual dates. Haiti, for example, was the first Caribbean island to gain Independence, negating the need for Emancipation to be granted by the French. The former British West Indian colonies, however, all celebrate the 1834 granting of emancipation by the British government to the enslaved populations on their islands on August 1, annually. For African-Trinidadians a day such as Emancipation Day is not just a national day of significance, but is the day celebrated and sacred to the divide, where they could express pride and appreciation for their African ancestral heritage. The Indian-Trinidadian, with such practices as Holi (early to mid-March) occupies spaces on the streets as needed, to celebrate her/his own traditions brought from India. I also noticed that the more ritual practices performed by African-Trinidadians (Yoruba Orisha-related) occupied spaces that were remote and kept in secret and so were a bit difficult to attend without an insider's invite. It was with this recognition that I knew I was witnessing a divide not created by the people but one upholding structures of their colonial past. The strong division of territory was present but what I was interested in was the spaces in which these various cultural heritage

practices did not delineate, because at no time did I think to believe such a thing was possible. Perhaps this plurality was how these binary divides coexisted in Trinidad.

Social and surrounding context of the Masquerade in Trinidad

The Carnival (and Mas), however,

> does not mean the victory of one social group over another but must be seen as a ritual space, 'sub-policy', where such conflicts can speak freely. It bypasses the modes of representation and objectification dominant, indicates the limitations of binary oppositions and aestheticizes power relations. (Cohen 1993).

With the country quickly expanding, being in a post-industrial position and building itself as a capitalist economy, the division of class has grown more diverse. The category of high class status is not one as simple as race, rural versus urban or even working class versus the middle class. The categories that determine a high social status depends on economic activity, employment status, housing characteristics, education, health, crime and violence, and perceptions around poverty.

Behind Trinidad carnival are countries of the African continent and the country of India, where the current realization was a witnessing of colonial effect on the former practices of these homelands. The energy of classism in mas not only stemmed from how these people came to be on Trinidad's soil but also from the ongoing conflict of belonging. There is no clear owner of carnival but what is clear is that these two groups of people are, during the moment of carnival, forced to share the same space in spite of occupying different societal positions. In 1969, Walter Rodney in *Groundings with my Brother,* acknowledges the division of that period, where he states:

> The intense division between these two communities has had serious repercussions on nonwhite solidarity against external forces as well as internal challenges of development... Internal fissures, especially the African-Indian division, have always provided the conditions for ethnic conflict and in any project of solidarity have had to be contained

The climate of Trinidad's carnival is heightened in competitiveness and hierarchy, as its structure has categories and judges with villages lined up to showcase performances for titles of status. The venue, the well-known Queen's Park Savannah, is divided into strong binary class systems. There is a North Stand and a Grandstand with the strip of stage running through the middle separating both areas, almost like that of a runway. The grandstand was for those who could afford heavy pocket prices, the VIP crowd, scholars and any other official guests. The North Stand was the stand for the Trinidad people with lower-priced, harsher seats, a louder, more crowded atmosphere and a greater mixture of patrons across classes. With such a classist divide one can gather that carnival is indeed a celebration of differences, or as anthropologist Richard Schechner clearly states in a compilation of articles exploring Trinidad carnival, 'Despite much boundary-crossing interculturality- is partially a festival of "differences" demarcating the urban from the rural, the African from the European, the Asian from the African, and so on.' (2004, p.4). He explains that carnival was generated out of a space for celebration of the liberation of the enslaved people taken to the land of Trinidad. He reminds that from its very core it has always been 'policed and controlled' (2004, p.5). It is from Schechner's writing that we can gather that the eyes of power never stopped patrolling the celebration; in fact, more clear divisions have been made over time to ensure that the very energy of spontaneity that carnival occupies was held within a box of limitation to protect it. Is it in need of "saving/ preserving", for the purpose of the social? The extended purpose can be observed on billboards, television ads and costume prices closer to the season of the festival. Carnival not only serves a social purpose/divide among the people themselves but is a product for the Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd. (TIDCO) to market for capital.

Jouvay Ayiti

> Mas amplifies and makes what might not be known, conscious. (George & Gibbons, 2016, p.70).

Certain circles within the Caribbean have deeply respected Haiti as a brave nation of revolutionaries as, through blood and skillful warfare, it was the first island in the region to win its 'independence' from France, declared at the end of its revolution in 1803. In Trinidad, Haiti's continued well-being has a commitment from many, as that nation is still recognized for its role as the "beacon of Caribbean's civilization". Not long after its tragic 2010 earthquake, a group of Trinidadians under the endorsement Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies (founded in 1977 by Caribbean thought leader and long-standing advocate of Haiti, Lloyd Best)[8] came together to form a working group, who considered themselves a *convois*[9] of long-term committed supporters for Haiti's rejuvenation. As awareness of the *convois* grew among the university students, recognizing their interest and efforts, Rawle Gibbons, at the time, was a member of the Lloyd Best Institute, a fellow of the *convois*, and the Head of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts, created opportunities for the students to become central to the cause; the initiative expanded into the creation of a campus group called Jouvay Ayiti**.** This group's purpose also dovetailed neatly with the Department's commitment to keeping current the Traditional mas as opposed to the 'pretty', commercialized mas of sequins and feathers. In a personal interview, the leader of Jouvay Ayiti, Marvin George mentioned quite a number of things that caught my attention as it was along the lines of my interest in mas. He mentioned that his interest did not lie in mas action but, instead, he was much more connected with the things that people learn when engaging with mas, the transformations on a physical, emotional and spiritual level.

Jouvay Ayiti's work has a history of activism, as Marvin George calls it, *Mas Action*. In 2016 mas as Jab (Devil) qua Jab (Black) is reminding us of the atrocities of enslavement ie. whips, beatings, chains, the sins and scars for which a strong case for reparations is being made

[8] "The Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies is a non-profit, independent think tank dedicated to the sole purpose of the development of the Caribbean. It is named after its founder, Lloyd Best, who launched it in 1977 as the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies. The mandate of the Lloyd Best Institute has always been, and continues to be guided by the title of Lloyd's seminal work, "Independent Thought and Caribbean Freedom" (Buzz TT, 2017).

[9] The name given to African secret societies in nineteenth century Trinidad.

today. And then there is the defiance i.e. blackening despite of. Both are embodied in the mas, and when danced, these are amplified, and/or confronted, overturned, affirmed… transcended… The masquerader/performer is thus being challenged to reinterpret the tradition, asking her/himself the following: 'knowing this, if these Jab must play, what is the reparations statement s/he might carry in mask [costume], and actualized in the mas [performance]?' (George, 2015). The work of Jouvay Ayiti has three (3) distinct components to its mas layers as George & Gibbons (2016) puts it:

1) That which is artistically conceptual - towards a mandate of pushing their socio-political ideologies (curving the overarching theme at play)
2) A repertoire of movement, music/ sounds/ poetry/ costumes encoded in symbolisms, borrowed from rituals across the Caribbean
3) The theme which strongly determines the repertoire chosen and combines and influences artistic directions.

In the Anglophone Caribbean, Emancipation Day is a national holiday of festivities, laughter, drinking, ritual, music, dancing storytelling, reenactments of great rebellions, one celebrating the exact moment in time in 1834 when the enslaved were no longer legally mandated to work on the sugar plantations. On this day, the now "free" descendants of once-enslaved Africans pay their respects to ancestors and celebrate all that is left or has been safeguarded of their traditions. Displays from a unified people and a purpose-driven "free" nation can be seen flooding streets, hero monuments, battle sites and homes. Jouvay Ayiti's masquerade procession was to take place on this, Emancipation Day, August 1, 2016, during my fieldwork engagement. In Trinidad, an Emancipation Day Parade is held in the form of a procession through the streets of Port of Spain and leads into an open park grand gala celebration, set up as a Heritage Village at the Queen's Park Savannah. Performances by groups and bearers of certain African-Trinidadian traditions occur on a massive stage to crowds of other African-Trinidadians.

Positioning self: framing purpose and action

I have chosen to insert this section in my dissertation as a way to capture the processual nature of my position in the field. My positionality within the field underwent many drastic shifts from the moment I prepared my plan, to the moment I left the field. I believe that my position is critical to mention, as it helps the reader to not only understand the content of which I speak, but it allows the reader to also construct and contextualise the content with an additional layer of locating me, the writer in the very space of which I write, as my presence affects and affected, the happenings within the field. There are three parts designated throughout this dissertation that speak about my positionality, at the different stages at which I recognised that it had to and did shift. Below is Part 1 of the three:

Quickly recalling my plan of action prior to the field
A part of my journey in the field was to, as best as possible, try to document the mas in all its layered complexities through detailed descriptions of the symbolisms at play, in the costumes, characters, songs/lyrics chosen for the mas I was to observe and participate in.

My overall approach to the field was that of participant observation. As a practitioner of masquerade, I had to be careful to not be pulled into the procession/ process for my expertise. Given the limitation of the length of time overall, I had separated my schedule into categories, subsections rather, for data collection.

The methods I intended to use are interviews, fieldnotes, collecting sketches, photos and videos. Many of my interviews were to be focused on members of **Jouvay Ayiti** in efforts to understand more about who they are, their background, their mission, hope for the future and, most importantly, to listen to how they will structure/ express their plan of action for sharing the mission and content of **Jouvay Ayiti** with their new initiates in two weeks for the Emancipation Day procession. The second batch of interviews were to be conducted with the participants within the two weeks of their *initiation* and 'after they participate in the mas', their *post initiation*.

After viewing the schedule, and upon recognising how busy the two weeks of the summer intensive would have been, I decided to experiment with requesting sketches. These sketches were intended to help me to gather information during the process of details of the costumes

everyone would be creating, without interrupting the sessions. I intended to ask the **Jouvay Ayiti** co-ordinator to allow me to hand out blank paper at the beginning of the session and ask the new initiates to sketch their costume ideas, concepts, write the name of their characters, the colour and perhaps have a scale at the end of the page for them to express their own thoughts however they choose, akin to a collection of their personal journal/ feedback of each session.

My fieldnotes were to have three (3) categories:

1) My personal recollection 'a journal',
2) A detailed ethnographic 'descriptive account of the daily environment'. Knowing it might be difficult to focus on each individual, I would focus on the actions as groups in and around the two main spaces 'Studio 66' (**Jouvay Ayiti**'s meeting space) and New Waves! Institute (the space where the process for the procession sessions with the new initiates will take place),
3) Observations of the actions of the initiated **Jouvay Ayiti** members - mapping and recording their interactions, discussions, group dynamics, biographies and group impetus - and of the actions of the new initiates - mapping and recording their interactions, discussions, group movement, dynamics and relationships.

Taking photos and videos was to be a part of my way to recall, document and journal my day-to-day fieldwork experiences for future analysis. I intended to capture a few costume-making shots and the actual mas procession but was to mostly depend upon written fieldnotes, because, for the most part, I am a lone documenter and the camera would perhaps have to be stationary while I moved through the different spaces. With the camera being stationary the videography will not be at its most effective, as it is best when one can guide what the camera focuses on at any given time; videoing while note-taking would be almost impossible to undertake. Being a foreign young lady, travelling back and forth with the equipment might have also been problematic as I was to mostly be on foot or using public transport.

With the only information accessible to me being that of the **Jouvay Ayiti** meeting schedule and the New Waves! Institute timetable, I made plans to be in a central space where I could easily and safely get to meeting spaces in Barataria (**Jouvay Ayiti)** and in Cascade (New Waves! Institute). My ticket in hand, all my necessary documents were ready. I had received my yellow fever vaccine, and was set to travel freely as a Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) national, with the hopes that I would not 'clam up' at the immigration

window from my own fears of the horror stories on the news about how the Trinidadian immigration officials have been treating visiting Jamaicans.

I was to arrive in Port of Spain, Trinidad on June 12, 2016 where I was to live on a community hostel but after discovering my research destination, a close family friend quickly contacted a friend and made arrangements for a space he felt would be safest and where my landlord would treat me like family because of this affiliation. There had been recent flare-ups of friction and stiffness between Jamaicans and Trinidadians, especially at Trinidad's Piarco airport, and so his concerns for safety were justified. Nevertheless, I had doubts about the location of the space and feasibility of transportation, because it is far west from the centre of Port of Spain. There are only three options for public transportation heading from this area to the centre - a route taxi, a maxi cab, or a private taxi company, none of which I know or feel might be safe enough for a foreign young woman travelling alone, especially at nights. With plans of spending most of my days between the archives of the University of West Indies Library, in St, Augustine (the East) and with members of the **Jouvay Ayiti** group in Barataria at 'Studio 66' to glean details of their first phase (preparing for the initiates), moving to and from the centre of town might also prove to be unsustainably expensive.

My fieldwork was to occur in what I had segmented into three (3) Phases:

1) The prep (preparing for the initiates)
2) The initiation (enculturation/transmission) phases of initiation (the tasks of the new initiates- how they approach such tasks
3) Post-initiation reflection

The research was planned to be conducted as follows: I will in my first week (June 12 to 19) undertake initial orientation with main contact and host, Rawle Gibbons of **Caribbean Yard Campus**. In Phase One - weeks two (June 20 to 26) and three (June 27 to July 2) - I will organise meetings with key resource persons. My main research at the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Library will happen in week four (July 3 to 9) and in weeks five to eight (July 10 to August 3) - Phase Two - attend the *Jouvay Ayiti* members-only meetings at Studio 66 and the general, collaborative workshops connected to New Waves! activities, as detailed in the schedule created by Marvin George (see Figure 1). Week nine (August 4 to 13), Phase Three, will be earmarked for post-activity discussions, final meetings and reflections.

My guiding questions of inquiry were as follows:

- What are some of the processes involved?
- How are the relationships formed?
- How does Jouvay Ayiti share their ideologies through the process and enactment of mas?
- How do the relationships formed between the initiated and the new initiates influence or affect the exchange of the group/ ritual, ideologies?
- How do new initiates identify and see themselves and others who are sharing this experience?
- How has the initiation act impacted engagement with others and self?

In understanding the Traditional Mas content, I would engage with being present with the Jouvay Ayiti mas players, not as a dance element with set choreography or vocabulary but rather an event/ procession layered in its historical and sociopolitical complexities.

Meeting the Visionaries: Connecting with my fieldwork community

I wind my window down so I can inhale the air, familiar to me, the breeze of the trees passing on the smell of fruit and hard labour. But this air is filled with a bit more industrialization, exhaust and breathes thick, humid, warm and chalky. The ride on the highway was long, the roads wider than that of home, the buildings cast shadows in the streets much like the skyscrapers I have encountered in France. The ocean smell was nowhere close and I was in a sense of culture shock. How truly similar was this island to mine?

The car turned off into a narrow path off the highway. Bumpy the ride, dusty the air, and my eyes seemed to stay fixed on the spirals of sharp blades that topped the gates and fences of every building we were passing. This kind of image I associated with military bases and the gates of my old high school. We have houses back home with fences topped with barbed wire such as these, but such houses belong to the wealthy and extremely fearful. The music of percussive rhythms was loud and sing-songy conversations which leaked into the car from street vendors. The street widened into amber lighting, with dim specks of colour and I felt like I never left home. I was suddenly put at ease by the warmth of the streets and the vibrancy pumping in the people. We turned left under what looked in the darkness like an aqueduct or an old stone bridge tunnel and we were on the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus.

I was introduced/ inducted by a man whom I came to deeply respect as most in the field. Rawle Gibbons, through his tireless dedication and caring spirit was not only seen as a researcher/ Theatre Arts genius or retired Professor of the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine, Trinidad) in the Festival Arts Department. Included in these titles, was the father guide of most, if not all, of the Traditional mas players present in the Jouvay Ayiti workshops. He also represented the heartbeat of the Jouvay Ayiti group which I later understood as a movement, a part of a larger vision he has for not only the masquerade traditions of Trinidad and their bearers, but a vision for traditional practices throughout Trinidad and the Caribbean. During my fieldwork, Rawle Gibbons was more than my "gatekeeper" (as expressed in anthropological terms) and in this dissertation, I will refer to him as my spirit mentor. His role in Jouvay Ayiti as stated by Marvin George *"As my lecturer, he really was the one who influenced and motivated me to work on this project."* Rawle held the position as the overall

project/ workshop orchestrator as Marvin was away in Jamaica working at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, School of Drama as a new lecturer.

I first encountered Marvin George during a Skype meeting from my accommodation in Trinidad at the Trinity House on the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus. On this occasion, he was assisting me in creating the schedule for my two-month long fieldwork in Trinidad as I was going to be *playing mas* with the masquerade group he directs, Jouvay Ayiti, as my main research focus. After our conversation ended, I began to understand that the group was not just a community of people building costumes and taking to the streets, masquerading. There was much more going into the structure, aim/intentions and working plan of the group.

With Marvin, not being physically present in Trinidad to see this project through, Rawle as chief orchestrator was not going to be working alone. The process would be executed by a team of directors; Rawle, Jouvay Ayiti Co-Founder and Carnival Theoretician, Director of Caribbean Yard Campus and my liaison and signatory of my fieldwork convention. Marvin's trustee, mentor, past lecturer, colleague and friend. Turunesh, Papier Mache Artist and teacher, Makemba, visual artist and director of the Studio 66 space, where the workshops would be based. Lari, legendary costume building master who has worked alongside one of the oldest, most renowned and political mas artists in Trinidad, Peter Minshall[10].

[10] " Peter Minshall, an existential hero in Trinidad and the largest novel character among carnivals anywhere in the world. For four decades he has had audiences in his mirror, which he calls mas, not masquerade, because his graphic imagery of society is much bigger than that. It is largely about who we were, what we've become and why we haven't changed. (...) the seven deadly sins remain his overarching theme.(...) Minshall was instrumental in staging the 1992 Barcelona Games, Atlanta (1996) and Salt Lake City (2002), for which he won an Emmy. Olympic Games producers found Minshall's genius for orchestrating grand spectacles in the Trinidad Carnival, where his themes usually play on good and evil" (Travel Film Fest)

Chapter 2

Reclaiming Space:

ReShaping

Making

Creating

Should we really live to embrace the saying 'No rest for the wicked'?... Is there truly, No home for the colonized?... No freedom for the displaced?... Shall we not claim our space?

The ability to reimagine can only mark the beginning of the process for the "development" of a postcolonial society, for there is no change in the imagined space, only a shift in the way one thinks and sees. Recognition of the colonial effect upon the African and Indian diaspora people of Trinidad has led me to not only believe myself to be a mere witness within the field, it has set up for me the acknowledgement of my own colonial effect and my fieldwork then, has become a space for understanding these processings. Such processes begin with the psyche, yet demand action, action I have conceptualized, for the purpose of this chapter, as a Reclaiming of Space, with subsections that cover the process actions of Shaping, Making and Creating.

The colonial effect needs to be understood as an ongoing state of being that does not die with the liberation of the enslaved but lives within the psyche and bodies of the people once oppressed and their oppressor. It is a power play that first begins from the outside wherein the one with the ability to assert dominance over another, then placing said other into subjection (Butler, 1997, p. 29). The divides mentioned in the earlier discussion regarding the surrounding context - socio political structures - is what is known to be shaped because of the colonial effect. This divide is not one that can only be witnessed among the spectators but has too, caused tensions between the rural and urban practitioners within the mas.

Jouvay Ayiti is one such 'carved out piece of land' that is reclaiming its birthright to exist, as it stands on the border, bridging both the urban and rural. It is the reimagining space of both Marvin George and Rawle Gibbons that gave birth to Jouvay Ayiti's taking of place. Asserting the position of such newly concepted spaces, was only the start of a process towards a reclaiming of the Trinidadian people's sense of identity, an identity which sustains the rural, to contextualize the urban. They, being visionaries, see, too, the possibility not only in Trinidad, but extend hope for such reclamation across the Caribbean.

Process framework

The Jouvay Ayiti Summer Workshop was a publicized series of workshops running in conjunction with Caribbean Yard Campus and Studio 66. The workshops or mas camps[11] were planned to give background and context about the devil characters to be played in the procession. and would be taught by Traditional Mas players to everyone present but they would achieve different purposes; some would be lecture demonstrations about the life of the characters, others would focus on teaching the techniques (e.g. wire bending, cardboard sculpting etc.) used to make the costumes worn by the characters, and all would culminate in a final parade for Emancipation Day. The workshop was structured collaboratively to include; i. workshop sessions, ii. the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ), iii. Caribbean Yard Campus, iv. the New Waves! Institute.

i. Workshop sessions

These sessions were held for the express outcome of making costumes to be worn in the Emancipation mas procession. The structure consisted of lecture demonstrations from bearers of Traditional mas characters, giving the history and overall theory about playing their characters. Hands-on skill learning of the techniques used in Traditional mas such as; wire bending, cardboard sculpting and papier mache, were taught by wire artist Kendall De Peaza, cardboard artist Martin Kendall, papier mache artist Turunesh Raymond and special guest, Haitian papier mache artist, (expert with forming mask molds from clay) Didier Civil. The workshop sessions had a fee that each participant had to pay. The Jouvay Ayiti group was going to be providing all the material being used to make the masks, and such a fee was to cover the costs. Though we all had to pay a fee, the amount differed, because the workshop was also facilitating the (CVQ) course which carried its own fee. If at the end of the workshop any of the participants wanted the (CVQ) certification they had to pay an addition fee to cover such certification.

ii. Built-in Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) course

Offered and certified through the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTATT),

[11] In Trinidad, this term denotes locations where costumes and floats for Carnival are designed, fabricated, displayed and distributed. (Carnival Dictionary, 2008)

the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) is a competency-based CARICOM-approved award that represents achievement of occupational standards developed by industry experts within a specified occupational area. These competencies define core work practices of the occupational area according to levels stipulated by the regional qualifications framework (e.g. Level 1 - Semi-Skilled Worker and Level 4 - Manager/Entrepreneur). The aim of the CVQ is the development of the Ideal Caribbean Worker and it provides alternative opportunities to further / higher education. Very importantly, a practitioner's past work experience and skills are taken into account when pursuing the CVQ, which made the connection of it to the Jouvay Ayiti workshops very natural as the traditional mas practitioners who were participating had the chance to be awarded not only for the new skills being learnt, but also for their everyday work and practice in the field. The (CVQ) Has a two (2) part assessment; one is a practical activity eg. a project or case study (with a video as evidence of the individual's participation) and the other is a portfolio (which proves the individual's work relevant to the field/ industry and a compilation of their reflections in the programme). The course is an examination programme offered under the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) and the standards are set by the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) as the stipulation for the expected work performance, and are approved by (CARICOM) allowing an ease of access across the Caribbean region. The underlying aim of the CVQ is ensuring the direct link between the skills learnt and the ability to immediately apply them in the industry. Hence, it is critical to note that The National Training Agency (NTA) holds a valid place, to fulfill such a purpose. The CVQ's close connection to the industry centre allows for direct interaction (practical and theoretical) by the participants of the programme. (Caribbean Examination Council, 2017).

Given the fast global expansion of Trinidad's Carnival, having Traditional Masquerade (Mas making) as a certification course being offered under such structure allows for a few things;

1) standardisation of competence/skill level of the various practices of mas making
2) building a strong and large knowledge base group on mas making
3) assuring knowledgeable and "good" delivery of mas making
4) safeguarding the mas making practices

Attaining the CVQ would, therefore, make the bearers more marketable across the Caribbean and the world as qualified and certified purveyors of Trinidad's traditional mas making practices and performance, but, such a qualification is also a way to 1) safeguard the very

knowledge of the traditional practice, 2) manage the quality of the mas industry, 3) ensure the bearers' employability, and 4) put them in-charge of managing and monitoring the exposure of the practice. The qualification then becomes the policing benchmark for deciding who is then allowed to transmit such information. If all the bearers were to hold such certification, I imagine, they would be set above those who do not hold the skills at the level which they have set.

iii. Collaboration with CYC

Pioneered and headed by Rawle Gibbons, Caribbean Yard Campus (CYC) is "an educational enterprise that is designed to network traditional knowledge systems in the Caribbean" with a view to producing culturally relevant and culturally coherent approaches to development challenges in the region. The organisation seeks to recognise and endorse the powerful influence which traditional knowledge - the inherited "body of experience, know-how, wisdom and values" - has had on modern Caribbean society in shaping cultures. Although this indigenous wisdom has often come into conflict with the formal, western education system the CYC creates important intersections between traditional knowledge systems/experts and academic workers through the connection of already existing knowledge 'yards' - traditional communities and their institutions - their programmes in cultural education and new programmes using relevant indigenous technologies, community structures and values. CYC was the organization which launched the CVQ Traditional Masquerade course in 2016 twinned with the Jouvay Ayiti Masquerade workshops.

iv. Collaboration with New Waves

Established in 2011, The New Waves! Institute emerged from the Makeda Thomas-led Dance & Performance Institute (2010), an international community of dance and performance artists providing a forum for exchange, and a series of programs on contemporary dance and performance based in Trinidad & Tobago. Annually, New Waves! mobilises global dance artists, teachers, and scholars to connect for dialogue, networking, experimentation and collaboration. Also curated and directed by Makeda Thomas, New Waves! boasts an eclectic and cutting-edge mix of faculty who, with the over 200 participants since its inception, continue to grow a supportive and inspiring community surrounding issues, challenges and opportunities of dance and performance in the Caribbean.

With its large network of people within the Caribbean diaspora and those who have a great interest in Trinidad's deeply rich arts and culture, the New Waves! Institute tends to pull a group together every other year in Trinidad for a Contemporary movement series, with a large part of its focus being on the *mas experience*. They expose their participants to a number of different mas making/playing sessions, being taught by bearers and specialists in the area of different traditional mas practices. At the end of the series, the New Waves! participants would have the opportunity to play mas. Some of the mas sessions were schedule to to be with the Jouvay Ayiti group. The participants would join a few of the workshops and also play mas with the Jouvay Ayiti group on Emancipation Day.

Breakdown of workshop sessions

As mentioned above, the mas-making workshops organized by the team of directors, Marvin, Rawle, Turunesh, Makemba and Lari, aimed at collaboration between the missions of Jouvay Ayiti, CYC and New Waves! while also creating a channel for interested participants to earn a CVQ in Traditional Masquerade Techniques. The workshop sessions were specifically geared towards practical skills and theoretical frameworks and yet each was aligned to Jouvay Ayiti's mission of reclaiming space and its larger theme for the Emancipation mas, *Pay De Devil* - an engagement with the Caribbean's reparations debate. The definitive workshop objectives were as follows:

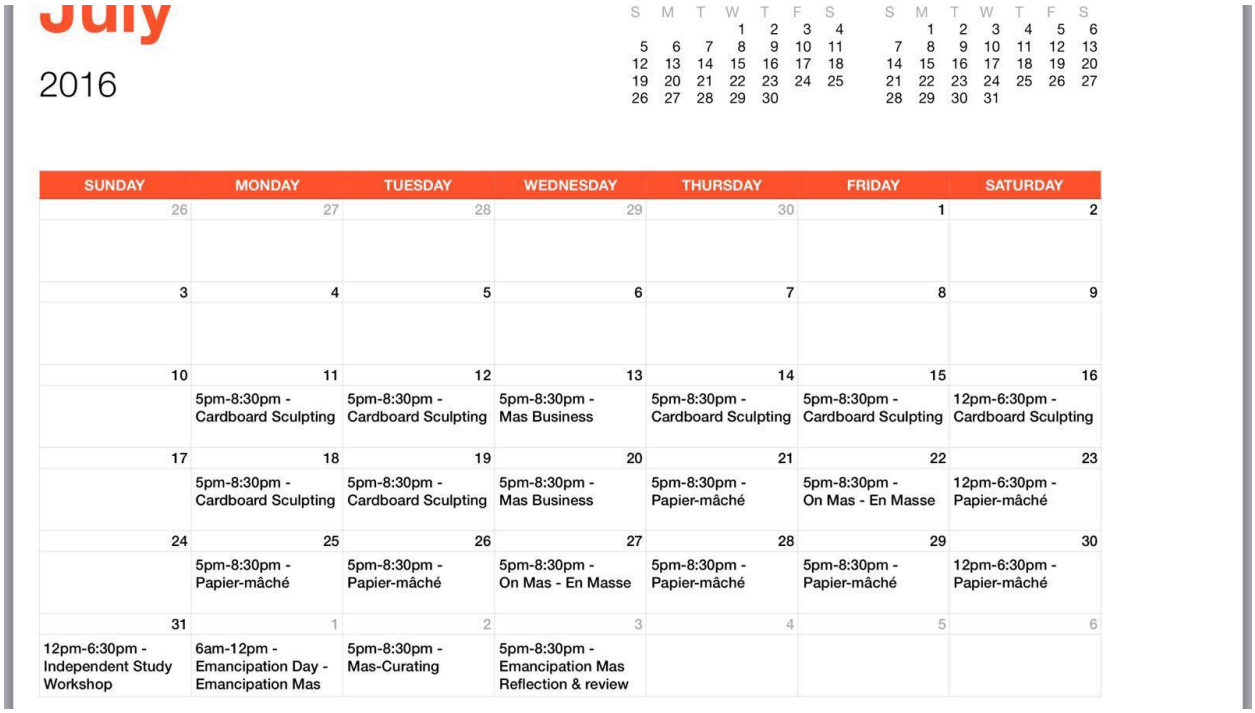
i. to teach the history of traditional masquerade and overall background of the devil character in Traditional mas, primarily through lecture-demonstrations

ii. to teach specified traditional skills and techniques used to create masks for mas (cardboard sculpting, wirebending, papier-mache)

iii. to give a survey of relevant art theory (e.g. use of the colour wheel and colour mixing) - particularly for the CVQ

iv. to supervise mask construction for the Emancipation mas procession

v. to lead participants in the Emancipation mas procession in the Jouvay Ayiti group.



July

2016

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	5pm-8:30pm - Mas Business	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	12pm-6:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	5pm-8:30pm - Cardboard Sculpting	5pm-8:30pm - Mas Business	5pm-8:30pm - Papier-mâché	5pm-8:30pm - On Mas - En Masse	12pm-6:30pm - Papier-mâché
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	5pm-8:30pm - Papier-mâché	5pm-8:30pm - Papier-mâché	5pm-8:30pm - On Mas - En Masse	5pm-8:30pm - Papier-mâché	5pm-8:30pm - Papier-mâché	12pm-6:30pm - Papier-mâché
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
12pm-6:30pm - Independent Study Workshop	6am-12pm - Emancipation Day - Emancipation Mas	5pm-8:30pm - Mas-Curating	5pm-8:30pm - Emancipation Mas Reflection & review			

Figure 3. Timetable of Jouvay Ayiti Workshop Sessions

Mask making (wirebending, cardboard sculpting, papier mache)

"*People will steal your ideas you stay there!*"[12] Mask ideas are like gold to every mas player, especially those who enter the mas character competitions during Carnival time, as I understood from a Tradition mas player I encountered. Sketches and ideas of masks were such prized possessions that asking the workshop participants to release drawings of what they were working on, would, I was afraid, perhaps make me out to be someone untrustworthy. So, I quickly dropped the idea of requesting these drawings that I had hoped to use to trace the common threads of the devil characters and to more deeply understand the character's mask symbolism and dominant elements. Any methods in my plan that would jeopardise the relationship I was building with the group, I quickly restructured.

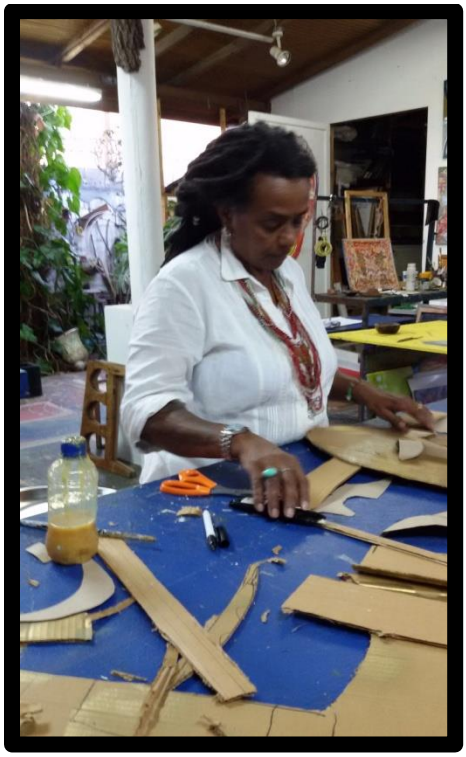


Figure 4. Cardboard Techniques mold
In photo: Turunesh Raymond

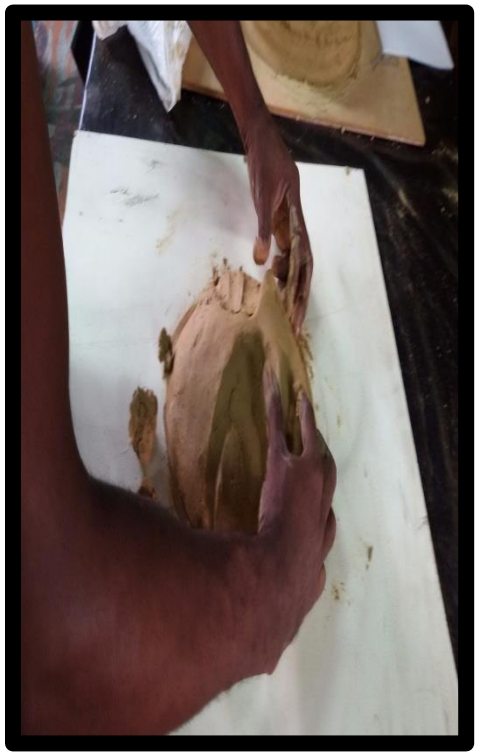


Figure 5. Papier mache mask from clay
In photo: Didier Civil

[12] Tracey Sankar-Charleau, in personal interview

Figure 6. Wire bending technique

Figure 7. Lec. demonstration; Mas History
In photo: Ronaldo and Ronald Alfred (from left to right)

Character building (Lecture Demonstration)

Embodying a mas character can neither be achieved through a series of acting sessions nor can it be understood through someone telling you "how to". Playing a character is a ritual secret between you and your mask. A mas character is taught through oral tradition of stories and myths, as well as physical secrets only exchanged with the initiated. Lecture demonstrations were, however, given during the workshop sessions, wherein historical background was included, demonstrations of mas playing were done and participants were encouraged to try. Additionally, stories and myths were told, photos and videos shown, all around devil character variations in line with the theme of the procession, Pay *de Devil*.

The lecture demonstration which focused on the overall background and history of masquerade in Trinidad, was geared towards the devil character variation, the Jab Jab. The most formidable performer of this character and bearer of playing Jab Jab mas - who was also participant in the workshop sessions - Whipmaster Ronald Alfred, led the lecture demonstration to help us to better understand the devil mask characterisation process.

His giant-like stature was physically intimidating, yet his energy seemed as if it would put the wildest animal at ease. I pondered his business in the workshop, he sat every day in the same spot beside the same gentleman. They never spoke much words. For days I watched, and whenever I would say hello, he and his colleague both were polite. I wrote pages of fieldnotes, with questions such as "Perhaps they are art teachers?". I soon learnt that his name was Ronald Alfred and the gentleman much younger than he, Ronaldo, is his son.

Ronald Alfred, Chief of the Original Whipmasters of Couva, the 'Whipmaster King' he is indeed. With all he said in his lecture, I was stuck with the thought of the combat 'conflict' element. I was aware I would perhaps not witness the combat live, as it was not the season of Carnival. I hoped however, that I would see them play the Jab Jab character in the Emancipation Mas parade, since the theme of this year's Jouvay Ayiti mas was 'Pay de Devil' and the Jab Jab is a devil character. The Jab Jab (from the French, *diable diable*) devil character, like most of the characters of Trinidad's Traditional Masquerade, is layered in ritual elements.

"I play Jab Jab mas[13]... the whip-fighting art form Jab Jab, wid di whips, wid di mirrors, di costumes, di stripes, da is di Jab Jab mas we play... The Alfred family, on the whole, the only mas we play is Jab Jab."- Ronald Alfred (conversation in the field)

The room was silent, even a pin could drop and its sound waves would ripple through the room. As he laid out all the elements of the Jab Jab costume, there was nothing but wide eyes and long necks stretching across table to get a glance. He described them in great detail.

"When we play Jab Jab we wear costume which is made of satin, wid di stripes, vary different colour. Different villages wear different colours... so you know where dey're from. You wear di chest plate on di costume wit' di mirrors, di mirrors and rhinestones. Di mirrors is serve di purpose of the fighting artform where yu dance... di person and yu glitter di reflection in his eyes, so yu distrac' him. And den yu whip him. So ... its not just prettiness on di costume it serves a purpose. So when you go to fight di man, di Jab Jab dem ain' movin' because he movin' di ches' in a sense to reflec' into di opponent's eyes to strike him. Is a part of the fightin' strategy." -Ronald Alfred (transcription from recording of the lecture demonstration session)

Figures 8 & 9; Still photographs from documentary, ***Our Soul Turned Inside Out*** *(CITT), showing*

[13] "The name of this mas is derived from the French patois for "Diable Diable". The costume consists of a "Kandal" or satin knickers, and satin shirt with points of cloth at the waist, from which bells hang. On the chest, there is a shaped cloth panel which is decorated with swans down, rhinestones and mirrors. Stockings and alpagatas are worn on the feet, while the headdress consists of a hood with stuffed cloth horns. The costume can come in alternating colours and be divided into front and back panels. The Jab Jab has a thick whip of plaited hemp which he swings and cracks threateningly. These whips can reduce the costumes of other Jab Jabs to threads." (NCCTT, 2014)

costume details (I did not take photographs of the powerpoint presented in the lecture demonstration)

> *"We dress up di alpagat*[14]*... well, shoes, now dey have sneakers. We originally, I still use alpagat ... An' that is so when yu movin' now, yu move light in yu foot... because yu dance di man, yu sprint on him one shot, Wap!... Yu come back... Yu could move... Yu hadda be light in yu foot, fast in yu han'. Da is di way I learn it from di olda fellas to di younga time I is now, and I teachin' di younga fellas di same ting too... Then we have the bells on di costume, willows we does call it... Sching! Sching! Sching!... we usually chant ... So that is our chant. We sing different chants for different purposes, yu know."*- Ronald Alfred (transcriptions from recording of lecture demonstration session)

Figure 10; Still photograph from documentary, ***Our Soul Turned Inside Out*** *(CITT), showing shoe detail*

(I did not take photographs of the powerpoint presented in the lecture demonstration)

> *"Normal when yu move, Jab Jab, yu let dem know:*
>
> *Jab Jab*

[14] This is Trinidadian creole for alpargata, a light canvas shoe with a plaited fibre sole; an espadrille.

Here Papa Jabla/ Jab Jab
Look ah feelin' evil/ Jab Jab
Look ah beatin' people/ Jab Jab
Dis rope an' twine/ Jab Jab
Goh make yu wine/ Jab Jab
Woi-ya-ya-yoi/ Jab Jab "
-Ronald Alfred (transcriptions from recording of lecture demonstration session)

He sang lavways such as the one above, and then the room's silence shifted into a gasp as he took us to the preparation for playing mas as a Jab Jab in a carnival procession, opening with a display of a picture such as the ones below;

Figure 11 . Whipmaster dressing the wounds of a Jab Jab

Figure 12. Jab Jabs fighting

Playing Jab Jab mas has a competitive element, whereby Jab Jab bands would challenge each other to a ring dance, with their whips in hand. The winner of the fight would be the one who can take the most lashes[15]. He explained that this ring dance required much preparation, particularly a ritual bath before and after, with specific herbs. He paused, *"... dat is only fa di ears of Jab Jab"*.

[15] A word used in Trinidad for whipping.

The session ended with an outdoor demonstration. *"Who go try an' crack di whip, boi?",* he asked. Just looking at it, I had flashes of fights the whip has been in, the screams of skins it tore open. I was not going to touch that whip, and certainly did not think my hand could manage the weight of the energies it carried even if I tried.

Group Synergy

I left home and headed to the studio at 12:30pm, walked out to the priority bus route and got on to a maxi heading west to get to Barataria. As I walked up to the gate, the dogs who I thought would know my scent by now would not stop barking, and so a gentleman came to the gate to let me in. The dogs are harmless and usually very friendly but I gather they are trained to play bad with any stranger. Getting in was no problem as they became friendly as soon as I was on the compound. The studio was quiet. The gentleman who had walked me in went to sit at a table that was in the front sitting area where he was drawing, nothing that seemed to be related to the mas camp. In the front sitting area was a second table where Arielle, a Jouvay Ayiti mas camp participant, sat with her two daughters, pouring paint on palettes for them to paint on leaves which they both were holding and were already painting 'one 3 and the other 6'. As I entered the actual workspace of the studio there stood a dark-skinned lady (Simone) and an Indian lady (Vejaya) who were familiar to me, both working on their masks. I said my hellos and went to sit on a work bench. There were only 3 people working on their masks so far. I observed the stillness in the room. Everyone was so silent, almost entranced, completely engulfed in their mask-making. Simone and Vejaya shared whispers for about 10 minutes but then continued working in silence. I was tempted to make conversation, I really wanted to know who these people were and what their interests were in mas, but it was difficult to break the silence.

Arielle entered and so did Shereen. They both took the masks they were working on to the desks they have been working at since the beginning of the workshops. Arielle moved to a station where she could see her daughters and left to go be with them after 20 minutes. Shereen worked on the floor because her mask was quite large and since the studio was empty she had the space. Arielle re-entered with what looked like a burning incense stick and said "You all missed the mosquitoes on Wednesday and Thursday!" Her statement broke the silence and everyone

started to converse about the mosquito situation on those days. Shereen showed us her long pants and the socks and shoes she was wearing, prepared for the mosquito attacks. Simone offered me mosquito spray, which she got from a gentleman who she believed works at the studio. Turunesh walked in, asked if anyone needed anything, and stated that if anyone needed any help to ask her because she's around. Well, I came prepared for mosquitoes as well. I was wearing Odomos, a repellant I got at the pharmacy, and it seemed to have been working. I did not attend the workshop on Wednesday because we were informed that there was none being held. It seemed we were the only ones. Arielle, Shereen, Simone and Vejaya seemed to have all been here because they missed the memo... Everyone went back to work.

I had originally anticipated that the Jouvay Ayiti workshop participants would be a mixture between locals and non-locals, students of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA) at UWI, St Augustine Scholars, researchers, visual/ theatre artists, professors and traditional mas players. There were no students from the University Creative and Festival Arts department, but there were the latter. Additionally, there were no non-local participants; they were all Trinidadian locals and no strangers to the masquerade traditional practice. Some present were practitioners of mas directly and others had a deep interest for mas-making but had never taken on the opportunity of playing mas; they however teach art-making, have received a BA in culture or have been exposed to artistic skills. All the masks, as commented by the workshop facilitators came out demonstrating a fairly decent technique mastery.

The group was one of intense silence, and mostly worked quite intently, with a deep level of focus. But though exchanges were few we shared mosquito stories, offered each other rides home, walked in groups to the bus stop and took trips to the local shop for snacks.

Given the sociopolitical construct within which the Trinidadian society exists, I thought the strong divides of race and class would be present in the Jouvay Ayiti workshop space.

The mas an individual play in the larger Trinidad carnival context is usually indicative of where or who they are in the society's social structure, their economic capital, their community affiliation, their race, their class, their family line. The positions held by individual outside of the mas space, is taken into the mas space, and amplified.

The late twentieth century carnival had been known to create community and impact

neighbourhoods and families. Mas camps pulled people together to work on masks, to have a laugh or a drink. Steel Pan, which is the national musical instrument of carnival within that period, was learnt, rehearsed and mastered in community centres known as pan yards. Pan yards were territorial gangs that would get violent if they needed to defend their community zone. Pan yards operated as a safe space for young men from underserved areas, giving them something meaningful to do with their time. Not only were pan yards for poor young men, but they were also a space attractive for middle class young men, as they could undergo their own rites to manhood through exercising rebelliousness. (Riggio, 2004). Carnival was known, then, to not only uphold rivalries but it had a history in the late twentieth century of creating spaces that crossed class borders and shifted social structures, or rather created a second one, one outside that of the everyday society.

Such documentation has been a continued trend, because what I witnessed at the workshop was that the mas camp space was one where such social divides though present, were not performed. The social differences within the larger society had to and did coexist, yet the Jouvay Ayiti workshops participants built a community, and this community had its own system of social constructs. It was one that linked different families, people from the same and different regions, classes (economic background), work areas (profession), races, colours and even nationalities, in its own cross-patterning. The Jouvay Ayiti mas procession was one of a common goal; everyone, regardless of the character they were used to playing, had to play *devil mas*. Even Ronald whose family line had only ever played, and is affiliated only with playing Jab Jab mas, was playing a different devil character, for the first time in his family's history. This made me realise that a social structure can be both broken and affirmed with a mas space. The Jouvay Ayiti mas space was not one that brought people to coexist affirming their differences, but rather, it was a space that brought people to coexist affirming a commonality.

Positioning self: Reframing purpose and action

Part 2

Though Rawle could introduce me to almost anyone I asked to speak to or meet, I had to step into being my own self, in the eyes of the people, because his respect did not automatically speak to my trustworthiness. Many of the methods I chose, such as in-depth interview, were quite challenging, as I realized that either the energy was one of secrecy or the nature of the space was one wherein every day was a rush hour of work. We all had been working on masks with limited time to really do anything else. With time, I was being woven into the workshop space, going liming[16] with a number of the workshop practitioners almost every weekend, offering my time and too also being asked to commit to anything in which my expertise could lend a hand outside the workshop setting. With this I managed to have more conversational, informal interviews as opposed to the planned, more in-depth structured ones. I also didn't have time to take many photographs due to the same reason, all involved were just really busy. I recorded a few conversations shared outside of work hours, mostly in bars, while liming, and indeed great fun was always had and many conversations shared over a bottle or two of Stag beer. The major issue with this method, however, was the music in the background which made the recordings muffled and at times I could not understand the accent or dialect well enough under such muffle to transcribe them. With such difficulties, fieldnotes became one of my biggest reliances/ assets/methods in the field.

I was, of course, a novice[17] researcher in the field, a stranger to mas in Trinidad but not an outsider to Masquerade traditions in the African Diaspora, as most of my choreographic work is centered around concepts within the Jamaican masquerade traditions. My initial research was to look at induction into the 'process-to-procession' of the Jouvay Ayiti Emancipation mas and to, as best as possible, document the mas in all its layered complexities through detailed descriptions of the symbolisms at play, in the costumes, characters, songs/lyrics chosen for the mas I was to observe and participate in. Some of my intended methods and techniques for documenting data were adjusted to match the change in the field. I learnt from prior reading of Rossman and Ralis's *Learning in the Field*, that the field is not a stable space but rather shapes

[16] A word used in Trinidad to mean hanging around, usually in a public place with friends, enjoying the scene.
[17] This was my first fieldwork experience

and re-forms and shifts itself. It was still up to me to build a relationship with everyone there.

The guiding methodology concept of the *initiated* and the *new initiates,* through which I thought to perceive the initiation process in stages, had to be adjusted, as I learnt at the workshop sessions that the participants were not novices but were actual bearers and Traditional mas players being initiated, engaging more widely and deeply with their own and each others' work (character sketches, techniques, rituals and history). I kept, however, the three-part model framework, but changed the names to focus on documenting their self-expanding process.

1) **The preparation (releasing, preparing for the process)**
2) **Transition of self (engaging with workshops)**
3) **Performing self-expansion (procession)**

Mapping the relationships - that is, the network dynamism - between the outsider and the bearers was quickly changed, as the space was one of silence most of the times. I contemplated keeping the concepts to discuss my journey during the field, because at the moment of writing this second positionality in the field, I felt as though I was existing in a transitional space, having released the past but not sure where I was heading for the future. I knew I was existing in the present so that position went unsaid. Such a process made me think of Van Gennep's three-fold stages of initiation rituals, and perhaps I did not understand such a process because I was new to the Trinidadian social context. This period I felt was in some way becoming one of my own initiation.

Chapter 3

ReCalling:

Playing mas on Emancipation Day

Lest we forget we are not alone, there lives within us a line of ancestry waiting for us to call upon their names ...

Reflections on Procession

Jab Se Yo Neg - 'Pay de devil'

Turunesh reheated leftover food we had bought earlier that day from one of her favourite Indian takeout restaurants (palak paneer, okra, white basmati rice, naan bread) and we added the bread from Roxy[18], and butter, pepper jelly, avocado and cheddar cheese from Makemba. The portion was little, but it was all plated on a large platter placed in a clearing made in the chaos of all the masks, on one of the work tables. Turunesh gave us each a fork and we all ate from the platter, turning it when we felt we wanted to have a bit of something else, as if it was on a Lazy Susan. She made smoothies with goat milk, blueberries, bananas and honey a little after which she offered us a drink, rum on ice. She came out displaying a bottle of Appleton Rum, Jamaica's finest. I chuckled to myself, and before I could ask, she answered "You know how long I have this? I keep it for my cooking, and offer it every now and again when I have visitors, because you ladies know I don't drink." She shared stories of her Catholic upbringing in boarding school and how she stole chocolate from the chest where they kept the good stuff that parents brought. She always had stories to share. It was always the part of the night I looked forward to, sitting, eating with these women. and listening to Turunesh's story, a life of a rebel but always told with grace. Her stories of her homeland Ethiopia were always my favorite, lined in patriarchal discipline, and her fights of conquering and rejecting such constructs, and her plots of striking the balance and breaking even. She got up and left the table, hurrying to wash the oil stain from her white shirt. Turunesh never wore anything but full white, and her neck was always layered with beads from her initiation into Ifa; her ears, wrists, ankles and fingers adorned like royalty with silver. Her hair flowed long down along spine, each lock its own shape and she personalized a few with shells from the ocean, beads she perhaps collected on her many journeys across the world, and silver. She gifted me such precious jewelry often and advised me to lighten the colours of my wardrobe; she never liked me in black.

Our communal dinner and round table of stories ended as time knows no day or place; it ticks by regardless. My hands, now numb, and my legs having forgotten gravity, I floated across the room, eyes sinking in sockets, lids closing. Morning was close and we had much to complete.

[18] A dancer from Continuum Dance Project, a Trinidad-based dance company, upon which eNKompan.E - a Jamaican dance collective which I co direct - was setting a choreographic work while I was in Trinidad.

The rooster next door kept our company through the night-morning as we worked, first crowing at 3:00am; then at 4:00am, I jumped up from a doze, at the table at which I was working. Turunesh had set an alarm for 5:30am.

I fell asleep covered in paint, glue, sweat and the dirt of a long day of spray paint, dust and sitting where I must, to get to the angles I needed on the headpiece. After a whole evening into morning of a black paint wash on the body of the headpiece, to gold spray paint on the wings, then spraying adhesive with tossed sand for texture, then red dry brush, painting a black contour on the inside of the wings to leave the rims gold for highlights. I was surprised it was dry.

Turunesh entered the studio and offered coffee, and with no surprise we all said yes. 7:00am came fast and our call time was 8:00am. Makemba had still been by his desk and the neighbour who was going to transport some of the masks in his pick-up truck had been there waiting around the communal table. Arielle's mask had not yet been finished. We quickly got ready and left. The streets were freer than usual. No traffic, just roadblocks around the city square prohibiting cars to enter as the parade was around the city centre and to the Queen's Park Savannah. We got as close as we could to the meeting place, offloaded the van of masks and communed with the others in the band[19].

Over crowds of people who seemed uniformed, wearing copies of the same costumes, drumming groups and announcements booming through speakers strapped to trucks, were tall figures, casting shade and shadow; these were the Traditional mas players on stilts, the mokojumbies, perhaps belonging to the same band. Besides Jouvay Ayiti and the mokojumbies I spotted no other masquerade bands.

The smell of kerosene and paint rose and the air was darkened by smoke as the jab molassi players performed their ritual of darkening their bodies with smoke and paint. I noticed a number of new faces who would be playing mas with the Jouvay Ayiti band. The faces of these jab molassi group were new to me; they were not in the workshops. They seemed highly skilled. Of course, they are; they were about to join a parade blowing fire. They were traditional mas

[19] "Band – A group of Carnival masqueraders with costumes designed on a related theme." (Trinidad Carnival Diary, 2008)

players of… who play devil mas.

Participants of the New Waves! Institute who came to the workshop session a day before, arrived and got into their masks to prepare to join the parade. Playing mas was a large part of the New Waves! experience and Jouvay Ayiti therefore had additional numbers occupying the street, than those involved in the process workshops. Familiar faces joined the group, the Whipmaster and his son (Ronald and Ronaldo Alfred) covered in masks - and playing a different devil character, as the only mas the Alfred family plays is Jab Jab mas - Vejaya in her dragon, Shereen in the cow head mask that she had completed at home and Tracey, who played one of her three (3) traditional mas characters, the "fancy jab", hers a representation of a blue devil.

With the smell of rum rising through the pores of many individuals who passed I thought of home and all that white rum was used for in a spiritual space. It was one of the elements that, like food for us living, rum is food for the dead. White rum is used to ritually open and close seals and spaces, of ceremonies. It is used to sap the heads of people possessed and also in ritual libation of the drums. To clear spirits from objects and people, and as I recalled being told by my lecturer of folk studies in my first year of undergrad, "It is used to appease the gods" /ancestral spirits. A bottle lay empty in the gutter where waste water usually flows openly along either side of the street, now dry; it lies there abandoned, labeled Puncheon. Whose head did it sap? Whose drum did it bless? Who had walked the streets just drunk, embodying their own silent freedom in drunkenness?

The music of Yoruba came sounding off the truck in front of us, the street filled with people almost being sandwiched together at different moments in the parade; there was very little room on the smaller streets. The group was displaced. I stood alone with the members of New Waves!; we were alone, being led forward with the wave of the crowd. Invisible ropes lined both sides of the street, keeping spectators outside and off the streets where the parade was being held, or maybe keeping paraders inside. Tall, short, young, elder, mostly dark-skinned faces covered in multi-colored, tribal prints, heads tied or covered and adorned, stood staring into the parade. Was today not a day for the people? Why are they observing and not on the streets with us marching? I thought. There was space to move now, as we came to a wider street. I stopped looking around for the others. The jab molassi group of three were performing

fire spectacles that had the crowd amazed. Phones and cameras were out, and photos and videos were being shot. Tracey had been with us, making her own fire bird in the open air.

"Excuse me, what are you doing here? What is this? Who do you people represent? Where is the group leader? Where is your banner?" I froze, not sure how to respond. "Is there a problem?" Robert Young[20] asked the gentleman who looked like an official, demanding answers from me. "Sir are you the leader of this group?", the official continued. "Does it matter who is the leader of this group? This is mas! What you mean who is the leader of this group?" Robert continued. The conversation turned into one of confrontation with words, as he laced the official with a history lesson on Emancipation and freedom of space. I stood in support, because I had been troubled from the beginning by similar thoughts. The gentleman, simply doing his job soon left, worn out by the effort. Robert stayed with the group marching with us through the parade, directing us to hold space.

Weaving in and out through the parade, I was losing hope of us ever staying together as a group, because I realized, the traditional mas players cannot and will not be contained because they are playing their characters. The others were wearing a more contemporary interpretation of the traditional mas devil characters, and were not practitioners of traditional mas. I then noticed that the group was a mixture of the two. Within this divide I followed who I could, whenever I could. Joining up with Lari and others, whom I knew from the workshop allowed me a safe place in the crowd to just walk, change my camera battery and hydrate. It was critical to hold space as the Jouvay Ayiti band, and both the chase of the traditional mas characters and the more evenly maintained cluster was equally important to the documentation of the Jouvay Ayiti process of reclaiming space.

In moments when the group merged, the jab molassi seem to have been in their character so deeply. Lari kept instructing us to encircle them as they yelled and spat kerosene at torch sticks in the large crowds, sending flames of cloud shapes into the air and sometimes towards the asphalt. We created a large circle around them as time and space progressed. Some people climbed on steps of buildings on the side to have a clear view, while others just continued on parading. In the circle were the two young men playing jab molassi and two dancers from the

[20] Founder and director of renowned Trinidadian clothing design label, The Cloth, Robert is also an avid ally of the Yoruba faith and is connected closely to New Waves! Institute.

New Waves! Institute, one a multi-colored devil character and the other in full white, with a headpiece depicting a spider sitting atop a tree trunk[21].

Flame was spat across the asphalt that lined the street, as though to clear and open the space. The characters all began engaging in a narrative that was being morphed in the moment of them all being in the centre of the space. Bodies rippled across the street, dipping, hiding, seeking, jumping, wheeling, shaking, hips rotating. They were entranced by their own narrative and created a sacred space that only they could access among themselves. The circle curved inward and we all continued on the last 10 minutes of the procession into the Queen's Park Savannah.

Water was being poured continuously over the heads of the jab molassi, perhaps to cool them down. The Queen's Park Savannah had tents pitched, with the smell of food in the air, music booming from trucks, and blowing in the wind from steel pan and drums, vendors shouting out prices for food made with recipes they learnt were to be kept within their families, as it has been with them for generations, all under the heat of Caribbean sunshine. There was a crowd seated inside, in front of a stage waiting for performances from some of the groups that had been parading. Lari looked across at us all who, by now, were all together, all exhausted, most ready to leave. He guided us out of the Savannah and towards a building where we would strip ourselves of the masks, hydrate, rest and for those covered in body paint, wash the paint off. I lay there on the concrete pavement in an 'x' on my back, face to the sun, which had now been behind clouds, just feeling the calm of my own breath and enjoying the shade and cooling breeze. Puzzled by all I had witnessed and performed, I knew that the images of the parade would not stop passing through my mind for a while.

Mask analysis: character and mask variations that existed

Traditional mas playing has been expressed to me by the bearers of the practice as ritual. Layered in complexities, it is a space of witnessing the past of the Trinidadian people through observing their embodied present. Asserting the present can also be understood as existing always in a transitional space between past and future, where we can observe a process - or set of processes or phases - of this group of people, having had to adjust, reshaping/recalling

[21] The costume was dual and could be depicting the main trickster character/hero in Caribbean/ African Anansi stories, as well as papa Legba/ Ellegua from the Yoruba traditions.

themselves, by the change in their surrounding environment. It is from this place that this chapter speaks of *ReCalling*, because the devil characters that were playing mas on the street on Emancipation Day were not merely performing a choreographed line of movement. They were not embodying a character sketch into which they had trained themselves through countless acting classes. Instead, they were engaging in a ritual that was fed by both past (stories and myths) and future (perhaps their expanding perception to the global/ "development") and asserting this place as the present.

For analysing the mask as symbol I have borrowed a few structures from Victor Turner's study *Symbols in Ndembu Ritual* (1967). I am aware that this article was written in 1967, but my field event is one to which a few of Turner's notions and structures can be applied. I will further make clear the structures I have chosen and their relevance in this section.

In Turner's 1967 article, ritual was defined as 'prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers [stories and myth]' (Erickson and Murphy, 2013). He was interested in ritual for its social meaning, considering deeply the ways in which it affected/ impacted/ represented the social structure of a society. In the context of twenty-first century mas playing within the Emancipation Day procession, mas players do not perform in the same way that their ancestors once did, but there are elements that seem to have been agreed upon within the practice. I think, however, that such elements of agreed behaviours do not set mas playing aside from everyday routine/ reality. In the Trinidadian context, the emancipated Africans in the latter half of the twentieth century linked behaviours of mas to the mystical, but such behaviours are not severed from "routine/reality". Carnival researcher and consultant, Milla Riggio shares an ethnography of her fall in Trinidad and explains how the gentleman who helped her up refers to seeing the fall because of an energy unknown to her. She expresses that the society's people see 'emanations invisible to her' but which exist inside reality. I have used Turner's meaning of ritual to establish that, for the society in which Carnival exists, carnival as a ritual would represent, impact and affect the social structure and vice versa, as for the people, the mystical/spiritual exists together with the social.

The moment an individual put on the mask, those agreed behaviours become evident. When I had asked about the change in behaviour, I was often told that every mask has its own story,

some connecting to what sounded like myths, others to historical recollections. But what makes mas playing a ritual? It is the very thing that makes the agreed behaviours visible; the mask and its layered elements, and what they represent/ mean to the people.

The second definition/structure that I am applying from Turner is his definition for the elements in ritual that impact such behaviours. He refers to them as symbols, 'the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behaviour; it is the ultimate unit of specific structure in a ritual context' - much like the function of the mask. My investigations and interviews in the field uncovered that the stories and myths are what somehow give meaning to the mask, as without such meaning the mask stands alone, with no narrative to guide how it is embodied. The symbol is then molded by its meaning. Another observed layer to this symbol and meaning relation, which no one seemed to mention while I was in the field, was the reverse of this, that the meaning can also influence the symbol.

The devil mask meaning accesses the spiritual, the religious, the secular, the political, all spaces that we can locate in the societal constructs of the people. The story of the devil is one intended to scare the people and keep them 'in line'. Such meanings are broad and are left up to the interpretation of the mas player hence embodiment emerges in varied ways. Having analysed the masks, I propose that the Jouvay Ayiti band consisted of two main categories, 1)Traditional devil masks, and 2) Contemporary devil masks

My choice to categorise as such was influenced by a few factors. Traditional Mas characters are clearly defined and their symbolic elements and representations have been documented over time. They, therefore, portray a more historical past (meaning of the mask pre-constructed)
while the contemporary mas characters were more personal and self-driven interpretations of the traditional characters. These characters exist within a less-documented structure, and as such, they have not been documented; their meanings are more or less constructed by the individual. Further, these characters display the more global engagements/influences of the present (meaning of the mask post constructed).

The pre-constructed meaning is one that has been shared among people of a specific mas band from generation to generation; stories and myths compiled and told to them by previous band

players, or elders who have been playing the characters for years (a more traditional representation). The meaning constructed within the moment (post construction) is a compilation one creates for self-based on the mask one has made or character one has chosen, and is usually a construction done by the individual person in the moment of the masquerade (contemporary representation). Both are critical to the embodiment of the masks. Before we move on to analysing the behaviours which the masks influence, I think a description of the typical devil mask symbol is necessary. Many variations of the devil mask were present at the field event, so I have created a chart to analyse what I will call the *dominant elements* of the devil mask as symbol.

Mask as Symbol: its layered symbolisms

The table shows most of the masks from the field which represent the devil character. The columns organise the elements that were shared across all the masks;

Figure 13: Mask Analysis (Dominant Elements)

Devil mask variation of characters	horn **h**	wings **w**	face mask **fm**	body paint **bp**	fire blowing **fb**	head dress **hd**
Fig 14a&14b. Jab Molassi ***Traditional***	0	0	0	bp(black)	fb	0
Fig 15a&15b. Fancy Jab ***Traditional***	0	0	0	bp(blue)	fb	hd(blue)
Fig 16. Cow ***Traditional***	h_2	0	0	0	0	hd(blue+ red+brown)
Fig 17. Anansi ***Contemporary***	h_2	0	fm(white)	0	0	hd(white)
Fig 18.(on left) Headless hermaphrodite ***Contemporary***	0	w_4	0	0	0	hd (black+red+ gold)
Fig 19a.&19b Psychedelic devil ***Contemporary***	h_2	0	fm(multi colored)	bp(black)	0	hd(multi colored)
Fig 20. Dragon devil ***Contemporary***	h_7	w_2	fm(red+blue+ orange)	0	0	0
Fig 21.(on left) Vampire devil ***Contemporary***	0	w_2	0	bp(white)	fb	0
Fig 18.(on right) Old white devil ***Contemporary***	h_2	0	fm(white+ red+ black)	0	0	0
Fig 22. Tribal devil	h_2	0	fm(white +blue+red	0	0	0

Contemporary			+green+ black)			
Fig 23. Boned nose devil ***Contemporary***	h_{10}	0	fm(black+ white+blu e+ red)	0	0	0

As evidenced above, the devil mask elements varied and carried only a few similarities. More specifically, the dominant elements between both the traditional devil mask and the contemporary devil mask were the horns and wings which held the same meaning for the mas players. It is interesting to point out a recurring pattern that was also made clear from this system of analysis. This is not a physical element per se, but rather a conceptual element; the mas players who had face masks did not wear body paint, and the ones who wore body paint did not wear a face mask - with the exception of psychedelic devil (contemporary) which has both.

See images on following page for full mask descriptions.

Masks and characters analysis

Traditional Mas

Fig 14a. Jab Molassi ***Traditional***

Fig 14b. Jab Molassi ***Traditional***

Analysis: bp(black)+fb

Detail: In figure above the devil mask variation characters are covered in full body paint colored black, they have also blackening their skin with smoke, and blows fire

Fig 15a. Fancy Jab ***Traditional***

Fig 15b. Fancy Jab ***Traditional***

Analysis: bp(blue)+fb+hd(blue)
Detail: In figure above and to the left, the devil mask variation character is covered in full body paint colored blue, blows fire and wears a head dress colored blue

Fig 16. Cow ***Traditional***

Analysis: h_2 +hd(blue+red+brown)
Detail: In figure above the mask has 2 horns, is a headdress colored blue, red and brown. Is a cow figure, but too sometimes represent a devil character in a devil mas

Fig 17. Anansi ***Contemporary***

Analysis: h_2 +fm(white)+hd(white)
Detail: In figure above the mask has 2 horns, a face mask colored white, and a head dress colored white

Fig 18. (on left) Headless hermaphrodite ***Contemporary***

Analysis: w_4+hd(black+red+gold)
Detail: In figure above the mask has 4 wings, a head dress colored black, red and gold

Fig, 19a psychedelic devil ***Contemporary*** *Fig, 19b psychedelic devil* ***Contemporary***

Analysis: h_2+fm(multicolor)+bp(black)+hd(multicolor)

Detail:In figure above the mask has 2 horns, is a face mask multi colored, full body painted black, and has a head dress; multicolored. The devil character has strips of colorful fabric added around the waist almost forming a skirt.

Fig, 20. Dragon devil ***Contemporary***

Analysis: $h_7+w_2+fm(blue)$

Detail: In figure above the mask has 7 horns, 2 wings, is a face mask colored blue. The mask character is a blend of a dragon, which is also used at times to depict a devil, in devil mas. The dragon is in the form of dragon head staff, having 2 horns on the top and is colored blue, red and orange.

Fig, 21 (on left) Vampire devil ***Contemporary***

Analysis: w_2+bp(white)+fb

Detail: In figure above the mask has 2 wings, full body paint colored white and blows fire

Fig, 21 (on right) Old white devil ***Contemporary***

Analysis:h_2+fm(white+red+black)

Detail: In figure above the mask has 2 horns, is a face mask colored white red and black, seems to have flames coming from the top

Fig, 22 Tribal devil ***Contemporary***

Analysis: h_2+fm(white+blue+red+black+green)

Detail: In figure above the mask has 2 horns, is a face mask colored white, blue, red and black, with green palm leaves added giving it a wider more elaborate appearance

Fig, 23 Boned-nose devil ***Contemporary***

Analysis: h_{10}+fm(white+black+blue+red)

Detail: In the above figure, the devil mask has 10 horns, is a face mask colored white,black,blue and red.

Upon the analysis of the mask I conclude that the dominant elements of both the traditional and contemporary representations of the devil mask are horns and wings. Despite this symbol's many variations I was assured by the mas players that they all shared the same meaning. Nevertheless, what I had witnessed in the procession indicated strongly that the meaning does change. The meaning (stories and myths) seemed to be as flexible as the mask (symbol). They both somehow influenced each other and were inseparable for the mas playing ritual to have full effect. To further understand my statement of the inseparable, interchanging, dependent relationship nature shared by the mask and meaning, I will analyse the movement that was present at my field event. My reason for investigating beyond the mask is that the symbol itself is only the smallest aspect of the larger ritual process. It is from its embodiment that the meaning (preconstructed) of the symbol becomes clear and I am now proposing that it is from its embodiment that the symbol can begin to take on a meaning (post constructed). I aim to match the mask and meaning to its embodiment (movement association), to further understand the entirety of the mas playing ritual.

Movement analysis: Dancing a present, re-calling fragments of the past: movement as concepts, embodying stories, invoking myth

To further understand the mask and its meanings, the symbol and its behaviour, I have applied Richard Schechner's theory of *restored behaviour,* which likens living behaviour to fragments or pieces of puzzles which can be constructed and reconstructed, as they are independent of the daily systems and have a life of their own. The source, the truth of behaviour can be unknown, hidden under stories and myths. It can be arranged as a process pieced together to create another process, broken down and then honoured again into something else. Such processes as restored behaviour traverse duration, and can be short or as long as most rituals. Schechner uses examples from different cultural contexts across the world which uses objects, such as masks, swords to apply his theory. He discusses that objects such as the devil mask, of which I am researching, has a life of its own, that it carries behavior, and that one becomes the mask once it is worn; that the individual then puts on the behavior that the mask bears.

I do believe that the mask carries an energy "behavior" of its own, which can influence the behavior/ performance of the individual wearing it. I argue however, that the mask itself does not predict the behavior or performance of the individual but it is a combination of who wears

it and what they are wearing. Though the devil mask looked different physically, they all shared the same meaning, which if I adapt Schechner's concept, all the masks would share the same behavior. During the Jouvay Ayiti procession however, the mas players all wearing a devil mask, each embodied the mask differently. In the analysis given above on the devil mask as symbol, and its meaning, that stands as a narrative for the character. This narrative is not prescriptive, but as I mentioned, is a set of meanings open to one's interpretation, or in Schechner terms, I would state that it is a set of "behaviors", suggested, open to how one embodies such suggested behaviors. I say this because the mask itself cannot act, and no two individuals will act or behave the same when they interact with an object opened to their own cognitive and bodily interpretation.

It has been said that the people within the African diaspora do move like the ethnic groups within the continent of Africa. Proving the truth of such statements is not my aim, but I can share that much similarity can be found between these groups of moving people. Given the historical background of which the people of Trinidad are products, as mentioned throughout this dissertation, there perhaps are still traces of practices of the motherlands from which the ancestors - once enslaved peoples - were taken. The African diasporic people of the Caribbean's practices can be understood as blends of their once-colonial enslavers and the fragments they managed to keep or recall of themselves.

There was a point in the procession where a large circle was made around a few of the mas players and movement elements that can be analysed as dance were witnessed. It is this moment of the procession that I will use as the data to focus my movement analysis. To begin understanding my video footage I wanted to first understand what movement aesthetic I was observing. It was then that I knew I needed to find a breakdown of dance patterns of African/ African diaspora moving bodies.

From my search, I found a larger discourse around how African and, by extension, African diasporic people embody music, stories/myths and movement and have gleaned information from the dance research of Brenda Dixon Gottschild, Kariamu Welsh-Asante and Yvonne Daniel. I was led to understand that the embodiment I wish to discuss are fed by a combination, improvised from a movement pool/ groups of movements. This movement pool as organised by Dance scholar, Yvonne Daniel is vast but covers key elements of body action which are;

- groundation (G) - "grounded," low, or readied stances - Movements done on a low level or movements done with knees bent, weight is usually dropped/ relaxed in towards gravity
- retention and epic memory (REM) (extended narrative of the past),
- suppleness (S)
- body-part isolations (BI)
- the manner in which the torso divides and often initiates movement, (T)
- frequent polyrhythms in the movement as well as in the music (layered independent rhythmic patterns), (PMM)
- intimacy between musical sound and danced movement (IMD)
- percussion that usually accompanies the dance (PD)
- cool luminosity and spiritual connection (L)
- polycentrism (many overlapping points of interest/authority/power), (P)
- curvilinearity (characterized by curved lines) (C)
- multidimensionality (many aspects) (M)
- repetition (intentional, purposeful reproduction), (R)
- holism (integrated unification of parts) (H)

  (Daniel, 2011)

To mark the moments within the embodiment during which I observed the different types of movement, the table below lists a time-log detailing the moment when each movement was being done - from the beginning of the video to the end. I have chosen to focus on two of the four devil mask variations which were a part of this moment in the procession. One will be a traditional devil mask and the other the more contemporary devil mask variation.

Fig.24 Movement analysis: Structuring from a movement pool

Movement Pool	Devil variation #1 Fig. 14a &14b Jab Molassi (Traditional) Time	Devil variation #2 Fig 17. Anansi (Contemporary) Time
G	2:10 - 2:40 2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
REM	**(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
S	2:10 - 2:40 2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
BI	2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
T	2:40 - 2:53 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
PMM	**(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
IMD	2:10 - 2:40 2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**

PD		
L	2:10 - 2:40 2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
P	**(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
C	2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
M	**(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
R	2:10 - 2:40 2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**
H	2:40 - 2:53 2:53 - 2:55 2:55- 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**	2:24 - 2:35 2:35 - 2:58 **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**

Within the structural analysis table above we can see the complexity of the embodiment of the devil mask symbol. There are sometimes five movement elements, sometimes all the movement pool I am using, being reflected at the same time. Another thing observed is that the traditional character occupies almost all the movement elements from the beginning period of the video, whiles the contemporary mask seems to build up in complexity over time. The most

critical thing that I witness from this analysis, however, is that there is a heightened complexity in both characters that begins when they interact with each other in the space (circle) until the (circle dance) ends, from **(2:58 - 3:05 - 3:15 - 3:22 - 4:20)**. It is at this moment somehow that a different symbol meaning is somehow shared sacredly between and among the mas players themselves, as I have no access to what meaning exactly they were creating in what can be analysed as a third space.

The movements performed within the Mas procession were a clear demonstration of an inseparable connection between the mask and its meaning. The mask influences the meaning and the meaning influences the mask. The devil mask symbol bears meaning, preconstructed, and post constructed, that are not static but change and recreates itself a new. So, it is important to note that both the pre-constructed meaning and the post-constructed meaning are based on a self-interpretation. e.g. 1). though Jab molassi is pre-constructed, during the parade the embodiment is a construction of the present based on one's own interpretation of the pre-constructed. e.g. 2. the Anansi devil mask, though constructing the meaning in the moment, can and does pull on pre-constructed narratives but compiling and interpreting for self. When the symbol variations interact, a third meaning is constructed

Before going into the closing subsection of this chapter I will list a few key features of mas embodiment, that I have realised;

1) The movement performed within the mas playing ritual is one that can be understood as an encoded aesthetic *(embodiment of African aesthetics)* seeming to be written into the present practices of the Trinidadian people, due to their histories.

2) The devil mask (symbol) can either maintain a pre-constructed meaning or take on a post-constructed meaning during a mas playing ritual.

3) Can be expressed that the mas players are embodying stories (*evoking: to bring or recall 'a feeling, memory, or image' to the conscious mind)* because it is suc stories that give meaning to the devil mask *(symbol)*

4) Invoking myth *(stories being linked to ritual, spiritual and religious. taking movement recollection into a sacred space. Calling and summoning)*

Perhaps this is why Haitian practitioners of Vodun say they do not pray to god, but instead dance and become god. It is the calling upon the (hi)story of the ancestors, and the stories and myths of god energies that seems to call present the very thing that never left the physical land, the emblooded[22] codings and psyche of the generations after. 'ReCalling' makes critical reference to the fact that it is a summoning of that which lives within the mas players that they perform. It is not something that exists outside of them. A mask as a ritual symbol is not something that is severed, but it is indeed a very complex and layered symbolism. Its meanings are as fluid as the mask itself. The mask and all inlayed elements is what makes the performative, the embodied. it is what makes mas playing a ritual.

[22] A term I have coined to mean things known at the level of blood.

A moment of reflection: From process to Procession, a modern initiation?

Part 3 (Positionality)

Thursday July 7, 2016

Mosquito tennis seems to be a sport most play here, I thought, zapping the mosquitoes buzzing around me with a electrocuting racket. Rawle was through and came by to tell us he was going to meet with the head of Curepe Scherzando steel pan to discuss the stilt-walking sessions that CYC was setting up to be offered. I asked if we could accompany him, because he mentioned that this meeting concern us, as stilt-walking is a huge part of traditional mas. I burst out singing "Betta days are coming, betta days are coming, betta betta days are coming!" a song which had been stuck in my head after the performances given by the school children at the award ceremony for Black Stalin. Rawle laughed and led us to the back room, where there was a loft, the the floor level was a open studio with paintings that had been done by one of his daughters and two hammocks, a bicycle and a stereo system where he was playing a Black Stalin CD. The top level looked like a library; it was filled with shelves and shelves of books. He left us to enjoy the music. I went ahead and took my space in one of the hammocks, closed my eyes and lay there swinging and singing. I later opened my eyes admiring the grill work that was done covering the glass door like rectangular windows that were all opened. The grill had 4 circles joined down a vertical pathway; the first circle was made into a symbol I didn't know, the second was a steel pan, the third a symbol again and the forth a smiling face. "Here is my song!... Betta days are coming!" I started singing along. Rawle entered asking, "You heard yuh song?" he chuckled. "Yesss, I did!" I replied smiling. He turned the stereo off and we were out to Curepe Scherzando pan yard.

As we drove into Curepe Scherzando pan yard. The driveway was lined with kerosene lanterns made out of beer bottles, "This you only see when someone dies." Rawle uttered. We parked and walked towards the yard where there were seated a number of people looking like an Indian/ dougla[23] family. A few round and rectangular chairs were out. To the right there had been the steel pan set up as though they were going to have an open rehearsal, and just behind

[23] "**Dougla** (*dogla* , *bata-zendyen* , *bâtard z'indien* , *chappè* or *èchappè colie)* is a West Indian term for people of mixed Black African and East Indian descent, commonly used in Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Suriname. The term comes from Bhojpuri or Hindi doogala w hich can mean illegitimate or bastard, tw o necks, many, mix, and much. Mauritius, Reunion, and South Africa have a significant mix black African and East Indian population." (Afropedea)

the set up on the right there was netball being played on an even asphalt. Loud music was streaming out of what appeared to be a room that a group had been using for a dance rehearsal or class. Rawle had left us as he went looking for the head. "It is a wake." Rawle returned, making us aware that someone from the steel band had died.

The television was on. Sounds of debates around the Dallas shootings were leaked through the crack in the front door. Tony Hall[24] *was present. We watched the news reports and discussed the levels of politics circulating on the Black Lives Matter campaign and marches occurring across America. He mentioned a bit on mas and his interest in its layers.*

Saturday- July 9, 2016

New faces; she was babysitting her adopted girls from next door, little 3-year old Taheera and her sister, 6-year old Soraya. We drove with Turunesh to her beautiful space in the cool, cool hills of Coura. All the main streets of Tunapuna were barred by police because there was the funeral of... a mystery... but the past Prime Minister Patrick Manning's funeral was occurring but it was to be happening in the south of the island. However, Turunesh guessed that they might be taking the body to the crematorium which is in Tunapuna. We turned back from many streets we tried taking, eventually stopping to buy snacks at a local corner shop and headed up hill to Turunesh's house, where we left some furniture she got from a flea market and headed up hill to the top of the river. Loud music was pumping from speaker boxes attached to the top of cars. Quite a social space on a Saturday afternoon. We brought gifts for the river, took photos with the girls, and I even taught them how to make a fire from twigs.

We headed into town and stopped at what was Turunesh's favorite street food spot; she works nearby. A bowl of corn soup, a box of fried fish, macaroni pie, cooked cassava with stew lentils. Our evening was spent in the nearby park talking about Makemba and Studio 66 and its unfairness, and on the swings, teaching the girls how to swing and how to hold balance while standing in the swings.

Sunday- July 10, 2016

[24] "Tony Hall is a playwright and moviemaker. In the theatre, he works extensively in Western Canada and in the Caribbean, with Derek Walcott's Trinidad Theatre workshop. He is the academic on-site director of the Trinity College in Trinidad global learning site, each Spring term, and in most Fall terms is visiting artist-in-residence at Trinity College." (Riggio, 2004)

Bake and shark[25] at Maracas Bay with Rawle :)) First bake and shark.

Monday- July 11, 2016

Burton[26] stopped by unexpectedly. He had with him a print of his book as he had been wanting me to read it ever since I met him. He waited while I got ready and offered to take me to Studio 66. I smiled with a warmth in my heart, and we spoke the whole way through the journey.

"Can I play mas now?" I asked as I was preparing to leave the field. I was offered many character spaces "Of course! Spirit know you... you a one of us. You welcome to play mas anytime" responded Tracey.

I would say that I was the initiate in this research. Above, I mentioned that I was indeed not new to the structure and artistic vision of Jouvay Ayiti as I use Jamaican traditional dance elements in my artistic work and arts initiative (Yaad Arts).[27] Not an outsider but a stranger, I somehow had foreseen a few of my limitations based on my plan and indeed struggled with the ability to be distant as, artistically, I work deeply with cultural information within the visual and performing arts. Some of my limitations however were unexpected. It took me a while, for example, to blend into the overall environment of the Trinidadian society and the Jouvay Ayiti Workshop session space, because the group was a quiet bunch. My positionality of self in the workshop sessions really made me think a great deal about initiation processes, and how they look in the twenty-first century.

It is largely - and falsely - said that all Caribbean island culture is the same. Like travelling to any country for the first time, however, one will always be a stranger where the land is unknown. Codes of conduct take a few bad turns because it isn't a 'simple help column' in the local newspaper, and finding your way around is impossible without paying a number of 'ignorance' taxes. My largest limitations were really those that I expressed around the methods of data gathering. But, the real initiation, acceptance and trust are in the moments spent, watching the news with Tony, driving with Rawle through the hills of Trinidad in heavy rains with fear seeping wet through pores - just to taste the country's number one street food, bake

[25] Bake and shark is a well-loved, traditional Trinidadian street food.

[26] Burton Sankeralli is a theologian whose area of research is religion, culture and society in Trinidad (Riggio, 2004).

[27] As choreographer, my work is used to evoke unspoken issues the society's people face in Jamaica. Using DanceArt as a Political Drama. As a voice to shake the Jamaican political dynamics

and shark, a must have - or tales shared among elder women around one platter of food. They are in the listening to the laughter of Turunesh's adopted girls from next door, in the late-night limes at the bar in Barataria, sharing bags of chips and glass bottles of peanuts, rum and in drives with Arielle and her babies waving goodbye as I closed the gate to the Trinity House. One cannot forget the bottles of beers down thirsty throats and a Burton who speaks and knows no bounds for he is the group's philosophical archive; or the quiet Macabrii[28] in the corner of the room, silent and extremely humbled with her incredible talents; or the Alfred bloodline, whose muscular stature only scares, and whose hugs are the most healing I have ever received; or the mother of four (4) the only all-rounded traditional mas bearer of the twenty-first century in Trinidad, Mrs. Tracey Sankar-Charleau, and her every moment of reminding everyone that mas is not dead.

It is here that I was initiated not just into a community of traditional masqueraders but into a movement aimed to safeguard a living tradition, one that keeps them alive and fulfilling what for them, is their life purpose.

> "Mas, in other words, isn't just a cultural event that plays out every year at Carnival, or a spectacle for sophisticated audiences at international art events. It is the way we imagine and present ourselves to each other — the masks-under-masks of our public and private personas. The artform's true medium is not the material of its costumes, but human desires and foibles, evasions and expectations. ... if visual arts are fundamentally about how we see, if music is about how we listen, and dance about how we move, then mas — combining elements of all these — is about how we see, listen to, and move around each other." (Marlon Griffiths in Laughlin, 2013)

> Griffith puts it in plainer terms. "Mas is just a word," he says. "My work is about relationships. My work deals with people." The goal is to provoke a moment of real human recognition: never as simple as it sounds, always more powerful than you expect, whether it happens in an art gallery or on the road in the heat of Carnival Tuesday. (Nicholas Laughlin in Laughlin, 2013)

[28] Briana McCarthy, also known as Macabrii, was a participant in the workshops. She is a "mixed media visual communicator working and living in Trinidad + Tobago. Her form takes shape through masking and performance art, fabric collage, traditional media, and installation pieces. She is a self-taught artist and aims to create a new discourse examining issues of beauty, stereotypes, representation as well as the documenting the process" (McCarthy, 2012)

It was not until this reflection that I realised my position in the field had not only been one of the relationships built between myself and the people I engaged with (or who engaged with me) but also, it was one of my own construction, with the following stages:

i. The preparation

ii. The expanding of self-practice

iii. Reflection on expanding of self-practice

These, I had created for observing the processes of the new *initiates* from chapter 1 of this dissertation under the sub-topic (pre-plan) and not one only for the observation of the participants in the Jouvay Ayiti workshop. These stages however, were not one's exclusive of myself; I had been engaging with them throughout my time spent in Trinidad. They are the very ones that are also being written within this dissertation, where I was not separate from the very thing I was witnessing, but indeed was experiencing; and construction was happening around self.

i. My preparation was mentioned in Chapter 1

ii. My expanding of self-practice expounded upon in Chapter 2

iii. My Reflection on expanding of self-practice being mentioned here in Chapter 3

It seems to me that the ability to reimagine space, to reclaim space and to recall are processes which run parallel to that of an initiation, where an individual (or group) has to prepare self and be ready for the actions involved, which demands an openness and willingness towards self-expansion. Such expansion is required while understanding that after such a process of action there will be a kind of change, and in such moments, one has to remember there will be need to call upon different parts of ourselves - be it our ancestors, our histories, our memories - all of which might reside in other parts of self, but are deeply embedded in our psyche. It is in the reflection that we can recognize the journey of these stages and perhaps can understand how to then continue forward, forging into a new cycle.

Chapter 4

Continuity

What is the process of keeping a practice alive, when it seems to be "dying"?

Mas Tragedy: A funeral of a man or the death of a tradition

I could hear the whispers, as if the words were not my very own thoughts. I guess even the mind knows reverence. The whispers asked me with an earthquake breath of fear, in what seemed like hope of not disrespecting my very passion, for my gaze was fixed on camera in hand, trying to take a steady shot. After all, I was trying to capture the details of the Jab Jab costume, and the puzzling arm action that never failed to crack that whip louder than lightening, after every spiral the twine took above their heads. "Do you think they weep under that mask?" My steady hands turned into a tremor and the space of my mind an echo chamber deadened with silence awaiting self to answer. Self was not present in words but instead the whispers left mind and transferred through my body. I stopped recording, running to cross the busy street to keep up with the mas players steadily marching in grief.

Though I knew not his name, I knew that the man who lay in the hearse accompanied by the masqueraders was an elder of great respect, just from the people who marched behind him. It was not the ordinary black-suited bodies, but instead was a vibrant array of colorful masks, costumes and movement. The lively music of calypso sounded from loud speakers on a vehicle travelling in front. They masqueraded down the streets of St. James, almost celebrating the very spirit of the stories and memories of this man and not the melancholy state of death.

My eyes hollowed in response to that which I was feeling, "Is this how grief looks?.. colorful and vibrant?!" The whispers were back. "Who was this man?" I asked the Dame Lorraine[29] standing quite poised, fan in hand with victorian style parasol opened above head, shading her from the sun - an image I have only ever seen in old British movies. Her memories and stories of him and his work had her teary-eyed, she removed her mask and lit a cigarette, recalling recent deaths of bearers of characters within Traditional Mas.

[29] "Today, the Dame Lorraine traditional character appears as a female dressed in the style of a rich planter's wife. However, in the beginning, the Dame Lorraine was not a single character. In fact, the Dame Lorraine was a collective of characters who took part in an elaborate skit or parody of these early French Planters. Long ago, this theatrical performance would take place on Dimanche Gras. The Dame Lorraine poked fun not only at the elaborate festivities of the rich planters but also their physical infirmities. The name of each character was in French Creole. These names were very descriptive and pinpointed certain bodily defects. At one time, the big bottom and the big breasts were worn by separate characters. Today, both are combined into one outfit, worn by one character. In the past, mostly men portrayed Dame Lorraines. As of late, mostly women portray the character." (NCCTT, 2017)

"Him is one a di few weh care fi wi"[30]*, she opened, as she explained that his commitment was to, sustain the life of the Traditional Masqueraders. With small competitions, he created opportunities for them to finance their practice and better the quality of their costume techniques. He held them up emotionally, mentally, and physically if needs be and fought alongside them, the fight of reclaiming space as Traditional Mas players. All because he was them. He was an elder, a bearer, a mas character with years of embodied knowing having played Fancy Sailor*[31]*. The characterization with which he has left this earth, will take time to be nurtured in another, especially in a newly initiated mas player. I watched as he was lowered, masked in his costume, placed to rest in the earth. It is within those ten seconds, like that, a tradition dies.*

[30] English Translation: He is one of the few persons who cared for us.

[31] "The Fancy Sailor was an off-shoot of the King Sailor. The fancy sailor costume consists of papier-mâché headpieces, decorated and painted to look like birds, animals or plants. The sailor outfit is decorated with ribbons, medals, braiding, swans down and other embellishments to match the headpieces." (NCCTT, 2017)

Safeguarding Power Dynamics

As time passed, a few discussions arose in the workshops which stirred my thoughts and seemed to be following a recurring pattern, as they resurfaced quite often. The Alfreds were in the the middle of a land ownership battle. They are extremely close to losing the land where they grow the plant needed to make the whip, and the herbs they use for the rituals, which is critical to their practice. Much of the Traditional Mas players also argued about the government's festivalization of their mas, which has a competition element included for the traditional characters 'Best Costume/ Mas Characterisation'. They described the judges as underexposed to the techniques and knowledge of Traditional Mas. Not only was this an issue but, with the class divides and social hierarchy which exists, there is always a hovering fear that the choice can be tampered with, depending on where they (the players) are placed within the social structure. With such lack of expertise at the judges' table, the competitions are almost not always fair to the traditional practitioners, who invest much of their time and money into their craft and livelihood, as for most, mas is their life. The Traditional Mas seems to be facing an issue of 'under awareness' from the public, who seems to reject the idea and practice. This I witnessed on Emancipation Day during the parade wherein they somehow almost rejected the very site which it stands to express.

The symbolisms and meanings in the context of the post-colonial society can be seen as encoded with a past of enslavement and indentureship and present events of their society displaying to a more global market. It has been argued in Schechner's article *Carnival (Theory) After Bakhtin* that such symbolisms and meanings are the very things that keep the mas practice "alive". He argues that it is its existence in the past (traditional) that makes the present (contemporary innovations) a much more appealing product. He also urges that 'the past is restored to assure a future of carnival diversity' (Schechner in Riggio, 2004, p. 9).

Government

"What are they rehearsing for?" I asked out of curiosity. Rawle led us to the back of the yard where there was a side entrance to a huge auditorium that had been locked up when we last came for the barbeque; it was parallel the netball court. Inside the auditorium was a group of teenagers and adolescents all dressed in full black, dancing what was perhaps considered a traditional folk form, "They are rehearsing for the Best Village competition to be had on Independence Day." Rawle mentioned. A group of three drummers pulled up chairs and shortly joined the group's rehearsal. A gentleman in trousers, a buttoned-up shirt and tie, with closed toe shoes stood in front of the group proceeding to lead the rehearsal. Subsequently, he was also teaching the lead dancer in the group a piece of solo choreography. The drums started and so did the dancers. After restarting the dance piece a few times from different points in the work, that was clearly not the end. I kept thinking about the concrete floor they were dancing on, and how unsafe it is and will be for their bodies in the future. I could not be silent about it and so I started discussing the issues I was grappling with to Rawle. "Listen," he said sagely, "these people only thinking about the competition." I guess all I gathered from our conversation was that, what was most important was the 'making-a-star' complex, being the Best Village winner was most important and that they just don't think about 'those things' because they don't know, and perhaps those who know, can't afford to create a space more conducive to 'safe' practice. Still, I marveled in the beauty of these young people's unification as they walked together to the bus stop. With smiles on their faces and walking in a cluster so tight that their shoulders would touch ever so often. So, indeed, there is a social shift in meeting for rehearsals for this competition and the pride they would feel as a community on winning that title of Best Village, is one that would be unforgettable.

As Richard Schechner mentioned in his article *Carnival (Theory) After Bakhtin*, 'Trinidad carnival actually both critiques official culture and supports it. It is an event both "of the people" and "for the nation"' (2004, p. 4). In this statement, he refers to carnival being both a contemplative stillness and a rejuvenation of the people and their communities, where self on a grand scale is questioning what they know self to be, both asserting and challenging it.

The continuation of a country's heritage, cultural practices and even its artistic creations is always at the mercy of the group holding the highest power. Power, the dominance from an individual or individuals, over oneself and others, to mobilize a specific idea and action (Butler

1997), can be asserted in different ways, but in the context of Trinidad carnival I explore three; monetary power, connective power, and cultural power.

Trinidad and Tobago's government has established a few systems to safeguard carnival traditions: 1) Under the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Arts (MCDCA), 2) Under the government's Vision 2020 Operational plan, and 3) Through national commissions; National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago (NCC). In more detail:

1) The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Arts, being a signatory of the United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2003 Convention has drafted much of their cultural policy under the guidelines of that which they agree to as a member state of the Convention. Under the convention, Trinidad Carnival is categorized as Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), as it is a living tradition that is still extremely important to the communities involved, and year after year it continues to be transmitted from generation to generation (UNESCO 2003 Convention). Safeguarding, is about transmitting the skills, meaning and knowledge of a living practice from one generation to the next. As a sustainable system, this requires that the people of the communities holding such practices be placed at the centre of the choices made about the ICH element. The UNESCO 2003 Convention actually demands such a bottom-up process, regarding it as the base of good safeguarding practice. It is the agreement and responsibility of the country, as a member state, to safeguard and provide sustainable transmission of practices by communicating with, listening to, the needs of the community, its Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

In Chapter 7 of its Social Sector Plans policy document, in article 7.2 - which covers the mandate of the MCDCA, there was a subheading, Cultural Preservation. Under these three points were listed:

- National Exhibition Series: this initiative will continue in 2017 and involves a year-long programme of exhibitions that provide information on major celebratory days, significant landmarks, cultural practices and respected Icons.
- **Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding, Preservation and Promotion: as a signatory to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Ministry will develop inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in Trinidad and Tobago.**

- Development of the National Centre for the Arts (formerly Arts Centre at Agostini): acquisition and development of this facility to serve as a cultural cluster for the ongoing state initiatives in the arts and heritage. In fiscal 2017, it is expected that the property will be acquired and renovated for purpose. (The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2017 Social Sector investment programme document, p.162-163)

The other two sub headings that I assumed would house the sustainability of Carnival are:

- Development of Cultural Industries (focus placed on education and training for access into the larger industry, research to develop a "cultural system")
- Festival Development (This is structured to grow the contemporary visual and performing arts practice. (The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2017 Social Sector investment programme document, p. 163)

None of the subheadings in the 2017 Social Sector investment programme document seem to have a system in place that will implement a bottom-up start for the sustainability of ICH. All the articles seem to speak of is practice as product. I must however, state that making an inventory, under the UNESCO convention, starts the process of a safeguarding that one hopes will understand the importance of building relationships where the bearers are at the root of whatever is implemented.

2) In Part II of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2020 Operational Plan[32] - implementation progress by development pillar - innovation was said to be a complex element that required a structure of varied, open people from different sectors. The government's aim to "develop" was set in the framework of innovation, as it is believed to present solutions to such issues as food sufficiency and climate change became a driving force of the policy. The aim for the innovation framework is to;

> Promote sustainable development, is for citizens to develop scientific skills, as well as ensuring that there is full utilisation of the skills, talents, knowledge and creativity of our people. Equally important is the creation of a culture of learning, demonstrating a commitment to science and technology, instilling citizens with a greater desire for continuous learning, the development of a legislative framework that protects new

[32] 2007- 2010, the 2008-2009 Progress Report 'Strengthening Efficiency, Addressing the Challenges. Vision 2020

innovations and utilisation of these (The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, 2007- 2010: the 2008-2009 Progress Report 'Strengthening Efficiency, Addressing the Challenges. Vision 2020)

Under the subtitle Developing innovative people, within a table entitled *Vision 2020 Operational Plan 2007- 2010, 2008 / 2009 Report; targets achieved*, was 3 columns, with heading; Target to 2010, Progress 2008/2009 and Trend. Under the column **Target to 2010** was listed 'Carnival and other cultural festival effectively managed. Under the column Progress 2008/2009 read:

Annual Arrivals for Carnival;

- 2008 - 39,115
- 2009 - 36,643

18 shows hosted at the Tobago Heritage Festival attracting over 35,000 artists

And under the column **Trend**, was written "improving". This was out of the options Target exceeded or Improving; "Exceeded", I gather being the higher of the two. (p. 26).

Mentioned liberally throughout the document, was also the plan of launching the *Carnival Museum of the Americas (p. 107)*. Although this idea is commendable, all such implementations are still those with the industrialized gaze, treating the practice as product for capital.

3) The National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago (NCC), responsible under the government of Trinidad and Tobago is the main safeguarding space of carnival. The organization's function is to 1) regulate, coordinate and conduct all carnival activities throughout the country. 2) To develop maintain and revisit or change rules regulating all the festivities of carnival. 3) Identify, evaluate and promote all carnival related industry, to enhance and market their cultural product and services. 4) develop and implement marketing strategy to optimizing the revenue earning potential. Though the functions are without a doubt globalized product oriented ironically, the overall aim of the NCC to preserve the traditional heritage of Trinidad and Tobago Carnival whilst ensuring its sustainable development as a viable industry. (National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, 2014)

To conclude, the ongoing trend that extends across the governmental documents for a continuity plan for carnival or ICH in general across the country is a product-oriented, top-down approach. The government, having monetary power and political power, are the gatekeepers, setting the rules for what is allowed or not. Further, they somewhat assert "ownership" over carnival as it is property of the nation, and as government it is theirs to manage and control. Systems such as those mentioned above, are, highly focused on carnival as a global product for a particular capitalist consumption by people around the world. The competition element gives little to the bearers of the tradition itself. How can a practice be sustained with(out) the individuals who practice it? The practitioners themselves are equally as powerful and important to the continuity of a tradition / heritage practice.

As Richard Schechner puts it further in his article, that a structure which feeds carnival, encompasses both a top-down system and a bottom-up system. Such systems must be understood from a political perspective, as the top-down system is one influenced by Europe for a global hegemony and the bottom-up system is one managed and controlled by the power of the people. (Riggio, 2004, p. 10). Such a top-down system most times does not consider the value of the people themselves, but it is here I say thanks to spaces such as Jouvay Ayiti.

Jouvay Ayiti

Through my observations, Jouvay Ayiti is a performance, research and safeguarding hub, an activist space for Trinidad's traditional masquerade practices and its bearers. The processes I have written about throughout this dissertation have been a documentation of an adopted structure based on a need to shift towards sustainability and continuity and plans for the protection and respect of the life and works of the existing and upcoming Traditional Mas players. A high-quality safeguarding model, I believe, respects the bottom-up process, keeping the bearers of the tradition as their centre/root focus, influences sustainable practice, and encourages the practice as a living tradition.

The postcolonial idealised space is not one free of subordination, but one that still perpetuates the structure of the subjectifier and the subject. The concept 'postcolonialism', then, is one that is merely a masked imaginary more so than an actuality. Such structures create spaces of conflict, and inequality. It is evident however that Jouvay Ayiti has recognized that they do

not have the monetary power to sustain certain needs of the practitioners. The space however, of expanding the wisdom and knowledge of the practices through educational structures and workshop that form communities spanning all socio-structural norms, is Jouvay Ayiti asserting its connective power, and strengthening the cultural power of the very people who make culture witnessable or a expensive global product. to recognise and strengthen such power is to safeguard, is to start the journey to a sustainable cultural practice, and marks too, the continuity of a society's living traditions.

Conclusion

With the traditional bearers aging and the community of rural practitioners lacking the money for sustainability, although they seem to have strong connective and cultural power, it is not equal to the financial power needed to keep the tradition "alive". What has been clear from analysing my fieldwork experience is that though Trinidad Carnival is layered in its socio-political dynamics and forms power relations, the traditionalists with the cultural power feel that their practices are not being supported, preserved or 'safeguarded' - in the wording of the UNESCO policy. Here, the platform serves as one from the ground up, meaning that the policy is made to put the practitioners and bearers in the forefront of all the safeguarding practices. In the Trinidadian context however, I am of the view that perhaps the practitioners of Traditional Mas are not as supported or respected as they would like to be in a general sense, nor do they feel their practices are in sustainable positions. What my fieldwork surely brings to the surface is Jouvay Ayiti's structure as an agent, and the allies working and affecting the traditional practice of mas in the ways they have designed. These may be summarised as follows:

1. Rawle Gibbons - mentoring, maintaining a warm, respectful and supportive relationship with the families of the bearers of Traditional Mas, directing the Caribbean Yard Campus project and the implementing of institutionalized curriculum 'Indigenous Knowledges' and in collaboration with Jouvay Ayiti curriculum.
2. Jouvay Ayiti - pulling various Mas players together, to ensure the sharing of the Traditional Mas experience and to maintain its visibility on the streets and expanding the connective power. Expanding mas practice/ cultural power, through its workshops of Traditional Mas Making; Cardboard Technique, Papier Mache Mask from clay mould technique, Lectures on Mas History by CYC, Wire-bending Techniques.
3. New Waves! Dance and Performance Institute - sharing the knowledges of Traditional Mas on an artistic international level
4. Carnival Institute of Trinidad and Tobago - Archiving and Documenting
5. The Carnival Industry - 'Season of Carnival road parties - bikini, beads and feathers', borrowing and expanding on the ideas and designs of traditional carnival' (The Guardian, 2015)
6. The Government - festivalisation, 'stagings and competition' leaves room for a more artistic expression from the community expanding their creativities and innovative

thinking

> Trinidad Carnival actually both critiques official culture and supports it… Carnival is financially, artistically and conceptually supported from the bottom up and from the top down...which - despite much boundary-crossing interculturality (Schechner, cited in Riggio, 2004, p. 4)

I have mapped my encounter as a phenomenon layered in a political imbalance of rural and urban cultural mandates. The traditional masquerader holds a cultural power, the commercialised carnival experience holds financial power, and of course the government holds the political power making the decisions that create and implement cultural policies. Such policies, however, are not necessarily inclusive of the daily actions and practices of the people. In mapping the Trinidadian society's history, and having engaged with carnival theory, I recognise a trend in trying to understand the space which carnival creates for the people. This I find to be problematic, because the focus should not only be placed on what carnival does for the society, because the people are the carnival; that which is witnessed in a carnival space needs to be understood and, of course, critiqued as an outpouring of the people. What is being acted/ performed needs to be contextualised in its entirety - the entirety being their historical past, their ongoing view towards future, both of which can allow us to glean what it is that we are witnessing to be present. Within this dissertation I have uncovered carnival's layers of the social, ritual, and political, as such layers were dominant within my field encounters; perhaps there are quite a number of layers to unpack, if they have not already been unpacked. The social climate in Trinidad is largely a result of the colonial effect, and the country's fast growth with the establishment of oil factories. Uncovering carnival as a ritual, has solidify the construct of the social. Carnival, being a ritual, encompasses seeing behind the mask, seeing the embodiment as behaviours mixed from practices of past, which they are able to recall: the once European colonisers, the fragments of the peoples of African descent 'fragments of enslavement', indentureship of peoples from the Asian continent, and immigrants from the Americas. Of future: The country's focus on capitalism, aiming to "preserve", police and control a practice as product for its monetary value, other than safeguarding it, where it is understood that the people are the true bearers of the practice and without them being supported, the practice cannot be sustained.

I have documented and analysed the Jouvay Ayiti, new age masquerade group process to procession. Throughout the process they create the space for safeguarding the traditional masquerade practice and in this, reclaims and assert a continued space for the future of the practitioners and their practice. A group such as this is one that is expanding as a community of masqueraders; traditional mas players/ bearers, contemporary artists, researchers, teachers and children. I hope the community continues to enhance their cultural and connective power, as the sustainability of the practice, requires this. The life continuity of carnival, needs the expansion of communities such as these, because the traditional is what gives relevance to the contemporary, as expressed by Schechner above. There is no present global product of great value, without the traditional, and no traditional without the people, so establishing solid and relevant support for bearers' needs is not a gentle request but should be a firm demand.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anon ((n.d.) *about : Brianna McCarthy*. *about: Brianna McCarthy*. Available at: http://www.briannamccarthy.com/index.php/about/ (accessed 08/06/17).

Anon ((n.d.) *Liming in Trinidad, The Art of Doing Nothing - Thomas Hylland Eriksen*. *Liming in Trinidad, The Art of Doing Nothing - Thomas Hylland Eriksen*. Available at: http://www.skettel.com/liming/ (accessed 08/06/17).

Burton RDE (1997) *Afro-Creole: power, opposition, and play in the Caribbean*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bakka. L (2016) Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage- the spirit and the letter of the law. Musikk og Tradisjon (pp. 135- 170). Oslo: Novus forlag.

B ((n.d.) *The Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies in Tunapuna - ID 981*. *in Tunapuna - ID 981*. Available at: https://buzz.tt/venue/the-lloyd-best-institute-of-the-west-indies-981 (accessed 08/06/17).

Anon ((n.d.) *CVQ. Caribbean Examinations Council*. Available at: http://www.cxc.org/examinations/cvq/ (accessed 07/06/17).

Centre UNESCOWH ((n.d.) *World Heritage*. *UNESCO World Heritage Centre*. Available at: http://whc.unesco.org/en/about (accessed 07/06/17).

Clairmont DH and Cohen A (1976) Two-Dimensional Man: An Essay on the Anthropology of Power and Symbolism in Complex Society. *Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 1(4): 529.

Cohen A (1993) *Masquerade politics: explorations in the structure of urban cultural movements*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Anon ((n.d.) *Connect with Us. National Carnival Commission (NCC)*. Available at: http://www.ncctt.org/new/ (accessed 08/06/17).

Crowley DJ (1956) The Traditional Masques of Carnival. *Caribbean Quarterly* 4(3-4): 194–

223.

Cuzzort RP and Firth R (1976) Symbols: Public and Private. *Contemporary Sociology* 5(6): 750.

Daniel Y (2017) Caribbean and Atlantic Diaspora Dance. *University of Illinois Press*.

Anon ((n.d.) *Devil. Traditional Mas Archive*. Available at: http://www.traditionalmas.com/project/devil/ (accessed 07/06/17).

Anon ((n.d.) *Dougla. Afropedea*. Available at: http://www.afropedea.org/dougla (accessed 08/06/17).

Drewal MT, Nunley JW and Bettelheim J (1989) Caribbean Festival Arts: Each and Every Bit of Difference. *African Arts* 23(1): 20.

Erickson PA and Murphy LD (2017) *Readings for a history of anthropological theory*. North York, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Forgacs D and Eagleton T (1983) Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism. *Poetics Today* 4(1): 183.

Gaventa J and Scott JC (1992) Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts. *Contemporary Sociology* 21(3): 344.

George M (2016) *Playing Devil's Advocate with Mas. Guernica*. Available at: https://www.guernicamag.com/daily/marvin-george-and-jouvay-ayiti-playing-devils-advocate-with-mas/ (accessed 08/06/17).

Gilbert H and Tompkins J (1996) Post-Colonial Drama.

Glazier SD (1983) Cultural pluralism and respectability in Trinidad. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 6(3): 351–355.

Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Social (2017) Sector Investment

Programme: *Shaping a Brighter Future- A Blueprint for Transformation and Growth*, (2017). Available at: https://www.finance.gov.tt/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SSIP-2017-for-web.pdf (accessed on 08/06/17)

Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (2017) Vision 2020 Operational Plan 2007-2010, 2008-2009 Progress Report: *Strengthening Efficiency, Addressing the Challenges' Vision 2020*, Available at: http://www.transforme.gov.tt/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/library/documents/Vision%202020%20Progress%20Report%2008-09.pdf (accesed on 08/06/17)

Grindon G and Eagleton T (2007) *Carnival against capital: the theory of revolution as festival*. Manchester: University of Manchester.

Helmlinger A (2014) Birth Kevin K., 2008, Bacchanalian Sentiments. Musical Experiences and Political Counterpoints in Trinidad. Durham, Londres, Duke University Press, 258 p., bibliogr., index. *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 38(1): 284.

Hughes-Freeland F (2011) *Embodied communities: dance traditions and change in Java*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Anon ((n.d.) *Intangible Cultural Heritage. Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage - intangible heritage - Culture Sector - UNESCO.* Available at: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention (accessed 07/06/17).

Kinser S (1990) *Carnival, American style: Mardi Gras at New Orleans and Mobile*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kyrou CN and Rubinstein RA (2008) Cultural Anthropology Studies of Conflict. *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict* 515–521.

Anon (2014) *Marlon Griffith: Mas by other means*. *Caribbean Beat Magazine*. Available at: http://caribbean-beat.com/issue-119/marlon-griffith-mas-other-means#ixzz4hZ6t5Mfu

(accessed 08/06/17).

Marshall EZ ((n.d.) *'Staging Mas': Theatre-Carnival Project Documentation with Tony Hall, Leeds 2006*. *Academia.edu*. Available at: http://www.academia.edu/20822174/_Staging_Mas_Theatre-Carnival_Project_Documentation_with_Tony_Hall_Leeds_2006 (accessed 07/06/17).

Mcconachie B (1996) Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance. By Joseph Roach, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996; pp. 328. Price not available. *Theatre Survey* 37(02): 141–144.

Pritchett JA (2009) Victor Turner and contemporary cultural performance. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15(3): 636–637.

Riggio MC (2004) *Carnival: culture in action ; the Trinidad experience*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Rousseau GS, Foucault M and Howard R (1970) Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4(1): 90.

S (2008) *Trinidad Carnival Dictionary*. *Trinidad Carnival Diary*. Available at: http://www.trinidadcarnivaldiary.com/trinidad-carnival-dictionary.html (accessed 08/06/17).

Schechner R (1977) Performance Theory.

Sewart JJ (1985): Play, Games and Sports in Cultural Contexts . Janet C. Harris, Roberta J. Park. *American Anthropologist* 87(2): 473–474.

Shanin V ((n.d.) *MasMan*. *TRAVEL FilmFest*. Available at: http://travelfilmfest.com/videos/masman/ (accessed 08/06/17).

Shepperson G (1972) The Groundings with my Brothers. By Walter Rodney with an introduction by Richard Small. London: Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, 1969. Pp. 67. Paperback, 6s. 6d. *The Journal of African History* 13(01): 173.

Sylvester C (2015) *Masquerades of war*. London: Routledge.

Anon (2011) Symbols (Routledge Revivals). .

Tancons C ((n.d.) *Farewell, Farewell: Carnival, Performance and Exhibition in the Circum-Atlantic Economy of the Flesh*. *Academia.edu*. Available at: http://www.academia.edu/20867033/Farewell_Farewell_Carnival_Performance_and_Exhibition_in_the_Circum-Atlantic_Economy_of_the_Flesh (accessed 07/06/17).

TT ((n.d.) *Traditional Carnival Characters*. *TnTisland.com aka Roger's Trinbago Website*. Available at: http://www.tntisland.com/carnivalcharacters.html (accessed 08/06/17).

Turner V (1982) 2. Dramatic Ritual/Ritual Drama: Performative and Reflexive Anthropology. *A Crack in the Mirror*.

Turner VW (1982) *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play*. New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications.

Turner VW and Mitchell JP (1969) *Liminality and communitas: form and attributes of rites of passage*. .

Turner VW (1967) *Schism and continuity in an African society*. Manchester, Eng.: Manchester Univ. Press.

Turner V (1970) Symbols in Ndembu Ritual. *Sociological Theory and Philosophical Analysis* 150–182.

Turner V (1995) *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure*. New York: Aldine publ. comp.

User S ((n.d.) *Traditional Mas Characters - Fancy Sailor*. *Traditional Mas Characters - Fancy Sailor*. Available at: http://www.ncctt.org/new/index.php/carnival-history/trad-carnival-characters/330-traditional-mas-characters-fancy-sailor.html (accessed 08/06/17).

Waite M (1998) Self-determination in the dance: 'Cultural action'/constraint and creativity in

the Trinidad carnival. *Anthropological Forum* 8(1-2): 49–83.

Anon (2015) *The siloed mas agenda*. *The Trinidad Guardian Newspaper*. Available at: http://www.guardian.co.tt/lifestyle/2015-04-14/siloed-mas-agenda (accessed 08/06/17).