CONSTRUCTING VERNACULAR CULTURE IN THE TRANS-CARIBBEAN

Edited by HOLGER HENKE and KARL-HEINZ MAGISTER
PART II PERFORMING IDENTITIES

1. Conscience in Decisionism: Disposing Consciousness
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PART I (CREATING HOMES IN THE VERNACULAR)

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Commercialism, and the Latino-Caribbean Readeings from Aby Aylia: Music,

Raphael Dalleo
The terms of contract and commerce, cultural production, political science, and philosophy.

The 1993 American Civil Liberties Union’s annual report, "The Pledge to the Process: The First Amendment and the Role of the Judiciary," highlights the importance of free speech in our democratic society. The report stresses that the First Amendment protects the right to engage in political speech, including criticism of government, without fear of reprisal.

In addition to these core values of democracy, as well as a more general concern for human dignity and cultural pluralism, the report emphasizes the importance of protecting individual rights and freedoms. These values are foundational to a healthy democracy, ensuring that all voices are heard and that the government remains accountable to the people.

The report calls for the continued protection of free speech and the freedom of the press, recognizing that these rights are essential for a free society. It also advocates for the protection of the right to assemble and the right to petition, which are critical to the functioning of democracy.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is a nonprofit organization that defends and promotes individual rights and liberties. It works to ensure that all people are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other characteristics.

The ACLU’s mission is to defend and preserve the individual freedoms and civil rights enshrined in the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The report is a call to action, urging all Americans to stand up for these values and to work together to ensure that our democratic society remains strong and vibrant.

The American Civil Liberties Union is a powerful voice for freedom in our society. It has played a vital role in protecting the rights and liberties of all Americans, ensuring that the government remains accountable to the people and that all voices are heard.

The report offers a compelling argument for the continued protection of free speech and the freedom of the press, recognizing that these rights are essential for a free society. It also advocates for the protection of the right to assemble and the right to petition, which are critical to the functioning of democracy.

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The enormous traffic jam, the tapón which is part and parcel of Puerto Rican and U.S. industrialization and modernization, frustrates the drivers at the same time that it freezes everyone in their place. It stops the action and ensures that virtually nothing happens throughout the novel; even the suggestion of change or mobility in this world appears unthinkable. This stasis is especially marked when contrasted with one of Sánchez’s other major works, La guagua aérea (1983). La guagua aérea, in contrast to La guaracha del Macho Camacho, is organized around movement; the entire story takes place on a flight (an air bus, as the title calls it) between San Juan and New York, and has become a founding text for the in-between Latin/o community defined by that border crossing.22 Far from the world of La guagua aérea, La guaracha del Macho Camacho captures in its language and form the social stasis of a world in which movement is not available to all: amidst the standstill, the novel’s energy comes not from its plot, but from its language, which twists and contorts as it incorporates the sounds of the street and the radio. The novel’s most memorable moments come from how the language of television commercials, of telenovelas, and of radio DJs mingles with the performances of Macho Camacho himself, the singer whose guaracha crosses class-lines and seems to be the only thing capable of circulating inside the traffic jam.

Lisa Sánchez González and Juan Otero Garabits are two of the critics who La guaracha del Macho Camacho has allowed to, as Díaz Quiñones puts it, “intervene in cultural debates.” Both critics use readings of the novel to make their move away from literature and towards music as the articulation of the transnational. Sánchez González ended Boricua Literature with the chapter “Ya deja eso: Towards an epi-fenomenal approach to Boricua cultural studies,” which takes its title from La guaracha del Macho Camacho. Sánchez González arrives at her “epi-fenomenal” approach, of displacing literary with cultural studies, through her reading of La guaracha del Macho Camacho. Despite the novel’s literariness, Sánchez González reads the novel as signaling the extraliterary direction in which she takes her work. She writes:

Macho Camacho’s guaracha gives voice, in an unmistakably Puerto Rican accent, to a collectivizing realization . . . the shared experience of hearing it . . . provides its characters—and its readers—a dynamic moment for making it ontological, for assuming the epi-fenomenal posture of “ya deja eso”—enough already—and returning to what has been perhaps the only genuinely inclusive national articulation in Puerto Rico’s history: popular music.23

Sánchez González argues that La guaracha del Macho Camacho “is less a novel than a poetically inscribed invitation to dance, the music being everywhere implied but never representable.”24 The novel’s stylistic resemblance to popular speech and music allows it to be “anti-canonical” as it breaks down hierarchies between the spoken and written word.25 The novelist, she contends, totally subverts the hierarchical division between high and low cultures by creating a novel which is actually a song.
The problem is not a lack of interest in the subject, but rather an inability to effectively convey the importance. To address this, we must focus on clear and concise communication, using both language and visuals to help illustrate the points being made. This will require a deeper understanding of the subject matter, as well as an willingness to adapt our teaching methods to better suit the needs of our students.

In conclusion, while there may be some challenges in teaching this subject, we have the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of our students. By focusing on clear communication and adapting our teaching methods, we can help our students develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the future.