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When *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (1940) was published in Cuba, Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969) had established himself as one of the country's most influential public intellectuals. Like so many Latin American and Caribbean men of his position and generation, Fernando Ortiz had left his native land to receive a European education. When he returned to Cuba, where he remained until his death, he dedicated his life to the study of its popular traditions. Taking Cuba as his central concern, he addressed issues of national culture and colonialism, supported democratic institutions, promoted cultural organizations and journals, and authored works in areas ranging from criminology to ethnology. In *Cuban Counterpoint*'s prologue, Herminio Portell Vilá, a Cuban historian, insists that there is actually no need to introduce an outstanding work by this prominent author, and expresses gratitude that he has been allowed to link his name to that of Don Fernando Ortiz.

Perhaps in Portell Vilá's insistente one may detect a critical commentary on the introduction of the book, authored by the most renowned anthropologist of the time, Bronislaw Malinowski. A Polish émigré to England, Malinowski was a leading figure in defining anthropology as a scientific discipline and in conceptualizing field-

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For without exception, the cultural treasures he surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror. They owe their existence not only to the efforts of the great minds and talents of those who created them, but also to the anonymous toil of their contemporaries. And just as such a document is not free of barbarisms, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from owner to owner.-WALther BENJAMIN

Las obras literarias no están fuera de las culturas sino que las coronan y en la medida en que estas culturas son invenciones seculares y multitudinarias hacen del escritor un productor que trabaja con las obras de innumerables hombres. Un compilador, hubiera dicho Roa Bastos. El genial tejedor, en el vasto taller histórico de la sociedad americana? -ANGEL RAMA

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*Illustrations*

Cigar-box label showing tobacco plantation and baled tobacco (late nineteenth century)  
Cigar-box label showing steps in the manufacture of cigars (twentieth century)  
The elegant manner of smoking and blowing out smoke called "Cuban ebollition" (from an English broadside of 1641)  
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work as the core of its method. In his introduction, Malinowski, then at Yale University, enthusiastically praises Ortiz's ethnographic skills and unabashedly presents the book as an outstanding example of functionalism, the theory of social integration with which Malinowski was closely aligned. He notes in particular his admiration for Ortiz's neologism "transculturation," and vows to employ it himself in his subsequent work: "I promised its author that I would appropriate the new expression for my own use, acknowledging its paternity, and use it constantly and loyally whenever I had occasion to do so" (1947, ix). Before his death in 1942, Malinowski wrote a number of papers and prepared two books, published posthumously. In these works he only used "transculturation" twice.

While I too recognize the privilege of introducing a book that speaks for itself, I acknowledge that, in the words of an earlier contrapuntal author, we necessarily read it "not just as we please, but under circumstances not chosen by ourselves" (Marx 1963, 15). It is difficult to assess the impact of ideas, to trace their origins and circulation, the paths through which they enter disciplinary canons and collective understandings, and the contexts that mark their reception by different publics. It is undeniable that Ortiz's greatest work has found its way into English in 1947 and in 1954, Columbia University, on the occasion of its two-hundredth anniversary, conferred on Ortiz an honorary doctorate. Yet my sense is that, given the conditions shaping its international reception, Ortiz's book has been read in ways that have overlooked aspects of its significance and have left its critical potential undeveloped. By offering a reading of selected sections of the book and of Malinowski's introduction, this essay seeks to enter into a dialogue with these texts, not so much to introduce the book, as to make its introduction ultimately unnecessary.

"A written preface," writes Gayatri Spivak in her introductory essay to Grammaology (Derrida 1974), "provisionally localizes the place where, between reading and reading, book and book, the inscribing of \textquoteleft reader(s),\textquoteright writer(s), and language is forever at work" (xii). A reader of Ortiz's Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar can readily understand the notion that "the return to the book is also the abandoning of the book" (Derrida quoted by Spivak, ibid.), that each reader and each reading of the same book opens up a different book. As Spivak suggests, "the preface, by daring to repeat the book and reconstitute it at another register, merely enacts what is already the case: the book's repetitions are always other than the book. There is, in fact, no 'book' other than these ever-different repetitions." Ortiz would have welcomed a perspective that, while respecting the integrity of a cultural text, recognizes its provisionality and inconclusiveness, the contrapuntal play of text against text and of reader against author. If, indeed, a counterpoint among reader, writer, and language is forever at work, my text pays tribute to Ortiz by engaging in this transcultural exchange, as Ortiz's book does, in counterpoint with the historical conditions of its own making.

**Conditions of Reception**

The publication of Ortiz's book in 1940 occurred at a time of international and domestic upheaval which frames the concerns of the text and helps explain its allegorical character. Fascism had begun to engulf Western Europe and to challenge the principles, already shaken by World War 1, considered fundamental to "Western civilization." In Cuba, the strongman Fulgencio Batista, who controlled the state through intermediaries, gained widespread support and was elected president of the country. By the time Ortiz received his honorary doctorate in 1954, the United States had emerged as the dominant global power and the arbiter of Latin American affairs, and Batista had returned to the presidency of Cuba in 1952 by way of a coup. Batista's dictatorship, backed by the United States, carne to an end in 1959, when a guerrilla-led revolution overthrew him and led to the first socialist regime in the Americas.

Cuban Counterpoint has circulated, until recent years, in a world divided into socialist and capitalist camps and modern and backward nations. For Third World nations-and this seemingly indispensable category was also born in the 1940s-socialism and capitalism have commonly been regarded as competing strategies to achieve modernity. While in the Third World, socialism and capitalism have offered competing images of the future, they have shared the assumption that the future, whatever its particular political or economic form, must of necessity be "modern." Ortiz's book did not quite fit the terms of this polarized debate. It was unconventional in form and content, did not express explicitly the wisdom of the times or reiterate prevalent currents of thought, and it proposed neither unambiguous solutions nor a blueprint for the future. Rather than straightforwardly offering an argument, it worked tangentially through poetic...
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can be read as a unit, together they present Ortiz's understanding of

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tion the conceits of modernity and postmodernity alike. Ortiz shows

gramscian marxism, and poststructuralism, an attempt has been

made to develop new perspectives and to bring excluded problems
under critical observation. In certain respects these efforts have helped

counter the silencing and stereotyping of subaltern collectivities and

revealed their role in the making and the contestation of histories and
cultures long represented from the homogenizing perspective of those
who hold dominant power. This new edition of Cuban Counterpoint

enters the space opened by these collective achievements; as an exam-
ple of engaged cultural analysis, it may contribute to expanding it.


cuban counterpoint examines the significance of tobacco and sugar

for cuban history in two complementary sections written in contrast-
ing styles. the first, titled "cuban counterpoint," is a relatively brief

allegorical tale of cuban history narrated as a counterpoint between
tobacco and sugar. the second, "the ethnography and transcultura-
tion of Havana Tobacco and the Beginnings of Sugar in America," is

a historical essay that adheres loosely to the conventions of the genre.

It is divided into two brief theoretical chapters and ten longer his-
torical ones which discuss sociological and historical aspects of the

evolution of sugar and tobacco production. Although each chapter
can be read as a unit, together they present Ortiz's understanding of
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inforce each other. While each is complex, they place different de-

mands upon the reader. The historical essay is imposing and requires

the reader to assimilate a vast amount of information. The brief

allegorical essay poses a more unusual challenge: it reads almost too
easily.

The allegorical essay seems to pull us in two directions at once. It

is as if, through his playful evocation of the pleasures associated with
sugar's and tobacco's consumption, Ortiz wishes to seduce us into 

enjoying the text with sensuous abandon. And yet it is also as if, 

through the unfolding dramatic plot which compellingly recounts a 

story of colonial domination, Ortiz wishes us to read this text in the 

same way that he reads tobacco and sugar: as complex hieroglyphs 

that elude definitive decoding. Through the interplay of these two 

readings the essay may seem at once to stand by itself and to call for 

continuing reinterpretation.

At a time when debates about postmodernity and modernity affect

the climate of discussion about Latin America, there may be a desire 
to receive Cuban Counterpoint as a postmodern text on the basis of 

its unusual formal organization and its evident distance from posi-
tivism. There is a certain risk in this appropriation, however, for it is 

likely to deflect attention from the book's significance as a historical 

interpretation that seeks to integrate, through innovative methods of 

investigation and narration, the interplay of cultural forms and ma-
terial conditions. In my view, Ortiz's analysis of the complex articula-
tion of stabilizing and disruptive forces throughout Cuban history 

both questions prevailing assumption about the existence of separate 
"premodern" and "modern" domains, and demystifies certain pre-
tensions of modernity itself. In this respect, we may wish to see Cuban 
Counterpoint as offering a historical analysis that can contribute to 

the understanding of Latin America's deepening social crisis and the 
emergence of a world at once increasingly interrelated and fractured.

From my position as a venezuelan anthropologist working in the 
united states, I wish to approach Cuban Counterpoint as a valuable 
book for these difficult times. I take this text as an invitation to ques-
tion the concepts of modernity and postmodernity alike. Ortiz shows 

that the constitution of the modern world has entailed the clash and 
disaarticulation of peoples and civilizations together with the produc-
tion of images of integrated cultures, bounded identities, and in-

exorable progress. His counterpoint of cultures makes evident that 
in a world forged by the violence of conquest and colonization, the 
boundaries defining the west and its others, white and dark, man


cuban counterpoint from the margins
and woman, and high and low are always at risk. Formed and transformed through dynamic processes of transculturation, the landscape of the modern world must constantly be stabilized and represented, often violently, in ways that reflect the play of power in society. If a postmodern vision offers the image of fragmentary cultural formations unmoored from social foundations as an alternative to the modernist representation of integrated cultures rooted in bounded territories, Ortiz's perspective suggests that the formation of this vision be understood in relation to the changing geopolitics of empires. Ortiz invites us to understand the micro-stories of modernity and the master narrativities of modernity in relation to their respective conditions of possibility, rather than regarding one as epistemologically superior and thus trading the certainties of one age for those of another.

_Cuban Counterpoint_ helps show the play of illusion and power in the making and unmaking of cultural formations. If the self-fashioning of sovereign centers entails the making of dependent peripheries, Ortiz celebrates the self-fashioning of these peripheries, the counterpoint through which people turn margins finto centers and make fluidly coherent identities out of fragmented histories. Like other Caribbean thinkers who left their homelands and figure as foundational figures of postcolonial discourse, Fernando Ortiz struggled against Eurocentrism, although within the political and cultural confines of his nation and of reformist nationalist thought. While Ortiz clearly valorizes forms of sociality embedded in certain traditions and is hesitant with respect to the specific form of the future, he does not root identity in the past. His utopia involves less of a rupture with the present than Fanon's, but like Fanon, Ortiz uses binary oppositions (black and white, West and non-West) in a way that recognizes the experiential value of these terms for people subjected to imperial domination, but that also refuses to imprison an emancipatory politics in them. His allegorical essay recognizes the play of desire in the construction of colonial oppositions, vividly revealing how the colonial encounter forged cognitive categories as well as structures of sentiment. Ortiz treats binary oppositions not as fixities, but as hybrid and productive, reflecting their transcultural formation and their transitional value in the flow of Cuban history.

Against the imperial alchemy that turns a Western particularity into a model of universality, _Cuban Counterpoint_ calls attention to the play of globally interconnected particularities. Given Malinowski's role in establishing the centrality of anthropology as a Western discipline of otherness, there is a certain irony in the counterpoint which occurs between Malinowski and Ortiz. If Malinowski was the metropolitan ethnographer whose "magic" was most responsible for creating the concept of cultures as islands standing outside the currents of history, Ortiz, constructing a perspective from the periphery, viewed cultural boundaries as artifices of power traced precariously on the sands of history.

Ortiz's playful treatment of cultural forms as fluid and unstable in _Cuban Counterpoint_ explains the temptation to see him as a postmodern ethnographer _avant la lettre_. Yet we should not forget the significance, in Ortiz's life work, of his critique of Eurocentric categories, his respect for the integrity, however precariously achieved, of subaltern cultures, and the attentiveness with which he studied the material constraints within which people make their cultures. I believe Ortiz would endorse Marshall Sahlins's warning concerning certain currents in postmodern ethnography:

> Everyone hates the destruction rained upon the peoples by the planetary conquests of capitalism. But to indulge in what Stephen Greenblat calls the "sentimental pessimism" of collapsing their lives within a global vision of domination, in subtle ideological ways makes the conquest complete. Nor should it be forgotten that the West owes its own sense of cultural superiority to an invention of the past so flagrant that it should make natives blush to call other peoples culturally counterfeit. (1993, 381)

In Ortiz's works the concept of "transculturation" is used to apprehend at once the destructive and constructive moments in histories affected by colonialism and imperialism. Through his critical valorization of popular creativity, Ortiz shows how the social spaces where people are coerced to labor and live are also made habitable by them, how in effect power resides not only in the sugar mill, but in the rumba. As a liberal democrat who had seen the failure of liberal democracy in Cuba and elsewhere, Ortiz could find little hope in a democratic option for Cuba in 1948. He probably found even less promise in Marxism, given its formulaic application in Cuba. If Ortiz's distrust of theory is related to Gramsci's "pessimism of the intellect," his analysis of popular culture reflects its counterpart, "the optimism of the will." This optimism takes as its central object the life-affirming creativity with which Cuban popular sectors countered
their violent history. As if inspired by Cuban popular traditions, Ortiz offered *Cuban Counterpoint* as his own response to the critical circumstances of his time. After the revolution in 1959, many professionals left Cuba, but Ortiz remained, conducting research on Cuban culture until his death in 1969. Now, when the promise of a democratic society appears as a receding mirage and the market parading as Freedom haunts much of the world, we may wish to remember how Ortiz found strength in Cuban popular traditions and recognized in them exemplary forms of sociality and creativity.

The Caribbean, formed by a history of colonialism and neocolonialism, cannot be studied without addressing the geopolitics of empires. *Cuban Counterpoint* offers a glimpse into this history which demystifies its ruling fantasies—notions of the authentic native, of separate pure cultures, of a superior Western modernity 8 Listening to the dialogue between Malinowski and Ortiz today may allow us to participate in their understanding of this history and to trace links between the politics of social theory and the geopolitics of empire. My discussion of these texts is organized into three parts. First, I discuss some of the personal, cultural, and political circumstances in which the book was produced. Second, I offer a reading of the book which centers on its first part 9 Third, I discuss the politics of theory, through an examination of the counterpoint between Malinowski and Ortiz, and argue for the need to distinguish between theory production and canon formation.

**Circumstances**

*Cuban Counterpoint* was published when sixty-year-old Fernando Ortiz was at the height of his creative activity and Cuba was at the end of a tumultuous decade marked by numerous ruptures: domestic upheavals arbitrated by the United States; sharp swings in its U.S. dependent economy; the collapse of a revolutionary civilian regime in 1933; and the consolidation of the army’s power under Fulgencio Batista.

Born in Cuba in 1881 to a Cuban mother and Spanish father, Ortiz spent his youth in Minorca, Spain where he completed high school. While he went to Cuba in 1895 to study law, the turbulent conditions created by the War of Independence led him to return to Spain to complete his studies. In 1900 he obtained a bachelor’s degree in law
among practitioners of "brujería" (sorcery) in Cuba. Illustrated with photos of the heads of Afro-Cuban criminals, it exemplified the biological notion of race widely accepted in Europe and the United States, and the assumption that those of African descent were a source of social disruption and stagnation.

However, by 1910 Ortiz had begun to develop a sociological approach to race, one which emphasized cultural rather than biological factors as the basis of social progress. Concerned as before with Cuba's "backwardness," Ortiz felt Cubans must recognize their inferiority if they were to advance: "We are inferior, and our greatest inferiority consists, without doubt, in not acknowledging it, even though we frequently mention it." (1910, 27). But he explained that this inferiority was not due to "our race ... but our sense of life, our civilization is much inferior to the civilization of England, of America, of the countries that today rule the world." He argued that Cubans could be civilized or uncivilized, like all men, "like those who are victorious, like those more backward ones who still splash around in the mud of barbarism" (28). Distancing himself from biological essentialism, he argued that people were physically alike; what Cubans needed, he argued, was "not a brain to fill the skull, but ideas to flood it and to wipe out its drowsiness.... We only lack one thing: civilization." The "civilization" that Cubans needed, however, was European. Ortiz, in effect, transcoded biological signs into cultural signs, adopting at this time a racially marked evaluation of civilizing progress.

The cause of Cuba's backwardness, of the corruption of its politicians, of the precariousness of its institutions, was attributed to the influence of the sugar industry by historian Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez in his highly influential Azúcar y población en las Antillas (1927), published at a time of heightened authoritarianism under President Gerardo Machado. This study profoundly affected a generation of Cuban intellectuals involved in the struggle for political reform and honesty in public life. In Guerra y Sánchez's analysis, Afro-Cubans figured as victims of the giant sugar factories that dominated the Cuban economy rather than as a source of Cuban culture.

For this reason, it is likely that Spengler's widely read work The Decline of the West (1918, translated into Spanish in 1923) exercised a greater influence on Ortiz. Its depiction of multiple paths leading toward historical development encouraged many Latin American intellectuals during the interwar period to view their societies as occupying not a lower stage in the unilinear development of Western civilization, but a unique position in a different historical pattern, one informed by its greater spiritual qualities and by the revitalizing mixture of races (Skurski 1994). Latin America no longer had to be seen as an incomplete version of Europe, but as an alternative to it. The journal Revista de Occidente, founded by the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset in 1923, made German philosophy and historiography available to a generation of Cuban intellectuals for whom it provided intellectual resources with which to redefine Cuban identity (González Echevarría 1977, 52-60). According to Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier, the journal became "our guiding light." It helped forge new links between Cuba and Spain, like the Spanish-Cuban Cultural Institute over which Ortiz presided (53). Spain, because of its own marginality within Europe, became a conduit for German thought, especially that of Spengler, which provided a compelling vision of historical diversity. As González Echevarría suggests, Spengler offers a view of Universal history in which there is no fixed center, and where Europe is simply one more culture. From this arises a relativism in morals and values: no more acculturation of blacks, no need to absorb European civilization. Spengler provided the philosophical ground on which to stake the autonomy of Latin American culture and deny its filial relation to Europe. (56)

The shift in Ortiz's evaluation of the Afro-Cuban population and his concern for establishing the foundations of Cuban nationhood can be better understood in the light of this influence. Ortiz's alternative conception of Latin American development revalorizes popular and regional cultures but maintains a modified evolutionary framework (evidenced, for example, in his conception of cultural stages presented in the introduction to the second half of Cuban Counterpoint). Thus, while he keeps a notion of levels of cultural development, and in this respect reproduces certain biases concerning primitive and advanced civilizations, he significantly revalorizes contemporary Latin American cultures. Thus, in his Africana de la música folklórica en Cuba, he seeks to establish the universal value of African and Afro-Cuban music, and to relativize European music as the standard of accomplishment. Ironically, to achieve this aim, Ortiz invokes the authoritative words of a European intellectual, Marcel Mauss: "Our European music is but a case of music, it is not the music" (1950, 33, my translation).
**Cuban Counterpoint**

Cuban Counterpoint, like Guerra y Sánchez’s book, was published in the context of a strongman’s consolidation. But Ortiz’s book, in contrast, is a highly metaphorical interpretation of Cuban history. Its framework is not positivist, but literary, and it is, modeled after the work not of Lombroso, Guerra y Sánchez, or even Spengler, but of the medieval Spanish poet Ruiz, the archpriest of Hita.

The core of Ortiz’s book is its first section. It creates a playful counterpoint between sugar and tobacco that is modeled, according to Ortiz, on Ruiz’s allegorical poem, “Pelea que tuvo Don Carnal con Doña Cuaresma,” and inspired by Cuban popular traditions: the antiphonal liturgy prayers of both whites and blacks, the erotic controversy in dance measures of the rumba, and the versified counterpoint of guajiros and the Afro-Cubans curros (1947, 4) While Ruiz set Carnival and Lent in a contest against each other, Ortiz engaged sugar and tobacco in a theatrical interaction structured around their contrasting attributes.

Ortiz’s use of allegory not only draws on this long established literary form, but speaks as well to an allegorical literary tradition influential in Latin America’s republican era. In the foundational novels of the nascent republics, as Doris Sommer argues, national political conflicts and the romantic ties of a couple from differing origins mirror each other, charting a resolution to divisions in the polity and family through the formation of desire for the nation (991)

In Cuba’s social evolution narrated through the actions of sugar and tobacco, products he introduces as “the two most important personages in the history of Cuba” (4). Throughout the book he emphasizes their contrasting properties:

Sugar cane lives for years, the tobacco plant only a few months .... The one is white, the other dark. Sugar is sweet and odorless; tobacco bitter and aromatic. Always in contrast! Food and poison, waking and drowsing, energy and dream, delight of the flesh and delight of the spirit, sensuality and thought, the satisfaction of an appetite and the contemplation of a moment’s illusion, calories of nourishment and puffs of fantasy, undifferentiated and commonplace anonymity from the cradle and aristocratic individuality recognized wherever it goes, medicine and magic, reality and deception, virtue and vice. Sugar is she: tobacco is he. Sugar cane was the gift of the gods, tobacco of the devils; she is the daughter of Apollo, he is the offspring of Persephone. (6)

He also establishes their profound impact on Cuban society and culture:

In the economy of Cuba there are also striking contrasts in the cultivation, the processing, and the human connotations of the two products. Tobacco requires delicate care, sugar can look after itself; the one requires continual attention, the other involves seasonal work; intensive versus extensive cultivation; steady work on the part of a few; intermittent jobs for many; the immigration of whites on the one hand, the slave trade on the other; liberty and slavery; skilled and unskilled labor; hands versus ars; men versus machines; delicacy versus brute force. The cultivation of tobacco gave rise to the small holding; that of sugar brought about the great land grants. In their industrial aspects tobacco belongs to the city, sugar to the country. Commercially the whole world is the market for our tobacco, while our sugar has only a single market. Centripetence and centrifugence. The native versus the foreigner. National sovereignty as against colonial status. The proud cigar band as against the lowly sack.(6-7)

The contrasta of tobacco and sugar thread throughout the book and present themselves as a series of oppositions. However they have unexpected alignments that destabilize notions of fixed polarity: indigenous/foreign; dark/light; tradition/modernity; unique/generic; quality/quantity; masculine/feminine; artesan production/mass production; seasonal time/mechanical time; independent producers/monopoly production; generates middle classes/polarizes classes; “native” autonomy/Spanish absolutism; national independence/foreign intervention; world market/U.S. market.

These contrasts, while first described in Lombrosian fashion as deriving from the “biological distinction” between tobacco and sugar (4), unfold not as fixed qualities, but as themselves hybrid products. While tobacco is seen as male, its biological variety is seen as female. Tobacco is variously linked to the native (as an indigenous plant), to the European (as cultivated by white small holders), to the uniquely Cuban (as a transcultural product); it is related to the satanic, to the sacred, and to the magical. Although in its finished form it is an icon of Cuba’s identity, it symbolizes foreign capital’s control as well.
Linked to the violent history of indigenous, white colonist, and slave labor, tobacco has become a unique Cuban creation, leading Ortiz to call it "mulatto." Similarly, sugar's contrasts also change, as both a modernizing and an enslaving force identified with foreign domination as well as with Afro-Cuban labor. Their qualities are contradictory and multiple, carrying with them the marks of their shifting histories. In an encompassment of diverse attributes typical of the baroque, tobacco and sugar incorporate multiple meanings and transform their identities. As paradigmatic metaphors, they acquire new meanings by being placed within a syntagmatic structure through which they express a changing historical flow.

Yet this apparent mutability, which historicizes racial categories and productive relations, is stabilized by Ortiz's tendency to naturalize gender and to use common values associated with the masculine and the feminine as standards for valorization. Tobacco tends to be masculine and to represent the more desirable features in Cuban culture; sugar, in contrast, stands for the feminine and represents the most destructive features of foreign capitalism. Quality and uniqueness become, in this alignment, strongly associated with masculinity and the national, whereas quantity and homogeneity are, in seeming paradox, linked to femininity and the international. Yet this paradox points to his representation of the character of capitalism on the periphery. While capitalism is powerful and therefore masculine, capitalism in the periphery is dependent and therefore feminine. As a dependent fragment in an expanding system of international capitalist relations, Cuba appears as feminized even as it is modernized, neocolonized rather than developed. The feminine becomes the sign of weakness and of seduction. As a result, Cuba, as a ground for national identity appears contradictorily as essential and as constructed, as a metaphorical entity and as a historical product.

As metaphorical constructs condensing a multiplicity of meanings, tobacco and sugar stand for themselves, as agricultural products, as well as for their changing conditions of production. Tobacco represents a native plant from which is made a product of great individuality and uniqueness, but also relations of production marked by domestic control over the labor process, individual craftsmanship, and the flexible rhythms of seasonal time. Sugar, on the other hand, represents not only a generic product derived from an imported plant, but also stands for industrial capitalist relations of production that reduce people to commodities, homogenize social relations and products, and subject labor to the impersonal discipline of machine production and to the fixed routines of mechanical time.

Symbols both of commodities and of productive relations, tobacco and sugar become defined reflexively by the conditions of production which they represent. This reciprocal interplay between products and their generative historical contexts constitutes a second counterpoint. As both products come under the impact of the capitalist forces, they become less differentiated and their attributes converge. They represent not only distinctive qualities or identities, but also their mutability under changing conditions.

Thus, the social identities of tobacco and sugar emerge from the interplay between their biological makeup and their productive relations. Except for certain aspects of their gendering, there is little that remains essential about them, for their biological attributes are mediated by human activity and modified by evolving patterns of production and consumption. Thus, in the last pages of the book's allegorical section, just when Ortiz identifies sugar with Spanish absolutism and tobacco with Cuban nationalism, he clarifies: "But today (1940), unfortunately, this capitalism which is not Cuban by birth or by inclination, is reducing everything to the same common denominator" (71). He returns to this idea in the conclusion of this section:

We have seen the fundamental differences that existed between them (tobacco and sugar) from the beginning until machines and capitalism gradually ironed out these differences, dehumanized their economy, and made their problems more and more similar. (93)

The playful construction of contrasts between tobacco and sugar meets its counter in the sobering image of capital's growing domination of Cuban society. As Ortiz states in the conclusion of the book, in the face of this domination "many peoples and nations may find in tobacco their only temporary refuge for their oppressed personalities" (309). Yet Ortiz's work offers no predictions and seeks no closure. Instead, the first section suggests a utopian solution in the form of a fairy tale. Asserting that "there was never any enmity between sugar and tobacco," Ortiz constructs a historical possibility which envisions the marriage, à la family romance, of Cuba's central actors, much as he had proposed a unifying alliance to resolve the political crisis of 1933:

Therefore it would be impossible for the rhymesters of Cuba to write a "Controversy between Don Tobacco and Doña Sugar," as the
roguish archpriest would have liked. Just a bit of friendly bickering, which should end, like the fairy tales, in marrying and living happily ever after. The marriage of tobacco and sugar, and the birth of alcohol, conceived of the unholy ghost, the devil, who is the father of tobacco, in the sweet womb of wanton sugar. The Cuban Trinity: tobacco, sugar and alcohol. (93)

It is poetic justice that in the end, tobacco and sugar, these impersonators who had taken the license to borrow so many human attributes, reciprocate by becoming models of the generative powers of the Cuban people.

This utopian allegory, however, bears the marks of its intellectual origins within an elite discourse of reformist nationalism. It conjures up the "unity of a collectivity" (Jameson 1981, 291) by means of a trope of the liberal imagination with deep roots in Latin American fiction: a fruitful marriage, compromise and fusion, rather than conflict or transformation. Ortiz envisioned national unity attained by making the productive relations established under colonialism the basis of Cuban culture. Yet alcohol, like tobacco and sugar, could not escape the expanding grip of monopoly capital or stimulate more than a transient illusion of community within a fractured nation. Ortiz's utopia was imagined within the confining landscape of a neocolonial commodity-producing society, revealing once again, how utopia and ideology set the limits of each other in the battle over history.

Transculturation

This suggestion of utopia is followed by a sober second section where Ortiz presents an amply documented study of the evolution of tobacco and sugar production in Cuba. The historical discussion begins with an unusual introduction of seven pages divided into two chapters. The first, titled "On Cuban Counterpoint," is a two paragraph chapter in which he explains that the second section is intended to give the preceding "schematic essay" supporting evidence. Yet he warns against a simplistic reading of the first section:

It [the first section] makes no attempt to exhaust the subject nor does it claim that the economic, social, and historical contrasts pointed out between the two great products of Cuban industry are all as absolute and clear-cut as they would sometimes appear. The historic evolution of economic-social phenomena is extremely complex, and the variety of factors that determine them cause them to vary greatly in the course of their development. (97)

The second chapter is titled "On the Social Phenomenon of 'Transculturation' and its Importance in Cuba." As if to mark his distaste for "theory," Ortiz begs the reader's permission for introducing the neologism "transculturation." His introduction of this term comes in two parts. First, he explains that he is "employing for the first time" the term "transculturation," and invites others to follow him: "I venture to suggest that it might be adopted in sociological terminology, to a great extent at least, as a substitute for the term acculturation, whose use is now spreading." He explains that acculturation is being used to describe the process of transition from one culture to another and its manifold social repercussions, but asserts that transculturation is a more fitting term. Transculturation provides a larger conceptual framework within which to place the unpredictable features of Cuban society; it helps us understand the highly varied phenomena that have come about in Cuba as a result of the extremely complex transmutations of culture that have taken place here, and without a knowledge of which it is impossible to understand the evolution of the Cuban folk, either in the economic or in the institutional, legal, ethical, religious, artistic, linguistic, psychological, sexual, or other aspects of its life. (98)

Making his strongest claim, Ortiz asserts, "The real history of Cuba is the history of its intermeshed transculturations." Whose transculturation makes up "the real history of Cuba"? That of tobacco and sugar? But sugar and tobacco now recede to the background of the narrative. Ortiz instead reviews the array of "human groups" that have populated the island over its history, from Indians to contemporary immigrants. He gives close attention to the violent conditions in which African slaves were forced to become part of these vast processes.

There was ... the transculturation of a steady human stream of African Negroes coming from all the coastal regions of Africa along the Atlantic from Senegal, Guinea, the Congo, and Angola and as far away as Mozambique on the opposite shore of that continent. All of them snatched from their original social groups, their own cultures destroyed and crushed under the weight of the cultures in existence here, like sugar cane ground in the rollers of the mill.

Following the forced African migration "began the influx of Jews, French, Anglo-Saxons, Chinese, and the peoples from the four quarters of the globe. They were all coming to a new world, all on the
way to a more or less rapid process of transculturation" (102). According to Ortiz,

There was no more important human factor in the evolution of Cuba than these continuous, radical, contrasting geographic transmigrations, economic and social, of the first settlers, the perennially transitory nature of their objectives, and their unstable life in the land where they were living, in perpetual disharmony with the society from which they drew their living. Men, economies, cultures, ambitions were all foreigners here, provisional, changing, "birds of passage" over the country at its cost, against its wishes, and without its approval. (ioi)

After making this point Ortiz elaborates the concept of transculturation by contrasting it to the English term "acculturation." Evidently referring to the way the concept has been actually used in anthropological studies (rather than to the way it has been formally defined), he argues that acculturation implies the acquisition of a culture in a unidirectional process. Instead, transculturation suggests two phases, the loss or uprooting of a culture ("deculturation") and the creation of a new culture ("neoculturation"). He thus places emphasis on both the destruction of cultures and on the creativity of cultural unions. Giving credit to Malinowski's school for this idea, he says that cultural unions, like genetic unions between individuals, lead to offsprings that partake of elements of both sources, and yet are different from them2°

Ortiz insists that the concept of transculturation is indispensable for an understanding of Cuba, "whose history, more than that of any other country of America, is an intense, complex, unbroken process of transmigration of human groups, all in a state of transition" (103). Yet, far from restricting this term to Cuba, he argues that for analogous reasons, transculturation is fundamental for understanding the history of "America in general." He left it for others to apply this concept to societies in which native peoples remained an important sector of the population. It was through his analysis, more than through his brief formal definition, that Ortiz showed his understanding of transculturation.

Counterfetishism

While in the first section of Cuban Counterpoint we are told that "the most important personages of Cuban history" are sugar and tobacco, in the second section we learn that "the real history of Cuba" made up of "the intermeshed transmigrations of people." What is significant of this apparent contradiction, of this shift from commodities to people as the central characters of Cuban history? Perhaps it is related to the strange effect the book produces upon its readers. The more Ortiz tells us about tobacco and sugar, the more we feel we learn about Cubans, their culture, musicality, humor, uprootedness, their baroque manner of refashioning their identities by integrating the fractured meanings of multiple cultures. Imperceptibly, we likewise begin to understand the social forces that have conditioned the ongoing construction of Cuban identities within the context of colonial and neocolonial relations. How is it that a book about two commodities produces this effect?

The mystery of this effect, and the apparent contradiction between these two views, is perhaps resolved by realizing that Ortiz treats tobacco and sugar as highly complex metaphorical constructs that represent at once material things and human actors. Moreover, by showing how these things/actors are defined by their social intercourse under specific conditions, he illuminates the forces shaping the lives of the real actors of Cuban history-of Africans "like sugar cane ground in the rollers of the mili," or of Cuban nationalists turned into interventionists, like the tobacco of the foreign-controlled cigarette industry.

Ortiz, in my view, uses the fetish power of commodities as a poetic means to understand the society that produces them 2° Without making reference to Marx, he shows how the appearance of commodities as independent entities-as potent agents in their own right-conceals their origins in conflictual relations of production and confirms a commonsense perception of these relations as natural and necessary. The meaningful misrepresentation that occurs when social relations appear encoded as the attribute not of people, but of things, transforms commodities into opaque hieroglyphs, whose mysterious power derives from their ability to misrepresent and conceal reality, and whose multiple meanings can only be deciphered through social analysis.

By constructing a playful masquerade of tobacco and sugar, Ortiz links the fetish to the poetic and transgressive possibilities of the carnivalesque. Using the idiom of fetishized renderings of Cuban culture, he presents a counterfetishistic interpretation that challenges essentialist understandings of Cuban history. In this respect, his work resonates with Walter Benjamin's treatment of fetishism. Unlike others members of the Frankfurt school, who were primarily con-
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cerned with demystifying the fetish in the service of reality, Benjamin sought to apprehend how the fetish commands the imagination, at once revealing and appreciating its power of mystification. By treating tobacco and sugar not as things but as social actors, Ortiz in effect brings them back to the social world which creates them, resocializes them as it were, and in so doing illuminates the society that has given rise to them. The relationships concealed through the real appearance of commodities as independent forces become visible once commodities are treated as what they are, social things impersonating autonomous actors.

As the narrative unfolds, tobacco and sugar indeed become historical personages; they appear as social actors with political preferences, personal passions, philosophical orientations, and even sexual proclivities. It becomes clear that tobacco and sugar, far from mere things, are changing figures defined by their intercourse with surrounding social forces. By turning them into full-fledged social actors, Ortiz has shown that they can appear as autonomous agents only because they are in fact social creatures, that is, the products of human interaction within the context of capitalist relations of production. Like Marx, who by personifying Madame la Terre and Monsieur le Capital in Capital highlighted their fetishization in capitalist society (1981, 969), Ortiz simultaneously presents sugar and tobacco as consummate impersonators and unmasks them.

The book's conclusion makes this clear. It follows an account of how Havana tobacco was accepted in Europe and its cigars "became the symbol of the triumphant capitalist bourgeoisie," and how the democratic cigarette eventually replaced the cigar, affecting in turn how these commodities were produced:

But cigars and cigarettes are now being made by machines just as economy, politics, government, and ideas are being revised by machines. It may be that many peoples and nations now dominated by the owners of machines can find in tobacco their only temporary refuge for their oppressed personalities. (Ortiz 1947, 309)

Tobacco, the symbol of Cuban independence, of exceptional skill and unique natural factors, appears now as an increasingly homogenized mass product controlled by foreign interests, like sugar. But at this stage the issue is not to dissolve once again the sharp contrasts established earlier between tobacco and sugar, but to unmask these pretentious actors as mere creatures of human activity. The point is

"emerge as the leading actors, for they dominate the structure and aims of production.

Similarly, at the conclusion of the first section, as the counterpoint of tobacco and sugar comes to the end, the pursuit of money and power emerges as a major force structuring the pattern of Cuban transculturations ever since the conquest. Ortiz approvingly quotes Ruiz's verses on the powers of money, the commodity that stands for all commodities, the universal fetish:

Throughout the world Sir Money is a most seditious man
Who makes a courtesan a slave, a slave a courtesan
And for his love all crimes are done since this old earth began. (8r)

The chale after money and power in Cuba had helped fashion a social world which trapped them in subordinate relation to external conditions beyond their control. As Portell Vilá explains,

A difference of half a cent in the tariff on the sugar we export to the United States represents the difference between a national tragedy in which everything is cut, from the nation's budget to the most modest salary, even the alms handed to a beggar, and a so-called state of prosperity, whose benefits never reach the people as a whole or profit Cuba as a nation. (Ortiz 1947, xix)

Just as money could "make a courtesan a slave," it made tobacco, the emblem of distinction, into a mass product like sugar. At the end, Cubans, with no control over the winds of history, appear as "birds of passage," transient creatures with fluid identities.

Without referring to parties, groups, or personalities, Ortiz depicts the dynamics of neocolonial Cuba, the malleable loyalties and identities of its major actors, the provisional character of its arrangements and institutions, the absence of control over its productive relations. He had seen how no political principie was secure; noninterventionists asked the U.S. ambassador to intervene, pro-civilians allied themselves with the military, advocates of honesty became masters of corruption. In Ortiz's narrative no names need to be mentioned, for tobacco and sugar act as a mirror in which one could see reflected familiar social identities.

By casting commodities as the main actors of his historical narrative, Ortiz at once displaces the conventional focus on human his-
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historical protagonists and revalorizes historical agency. Acting as both objects and subjects of history, commodities are shown to be not merely products of human activity, but active forces which constrain and empower it. Thus historical agency comes to include the generative conditions of agency itself. As a critique of reification, Ortiz’s counterfetishism questions both conservative interpretations that reduce history to the actions of external forces, and humanist and liberal conceptions that ascribe historical agency exclusively to people. His counterfetishism encompasses a critique of Western humanism’s essentialization of the individual and its hierarchization of cultures. As Paul Eiss argues, Ortiz enacts not only a counterfetishism, but a counterhumanism. “In addition to unmasking human social relations hidden in the apparent activity of commodities, Ortiz unmasks the agency of commodities which is hidden in apparently human agencies or characteristics. Ortiz’s counterhumanism not only constitutes a brilliant spatial critique, but also challenges stable narratives and identities of colonial and neocolonial history” (1994 35). Transculturation thus breathes life into reified categories, bringing into the open concealed exchanges among peoples and releasing histories buried within fixed identities.

Counterpoints of Theory: Malinowski and Ortiz

Given Malinowski’s international academic reputation, it is understandable that Ortiz, whose prestige was local, would welcome the opportunity to have Malinowski introduce his book. He regarded transculturation as a critical concept that countered prevailing anthropological theory by directing attention to the conflictual and creative history of colonial and neocolonial cultural formations; it offered the possibility of recasting not solely Cuban history, but that of “America in general.” In all likelihood he felt that the endorsement of a metropolitan authority of Malinowski’s stature would help gain him recognition.

Ortiz acknowledges, with a tone of formal correctness, Malinowski’s “approbation” of his new term. At the close of his introduction to Cuban Counterpoint’s second half, in which he presents his concept of transculturation, Ortiz adopts an impersonal tone and uses the passive voice when recounting the granting of approval by this intellectual authority: “When the proposed neologism, transculturation, was submitted to the unimpeachable authority of Bronislaw Malinowski, the great figure in contemporary ethnography and sociology, he offered his instant approbation” (1942). Resuming his characteristically direct narration, Ortiz explains that “under his eminent sponsorship, I have no qualms about putting the term in circulation.” Yet, he makes no further comment on Malinowski’s introduction.

Malinowski is more explicit. He recounts in his introduction that he visited Cuba in 1939 and was pleased to meet Ortiz, whose work he had admired. He was enthusiastic about his plan to introduce the terco transculturation as a replacement for the prevailing terms relating to cultural contact (“acculturation, diffusion, cultural exchange, migrations or osmosis of culture”). After stating that he promised Ortiz he would use it in the future, Malinowski recounts that “Dr. Ortiz then pleasantly invited me to write a few words with regard to my ‘conversion’ in terminology, which is the occasion for the following paragraphs” (ivii).

Just as it is reasonable to assume that Ortiz hoped to receive international validation through Malinowski’s authority, we may surmise that Malinowski sought to consolidate his own reputation and that of functionalism, by supporting while aligning with his own theoretical position the work of a noted anthropologist from the margins. The introduction reflects the tension between these two aims. At one level, Malinowski highlights the importance and originality of the book. He praises Ortiz’s style and mastery of ethnographic materials, offers an appreciative exegesis of the book’s argument, and recognizes the validity of the term transculturation. Moreover, he supports plans for the creation in Cuba of an international research center. In brief, the introduction expresses strong support for the work of a peripheral ethnographer by a metropolitan anthropologist, an unusual and significant gesture.

At another level, however, the introduction assimilates Ortiz’s project into Malinowski’s own, blunting its critical edge and diminishing its originality. This assimilation takes place through three related moves. First, Malinowski aligns Ortiz’s transculturation with his own ideas concerning cultural contact; second, he defines Ortiz as a functionalist without evidence that this is the case; third, he reads his own ideas concerning cultural contact (“acculturation, diffusion, cultural exchange, migrations or osmosis of culture”). After stating that he promised Ortiz he would use it in the future, Malinowski recounts that “Dr. Ortiz then pleasantly invited me to write a few words with regard to my ‘conversion’ in terminology, which is the occasion for the following paragraphs” (ivii).

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First, Malinowski presents as Ortiz’s the notion that “the contact,
clash, and transformation of cultures cannot be conceived as the complete acceptance of a given culture by any one 'acculturated' group" ([lx] and supports it by quoting two statements from a 1938 article he wrote on cultural contact in Africa. These quotes, focusing on, cultural "ingredients" and "typical phenomena of cultural exchanges"—"schools and mines, Negro places of worship and native courts of justice, grocery stores and country plantations"—present the idea that cultural contact affects both cultures and results in new cultural realities. While a sound idea, this formulation is well within the framework presented in the memorandum on "acculturation" by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, considered the definitive statement on the subject at the time.

During the 1930s, as the subjects of anthropological study could no longer be kept within the "slots" of the "primitive" and the "traditional" where they had been contained, British and American anthropology renewed their theoretical concern with issues of cultural diffusion and contact. Through studies of "culture contact" in England and "acculturation" in the United States, anthropologists not only redefined the objects of anthropological study, but also addressed issues of contemporary relevance. In a review of acculturation studies, Ralph Beals remarks that "The obvious utility of acculturation studies for the solution of practical problems was also a factor in their early popularity" (1955, 622). According to him, this sense of "utility" was not unrelated to the exercise of state power in the colonies and at home:

The beginnings of interest in contact situations in Great Britain, France, and Holland coincided with the rise of a new sense of responsibility toward colonial peoples, while in the United States the great development of acculturation studies coincided with the Depression era and its accompanying widespread concern with social problems. (622)

At this time British anthropology shifted its focus, geographically, from the Pacific to Africa, and thematically, from the study of pristine cultures to the study of "cultural contact." Malinowski was best known for his pathbreaking *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), a study of the Trobriand Islanders in which he defined anthropology as the study of culture as an integrated whole suspended in time. He adapted to this shift in focus, however, and defined as "the real sub-
past remembered” (631). His disciple Lucy Mair stated that "of the specimen charts which are published in *The Dynamics of Culture Change*, only that on warfare contains entries under both of these heads, and his comment on the reconstruction of the past is that, though of interest for the comparative study of warfare, it is 'of no relevance whatever for the application of anthropology' " (1957 24) Functionalism's attempt to address cultural change in colonial Africa did not lead to a reevaluation of its assumptions, but to the domestication of colonial history: conflict was contained within integration and transformation within reproduction. Thus, "savage" cultures remained safely subsumed by European "civilization." We will never know what kind of book Malinowski would have written had he lived longer, but given his taxonomic treatment of change in the works that comprise *The Dynamics of Culture Change*, it is understandable that he did not engage Ortiz's work or even mention the term "transculturation."

Second, Malinowski, rather than distancing himself from Ortiz, sought to include him in his camp. In the introduction to *Cuban Counterpoint* he refers to Ortiz as a functionalist three times. Given Malinowski's aversion to history, his insistence on casting Ortiz as a functionalist is telling, particularly since he presents Ortiz's extensive use of history as an expression of functionalist principles: "Like the good functionalist that he is, the author of this book resorts to history when it is really necessary" (lxii).

Apparently Malinowski believes history became "really necessary" for Ortiz as a tool to study changing patterns of tobacco and sugar production, independent of colonialism or imperialism. He construes these products as a source of pride for Ortiz, who, Cuban by birth and by citizenship, is justly proud of the role his country has played in the history of sugar, through the vast production of its centrals, and in that of smoking, through having developed in its vegas the best tobacco in the world.... He describes the triumphal march of tobacco all over the face of the globe and determines the profound influence exerted by sugar on the civilization of Cuba, its principal effect having been, perhaps, to occasion the importation from Africa of the many and uninterrupted shiploads of black slave workers. (lxiii)

Ortiz refers to tobacco and sugar as two sources of pride for Cuba, as "the country that produced sugar in the greatest quantity and tobacco in the finest quality" (92-93). Yet his analysis suggests how problematic the sense of national identification through these two commodities was. As we have seen, Ortiz had sought to find in the reflections of a sugar crystal a history of colonial domination. Ortiz's pride was not in the volume of sugar produced in Cuba but in the creation of a culture in Cuba that countered the degradation of this history; the quality of its tobacco served as a metaphor of Cuba's unique culture.

"Was Ortiz really a functionalist?" asks Cuban historian Julio Le Riverend, in an introduction to a Venezuelan edition of this book published in 1978? He answers his own question by indicating that Ortiz repeatedly asserted that he was not. Le Riverend presents Ortiz as a thinker familiar with classical and contemporary social theory who had read Comte, Marx, and Durkheim, as well as many contemporary thinkers, among them Malinowski. According to Le Riverend, Ortiz systematically avoided theoretical discourse and showed an increasing preference for a historical approach (1978, xx-xxiii); he was an eclectic intellectual who resisted procrustean labels. Ortiz must have recognized the irony of accepting his public presentation as a functionalist in return for the intellectual acknowledgement of a book that sought to counter metropolitan anthropology and the imperial imposition of labels on Cuba.

Third, Malinowski's treatment of sugar and tobacco as mere things, divorced from their cultural and political significance, serves to obscure the metaphorical character of the book and blunt its critical edge. It must be remembered that Malinowski saw himself as no ordinary anthropologist, but as one who combined literary sensitivity with theoretical ambitions—he aspired to be the "Conrad of anthropology" (Stocking 1983, 104). Yet there is little indication that Malinowski appreciated the literary qualities of *Cuban Counterpoint*, its unconventional structure, its allegorical character, or its originality as an engaged ethnography produced by a native anthropologist involved in the political struggles of his nation. He reads transculturation as a technical term that expresses a certain dynamism in cultural exchanges, not as a critical category intended to reorient both the ethnography of the Americas and anthropological theory. In Malinowski's introduction there is little receptivity to a reading of *Cuban Counterpoint* as a critical intervention in Cuban historiography, or, least of all, as a text that could develop metropolitan anthropology.
Theoretical Transculturation: Travelling

Many Cuban intellectuals have recognized Ortiz’s wide range of accomplishments; Juan Marinello, echoing a term coined by Ortiz’s secretary, Rubén Martínez Villena, called Ortiz “the third discoverer of Cuba” (after Columbus and Humboldt). While many intellectuals have paid tribute to Ortiz, few have directly engaged or developed his work outside Cuban circles. Perhaps the most remarkable exception is Uruguayan literary critic Ángel Rama. His Transculturación narrativa en América Latina, whose title pays tribute to Ortiz, begins with an appreciative discussion of his work and shows its relevance for Rama’s own attempt to examine Latin American narratives from a Latin American perspective.3 Using Ortiz’s concept, Rama offers a critical examination of the anthropological and literary work of José María Arguedas, a Peruvian ethnologist and writer who committed suicide after dedicating his life to revalorizing and integrating the Quecha and Hispanic cultural traditions that make up his nation. For Rama, transculturation facilitates the historical examination of Latin American cultural production in the context of colonialism and imperialism. Perhaps through the influence of Rama’s work, Ortiz’s ideas have received some recognition in literary criticism and cultural studies.

Among anthropologists, however, Ortiz’s presente is marginal. Ralph Beals, in an overview of “acculturation studies,” offers the following evaluation: “In his preface to the work (Cuban Counterpoint), Malinowski is enthusiastic about the new term, but one finds no serious consideration of the reciprocal aspects of culture contact in any of his own publications. ‘Transculturation’ has had some use by Latin American writers, and, were the term ‘acculturation’ not so widely in use, it might profitably be adopted” (1955, 628). Yet Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán criticizes the concept transculturation on etymological grounds and argues that the term “created more confusion.” (1957, 11). Brazilian anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro’s monumental synthesis of Latin American cultural formations includes a critical discussion of the concept of acculturation in terms that resemble Ortiz’s position, but despite Ribeiro’s erudite references to a large number of authors, he does not mention Ortiz, and retains the term acculturation (1971, 24; 37–39). Neither are Ortiz’s books mentioned in philosopher/anthropologist Nestor García Canclini’s important work Culturas híbridas (1989). In a heated debate among prominent Latin Americanists in the United States about approaches to the history of non-European peoples, Ortiz’s ideas were not considered (Taussig 1989; Mintz and Wolf 1989). In a review of Caribbean anthropology, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, in contrast, mentions Ortiz’s work in the context of his discussion about the development of a historically oriented anthropology and situates him in relation to the work of other Caribbean anthropologists, such as Price-Mars in Haiti and Pedreira in Puerto Rico (1992, 29).

The 1944 and 1957 editions of the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, edited by Seligman and Johnson, do not mention Ortiz. The 1968 edition edited by David L. Sills, despite its proclaimed goal of being more international in practice, reproduces this silence. As a commentator states,

Despite the stated aim of the editors of the new encyclopedia to recognize the main international contributions to the development of anthropology and to overcome the Anglocentric character of the work produced by Seligman, the names of the founders of Afro-American studies, Nina Rodríguez and Fernando Ortiz, do not appear in the six hundred biographic entries (my translation; Ibarra, 1990).

Even as a marginal note, Ortiz’s presence may be ephemeral. In the introduction to the first edition of Malinowski’s The Dynamics of Culture Change, Phyllis Kaberry comments that Malinowski rarely used the term acculturation for he preferred the phrase culture contact, but she also states that once he had “advocated the adoption of a term coined by Don Fernando Ortiz, namely, ‘transculturation'” (1945, vii). Kaberry, in a footnote, gives the source of this reference as the introduction to Cuban Counterpoint and adds that “Malinowski also employed this term in his article ‘The Pan-African Problem of Culture Contact.’” However, she does not elaborate. It is remarkable that in her introduction to the second edition of Malinowski’s book, published a decade and a half later, she modified this section. Her referente to Fernando Ortiz is dropped without explanation, and together with it the referente to Malinowski’s article in which he had used Ortiz’s transculturation (1961). This may explain why Wendy James, in an informative assessment of Malinowski’s increasingly critical opinion of colonial powers, strikingly titled “The Anthropologist as Reluctant Imperialist,” makes no mention of this article (1973, 41–69). Through these silences that appear in works analyzing the development of Malinowski’s ideas, Ortiz’s influence
on his thought is erased. Emerging anthropological canons appear exclusively as Malinowski's own.

How are authors from the periphery recognized at the center? Edward Said's discussions of the complicity between imperialism and knowledge have played a pathbreaking role in unsettling Eurocentric representations and in valorizing the work of authors from the periphery. Paradoxically, his comments on nonmetropolitan anthropology reveal the intricate mechanisms through which its marginalization is often unwittingly reinscribed. In a talk delivered to a professional gathering of anthropologists in 1987, he considers the limits of peripheral anthropology and suggests that imperial power is so dominant in the periphery that anthropologists working at the center must recognize the special responsibility they have:

To speak about the "other" in today's United States is, for the contemporary anthropologist here, quite a different thing than say for an Indian or Venezuelan anthropologist: the conclusion drawn by Jürgen Golte in a reflective essay on "the anthropology of conquest" is that even non-American and hence "indigenous" anthropology is "intimately tied to imperialism," so dominant is the global power radiating out from the great metropolitan center. To practice anthropology in the United States is therefore not just to be doing scholarly work investigating "otherness" and "difference" in a large country; it is to be discussing them in an enormously influential and powerful state whose global power is that of a superpower (213).

Indeed, Jürgen Golte, a German anthropologist specializing in Andean studies, does not condemn anthropology in its entirety as a discipline bound to imperialism (Golte 1980). Rather, his argument implies that Latin American anthropology cannot escape from this complicity because it originates not in the European Enlightenment—presumably the foundation of metropolitan anthropology—but in European imperialism:

Anthropology in Latin America is the instrument of the dominant classes in their relationship with the exploited classes. It forms part of a cultural context derived from bourgeois European thought which reifies potentially exploitable human groups. There are few indications that permit us to see a potential significance for anthropology in the context of the liberation of those who have been its objects, since Latin American anthropology as a discipline had its origin not in the tradition of the European Enlightenment but in the tradition of European imperialism (391).

Undoubtedly, Arguedas struggled with the tools he received and tried to adapt them to his own purposes, not always successfully. Like Ortíz, Arguedas rejected prevailing assumptions about progress and "acculturation," and sought instead to explore the dynamics of cultural transformation underpinning the formation of cultures in Latin America (1977). In a statement written before his death, on the occasion of receiving the literary prize "Inca Garcilaso de la Vega," Arguedas states, "I am not an acculturated person; I am a Peruvian who proudly, as a happy devil, speaks in Christian and in Indian, in Spanish and in Quechua" (my translation; 1971, 297). He explains that a principio guiding his life work was the effort to view Peru as an infinite source of creativity, a country endowed with such extraordinarily diverse and rich traditions, with such imaginative myths and poetry, that, "From here to imitate someone is quite scandalous" (my translation; 298).14

While Golte evidently intends to demonstrate Latin American anthropologists' complicity with imperialism in order to critique it, his blanket dismissal unwittingly completes the scandal of imperialism. An examination of the relationship between anthropology and imperialism should make visible not only the complicity, but also the contrapuntal tension between the two. While Said does not distance himself from Golte's opinion, his Alea for reading cultures contrapuntally in Culture and Imperialism (1993) opens a space for a more nuanced evaluation of cultural formations involving centers and peripheries. He argues for the interactional, or contrapuntal, constitut-
tion of cultural identities. "For it is the case that no identity can ever exist by itself and without an array of opposites, negatives, oppositions: Greeks always require barbarians and Europeans, Africans, Orientals, etc." (52). He returns to this idea in his conclusion: "Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental" (336). Against this paradoxical gift, Said ends by offering, with a sense of urgency, a contrapuntal perspectivism:

Survival in fact is about the connections between things, in Eliot's phrase, reality cannot be deprived of the "other echoes (that) inhabit the garden." It is more rewarding—and more difficult—to think concretely and sympathetically contrapuntally about others than only about "us" (336).

A contrapuntal perspective, by illuminating the complex interaction between the subaltern and the dominant, should make it difficult to absorb one into the other, completing, however unwittingly, the work of domination.

It is significant that two critics of imperialism developed, independently of each other and fifty years apart, a contrapuntal perspective for analyzing the formation of cultures and identities. While Said derived his notion of counterpoint from Western classical music, Ortiz was inspired by Cuban musical and liturgical popular traditions. Perhaps a contrapuntal reading of Said and Ortiz points to a counterpoint between classic and popular music, and beyond that, to one between the cultures of Europe, Africa, and America.

Ortiz's presence as an echo in Said's garden, however, makes also more visible the need to understand the systemic and yet little known operations through which centers and margins are reproduced. One may be tempted to see in the silences surrounding Ortiz, even as his ideas have had an impact on writing and analysis, a confirmation of Dipesh Chakrabarty's argument that Third World histories are written with reference to First World theoretical canons and thus to regard this as yet another proof that social theory is an attribute of the center (1992). Yet Ortiz's work complicates this view. His understanding of the relational nature of cultural formations undermines the distinction between First and Third worlds that seems so central to authors related to the Subaltern Studies project.

For instance, Gyan Prakash's suggestive proposal for writing post-Orientalist histories depends on a fundamental distinction between First and Third worlds (1990). While Prakash rejects foundationalist historiography, he ultimately brings "third world positions" as a slippery strategic foundation that guarantees "engagement rather inanity" (403). By anchoring the writing of history in the "Third World," he thus hopes to counter the possibility that a postfoundational historiography may lead to the aesthetization of the politics of diversity (407). Yet if the justification for this form of strategic foundationalism is its political efficacy, it must also account for the political consequences of categories that may polarize and obscure contests often fought on more varied terrains.

By examining how cultures shape each other contrapuntally Ortiz shows the extent to which their fixed and separate boundaries are the artifice of unequal power relations. A contrapuntal perspective may permit us to see how the Three Worlds schema is underwritten by fetishized geohistorical categories which conceal their genesis in inequality and domination; more important, it may help develop nonimperial categories which challenge rather than confirm the work of domination. The issue is not that the categories we have at our disposal, such as the "First" or "Third" worlds, should not be used, for it is evident that in certain contexts they are not only indispensable but also efficacious, but that their use should attend to their limits and effects. Arguments about theory production and subaltern historiography polarized in terms of the Three Worlds schema run the risk of reinscribing the hierarchical assumptions which underpin it.

In "Travelling Theory" Said discusses how theory travels through a study of the migration of Lukacian Marxism after wwi to France and England and its transformation in the works of Lucien Goldman and Raymond Williams (1983). While James Clifford considers Said's essay to be "an indispensable starting place for an analysis of theory in terms of its location and displacements, its travels," he also states that "the essay needs modification when extended to a postcolonial context" (1989, 184). He objects to Said's delineation of four stages of travel (origin; distance traversed; conditions for reception or acceptance; and transformation and incorporation in a new place and time), because, in his words, "these stages read like an all-too-familiar story of immigration and acculturation. Such a linear path cannot do justice to the feedback loops, the ambivalent appropriations
and resistances that characterize the travels of theories, and theorists, between places in the 'First' and 'Third' worlds. " Clifford complements Said's view of "linear" theoretical travel within Europe, with a conception of the "non-linear complexities" of theoretical itineraries between First and Third worlds (184-85).

While there are significant differences in the way theory travels between different regions of the world, perhaps one may push Clifford's argument further and propose that all theoretical travel is defined by "non-linear complexities," by processes of "transculturation" rather than "acculturation." The dichotomy between linear theoretical travel within Europe and non-linear theoretical travel elsewhere anchors theory production at the center. Thus, Clifford argues that Marx, who came from backward Germany, was "modernized" by moving to Paris and London. "Could Marx have produced Marxism in the Rhineland? Or even in Rome? Or in St. Petersburg? It is hard to imagine, and not merely because he needed the British Museum and its blue books. Marxism had to articulate the 'center' of the world—the historically and politically progressive source" (181). From a different perspective one could ask: could Marx have produced Marxism if he had not grown up in the Rhineland and kept it close to his concerns? Could Smith or Proudhon have produced Marxism? Marxism entailed a non-linear transculturation of intellectual formations involving not only "backward" and "modern" locations of European culture, but also dominant and subaltern perspectives within it. This suggests that all theoretical travel is inherently transcultural, but that the canonization of theory entails the retrospective erasure and "linearization" of traces and itineraries.

In my view, canons, not theories, are imperial attributes. While theoretical production—broadly understood as self-critical forms of knowledge—takes place in multiple forms and sites, disciplinary canons and the canonization of their creators largely remains the privilege of the powerful. Yet even canons, despite their hardness, are inhabited by subaltern echoes. There is no reason to assume that theory travels whole from center to periphery, for in many cases it is formed as it travels through the interaction between different regions. The recognition of the existence of a dynamic exchange between subaltern and dominant cultures, including subaltern and metropolitan anthropologies, may lead to the realization that much of what today is called "cultural anthropology" may be more aptly addressed as "transcultural anthropology."
A culture which lacks the instruments to conceive the social totality inevitably falls back on the nuclear psyche as a First Cause of society and history. This invariant substitute is explicit in Malinowski, Namier, Eysenck and Gombrich. It has a logical consequence. Time exists only as intermittence (Keynes), decline (Leavis), or oblivion (Wittgenstein). Ultimately, (Namier, Leavis, or Gombrich), the twentieth century itself becomes the impossible object (1968, 56).

Ortiz's totalizing historical narrative may have been particularly challenging to Malinowski, for Cuban Counterpoint constantly displaces and re-places honrè and exile, the national and the international, centers and peripheries, and shows how they are formed historically through constant interplay. "Historicity," as Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues in his review of Caribbean anthropology, "once introduced, is the nightmare of the ethnographer, the constant reminder that the groupings one needs to take for natural are human creations, changing results of past and ongoing processes" (5992). Ortiz's historical perspective sought not closure, but ruptures and openings, "Ortiz has never been able to encircle a subject of his study. In breaking the circle he seeks a problem's integral meaning, its significance in the world as a whole," according to a journalistic account titled "Mister Cuba" (Novás Calvo 1950). Ortiz's contrapuntal viewpoint also informed his practical concerns: "He has never thought of national affairs as separate from world affairs" (ibid.). Home and abroad, science and politics, self and other, were intimately related in Ortiz's historical work.

In Argonauts of the Western Pacific, Malinowski argues that an anthropological vision requires the perspective of a detached observer, capable of seeing the functioning of the whole society. "Exactly as a humble member of any modern institution, whether it be the state, or the church, or the army, is of it and in it, but has no vision of the resulting integral action of the whole, still less could furnish any account of its organization, so it would be futile to attempt questioning a native in abstract sociological terms" (5922, 52). Ortiz looks at Cuba, his "honrè," not from a detached archimedean point, but from within; his integral vision of the whole was developed by being in it and of it. As an intellectual from the periphery, developing a critical perspective from within does not preclude, but rather is conditioned by, a view from without. Yet his critical distance entails a critique of distance and of the view from afar. Thus detachment is not the oppo-

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site of commitment, but its necessary condition. Implicitly challenging the notion of the detached observer, Ortiz's work summons anthropologists, at the center or at the periphery, to recognize their positionality, the historicity of what Walter Mignolo has theorized as "the locus of enunciation" (5993). With particular urgency in postcolonial societies, this task involves taking a critical stance with respect to the available standpoints. Ortiz's work reflects a creative struggle to construct, rather than merely to occupy, a critical locus of enunciation.

It is difficult for me to imagine that Malinowski did not even glimpse the significance of Ortiz's achievement. If I am right in perceiving a tension in Malinowski's introduction between repressing and fleetingly seeing Ortiz's originality, perhaps we may see this tension on the two occasions when Malinowski used the term transculturation.

The first appears in Malinowski's attempt to lay the foundations of functionalist anthropology in his A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays (5944). In the second chapter, "A Minimum Definition of Science for the Humanist," he states that theory finds a source of inspiration and correction in practical concerns: "Finally, in all this the inspiration derived from practical problems—such as colonial policy, missionary work, the difficulties of culture contact, and transculturation—problems that legitimately belong to anthropology, is an invariable corrective of general theories" (14). Malinowski does not acknowledge the paternity of this concept, or explain its significance.

While in later chapters he surveys developments in anthropological theory and identifies the authors related to them, he does not mention Fernando Ortiz or his work and ideas.

Ironically, on the basis of Malinowski's minimal use of the term transculturation in this book, the Oxford English Dictionary credits Malinowski as introducing the word; needless to say, it does not distinguish the term from acculturation, which was Ortiz's intent in coining it:

Transculturation{f. Trans- 3 + CULTURE sb. + -ATION) _

Acculturation.

Practical problems—such as ... the difficulties of culture contact and transculturation—problems that legitimately belong to anthropology.

In striking contrast to Malinowski's minimal use of transculturation in this canon-setting book, in the last article he wrote before his death in 1942, "The Pan-African Problem of Culture Contact" (1943), he mentions the term several times, fully crediting Fernando Ortiz:

> We shall, in a moment, have a closer look at the general principles of this cultural transformation—or transculturation, as we might call it—following the great Cuban scholar, Dr. Fernando Ortiz, whose name may well be mentioned here, for he is one of the most passionate friends of the Africans in the New World and a very effective spokesman of their cultural value and sponsor of their advancement (650).

In this article Malinowski takes an unusually strong critical stance with respect to "the onslaught of white civilization on native cultures." In response to this onslaught, he states that "the anthropologist should immediately register that a great deal of African culture was destroyed or undermined in the process."

The African lost a great deal of his cultural heritage, with all the natural privileges which it carried of political independence, of personal freedom, of congenial pursuits in the wide, open spaces of his native land. He lost that partly through the predatory encroachment of white civilizations, but largely through the well-intentioned attempts of his real friends. At the same time, he did not gain any foothold in white citizenship in the social and cultural world of European settlers, officials, and even missionaries and educators—a foothold the promise of which was implicit in the very fundamental principles of Christianity and education alike (651).

In response to the ravages of colonialism, Malinowski makes an extraordinary proposal: the establishment in Africa of "an equitable system of segregation, of independent autonomous development" (665).

> How to explain Malinowski's exceptional use of Ortiz's transculturation, his emotional denunciation of colonial destruction, his strong critique of white civilization, his proposal for empowering Africans at this time? We may find a clue to this puzzle in the way Malinowski justified his proposal for a system of "autonomous" African development.

Speaking as a European, and a Pole at that, I should like to place here as a parallel and paradigm the aspirations of European nationality, though not of nationalism. In Europe we members of oppressed or subject nationalities—and Poland was in that category for one hundred and fifty years, since its first partition, and has again been put there through Hitler's invasion—do not desire anything like fusion with our conquerors and masters. Our strongest claim is for segregation in tercos of full cultural autonomy which does not even need to imply political independence. We claim only to have the same scale of possibilities, the same right of decision as regards our destiny, our civilization, our careers, and our mode of enjoying life.

In his unusual statement, Malinowski places himself in the text, but this time not as an impartial observer standing on an archimedean point outside history, as in his early texts, or as a concerned anthropologist, as in some of his later writings, but as a positioned historical actor, a kindred victim of history's atrocities. A decentered and fragmented Europe seems to have enabled Malinowski to locate himself in it, to be of it, to speak from it. It is as if at the zenith of his life, the advance of fascism in Europe, the occupation of Poland, the destruction of his own "honre," had made him receptive to the claims and experience of other oppressed groups. At that moment he was able to acknowledge Ortiz, to fulfill the promise he once made to his.

At a time when no place can be safe from history's horrors or innocence of its effects, we may wish to establish our affiliation with the Malinowski of 1942, rather than with the canonical figure of *Argonauts*. Malinowski's acknowledgement suggests how Ortiz's ideas helped him view cultural transformations from a nonimperial perspective and support the claims of subject peoples. In the spirit of Ortiz's work, we may honor his memory by suspending belief in his individual authorship, and remembering *Cuban Counterpoint* as a text in which "cultural treasures," as Walter Benjamin and Angel Rama recognized, cease to owe their existence exclusively to the work of elites and become, as products of a common history, the achievement of popular collectivities as well. Reflecting Ortiz's own counterpoint with these collectivities,—*Cuban Counterpoint* celebrates the popular imagination and vitality that inspired this work: the "antiphonal prayer of the liturgies of both whites and blacks, the erotic controversy in dance measures of the rumba and... the versified counterpoint of the unlettered guajiros and the Afro-Cubans curros." (947)

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Ortiz’s detailed examination of Afro-Cuban musical traditions in *Africana de la música folklórica de Cuba (1950)* and *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba (1951)* valorizes some aspects of the social dimensions of these musical forms (participative, improvisational, playful, democratic, etc.), without, however, paying sufficient attention to the gender inequalities reinscribed in them. These studies, more than his theoretical discussions, make evident the significance of his notion of “transculturation.” They also develop this concept in interesting directions. For example, Ortiz makes creative use of Maret’s concept of “horizontal and vertical transvalorization” in his discussion of the transculturation of high and low musical traditions (1950, ix-xix).

Many Caribbean writers have shown the connection between colonialism and the Caribbean (one can think here of writers as diverse as José Martí, C. L. R. James, Eric Williams, Nicolás Guillén, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Alejo Carpentier, George Lamming, Michelle Cliff, etc.). For a perceptive discussion of this connection in relation to anthropology, see Trouillot (1992, 22). While the Caribbean offers a powerful vantage point from which to look at colonialism, it needs to be complemented with perspectives from societies in which native populations were not destroyed, and remain, through processes of transculturation necessarily different from those that have taken place in the Caribbean, active forces in the present. These two sections draw freely from a previous article of mine (’993). His solution was to “keep Grau as provisional president while changing the structure of the government so as to include representatives of all important political groups, thus working toward a genuine ‘national’ government.” (Aguilar 1972, 189). See also Louis A. Pérez (1986).

For a discussion of Ortiz’s frame of mind at this time, which shows the burden of evolutionary, positivist, and racist scientific ideologies on his thinking, see Aline Helg (1990). Helg also argues that Ortiz’s work at the beginning of the century helped consolidate dominant forms of racial prejudice (250, 1990a). In an interesting discussion of “the conceptual horizon” within which Ortiz began his work in Cuba, Maria Poumier suggests that the yace war of 1912, in which several thousand Afro-Cubans were massacred, helped consolidate certain silences about the discourse on race in Cuba at a time when Cuba’s “whitening” was regarded as a necessary condition for its regeneration and unification as a nation. She situates Ortiz’s silence with respect to this war as a sign of his ambiguous relationship with dominant views. Poumier also echoes the opinion of Cuban experts who believe, on the basis of the extraordinary ethnographic information presented in Ortiz’s works, that at one point he must have become an initiate of the Abakuá, an Afro-Cuban men’s society, and that his obligations to its strict codes of secrecy may have constrained him from speaking on current issues of race. Helg’s and Poumier’s informative articles contribute to a fuller understanding of Ortiz’s thought by specifying the context of its initial formation. As their works make evident, an evaluation of Ortiz’s entire corpus must avoid the danger both of deifying Ortiz as a “discoverer” of Cuba and champion of liberal and socialist nationalist projects, and of vilifying him as a ventriloquist of racial prejudice. These polarizing positions only simplify Ortiz’s role in forming Cuban nationalist discourse and reduce the complex dynamic between his ideas and dominant ideologies to a few tenets. The challenge is to appreciate at once Ortiz’s striking transformation and its limits, given the origins of his work.

Notes

1. “One tree does not make a forest.” *Monte* has multiple meanings and associations in Cuba, e.g., “forest,” “mountain,” “woods,” “bush.” See Lydia Cabrera’s *El Monte* (1975), which is dedicated to Fernando Ortiz.

2. “Literary works do not exist outside of cultures, but crown them. To the degree that these cultures are the multitudinous creations of centuries, the writer becomes a producer, dealing with the work of innumerable others: a sort of compiler (Roa Bastos might have said), a brilliant weaver in the vast historical workshop of American society.” (From Angel Rama [1982]. My thanks to John Charles Chasteen for providing these translations.)

3. For the 1963 edition of this book, published by the Consejo Nacional de Cultura in La Habana, Ortiz added twelve chapters (over two hundred additional pages). He reorganized the second part by dividing it into two sections, “Historia, etnografía y transculturación del tabaco habano,” which discusses tobacco production in thirteen chapters (III-X; XIX-XXII, and XXV), and “Inicios del azúcar y de la esclavitud de negros en Americas,” which examines aspects of the evolution of sugar production in ten chapters (XI-XVIII; XXIII-XXIV). The section on tobacco includes (as Chapter II) the theoretical introduction to the second part, where Ortiz presents the term “transculturation.” There is no indication that he regarded this addition as definitive; in some respects, it only highlights the open-ended character of the book. Except for few modifications, he left the first section unchanged. The original Spanish and English editions included the prologue by Jerminio Portell Vilá; in fact, Portell Vilá’s name precedes Malinowski’s in the Cuban edition (but not in the English version). In the 1963 edition, Portell Vilá’s prologue is not included, but it appears again in an edition published by the La Universidad de las Villas in 1983.

4. These comments only intend to suggest certain links between the work of Ortiz and that of other postcolonial intellectuals. Benita Parry discusses the role of binary oppositions in Fanon and other postcolonial thinkers in an illuminating discussion of colonial discourse (1987). Homi Bhabha has brought up the important dimension of desire through a Lacanian reading of ambivalence in colonial situations (1985).

5. For an illuminating discussion of Malinowski’s impact on anthropology, see Stocking (1983).

6. It should be noted, however, that this temptation has not led to the inclusion of Ortiz in contemporary discussions about alternative foros of ethnographic writing. For references that defined this discussion, see Marcus and Fisher (1986) and Clifford and Marcus (1986).
in racist ideologies and his position as an elite intellectual under changing political regimes. My thanks to Rebecca Scott for sharing these sources.

12. "No cerebro que llene el cráneo, sino ideas que lo inunden y limpien su; modor... Sólo nos falta una cosa: civilización." (my translation).

13. I am indebted to Julie Skurski for this formulation.

14. Ironically, this denial of a "filial relation to Europe" took place through filial links to Europe, making these enduring ties shape the intellectual landscape on which Afro-Cubans were imagined as a source of culture, not an obstacle to it. This irony reminds me of a cartoon by Quino, the Argen
tinian humorist, depicting a discussion between the Mafalda and Libertad, two politically concerned young girls, in which one of them asserts: "The problem with Latin Americans is that we always imitate others. We should be like North Americans, who don't imitate anyone."

15. The term "curros" referred to freed Afro-Cubans who roamed the streets of La Habana during the first half of the nineteenth century and were considered part of the underworld. Ortiz examined this topic in Los negros curros, a posthumous book (1986).

16. On the ambiguities which marked this process, see Skurski (1994). On allegory in the literature of the periphery, see the exchange between Fredric Jameson (1986) and Aijaz Ahmad (1987).

17. Ortiz built on a tradition of thought, both popular and academic, that, established connections between tobacco and sugar and the formation of Caribbean nations. Hoetink argues that Pedro F. Bonó, in an essay written in the 1880s about the Dominican Republic, was the first to use the Caribbean to evaluate the social impact of tobacco and to develop an argument about its "democratic character." He states that this argument was "repeated and elaborated with great literary and scientific erudition by the Cuban scientist, Fernando Ortiz (1980, 5) (my translation). Bonó argued that tobacco was the basis of democracy in the Dominican Republic because it promotes economic stability among agricultural workers and landholders (Rodríguez 1964, 199). My thanks to Robin Derby for these references.

18. I am indebted to Roxanna Duntley Matos and Norbert Otto Ross for this observation.

19. Ortiz’s approach contrasts with that of other critics of the period. Guerra
y Sánchez, in the preface to the second edition of his Azúcar y población en las Antillas (1927), notes that his book had originally predicted the sugar crisis of 1930, which was determined by the "historical laws" that govern this industry, and had demonstrated how these events followed "with mathematical precision" from his account of Cuban history.

20. It is not clear who Ortiz has in mind, if Malinowski or some of his followers. Harriet de Onís translated "la escuela de Malinowski" as "Malinowski’s followers." I prefer the term "school." My preceding reference to the genetic union between individuals is also a more literal translation of Ortiz’s text than Onís’s "reproductive process." George Stocking has suggested that Ortiz may have read Malinowski’s "Methods of Study of Cultural Contact" (1938) (personal correspondence).

21. There is a vast literature on this subject. Most contemporary thinkers build upon the insights of Marx and Durkheim. For a discussion of anthropological perspectives on totemism and fetishism, see Terence Turner (1985). See also a discussion of commodities by Appadurai (1988) and Ferguson (1988).

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22. According to George Stocking, Malinowski was in the habit of co-opting people and concepts for his functionalist movement. He perceptively notes that while "too 'strong' a reading of his preface runs the risk of making too much of small things ... positively valued, this is precisely the point of de- or re-constructionist readings (to make much of silences, r... contradictions, or implications)" (personal communication).

23. They viewed acculturation as a two-way process mutually affecting the groups in contact: "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups ... " (1936, 10). Malinowski’s critique of Herskovits’s "acculturation" shows not only their differences—which center on the role of applied anthropology, which Malinowski defended—but also on their shared understandings. Malinowski’s agreement concerning the need to take into account the temporal or historical dimensions in the study of change shows how far he in fact is from Ortiz’s position (1939).


25. Kaberry explains that this book is based on materials on this subject from Malinowski’s 1936-1938 seminars at the London School of Economics, his 1941 seminar at Yale University, and other papers and articles. Kaberry acknowledges that although she was familiar with Malinowski’s ideas, the book she edited was "not the book that he would have written" (1961, vi).

26. This edition, published in 1978, was part of the "Biblioteca Ayacucho" series. Among the editors of this series was Angel Rama, an admirer of Ortiz’s work. The introduction by Julio Le Riverend is included in the 1983 edition of Ortiz’s book published by the Editorial de Ciencias Sociales in La Habana.

27. Marinello made this statement, which in certain respects highlights Ortiz’s links to “outsiders” and to an outsider’s perspective, in a section of Casa de las Américas dedicated to Ortiz after his death in 1969 (which included articles by Nicolas Guillén, José Luciano Franco, José Antonio Portuondo, and Miguel Barnet). I have mentioned the introduction to the 1940 edition of Ortiz’s book published by the Venezuelan edition of Cuban Counterpoint’s fifthtieth anniversary (Benítez-Rojo closely aligns Ortiz with postmodernism), and Gustavo Pérez Firmat’s The Cuban Condition: Translation and identity in Modern Cuban Literature. In an interesting critique of Todorov’s and Naipaul’s ideas, José Piedra (1989) uses the term "transcultural," without explicitly acknowledging Ortiz’s work, to propose a transformative approach to colonial encounters. Coincidentally, Piedra supports his argument by comparing Malinowski’s Argonauts of the Western Pacific to his A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term, noting that in the diary one can detect traces of transcultural exchanges between Malinowski and the Trobrianders that are suppressed in his monological scholarly text (xx; for a discussion of this work see Coroil 1989).

28. Ibarra refers to works by Alfred Metraux, Alfonso Reyes, Roger Bastide, Jean Price Mars, Melville Herskovits (1983), C. L. R. James refers to Ortiz’s work in glowing terms: “it is the first and only comprehensive study of the
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This is the article that disappeared as a citation in Kaberry's introduction to the second edition of Malinowski's *The Dynamics of Culture Change.*

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West Indian people. Ortiz ushered the Caribbean into the thought of the twentieth century and kept it there" (1963:395).

"Narrative Transculturation in Latin America," an important book as yet untranslated into English.

Rama appreciatively states that transculturation expresses "a Latin America's, can perspectivism, including in that which may incorrectly interpret" (1982:233). The reference to "incorrect interpretation" concerns Aguirre Beltrán's etymological critique of Ortiz's term (1975).

For example, Ortiz's ideas appear in the theoretical essays on cultural transformation by Bernardo Subercaseaux (1987) and George Yudice (1992). Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes Travel Writing and Trans
culturation* (1992) credits Ortiz for the term transculturation and develops, her conception of a linguistics of contact into a suggestive analysis of cultural transformation in contact zones.

Ribeiro refers to Ortiz only in relation to specific aspects of Cuban ethnography.

I am grateful to Riyad Koya for bringing this article to my attention and, for his helpful comments concerning Malinowski's affiliations and ideas.

"Imitar desde aquí a alguien resulta algo escandaloso."

The reality of Ortiz's absence in contrast to the expectation of his presence became clearer when I delivered a version of this essay at Duke University. While Walter Mignolo had assumed before the talk that Said's contra
temporal perspectivism in *Cultures of Imperialism* built upon Ortiz's ideas, i, Fredric Jameson believed that Claude Levi-Strauss, given his *Myth of Origins*, must have known and been influenced by Ortiz's work. After the lecture, Mignolo and I examined Said's book, and Jameson checked Levi-Strauss's works; in neither case did we find any reference to Ortiz. Yet Jameson conjectured that Levi-Strauss must have known about Cuban Counterpoint, given Malinowski's introduction to the book, his own work" in Brazil, and his travels and contact in South America. He exclaimed that if Malinowski's partial recognition of Ortiz's ideas is disturbing, Levi Strauss's silence is "thunderous."


There are, of course, counter canons and alternative modalities of establishing the significance of ideas and authors. This schematic formulation seeks to suggest a way of thinking about the role of power in the relation-
ship between theory production and canon formation. In the Angloameri-
...
HAVE known and loved Cuba ever since the days of a prolonged stay in the Canary Islands during my early years. To the Canary Islanders Cuba was the land of promise, where they went to make money and then return to their homes on the slopes of Mount Teide or around Gran Caldera, or else to settle in Cuba and return to their native islands only for a holiday, humming Cuban songs, parading the Creole mannerisms and customs they had picked up, and relating the wonders of that beautiful land where the royal palm queens it, and the sugar-cane fields and the bottom lands where the tobacco grows spread their verdure as far as the eye can see. After establishing these contacts with Cuba in my youth, my ties with the island were strengthened later when I became acquainted with the name of Fernando Ortiz and his work in the field of sociology. His research into the African influences in Cuba, his investigation of the economic, social, and cultural aspects resulting from the interplay of influences between Africans and Latin Americans, always impressed me as being model works in their field.

So when at last I met Fernando Ortiz during my first visit to Havana in November 1939, it was a source of pleasure and profit to me to take greater advantage of his time and patience than is generally considered permissible on such short acquaintance. As might have been expected, we often discussed those most interesting of phenomena: the exchanges of cultures and the impact of civilizations on one another. Dr. Ortiz told me at the time that in his next book he was planning to introduce a new technical word, the term transculturación, to replace various expressions in use such as "cultural exchange," "acculturation," "diffusion," "migration or osmosis of culture," and similar ones that he considered inadequate. My instant response was the enthusiastic acceptance of this neologism. I promised its author that I would appropriate the new expression for my own use, acknowledging its paternity, and use it constantly and loyally whenever I had occasion to do so. Dr. Ortiz then pleasantly invited me to write a few words with regard to my "conversion" in terminology, which is the occasion for the following paragraphs.
There is probably nothing more misleading in scientific work than the problem of terminology, of the *mot juste* for each idea, of finding the expression that fits the facts and thus becomes a useful instrument of thought instead of a barrier to understanding. It is evident that quarreling over mere words is but a waste of time if what is not quite so apparent is that the imp of etymological obsessions often plays mischievous tricks on our style—that is to say, our thoughts—when we adopt a terceto whose component elements of basic meaning contains certain false or misleading semantic implications from which we cannot free ourselves, and thus the exact sense of a given concept, which in the interests of science should always be exact and unequivocal, becomes confused.

Take, for example, the word *acculturation*, which not long ago came into use and threatened to monopolize the field, especially in the sociological and anthropological writings of North American authors. Aside from the unpleasant way it falls upon the ear (it sounds like a cross between a hiccup and a belch), the word *acculturation* contains a number of definite and undesirable etymological implications. It is an ethnocentric word with a moral connotation—*the uncultured* is to receive the benefits of being under the sway of our great Western culture. The word *acculturation* implies, because of the preposition *ad* with which it starts, the idea of a *terminus ad quem*. The "uncultured" is to receive the benefits of "our culture"; it is he who must change and become converted into "one of us."

It requires no effort to understand that by the use of the term *acculturation* we implicitly introduce a series of moral, normative, and evaluative concepts which radically vitiate the real understanding of the phenomenon. The essential nature of the process being described is not the passive adaptation to a clear and determined standard of culture. Unquestionably any group of immigrants coming from Europe to America suffers changes in its original culture but it also provokes a change in the mold of the culture that receives them. Germans, Italians, Poles, Irish, Spaniards always bring with them when they transmigrate to the nations of America something of their own culture, their own eating habits, their folk melodies, their musical taste, their language, customs, superstitions, ideas, and temperament. Every change of culture, or, as I shall say from now on, every transculturation, is a process in which something is always given in return for what one receives, a system of give and take. It is a process in which both parts of the equation are modified, a process from which a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent. To describe this process the word *transculturation*, stemming from Latin roots, provides us with a term that does not contain the implication of one certain culture toward which the other must tend, but an exchange between two cultures, both of them active, both contributing their share, and both co-operating to bring about a new reality of civilization.

In Dr. Ortiz’s excellent analysis (Part II, Chapter ii) he points out clearly and convincingly that even the first Iberian settlers of Cuba, those who arrived shortly after its discovery by Christopher Columbus, did not bring with them to that West Indian island their Spanish culture in its totality, complete and intact. Dr. Ortiz indicates how this new choice of those settlers, motivated by different reasons and objectives, operated a change in them by the very fact of their migration to the New World. The make-up of the new society was determined from its beginning by the fact that the settlers were strained through the sieve of their own ambitions, of the various motives that caused them to leave their 1 imeland and took them to another world where they were to live. These were people who, like the Pilgrim Fathers of Anglo-Saxon America, were not only seeking another land in which to re-establish the peace of their homes, but also had deep-seated reasons for forsaking their native land.

It would be as preposterous to suggest that the Spaniards who settled in Cuba became “acculturated”—that is, assimilated—into the Indian cultures, as it would be to affirm that they did not receive from the natives very tangible and definite influences. It will suffice to read this account of tobacco and sugar to realize how the Spaniards acquired from the Indians one of the two basic elements of the new Civilization they were to develop in Cuba during the four centuries of their domination, and how the other was brought in by them to this island of America from across the ocean. There was an exchange of important factors, *a transculturation*, in which the chief determining forces were the new habitat as well as the old traits of both cultures, the interplay of economic factors peculiar to the New World as well as a new social organization of labor, capital, and enterprise.

In the course of his study Dr. Ortiz shows how the different waves
of Mediterranean culture (Genoese, Florentine, Jewish, and Levantine) each brought with it its own contribution to the give and take of the process of transculturation. Negroes also reached Cuba first from Spain itself, which before the discovery of the West Indies already included among its population great masses of African Negroes, and then directly from the different countries of Africa. And so, century after century, carne successive arrivals of immigrants, French, Portuguese, Anglo-Saxon, Chinese... down to the recent influx of Spaniards after the late civil war and of German who took refuge there in their flight from Hitlerism. The author of this book emphasizes the importance of studying in all these cases both aspects of this contact and looking upon this phenomenon of integration as a transculturation—that is to say, as a process in which all the new elements are fused, adopting forms that are already established while at the same time introducing exotic touches of their own and generating new ferments.

With the kind indulgence of the reader, I can substantiate my complete accord with Fernando Ortiz by quoting from an earlier work of my own. On different occasions I have emphasized that the contact, clash, and transformation of cultures cannot be conceived as the complete acceptance of a given culture by any one "acculturated" group. Writing about the contacts between Europeans and Africans on the Dark Continent, I attempted to show how the two races "exist upon elements taken from Europe as well as from Africa,... from both stores of culture. In so doing both races transform the borrowed elements and incorporate them into a completely new and independent cultural reality." 1

I also suggested at the time that the result of the exchange of cultures cannot be regarded as a mechanical mixture of borrowed elements. "The developments resulting from exchanges of cultures are completely new cultural realities which must be studied in the light of their own significante. Moreover the typical phenomena of cultural exchanges (schools and mines, Negro places of worship and native courts of justice, grocery stores and country plantations) are all subject to the contingencies of the two cultures which flank them on both sides throughout their formation and development. It is a fact that these typical social phenomena are conditioned by the interests, the objectives and the impact of Western civilization; but theY are also determined by the cultural reality of the Africans' reserves. Therefore it becomes apparent once more that we must take finto account at least three phases in this constant interplay between the European and African cultures. The changes brought about in this way cannot be foretold or postulated, no matter how careful the scrutiny of the ingredients making up the two parent cultures. Even if we knew all the 'ingredientes' that are to go into the formation of a school or a mine, a Negro church or a native court of justice, we could not foresee or foretell what the development of the new institution would be, for the forces that create such institutions and determine their course and development are not 'borrowed' but are sired by the institution itself." 2

These quotations prove how completely my approach to the problem coincides with the analysis made by Fernando Ortiz in this volume. And I do not need to add that the fact gives me pride.

I think that with the foregoing I have complied with Dr. Ortiz's desire. Now, it would be as impertinent as it is unnecessary for me to comment upon the value and merits of this book. The intelligent reader will take account of the wealth of sober scientific labor and searching social analysis underlying the brilliant outward form of the essay, the fascinating play of words and the ingenious setting forth of contrasts and differences in this Counterpoint. In clear and vivid language, employing documentation as sound as it is unpedantic, Dr. Ortiz gives us first the initial definition of what he means by "counterpoint" between sugar and tobacco. Then he sets about translating his brilliant phrases into concrete and descriptive information. We see how the ecological conditions of Cuba made the island an ideal place for sugar and tobacco. This last point really requires no documentation or special pleading: the words Cuba and Havana are synonymous with the delights, the virtues, and the vices of the smoker. We all know that the luxury, the enjoyment, the xsthetics, and the snobbishness of smoking tobacco are associated with these three syllables: Havana.

The author then proceeds to give a brief resume of the chemistry, the physics, the technique, and the art of the production of those two commercial products. As befits a true "functionalist" who knows full well that the a'xsthetics and psychology of the sensory impressions must be taken into account together with the habitat and the technology, Dr. Ortiz proceeds to study the beliefs, superstitions, and

1 Methods of Study of Culture Contact in Africa. Memorandum XV, International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1938, p. xvii.

2 Ibid., p. xxiv.
Introduction

cultural values that touch upon the substance as well as the acts of smoking and sweetening. In the vein of Voltaire, the author slyly considers the supposed malignancy and Satanic associations of the diabolical weed. The religious and mystical attributes of tobacco are a theme of this book that will make it of special value to anthropologists.

Returning to the contrasts between these two vegetable products, the author points out the difference between the skill and care demanded in the cultivation, harvesting, selection, and manufacture of tobacco, and the rough nature of the agricultural, industrial, mechanical, and mercantile steps in the preparation of sugar. We come close to the soil of Cuba, and make the acquaintance of the tobacco growers and cigar-makers as well as of the slaves and peons who work in the cane fields and the sugar mills. In all lovers of good tobacco and those who have known the sweetness of the sugar Cuba, these intimate pictures of the Cuban landscape where the products are raised will arouse a keen personal interest. In the passages describing the raising of tobacco, the technique of its cultivation, its harvesting, its curing, and its final preparation, there is a wealth of narrative charm and analysis as well as important information that will be of keen interest to those who devote themselves to anthropology and economy and will fascinate the ordinary reader.

Fernando Ortiz belongs to that school or tendency of modern social science known today by the name of "functionalism." No one sees more clearly than he that the economic and ecological problems of works and skills are fundamental in the industries dealt with in this book; but the author is also clearly aware of the fact that the psychology of smoking, its aesthetics, the beliefs and the emotions associated with each of the finished products described by him, are important factors in their consumption, their distribution, and the manufacture. Reading the paragraphs in which he describes the finer part of cigar manufacture, the personal devotion of the growers and cigar-makers to their constant task of improvement and selection to endow with sensual beauty the material object that satisfies the habit, one might almost say the vice, of the habitual smoker, there came to my mind over and over again the best definition that has been given of beauty: "La beauté n'est que la promesse du bonheur" (Stendhal).

Like the good functionalist he is, the author of this book resorts to history when it is really necessary. The chapters dealing with the economic life of Cuba, its principal effect having been, perhaps, to occasion the importation from Africa of the many and uninterrupted shiploads of black slave workers. And the author points out, too, how in the former times that comprise the second part of the book.

With reference to the political implications inherent in the basic problem of this book, Dr. Ortiz has refrained from any unwarranted judgments. Nevertheless, as regards this aspect, I hope to see the book translated into English and read by the students, the politicians, and of course the general public of the United States. Fernando Ortiz, Cuban by birth and by citizenship, is justly proud of the role his country has played in the history of sugar, through the vast production of its centrals, and in that of smoking, through having developed in its vega's the best tobacco in the world. The author reminds us that it was none other than Christopher Columbus himself who carried tobacco from Cuba to give it to the Old World and who brought sugar to these West Indian islands. He describes the triumphal march of tobacco all over the face of the globe and determines the profound influence exerted by sugar on the civilization of Cuba, its principal effect having been, perhaps, to occasion the importation from Africa of the many and uninterrupted shiploads of black slave workers. And the author points out, too, how in the fortunes of Cuba tobacco and sugar have been closely intertwined with the fabric of its relations with foreign nations.

In both these principal aspects of its economic life Cuba is at present becoming more and more closely linked to the United States. The disastrous events now taking place in Europe tend to make this connection even closer and more exclusive. But the same observations I made above in analyzing the phenomenon of transculturation could be repeated here if we transfer them to a slightly different field. Interdependence is mutual. Cuba, together with Mexico, is the closest of the Latin-American nations in which the "good-neighbor policy" should be set up with all the intelligence, foresight, and generosity of which statesmen and even the captains of finance of the United States are sometimes capable.

In my long conversations with Don Fernando we meditated on the problem of why great North American institutions of teaching
Introductory investigation have been established in China, in Syria, on the shores of the Pacific, and not in the countries of Latin America. If some of the great and richly endowed cultural foundations of the United States were to contribute to the creation of institutes of economic and social investigation in these different countries it would do much, very much, to foster a better mutual understanding and greater economic co-operation between the nations of this hemisphere. If my understanding of these problems is correct and unbiased, Cuba, from this point of view, is the outstanding spot of Latin America, the most suited for establishing there a clearing house of information, ideas, influences, and cultural movements which would contribute effectively to goodwill and mutual understanding.

This book is a masterpiece of historical and sociological investigation, as admirably condensed and documented as it is free of sterile, pedantic erudition. To be sure, several of its sections, and even many of its paragraphs, could be used as guides to works of investigation in the field of ethnography. Those who work in those institutes of economic and social research whose creation Fernando Ortiz proposed at the Eighth American Scientific Congress, recently held in Washington (May 1940), and which the assembly unanimously agreed to recommend, especially with regard to the national institute to be set up in Cuba, could well initiate their activities with topics as profoundly complex and significant as the role of sugar and tobacco in the economy, ethnography, and sociology in the present and future of the Cuban people. As an outline for the development of the work of such investigations, the present book is ideal. With these scientific efforts of study and analysis of the objective realities through which the complex social phenomena of peoples reveal themselves, the understanding between the Americas would become greater, more perfect, and more fruitful the goodwill of the North Americans toward Cuba, the most important and closest of her island neighbors of Latin America. It is obvious that here, as in every phase or phenomenon of transculturation, the influences and understanding would be mutual, as would the benefits.

Yale University, July 1940

By Way of Prologue

The presence of these words of introduction of mine to a further contribution from the pen of Fernando Ortiz to his basic studies of Cuban national themes can be explained only as one more opportunity he has given me to allow my humble name to appear alongside his in his work of investigation, evaluation, interpretation, and dissemination of our culture, a work that is without doubt the most original and fruitful, the most universal in scope and nationally useful that Cuba has produced in its whole history.

There is therefore nothing startling in my sincere statement of belief that prologues to Fernando Ortiz's books are superfluous, in view of the author's international repute, the quality of his work, and the fact that they come from the hand of the person who in our days completely fulfills Martí's dictum on Domingo del Monte, to whom he referred as "the most real and useful Cuban of his day." This work, like the others that flow from his pen in furtherance of the ends of culture, so clearly bears this out that no further recommendation or judgment, beyond the author's outstanding merits, is needed to commend it to the attention and interest of the thoughtful reader.

Writing a prologue to a book of Fernando Ortiz's is a task that honors the prologizer. It gives him an opportunity to link a name of more or less significance to the intellectual achievements of a privileged mind equipped with an active, creative erudition that is astounding in its profundity and variety. Aside from the bonds of the old and warm friendship that exists between us, my only right to set down these words of introduction to Dr. Ortiz's stimulating and highly original study of the parallel roles played by sugar and tobacco in the economy of Cuba lies, perhaps, in the fact that I, too, have on various occasions considered this fundamental problem which Dr. Ortiz has examined wittily and precisely, entertainingly and with scientific exactitude in these pages, which are essential to an understanding of our national evolution.

Century-old economic and political errors that sprang up independently of the will of the Cuban people as the result of Spain's
restrictive colonial policy have been responsible for the monstrous increment of the sugar industry, which today weighs so heavily and with such disastrous effects on the life of our country. In the suggestive pages of this searching economic study, whose implications Dr. Ortiz has tried in vain to hide behind its whimsical title, he proves in detail and incontrovertibly that sugar cane, the industry that exploits it, the system that has developed around it, and so on, represent something foreign to our country, completely accidental, like a parasitic body, which although attached to us for centuries, still serves foreign rather than national interests, as though its loyalty to its other-world origin made it impossible for it ever to shed its characterizing traits of exploitation, unfair privilege, and protectionism.

In the past century as in the present the economist serving the interests of the sugar-producers, and others who have not wished to go to the heart of the problem or lacked the capacity to do so, have developed the theory that there is an identity between these interests and those of the nation, that sugar and Cuba are synonymous. This is the prevalent idea with regard to our country in Europe and in certain American countries, to the point where, by association of ideas, at the mere mention of the name of Cuba it almost seems as though they were tasting a lump of sugar, after the manner of Pavlov's dogs. In the eighteenth century Benjamin Franklin referred to Cuba and the other islands of the West Indies as "the sugar islands, y and the nickname of "the sugar-bowl of Santo Domingo" was commonly applied to the French colony of Haiti, the principal source of supply of sugar for the European markets before Cuba made up its mind to replace Haiti, after the latter's industry had been ruined by its war of independence, in the dubious honor and very relative advantage of being the "sugar-bowl of the world."

The attempted identification of the sugar interests with those of the nation is completely artificial and is the result of misconceptions and selfishness. The Cuban sugar industry has never been self-sufficient; it has always lived on the favor and sacrifices of others, like some huge parasite sucking out juices more vital than those that come from the cane under the pressure of grinders and crushers through which, in excruciating torture, pass the sweet stalks and the happiness of those whose destiny it is to work with them.

Before emancipation it was the slave whose labor produced sugar. On his physical and moral suffering the great parasite and the ex-
lished for its own benefit the system that had been overthrown. This was the most serious harm, among many others, to which the occupation of the island by the United States army gave rise, inasmuch as they pleased in Cuba purposely avoided the cardinal problem which was the reorganization of Cuba's economy to free it from the domination of sugar, and fostered the revival of the great parasite of Cuba's national life, so that through it Cuba would continued to be effectively dominated by the United States. It was in this way that the economic aims of the revolution of 1895 were frustrated with victory almost in sight, and everything still remains to be done in exterminating this dangerous monster if Cuba is to survive...

Tobacco, with its whole complicated process of planting, harvesting, preparation, and distribution, is the other extreme of this parallelism which Dr. Ortiz examines in this thoughtful study. The plant and the manner of preparing its aromatic leaves for smoking are indigenous to us, and it was here that Europeans first saw and learned smoking. The tobacco industry is Cuban in origin and it has always been essentially Cuban. The preparation of tobacco demands special care, skill, a technique all its own, and the intervention of experts in the different branches, which makes it the joint effort of growers, sorters, strippers, cigar-makers. These workers are progressive, informed, alert, and well organized to protect their rights. For many years during the eighteenth century, during the past century, and down to our own times the tobacco-grower and the tobacco worker have been the representatives of Cuban nationalism. They initiated or co-operated in the movements for independence and were the most capable spearhead of the Cuban proletariat. The invasion of overseas capitalism and the growing mechanization of the tobacco industry have wrought a profound change in its composition and workings and have occasioned a crisis, familiar to us but not irreparable like that of sugar, which affects plantings, prices, and sale...

In the case of tobacco, however, Cuba can defend itself better than where sugar is concerned, for, as José Manuel Cortina intelligently points out, we have a natural monopoly. A considerable number of countries produce tobacco in larger quantities than Cuba, but none of them equals it in the quality of the leaf, which is unique and which makes a Havana cigar a privileged product. This is due to the special soil of Vuelta Abajo or Manicaragua or Guantánamo as well as to the special methods of cultivation worked out by our growers...