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Stacey Lynn DiLiberto
University of Central Florida

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REMIEDIATION AND THE TASK OF THE TRANSLATOR IN THE DIGITAL AGE:
DIGITALLY TRANSLATING SIMONE SCHWARZ-BART'S *PLUIE ET VENT SUR TÉLUMÉE MIRACLE*

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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at the University of Central Florida
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ABSTRACT

In this qualitative study, I examine the utilization of electronic publication and electronic writing systems to provide new possibilities for the translation of French Caribbean literary texts. Using Simone Schwarz-Bart's 1972 novel *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* specifically for analysis and exploration, I investigate the potential of digital technology to aid in the production of literary translations that are mindful not only of the dynamics of language, but of French Caribbean women's discourse as well.

Since the cultural turn of translation studies, translators need not only be bilingual but bicultural as well, having a discerning knowledge and familiarity of the culture that they render. Cultural translation scholars, therefore, have argued that translators should make the reasons for their translation choices known through annotations, prefaces, introductions, or footnotes.

Advancing this established claim through critical and theoretical analysis and the construction of hypermediated textual translation samples from *Pluie et Vent*, I argue that translators can make their choices known by utilizing digital writing and hypermedia tools, such as TEI-conformant XML, for computer assisted translation (CAT) and electronic publication. By moving a new translation of Schwarz-Bart's text to a digital space, translators have more options in how they present their renderings including what information to include for better textual interpretation and analysis. The role, thus, of the translator has expanded. This person is not just a translator of language and culture, but an editor who provides scholarly information for critical interpretation. She is also a programmer who is skilled in new media

writing and editing tools and uses those tools rhetorically to invent new methods for the electronic translation of literature.

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Sam, whose endless love, patience, and encouragement sustain me;
to my mother, Maria Barreto, for nurturing my creativity and love of knowledge and encouraging me to always march to the beat of my own drummer;
and to the loving memory of my father, Osvaldo Barreto, who lives in my heart everyday.
I hope I have made you proud.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In this qualitative study, I will examine the ways in which electronic publication and electronic writing systems can be utilized to provide new possibilities for the translation of French Caribbean literary texts. Using Simone Schwarz-Bart's 1972 novel *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* specifically for analysis and exploration, I will investigate the potential of digital technology to aid in the production of literary translations that are mindful not only of the dynamics of language, but of French Caribbean women's discourse as well.

One of the central issues in postcolonial Caribbean literary studies is the translation of literary texts from local to global languages such as English. Language, as a medium of power in the postcolonial milieu, is employed by postcolonial writers (the voices of the colonized) to replace the dominant discourse with a discourse that adapts to and functions in harmony with the postcolonial experience. Oftentimes, postcolonial writers appropriate the colonizer's language and infuse it with the local, vernacular language to better express the unique attitudes, self-perceptions, and cultural experiences of individuals from colonized societies. As Jamaican writer Opal Palmer Adisa titles her essay concerning national language and literature in the Caribbean, "De language reflect dem ethos" (17). The language that a postcolonial writer uses informs the cultural ethos of a given people, and it is through literature that these perceptions and values manifest themselves.

While translation is necessary for the circulation of these postcolonial texts that would otherwise remain unknown, translations are also rewritings that are not produced in a vacuum.

There is always a set of cultural, historical, and political beliefs that influence the rewriting of a literary text and oftentimes linguistic or cultural mistranslations occur. In Schwarz-Bart's novel, which expresses the Caribbean Creole woman's experience, there are certain cultural and linguistic differences that exist between the French original and the English translation that could be considered misrepresentations. These misrepresentations include the rendering of Caribbean flora and fauna names that function figuratively in the novel; the use of the loaded term "mammy" to describe Reine Sans Nom, one of the main characters of the novel; and the renaming of the novel's title to *The Bridge of Beyond* which deviates significantly from the original *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée Miracle*, literally translated as *Rain and Wind on Télumée The Miracle Woman*.

There is also the issue of the anonymity of the translator, who aside from her name alongside the author's on the title page remains unknown to the reader. Upon close examination of the original and translated texts, one wonders what might have caused the translator to make such changes from the original, and what effect might these changes have on the unsuspecting reader. The sole English version of Schwarz-Bart's novel, translated by Barbara Bray in 1974, has had successful reviews and has been referenced frequently by scholars of Caribbean women writers; however, outside of Caribbean studies it is not well-read or well-known. Currently, it is also out of print, which makes one question whether the translation has had any influence on reader reception. Has the novel been forgotten by English speaking readers and does it now solely belong to a niche market?

Since the cultural turn of translation studies—which flourished in the late twentieth century with writings by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (1990; 1998), Lawrence Venuti (1998; 2000), Sherry Simon (1996), and others, and was influenced by post-structuralist approaches to literature, cultural studies, and the emphasis of cultural and social viewpoints in the study of history—translators need not only be bilingual but bicultural as well, having a discerning knowledge and familiarity of the culture that they render. These cultural translation scholars, therefore, have argued that translators should make the reasons for their translation choices known through annotations, prefaces, introductions, or footnotes.

Advancing this established claim through critical and theoretical analysis and the construction of hypermediated textual translation samples from *Pluie et Vent*, I argue that translators can make their choices known by taking advantage of digital writing and hypermedia tools, such as TEI-conformant XML, and using them for computer assisted translation (CAT) and electronic publication. The translator can now be a programmer who uses digital writing spaces to produce such annotations for deeper understanding and study. In *Writing Machines*, N. Katherine Hayles explains what the print book can become in the digital age if we examine its visual design and physical nature to find new possibilities for the contexts in which it resides (19). Ultimately, it is not just the content and words that make the page, but the page that makes the text as well. If “materiality is content and content is materiality” as Hayles claims, the remediated, electronic Caribbean literary text can allow new opportunities for invention and interpretation and make Caribbean literature available to larger audiences outside of Caribbean Studies through accessible digital writing spaces not limited to print.

Rationale & Literature Review:

Michel Foucault in *L'Ordre du Discours* asserts that a word (*une parole*) can “nevertheless make all the difference” [cette parole qui portant faisait la différence] (14). To study language is to become aware of the poetics and politics imbued in the language system. Caribbean authors in particular are aware of the dynamics of language and they use words to establish the unique voice and world view of this postcolonial region. As a Caribbean woman writer, words for Schwarz-Bart are particularly important since they allow her to resist silence—a silence stemming from the historical absence of texts by Caribbean women and the exclusion of women in the major literary movements of the French Caribbean by their male counterparts. For instance, much of Schwarz-Bart’s text can be associated with the *Créolité* movement in the French-Caribbean because of the author’s technique of using a Creolized French in her narrative; however, it is not recognized in the canon of *Créolité* texts.

Créolité is a literary movement established in the 1980s by Patrick Chamoiseau, Jean Bernabé, and Raphael Confiant. This movement seeks to validate the Creole language and culture in French Caribbean literature. Creole is an oral language and much of oral literature—known in French Caribbean literary studies as *oraliture*, a term first coined by Ernest Mirville in 1974 in *Le Nouvelliste* (Raguet 1)—in the French Caribbean has been passed down through Creole. *Pluie et Vent* centers on oral history as it is passed down through the generations of the Lougandor family, a family of strong, Guadeloupean women. Despite adversity, women in the novel have authority to steer their lives and tell their own version of the history of their people, thus challenging the socio-political powers that conspire to derail their lives. In this novel,

Schwarz-Bart blends oral storytelling, history, and magical realism to express the French Caribbean Creole culture of Guadeloupe.

The novel also exemplifies the ongoing dichotomy between orality and literacy that is present throughout the Caribbean. Schwarz-Bart's act of writing down a fictional oral history is a type of translation. The text moves from the oral (Creole) to the written (French). To use Jay David Bolter's concept of remediation explained in *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*, the text's materiality transforms from vocal performance to written performance. While Schwarz-Bart writes in the colonizer's language, French, she does not compromise the "Creoleness," the orality of the text when writing, and uses Creole ideas and philosophies blended with French for expression. As confirmed by Walter Ong in *Orality and Literacy*, as well as Patrick Concoran in *The Cambridge Introduction to Francophone Literature*, in such regions with a strong oral tradition as the Caribbean, there remains an oral residue made apparent in the literature of the region, and Schwarz-Bart's novel is no exception with its references to Creole proverbs and storytelling techniques. Although Schwarz-Bart's novel can be associated with *Créolité*, she is not considered an "official" member of the movement because, as a woman, she is not recognized on the same level by her male counterparts.

When translating a work by an author such as Schwarz-Bart, one must therefore be aware of the challenges the Caribbean woman author faces with silencing and denial, as well as the hybrid, polytextual, and polyphonic environment in which she writes. *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*, therefore, is a good example to use to explore some of the key issues of

translation, one being the issue of equivalence—whether word-for-word translation or adaptation/paraphrase are more appropriate methods of translation. Should the translator provide a literal translation of the text or adaptations that give readers the gist of the author's writing? Another issue is the selection of the translator who oftentimes is chosen by the publishing house to translate a particular author's work rather than by the author herself. As a result, the translator might not have a discerning knowledge of the culture in which the author writes leading to the mistranslation of culturally specific terms and concepts. The selection of translators without input from the author leads us to consider one of the most significant issues of translation: the idea that translation is often undertaken in the service of power—a power stemming from publishing houses that hold the publishing rights to an author's text and can manipulate its presentation for optimal sales.

According to Susan Bassnett and Andre LeFevre—two of the most prominent cultural translation studies scholars of the late twentieth century—in their book *Translation, History, and Culture*, a translation is a rewriting of an original text. They state: "All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way" (vix). While translations can help the evolution and popularity of a literary text in a particular society, they can also distort reader perception. Translation does not simply require transcribing words from one language to another; it also includes interpreting ideas and concepts with accuracy so that meaning is not lost.

Equivalence is a key issue in translation theory, especially for postcolonial works in the Caribbean. As Bassnett explains in *Translation Studies*, the debate of whether word-for-word versus sense-for-sense translation is more appropriate for rendering has been ongoing since the formal study of translation began with Cicero, Horace, and Augustine. Eugene Nida calls word-for-word translation, functional equivalence, while sense-for-sense is called dynamic equivalence. Dynamic equivalence, known also as paraphrase and adaptation, has been the most dominant method of translation since functional (or literal) equivalence cannot guarantee that a rendering be linguistically and grammatically sound to the target language text. Also functional equivalence cannot guarantee that the gist of a text be accurately conveyed through a literal translation.

Theo Hermans explains in “Paradoxes and Aporias in Translation and Translation Studies” that translations are not transparent representations of their source text. Hermans writes, “A translation cannot double up with its parent text. It uses different words, which issue from a different source, in a different environment. A translation cannot therefore be equivalent with its prototext, it can only be *declared* equivalent by means of a performative speech act” (11). Because there is more than one voice in the textual situation, translations can never be value-free, neutral, transparent, nor can we ever ignore that there is a translator present in some way.

Another dimension of word-for-word versus sense-for-sense translation was added beginning with German Romantic translation scholars, such as Schleiermacher, who stated that

a translator will either bring a reader closer to the author or the author closer to the reader. Lawrence Venuti would later build on this idea and explain that the latter will result in the domestication of a foreign text, which might be problematic since it can result in inaccurate representation, while the former will allow for linguistic and cultural difference in the translated text to help the reader grasp the author's culture. For Venuti this is called "foreignization." Juliane House would call Venuti's dichotomy "overt" versus "covert": if a text depends on its culture for intelligibility, an overt translation is needed including footnotes explaining the choices that were made in the rendering. Covert translation is similar to dynamic translation, which uses paraphrase and adaptation to attempt to disguise the translation in the target language culture so that it not appear too foreign.

Since the late 1970s when Hans Vermeer published his skopos theory which called for the translator to consider the source and target cultures when rendering, ideas related to equivalence have taken a cultural turn. Such postcolonial translation theorists as Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Andre Lefevere, and Annie Brisset, have all concluded that no translation or text exists in a vacuum; therefore contributing factors such as culture that have shaped the literary text and rewriting must be considered. Translations are made to respond to the demands and interests of individuals in a given culture, especially when two or more cultures exist in one region. According to Lefevere and Bassnett in *Translation, History and Culture*, a culture assigns different functions to the translation of different texts. The rise of French-Caribbean texts in translated form, in particular, perhaps grew out of the need for English-speaking audiences to acquaint themselves with the experiences of the postcolonial

world, quite possibly a result of Multiculturalism. Translation is therefore vital for the understanding and interaction between cultures since it allows texts to circulate in broader and more popular milieus. Translation has an ambassadorial function since it acquaints readers with ideas and expressions from other parts of the world that would otherwise remain unknown because of lack of language knowledge.

André Lefevere in *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Frame* explains that translation is perhaps the most influential and recognizable form of rewriting since it is able to circulate the image and works of an author in another culture beyond the borders of his/her own. It leads to renown and transmission among larger audiences and is a force of evolution in the literary world. Translations can introduce new concepts, new genres, and new voices and provide new ways for literary innovation.

Bassnett and Lefevere also mention, though, that paradoxically, rewritings, whatever their form, can also repress innovation since they can alter a reader's understanding of a given text and the interpretation of authorial intention. Translation has inevitably this negative aspect because it is, as a rewriting, a task that is undertaken in the service of power. This power comes from the publishing company who owns the rights to the book and hires translators to rewrite the work into a particular language that will reach a target audience, but not perhaps in the best conditions since publishing companies themselves submit to another power—bankers and financial backers. The translation market is also a commodity driven business and if the translation does not make optimal sales, the lesser the chances become for a translator

undertaking another work. For the publishing company, it is not so much the accuracy of a translated text that matters but the amount of revenue it can produce. For this reason, literary works are sometimes not translated as accurately as they could be. Either the publishing company will make painstaking efforts to find qualified translators to render the source text, or, as happens so frequently, will regard the target audience's profits more important, thus manipulating the text in the way it sees fit. The publishing house can thus "colonize" the author's voice with its own agenda and transform the text into something that does not resemble its former self.

Richard Watts writes extensively on the role of the publishing house in the production of postcolonial texts in his book *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World*. Watts claims that the titles, covers, illustrations, prefaces, and appendices that accompany the text are the "ritualized forms of the publishing world" (2). Gerard Genette terms these accompaniments determined by the literary network as "paratexts" which situate the text in a certain discourse and impose upon it a certain interpretation and readership. Watts explains that what is at stake is the text's circulation, or reader reception: "the splashy covers of mass-market paperback fiction produced (though not always written) by franchise authors suggest that the objective is the largest quantity of readers possible, whereas a comprehensive analysis of the work in the paratext signals that the quality of the reading is privileged" (2). In terms of the Francophone colonial and postcolonial literary world, on which Watts' research centers, this use of the paratext to promote and control "provokes political, cultural, and social tensions between its creators and the metropolitan

literary institution” (3). For Watts, “. . . the circulation of francophone literary works in the French literary institution can best be understood as a tension, struggle, even a conflict” (3).

As a result of publishing power, one complication that arises with translated texts is the anonymity of the translator. These individuals are trusted with the significant task of transcribing words and cultures from one language to another, yet they remain unknown. Translators are trusted with the task of being what Sherry Simon calls “cultural intermediaries,” but most of the time no one knows their methods when translating. Barbara Bray, for instance, the translator of *Pluie et Vent* into English as *The Bridge of Beyond*, has her name alongside Schwarz-Bart’s on the cover of the book, but no lay reader truly knows who she is since there is no blurb on her on any English editions of *The Bridge of Beyond*.

Editors have the power to negotiate translating rights, and it is the publishing house that usually chooses the translators from a list of distinguished individuals. Most of the time, the translator has been contracted by the publishing house to rewrite the work, and may not have a relationship with the author or the original text. Gayatri Spivak mentions that for a translator to be allowed to translate a postcolonial work, she must be an intimate reader—someone who has intimate knowledge of the language and culture in which the text is produced. For Schwarz-Bart’s novel which uses Creole concepts to authenticate and firmly establish her people’s position in the world, it seems important that anyone tasked with translating her work know this ideology. The translator should have some sort of familiar cultural knowledge and relationship to the text she is translating. The translator should not remain anonymous—only a

name on a title page—but should invite the reader to understand her technique and methods. It would seem that in order to reconcile the translator’s rendering choices with the text, she should have the opportunity to write a preface or introduction explaining her reasons for the choices she made in translating the text. In the same way the author affirms her voice, the translator should affirm her objectives in rendering as well.

If translation is an act undertaken in the service of power, though, how can translators affirm their objectives? It is here where we can see the potential of electronic writing spaces to help in the production of these translated texts. In *The Medium is the Massage*, new media theorist, Marshall McLuhan, states, “our time is a time for crossing barriers, for erasing old categories—for probing around. When two seemingly disparate elements are imaginatively poised, put in apposition in new and unique ways, startling discoveries often result” (10). In the past 50 years, we have seen a radical and rapid development of electronic hypermedia and digital writing technologies. This advancement has changed the way we think and view the world, as well as the way we read the world. A number of theorists such as George Landow, Greg Ulmer, Jeff Rice, Marcel O’Gorman, N. Katherine Hayles, and Jerome McGann, all see the potential for writing with new media to offer new ways of knowing. Writing with new media allows for more egalitarian approaches to the acquisition of knowledge, the expansion of cultural and literary borders that are not only limited to the printed page, the de-centering of canonical and privileged texts, and the production of texts that emphasize invention.

In *Hypermedia and Literary Studies*, for instance, Delany and Landow discuss the advantages of studying literary texts through the use of hypermedia and hypertext. Hypertext, according to the authors, is “the use of the computer to transcend the linear, bounded, fixed qualities of the traditional written text” (3). Hypertext breaks down our habitual way of reading and understanding texts (in a linear and closed fashion), but it also makes apparent how we read (our mental processes). Hypermedia extends hypertext by reintegrating the visual and auditory into the textual experience linking graphic images, sounds and video to verbal signs (7). Hypermedia uses sight and sound to make meaning from the text thus expanding the possibilities for close readings and interpretations.

Hypermedia also provides for “intratextual links,” instantaneously linking the writing of one author to other texts by other writers with just one click of a mouse. For Delany and Landow, this phenomenon “opens up textual borders” and provides for more avenues for literary interpretation that is not just confined to the isolated pages of a printed text. These authors demonstrate that hypertext eliminates the closure that is associated with the book. They write, “hypertext fosters integration rather than containment always situating it within other texts” (12). This linking destroys the physical isolation of the text and the attitudes associated with isolation. They conclude, “because hypertext systems permit a reader both to annotate an individual text and also link it to other, perhaps contradictory texts, it destroys one of the most basic characteristics of the printed text: its separate and univocal voice” (13). Literature, thus, exists in a complex dialogue of texts allowing for expanded intratextual and interdisciplinary study.

Echoing Delany and Landow, Jerome McGann outlines the possibilities that will come to literary and humanistic education with the advent of digital media tools in his book *Radiant Textuality*. He tries to answer the question: how can digital tools be made into prosthetic extensions of that demand for critical reflection? (18). Digital media can be used for more than organizing or archiving literature and art. They can be used to interpret works through a combination of hyperlinks, text, and image, thus deepening our understanding of the texts we read and study and changing the landscape of academic scholarship. McGann stresses that linking information is key to understanding a work of literature (17).

McGann reflects on the move towards the electronic scholarly edition that is not limited to the materiality of the book, but weaves and links together all sorts of primary and secondary materials including audio and visuals. With his example of the electronic editing of the *New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse I* (60-62), McGann demonstrates how hypermedia can also be used to mimic the original text by recreating its original materiality using electronic media, thus providing readers just one more feature to interpret a particular literary text.

As with Delany and Landow, McGann believes there does not have to be a centered text: one that other texts branch from. The hypertextual document is subject to alterations and modifications and becomes de-centralized (70-71). Many postmodern literary theories, whether Deconstruction, Feminism, Postcolonialism, and Reader-Response, have called for the de-centering of certain privileged, canonical texts and interpretations in order to diversify and widen the types of texts and authorial voices that are studied. Since hypertext has no fixed

center and allows for the reader to choose his or her own paths for interpretation, it can allow for the reinvention and redefinition of literary canons to allow for more underrepresented and marginal literary texts, thus broadening cultural understanding.

Electronic literature, an emerging literary genre, is another example of just how much literacy has and continues to change and how it is breaking down traditional literary boundaries and creating new ones. In *Electronic Literature*, N. Katherine Hayles expounds on the purpose of electronic literature and what function it serves. Hayles writes, “electronic literature extends the traditional functions of print literature in creating recursive feedback loops between explicit articulation, conscious thought, and embodied sensorimotor knowledge” (135). Where electronic literature departs from print is its function of linking human thought and cognition to machine processes and intermediation. Electronic writing machines use code to transform narrative, thus expanding the definition of literacy and how we read texts. When computation unites with literary narrative, new possibilities in reading, writing, and understanding are discovered. The relationship between reader and text is dynamic since both take active roles in the reading process. Since, according to Kittler, intermediation allows the machine to become a writer and determine the experience the reader will have with the electronic text, the roles in the reading process are reversed. The text does not remain a static object that the reader manipulates and interprets. Instead, the text writes itself and provides multiple pathways for the reader to choose.

Hayles' intention with *Electronic Literature*, as well as her previous work, *Writing Machines*, is two-fold: to demonstrate what the print book can become in the digital age, and to examine its visual design. In *Writing Machines*, Hayles claims that "materiality is content and content is materiality" (75). By reading e-literature, a reader can come to realize that it is not only the words and signs that allow us to connect to the world around us and make meaning, but the physical text itself (the object) that brings the reader meaning as well.

Not only are the possibilities of interpreting literature expanded but writing as well. Greg Ulmer, Marcel O'Gorman, and Jeff Rice speculate on the potential for writing with new media that center on invention: the manipulation of texts to permit different forms of scholarly composition. In *E-Crit*, O'Gorman explains the possibilities of what the humanities can become in the digital age if traditional academic conventions are modified and open to accept non-linear and non-print assignments. Building on the theories of Greg Ulmer in *From Internet to Invention*, O'Gorman writes about what twenty first century composition can be—full of hypericonomies (picture oriented, digital centric assignments) that generate knowledge production in computer-mediated communities (xvi). His proposal is an exercise in invention (what Ulmer calls heuretics). For Ulmer, "heuretics provides us with a logic of invention 'a form of generative productivity of the sort practiced by the avant-garde'" (qtd. in O'Gorman 12). By writing with puns and hypericonomies, the visual is foregrounded with words as a tool of invention, thus leading to electracry—an expansion of our notions of literacy (writing and print) that is now valued by our electronic culture.

O’Gorman’s vision aligns with Jean-Jacques LeCercle and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s rhizome theory which asks us to examine the remainder, the nodes that make up the whole. Instead of the “right” direction, the one path for knowledge acquisition, there is the poly-direction, “a sense with multiple offshoots, multiple roads; a network of paths interlinking words and pictures, departments and campuses, cultures and politics, neurons and electrons” (O’Gorman 16). Each one of these paths provides opportunities for users to gain insight into the textual system providing a more egalitarian approach to knowledge.

Like O’Gorman, Jeff Rice seeks to move beyond traditional print-based writing to practice Ulmer’s heuristics, or writing towards invention, through appropriation. Postcolonial writers also rely on appropriation to redefine and mold the dominant language for new uses to express the widely different cultural experiences of the colonized (Ashcroft 37-38). For Rice, appropriation exists to make meaning from these seemingly unbalanced interactions. Appropriation is a rhetorical stance that is “. . . dependent not on balance but on how terms or ideas are appropriated” (48). It’s a method that provides us with “dual meanings [that] serve inventive strategies in new media writing” (56).

Building on Rice, I claim that translators use appropriation to convey meaning and to domesticate the foreign for a certain domestic readership, which results in dualities and hybridity. As I stated in the beginning of this introduction, demonstrating this act of translational appropriation through new media provides a space for these dual (or triple or multiple) meanings and possibilities.

As all of these theorists suggest, writing with new media will show individuals that all texts, translations included, are not produced nor exist in a vacuum. To study them in collaboration with other texts is to “find new possibilities for the contexts in which [they] reside” (Hayles 19). Realizing their hybrid and transparent nature allows individuals to appreciate all textual forms, print and non-print. It allows us “to see print with new eyes, and with it, the possibility of understanding how deeply literary theory and criticism have been imbued with assumptions specific to print” (Hayles 33).

Writing with new media can also exist as a tool to assist in literary translations. While computer assisted translation tools currently exist, a significant issue at the moment is that they have not been able to render literary texts successfully because of problems of equivalence. Because electronic translation tools can only search for what they have been programmed and coded, the rendering of figurative language needs post-editing by a human translator. Currently, the mechanical cannot render the figurative and poetic, but perhaps with the assistance of current electronic textual editing methods, such as TEI-conformant XML and stylesheets such as XSLT, this age-old problem might be solved.

Richard Finneran mentions that the emergence of new technologies coincides with the postmodern shifts in textual theory, most notably that there is no single, definitive textual edition. In terms of literary translation, multiple versions of a text might need to be examined to derive full understanding, especially when considering figurative language since it can be so opaque to understand. If we agree that the text is part of a system that has many branches,

electronic text editing in conjunction with translation can help expose these multiple layers for further examination.

According to Kenneth Price, in his chapter “Electronic Scholarly Editions” in *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*, electronic editing allows scholars to avoid having to make a choice on which texts to include, which has been a contentious issue, and allows for all layers to be exposed. This is especially useful for translated editions since oftentimes multiple translations of a text exist with differences in rendering. Price mentions that providing researchers and readers with the multiple versions of a text will allow them to develop their own questions and opinions in regards to a particular literary text.

According to Price, one of the potentials for the e-scholarly edition is its ability to store massive amounts of information, and scholars are no longer limited to the materiality and size of a printed page. The e-text edition can provide for depth and richness in its ability to store not only the transcribed version, but the original as well for comparison. For translated texts, especially, this can be very beneficial since readers and other translation scholars can make comparisons between translated versions and the original for deeper study. Van Hulle, in his article on Samuel Beckett’s authorial translations in the *Electronic Textual Editing* anthology, demonstrates this potential by providing the multiple electronic versions of Beckett’s *Stirrings Still/Soubresauts* and the approaches to editing that he used. These methods aim to capture the work in all of its stages to give a comprehensive presentation of how all of these stages contribute to the overall makeup of the oeuvre and also exemplify what McGann considers

being the algorithmic nature of the text—texts produce other texts and are a part of a system that keeps on growing. The scholarly edition aims to communicate the editor’s notions, perspectives, and theories of a text in order to promote literary debate and explore new ways of understanding and studying the text. In extension, the digital scholarly edition aims to accurately and consistently present a text according to established editorial protocols.

As a type of computer assistance to translation, electronic textual editing can provide a new method for the translator to store larger amounts of information for future use (a translation memory) and include a plethora of information to assist with the study of a given literary text. Also, since the digital interface provides opportunities to incorporate multimedia into the text being interpreted, the translator is not limited to just words to translate, but visuals and sounds as well to manifest denotations and connotations. For the reader of the electronic translation edition, this information also becomes accessible from one interface allowing for convenience of interpretation as well as new opportunities to approach interpreting a work because of the multimedia available to him or her.

It has been established by translation theorists such as Eugene Nida and Juliane House that when rendering either word-for-word or sense-for-sense that the translator be transparent about his choices with the addition of annotations, footnotes, and endnotes to a text. Using electronic textual editing can allow translators to include annotations and endnotes to help explain the choices they have made in rendering a text. It can allow for side-by-side comparison of the original and translated versions of a text through the use of split-screens and roll-over

and pop-up hyperlinks, as is used with the Google Translate software. The incorporation of visual elements into the electronic edited text can also provide an added dimension to textual analysis since images often provide adequate explanations when words prove inadequate. For Schwarz-Bart's text—a text full of vivid imagery—in particular, visuals can be used to help the reader “see” what is being expressed by the author and interpreted by the translator. The visual can manifest the connotations associated with a word, phrase, or concept that are either rendered accurately or inaccurately by the translator(s). The visuals along with the coding of the text into digital form can help explain what words alone in a translation often cannot.

Project Overview and Methodology:

As a qualitative and exploratory exercise, this study will rely on historical inquiry, literary analysis, digital rhetoric, and translation theories and samples. The areas of interest for this project include: the rhetorical and discursive practices of textual production in the French Caribbean; the cultural turns of translation; computer assisted translation; and writing with new media. Chapter One of this dissertation provides an introduction, literature review, and rationale for this project.

Next, Chapter Two discusses the emergence of Caribbean women's writing and *Pluie et Vent's* place in the genre. During the last 20 years, there has been an increase in Caribbean Studies; yet with the exception of Maryse Condé, French-Caribbean women writers remain somewhat secondary to emerging scholarship of the region. Also, since literature curricula tend to privilege canonical texts, the French-Caribbean woman perspective is hardly read. Authors such as Schwarz-Bart provide the Creole/Caribbean woman's perspective on history and culture

and show that there is a distinct woman's discourse in the region. It is necessary to place *Pluie et Vent* in this context in order to understand the important task of the translator who renders her work.

Building from this idea, Chapter Three seeks to answer the questions: as a woman author, how does Schwarz-Bart assert her power and authority as a Caribbean woman who speaks and thinks in Creole, but writes in French? What is the relationship between orality and literacy in the novel? Can audiences foreign to Caribbean culture and language understand Schwarz-Bart's Caribbean womanist perspective and the Creole universe through translation?

Chapter Four of this dissertation elaborates on the major issues of translation in the French Caribbean and the cultural turn of translation studies through the examination of existing translation theory and the analysis of sample passages from Schwarz-Bart's novel and Bray's translation.

I will then focus on the existing methods for computer assisted translation and expand on the ways in which digital writing spaces and hypermedia can assist in translation methodology in Chapter Five. Also in Chapter Five, I will provide sample hypermediated translations of Schwarz-Bart's text along with a mock up of the encoded text that will show theory in practice. As experimental prototypes, these sample translations and coding can pave the way for future application and study and explore new ways for translation and cultural preservation in the Caribbean.

CHAPTER TWO: NÉGRITUDE, ANTILLANITÉ, CRÉOLITÉ, AND FRENCH CARIBBEAN WOMEN'S DISCOURSE

As advocated by cultural translation scholars such as Bassnett, Lefevere, and Venuti whose ideas were introduced in Chapter One, translators given the task of rendering literary texts must take into account the cultural and historical contexts in which the texts were produced. This idea is particularly evident in the translation of postcolonial literary texts, including literary texts from the Caribbean because they are texts which cannot divorce themselves from the turbulent history and multiethnic and multilingual cultures that they often communicate in their pages. In order for translators to produce sound translations of these Caribbean literary texts, they must be ever-mindful of the contexts that shape their production.

Furthermore, to translate a Caribbean literary text written by a woman is to recognize that there exists a distinct, womanist point of view in storytelling. I use the term “womanist,” as coined by Alice Walker, here since the definition emphasizes the cultural manifestations of women of color—their way of speech, their customs, their lore, and their act of writing, which is a political act regardless of gender (Davies and Fido xii). Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* is one of these Caribbean literary womanist texts of which translators must be mindful. If the translator desires to produce a new rendering of *Pluie et Vent*, she must understand the conditions under which it was written and the distinct Caribbean womanist discourse that it manifests. This chapter, thus, will discuss the emergence of Caribbean women's writing in the French Caribbean and *Pluie et Vent's* place in the genre.

As a result of the long and devastating history of slavery and European colonization in the Caribbean that imposed the adoption of western culture, thought, and language, the people of the Caribbean have faced the challenge of affirming their own unique voice and culture that is independent from the Eurocentric ideology that dominated the islands for hundreds of years. The study of Caribbean literature—although a relatively recent occurrence due to the growing awareness of the rich history, culture, diversity, and political experience of the Caribbean people—seeks to examine the repercussions of colonization that have been felt by inhabitants of the Caribbean long after slavery was abolished. In his book, *The Repeating Island*, Antonio Benitez-Rojo writes on Caribbean literature:

The literature of the Caribbean can be read as a *mestizo* text, but also as a stream of texts in flight, in intense differentiation among themselves and within whose complex coexistence there are vague regularities, usually paradoxical. The Caribbean poem and novel are not only projects for ironizing a set of values taken as universal; they are, also, projects that communicate their own turbulence, their own clash, and their own void, the swirling black hole of social violence produced by the *encomienda* and the plantation, that is, their otherness, their peripheral asymmetry with regard to the West. . . thus Caribbean literature cannot free itself totally of the multiethnic society upon which it floats, and it tells us of its fragmentation and instability. . . . (27)

Those living in a postcolonial region, such as the Caribbean, oftentimes continue to be “colonized” psychologically, especially in the French-Caribbean where colonialism was thought

to be “*une mission civilisatrice*”—an implementation of French culture, language, politics, economics, education, and religion—and where the islands are considered “overseas departments” of France—what some would say to be a form of *neo*-colonialism—to this day. Martinique and Guadeloupe’s current status as overseas departments, or overseas regions, of France means that the islands are dependent on France politically, economically, and socially. Island inhabitants have French citizenship; French goods are imported to the island; and children follow the French national curriculum, among other things (Léticée 22-23). For the inhabitants of Martinique and Guadeloupe, it has been difficult to find cultural value in the island after being indoctrinated with Eurocentric ideas and cultural practices for so long.

Several twentieth century French-Caribbean authors and scholars from Guadeloupe and Martinique including Aimé Césaire, Edouard Glissant, Patrick Chamoiseau, and Raphael Confiant became aware of this pessimistic position as post-colonized peoples. They sought to define their French-Caribbean cultural identity in terms of their historical, racial, and linguistic connections, first by looking towards Africa, and later towards the Caribbean itself, rather than their political ties with France. In their works, produced between 1935 and 1986, these authors have continually asked the question: how does one define Caribbean identity and assert one’s own vision of the world? Three literary and philosophical currents were conceived out of this examination: *Négritude* (in the 1930s), *Antillanité* (beginning in the 1960s but taking shape with Glissant’s 1981 publication of *Le Discours antillais*) and *Créolité* (in 1986). Although envisioned at three different time periods in the twentieth century and diverse in scope, these three currents build on and blend into one another, and one studying them together is able to create

a thorough understanding of French-Caribbean culture, identity, and language. They have helped classify the types of literary texts produced in the region and have encouraged scholarly dialogue and criticism that continues to the present day.

Négritude, *Antillanité*, and *Créolité* have also influenced the emergence of a distinct French-Caribbean women's writing tradition that coincides with these three literary movements despite the exclusion of women writers as "official" participants. Perhaps the biggest flaw with *Négritude*, *Antillanité*, and *Créolité* was the exclusion of women writers in the formation of the canon of French-Caribbean literature even though much of the women's literature produced before and during these three literary currents exhibits the characteristics that define them. By examining French-Caribbean women's literary texts, for example Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*, we can see that women writers have a rightful place among these literary and philosophical currents that privilege the writings of men.

Négritude

The first and oldest of the three movements is *Négritude*, first imagined in 1935 by the well-known Martinican poet and politician Aimé Césaire, the Guyanese poet Léon Damas, and the Senegalese poet—and later President of Senegal—Leopold Sedar Senghor. *Négritude* is a literary, political, and philosophical movement that "is usually seen to mark the birth of black Antillean resistance to colonialism and to the alienation--both collective and personal--which it entailed" (Haigh 9). *Négritude* looks to Africa as the primary source of identification for Afro-Caribbean individuals and by recognizing Africa as the source where Caribbean identity

originates, the fragmented Caribbean individual affected by the traumatic histories of slavery and colonization can find reconciliation with his cultural and racial identity.

Césaire, Damas, and Senghor were students in Paris at the time of formulating the *Négritude* movement and founded the leftist literary magazine *L'Étudiant Noir* in 1935 to disseminate their ideas. The magazine called for a rejection of European colonial values and a reaffirmation of "essential Africanness"—a celebration of blackness and African cultural values. As Sam Haigh explains in *An Introduction to Caribbean Francophone Writing: Guadeloupe and Martinique*, Césaire, in particular, had been influenced by the writers and theories of the liberated French-Caribbean nation of Haiti, especially those that contained a nationalist agenda, and sought to define the place of the Afro-Caribbean in the Caribbean milieu. One movement, *noirisme*, asserted the "essential Africanness" of Haitian culture and identity, and although it became a basis for the repressive Duvalier Regime, it inspired the Marxist fictional writings of Jacques Roumain, one of Césaire's influences (9). *Négritude* is most closely translated into English as "blackness" and it is concerned with the search for and celebration of black identity.

Perhaps the most influential work to come out of this movement was Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* first published in 1939 that solidified through poetry the rejection of French assimilation. The epic poem depicts through symbolic imagery the degrading history of slavery for Afro-Caribbean people and describes the rediscovery of an African identity as a source of healing and pride. Like his fellow "*Négritudiste*," Damas, Césaire takes a militant tone

in his poetry to express that which was lost to Europe. In the poem “Limbé” published two years before *Cahier* in 1937, Damas writes:

Give me back my black dolls

Let me play with them

Naïve, spontaneous games. . .

Become once more myself

Myself renewed

From what I was Yesterday

Yesterday

Free of complexes

Yesterday

When the time of uprooting came. (Damas 42; Trans. by Ormerod 2)

These initial ideas of uprooting and separation from the self in Damas’ work are similar to the portrayals Césaire makes of slavery as a massive injury to the Afro-Caribbean psyche. Beverly Ormerod in *The Introduction to the French Caribbean Novel* points out that as another writer affected by and in search of a paradise lost, Césaire equates the Caribbean islands themselves as scars of this massive injury that bear witness. Ormerod writes that through this image, “Césaire seeks to convey his tragic sense that the society which he describes is still crippled, still floundering in a wilderness of racial and cultural deprivation that was triggered by the initial disaster of slavery” (3). Later in the poem, Césaire professes that one must heal these wounds

by accepting one's history, both the good and the bad, to better oneself. In what are perhaps his most famous lines of the poem, the poet's militant tone is made explicit by the refusal to be defined by western ideals. Césaire writes:

My negritude is neither tower nor cathedral

It plunges into the red flesh of the soil

It plunges into the blazing flesh of the sky

.....

I accept, I accept entirely, without

Reservation

My race which no ablution of hyssop mingled with lilies can ever purify. (79-80)

Through figurative language, Césaire rejects western culture—western architecture (“towers and cathedrals”), the Catholic Church (“ablution of hyssop”) and the French monarchy itself through the image of the fleur-de-lis (“lilies can ever purify”)—for Africa (“the red flesh of the soil”). Of this rejection, Luciano Picanço in *Vers un Concept de Littérature Nationale Martiniquaise* writes, “ce n’est que par la destruction d’une ancienne mentalité, de laquelle le pays est porteur et de laquelle [le poète] se trouve porteur, qu’il pourra changer l’île” [it is not but by the destruction of the old way of thinking, of which the island is the bearer and the poet finds himself a bearer, that he—the Caribbean individual—can change the island] (25; translation mine). Only by accepting the good and bad of one's history and then casting off the

false western ideals that have defined the French-Caribbean can the individual lead the islands to a new era of pride and cultural reclamation.

In the *Cahier*, Césaire suggests that “although Africa can never be regained, a different kind of release and restoration may be sought through the acceptance of racial identity and the possibility of reintegration into society at a new level” (Ormerod 4). *Négritude*, thus, teaches the French-Caribbean individual to accept the past, whether good or bad, and move on with pride with the acceptance of Africa—that is where one’s true identity springs forth. As Picanço writes regarding Césaire’s message to the black individual, “il faut se concevoir comme un être reel, non rêvé ou voulu, pour ensuite gagner sa place dans la communauté mondiale” [it is necessary that the black individual perceive himself like a real being, not made up or wished for, so that he can then win a place in the world community] (24). To be a productive member of the world, the black Caribbean individual must shed any exotic or fabricated notions of who he is or what he should be. Here again is the removal of western standards for individual Caribbean definition. Africa is the key to identity.

The concept of *Négritude* and Césaire’s *Cahier* helped develop the new critical approaches to the works of postcolonial writers that would continue throughout the twentieth century. More specifically, *Négritude* was one of the first major theoretical glimpses into the realities of French-Caribbean individuals. While Haiti, as a former French-Caribbean colony had already begun to establish itself in the world of literature and theory, the movement certainly helped place Martinique and Guadeloupe on the cultural world map (Haigh 13). It had a lasting

effect on later writers from the French-Caribbean including those who would later outline *Antillanité* (Glissant) and *Créolité* (Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé) and theorists such as Frantz Fanon. In fact, Patrick Williams in his essay “Frantz Fanon: The Roots of Writing” discusses how Césaire influenced Fanon as his teacher. *Négritude* in many ways helped inspire Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* which explores the lasting effects of colonialism and racism on the black individual living in France. While Fanon did not wholeheartedly agree with *Négritude*’s obsession with the African past—what, for instance, could the past do for those who toil in the sugar cane fields—he admired Césaire for wanting to move away from “Frenchified” notions of identity and for accepting his blackness even if this theory was over-simplified (58).

Négritude and its founders, though, have not been without criticism. Angela Chambers in “Literatures of Decolonization: Aimé Césaire” writes about the critiques Césaire received with the publication of *Cahier*. One criticism was what seemed to be Césaire’s contradictory status as a writer advocating the acceptance of an Afro-Caribbean reality yet writing in French with a writing style in the *Cahier* that aligned itself with French literary models. Indeed, André Breton praised Césaire for his surrealistic aspects in the poem and wrote the preface to the *Présence Africaine* edition in 1956 (47), thus connecting Césaire with the French metropole. According to Chambers, some black intellectuals felt that Césaire was not perhaps the best individual to write about a new Caribbean consciousness if he remained entrenched in European models (48) and stayed connected to France. It is interesting to note that Césaire helped vote for departmental status for Martinique and Guadeloupe in 1946, thus proving for many that he did not want to entirely split away from France. The Creolistes would later write that *Négritude*

“replaced the illusion of Europe by an African illusion” and that even though they acknowledged that they were “Césaire’s sons,” *Négritude* had to be taken a step further by shifting the gaze from Africa to the Caribbean itself (Bernabé, Chamoiseau, and Confiant 888-889).

Another critique is the lack of women voices in the *Négritude* movement. Aside from the essay and writings of Aimé Césaire’s wife, Suzanne Césaire, found in the *Négritude* journal *Tropiques* (Haigh 191), women are left out of the movement. In terms of Césaire’s *Cahier*, Bonnie Thomas in the book *Breadfruit or Chestnut* writes:

In relation to gender, it is clear that a masculine figure emerges as the champion of *Négritude* even if Césaire’s stance is symbolic rather than prescriptive for what should unfold. The images he employs emphasize the prominence of the phallus and reify qualities traditionally linked to masculinity. (22)

For Thomas, the Afro-Caribbean subject of the *Cahier* is male, leaving little room for the Caribbean woman’s reality. In the essay “Women, History, and the Gods: Reflections of Mayotte Capécia and Marie Chauvet,” Joan Dayan reflects on Senghor’s use of the term *femme noir* and Césaire’s term *pauvre folle* in their *Négritude* works as being mere representations of women, not reality. They are objects, not subjects. She writes, “Negritude not only encased the black in the castle of his skin, but its call to transcendence, with the iconic black woman in tow, condemned women in the Caribbean to a crushing loss of presence” (69). The Caribbean woman became a male construction and part of someone else’s point of view.

Finally, in the years since the publication of *Cahier*, younger generations of writers in the French-Caribbean have wondered whether looking towards Africa for Caribbean cultural definitions is the most relevant option given the diversified make-up of the French-Caribbean. These writers like Edouard Glissant, Maryse Condé, Simone Schwarz-Bart, and later Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphael Confiant would replace *Négritude*'s model based on the African race with the national and regional models of *Antillanité* and *Créolité* (Chambers 37). Both *Antillanité* and *Créolité* offer widening definitions of French-Caribbean identity beyond the focus of Africa, which is no longer the sole point of reference. No matter the flaws with *Négritude*, though, it would become the foundation for *Antillanité* and later *Créolité*, and Césaire would be considered a pioneer in the French-Caribbean literary tradition. The implication for this new philosophy of *Négritude* was that Caribbean people were able to articulate through widely disseminated philosophical and theoretical publications their resistance to colonialism and its collective and personal alienation. Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé write that "Césairian *Négritude* is a baptism, the primal act of our restored dignity" (888). *Négritude* made it acceptable to find beauty and pride in one's African roots; roots that help comprise Caribbean identity.

Antillanité

Négritude later influenced the second major literary and philosophical current of the French-Caribbean: *Antillanité*. As briefly mentioned above, *Antillanité*, or Caribbean Discourse, was devised out of the need to define the French-Caribbean identity beyond the focal point of Africa. While Africa contributed to the make-up of the French-Caribbean individual, it was not

the one and only focus. French-Caribbean identity also derives from the multiple ethnic and indigenous cultures that have influenced Caribbean society. *Antillanité* seeks to look outward towards the entire Caribbean region to create an accurate representation of the French-Caribbean individual. While the discussion of a multi-ethnic, multi-racial French-Caribbean subject had already begun, it wasn't until the 1981 publication of Edouard Glissant's *Le Discours antillais* that the movement began to fully take shape.

In her essay "Women Writers of the French-Speaking Caribbean: An Overview," Marie Denise-Shelton provides a useful overview and introduction to Caribbean Discourse. *Antillanité* seeks to examine the relationship between the Caribbean with the greater world outside its borders in order to realize that experience transcends national diversity. She writes, "This discourse as defined by Glissant [as *Antillanité*] is produced within a space that has been shaped by slavery, colonialism, Creolization, and insularity" (Shelton 346). *Antillanité* aims to root Caribbean identity solidly within "the Other America" and the world. There is a distinct Caribbean history and culture which shares similarities with the histories and cultures of Latin America and the plantation society of the American South, two regions that along with the Caribbean make up Glissant's "Other America." *Antillanité* endeavors to reclaim and define a Caribbean history and culture that is independent of the European history and culture brought to the islands during colonialism. *Antillanité* also challenges the dominant social and political forces that surround the islands and threaten them with assimilation and extinction. As Glissant states in *Le Discours*, "The idea of Caribbean unity is cultural repossession. It reinstates us in the true essence of our beings; it cannot be assumed for us by others" (Glissant 18; Trans. by Dash).

Continuing Shelton's discussion is H. Adlai Murdoch's book *Creole Identity in the French Caribbean Novel*, which investigates *Antillanité*, what he terms "Caribbean Creoleness," and how it manifests itself in the works of five French-Caribbean authors. To define Caribbean Creoleness, he provides another foundational explanation of *Antillanité* and its extension, *Créolité*—how they are off-shoots of one another, how they are different, and how they inform the works of Caribbean writers like Edouard Glissant, Maryse Condé, and Patrick Chamoiseau. The notion of change is central to the term Caribbean Creoleness along with "the multiplicities of history, culture, and identity, [and] the resulting juxtapositions and interactions give rise to associative strategies of adaptability, re-presentation and relationality: indeed, in its capacity for creative contestation. . ." (Murdoch 5). Caribbean Creolization is more than just the *mélange* of languages, but the blending of cultural identities and subject positions. Murdoch explains that Caribbean Creoleness, as French Caribbean postcolonial discourse, is a cultural process of transformation and exchange, and becomes the power for resisting assimilation, "deculturation," and marginalization that have affected the entire Caribbean.

Edouard Glissant's *Le Discours antillais (Caribbean Discourse)* seeks to specify the terms and characteristics of a Creole culture that is located within a Caribbean context in constant creative flux. The core of *Antillanité* is uprooting and transformation, two strategies that the postcolonial Caribbean individual has had to use for survival. As Glissant writes in *Le Discours antillais*:

I feel that what makes this difference between a people that survives elsewhere, *that maintains its original nature*, and a population that is transformed elsewhere *into another people . . .* and that thus enters the constantly shifting and variable process of creolization (of relationship, of relativity), is that the latter has not brought with it, not collectively continued, the methods of existence and survival, both material and spiritual, which it practiced before being uprooted. (Glissant 15; see Murdoch 11)

Through the process of change and the mixtures of race and culture springs forth the French-Caribbean subject who is situated in the Caribbean and looks to the island for understanding. It is interesting to note that in Glissant's *Poétique de la relation*, a follow-up, expansion, and elucidation to *Le Discours antillais*, the author equates the Caribbean Creole identity with a system of roots with multiple offshoots. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari's *Mille Plateaux*, Glissant uses the figure of the rhizome as the metaphor for the articulation of Creole identity: "Root identity therefore rooted the thought of self and of territory and set in motion the thought of the other and of the voyage . . . Relational identity exults the thought of errantry and of totality" (Glissant 144; see Murdoch 14). Through the rhizome, the product of intersecting differences where offshoots emerge, Glissant emphasizes the polytextuality of Caribbean culture, which crosses boundaries of space, time, politics, history, and art.

In their historical discussion of the Caribbean islands, Kathleen M. Balutansky and Marie-Agnès Sourieau in *Caribbean Creolization: Reflections on the Cultural Dynamics of Language, Literature, and Identity* also hint at the rhizome metaphor put forth by Glissant to

describe the process of Caribbean creolization. They further explain the notion of *Antillanité*—also known to them as Caribbean creolization—that is at the heart of the historical, social, and literary discussions that have taken place in the Caribbean for several decades. Here, the Caribbean archipelago is a rhizome itself since it “determined that the islands would be at the center of intense economic and cultural exchanges and would serve as a *bridge* connecting North and South America (2; emphasis added). Citing Paul Gilroy, author and scholar of the African diaspora, the authors emphasize that the economic and cultural exchanges created a “rhizomatic transcultural structure” in the Caribbean regions (2). Creolization is the result of the process that reworks and transforms the cultural patterns of various social and historical experiences and identities.

Antonio Benitez-Rojo, author of *The Repeating Island*, sees in the rhizomatic nature of the Caribbean a “discontinuous conjunction” that includes “the features of an island that ‘repeats’ itself, unfolding and bifurcating until it reaches all the seas and lands of the earth, while at the same time it inspires multidisciplinary maps of unexpected designs” (3). Like Glissant, who views the Caribbean islands as a rhizome, Benitez-Rojo describes the Caribbean as “a cultural meta-archipelago without center and without limits, a chaos within which there is an island that proliferates endlessly, each copy a different one, founding and refounding ethnological materials like a cloud will do with its vapor” (4-5).

Despite the painful history of colonialism in the Caribbean, which has resulted in a fragmented system of culture and identity first explained by the *Négritudistes*, the resulting

creolization has survived to represent resilience and adaptability creating multiple offshoots and paths for exploration. In terms of Caribbean literature, Balutansky and Sourieau write:

It is no less remarkable that Caribbean writing has managed to move from narratives of existential fragmentation (common in pre-1970s Caribbean literature) to narratives that celebrate new multifaceted and liberated identities (common in “postcolonial” writings of the 1970s and 1980s, especially women’s texts). (7)

While, as these authors hint, Caribbean women authors alongside Glissant have passionately explored the need for the West Indian to reclaim his Caribbean identity and history, many Caribbean women writers believe they have been left out of the reclamation to which *Antillanité* speaks. As with *Négritude*, this omission becomes one of the biggest criticisms of the *Antillanité* movement headed by Glissant.

In *La Parole des Femmes*, an essay on Francophone women’s writing, Guadeloupean author Maryse Condé comments “that writers of history have denied the West Indian woman her rightful ‘historical image’” (qtd. in Wilson, “History and Memory” 179). While most scholars and male authors have accepted that there is discourse in the Caribbean as proposed by Glissant, the distinct womanist discourse of the region has been overlooked. This oversight stemmed, in part, from the historical absence of texts by women that showcased their position on major issues such as slavery, colonialism, decolonization, women’s rights and other social and cultural issues. Also, due to the illiteracy in the region, many women could not express their positions in French, the language of the colonizer, the “official written language.” When

women were able to write, it would be difficult for them to be published due to the lack of literary institutions that privileged women. Many times also when they were published, the writer would have to “submit to the requirements and priorities—often fanciful—of foreign literary establishments” (Shelton 346).

Adele S. Newson and Linda Strong-Leek in *Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars* also help situate French-Caribbean women writers in a French-Caribbean literary tradition and elucidate the challenges they have faced. They continue the on-going discussion on how Caribbean women writers influence their communities through their literature. Their anthology, which is the result of an International Conference of Caribbean Women Writers in 1996, addresses the diversity and influence Caribbean women writers and scholars have had on their societies. As echoed in Glissant’s *Discours antillais*, Caribbean literature represents the multicultural, multiracial, and polyphonic nature of the region, and the voices of women address the political, social, economic, and spiritual options that affect and are affected by these women of color. At the heart of this anthology is the notion that the rise of women’s writing in the Caribbean cannot be viewed in isolation, but must take into account the realities these women have historically encountered and currently face.

Newson and Strong-Leek provide a short introduction to the rise of Caribbean women’s literature in the Caribbean and demonstrate that it was not until the twentieth century that the majority of female authorial voices emerged to recognize the female Caribbean self. Before then, women’s writings were sporadic, the most popular being slave narratives such as Mary

Prince's *The History of Mary Prince, West Indian Slave* in 1831. Until the 1960s, Anglophone authors such as Jean Rhys and Louise Bennett dominated the literary landscape and are most noted for revealing to us that there is no "monolithic Caribbean female character" that inhabits one uniform landscape (4). If anything, through their descriptions of the various individuals and cultures—from the white Creoles (*békés*) descended from European colonizers to the indentured Asian servants that were brought to the islands after slavery—that inhabit the milieu, these authors speak against Westernized and exoticized notions of the Caribbean and show that the Caribbean landscape is a diverse *callaloo*: a mixture of cultures and languages, like the soup of the same name that contains a mixture of various ingredients.

Beginning in the 1960s a new generation of writers emerged including Jamaica Kincaid, who sought to expand the themes and personae first expressed by their literary foremothers. Women writers in the French Caribbean, though, were barely heard of until the 1970s when authors such as Condé and Simone Schwarz-Bart emerged and provided the womanist perspective of the French-Caribbean. They were women who wrote about women in the Caribbean. Until then, male authors in Martinique and Guadeloupe represented women through characters, most with secondary roles: "The development of literature by women had been thwarted or at least retarded by the prevailing social order in Haiti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe, where literature had been traditionally viewed as a male prerogative" (Shelton 346). The number of women writers was therefore small in comparison to that of their male counterparts. If defining a Caribbean discourse was necessary to establish Caribbean writers and thinkers in the world, it was imperative for women authors to identify their place in that

discourse. As a remediation of Glissant's words, a womanist identity could not be assumed by others (men). Men could not faithfully write the experiences of Caribbean women, so Caribbean womanist discourse is viewing the world (the Caribbean milieu) from a woman's perspective.

A womanist standpoint, a woman's consciousness, as extensions of *Négritude* and *Antillanité*, is vital since it provides the other side of the story. The womanist point of view of Caribbean literature is to see women's culture and women's place in the world. It complicates one's notion of the Caribbean and expands and redefines the meaning of a Caribbean woman's identity. The Caribbean woman's text is essential for understanding the complex historical and cultural make-up of the Caribbean as Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido state in *Out of the Kumbula: Caribbean Women and Literature*, because it "becomes a locus for the rewriting of the woman's story into history" (6).

One of the ever-present themes in Caribbean literature written by women is the problems and consequences of exclusion and dispossession. As Marie-Denise Shelton establishes in her essay "Women Writers of the French-Speaking Caribbean," these narratives generally "in the first person by a female character present themselves as frustrated enunciations which affirm and deny, create, and dissolve the female sense of self" (348). These novels, written as a type of autobiography, show the endless struggle of a female protagonist whose self-identity becomes so shattered that she withdraws from the world and enters into madness. This phenomenon, known in the Caribbean literary world as *la folie antillaise*, is

apparent in such works like *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys. According to the *Bloomsbury Guide to Women's Literature*, *la folie antillaise* is a recurrent motif in the literature of the French Caribbean:

This madness may be viewed as a defense mechanism which splits the inner and outer selves. It may also be seen as a crisis cause by difficulty of entering into, or staying within, an order which has been established by a different culture, and in which the all-important framework of language has been established by a colonial power. Some authors see it as a kind of "illness" to which West Indian societies are prone as a result of the colonial encounter. (551)

Although not the definitive theme of Caribbean women's writing, *la folie* (female neurosis) is important because it criticizes the social structures that cause a Caribbean woman to lose her sense of self. It is not a psychological study of a single individual; rather the individual is a synecdoche for a system that is itself ill. *La folie* is a "call, 'implicit or explicit,' for the transformation of the structures of society and the system of values that destroy freedom" (Shelton 352). For many authors such as Simone Schwarz-Bart, writing becomes a commitment to telling the true history and social reality of her people. Through the telling of her history, a woman can reclaim her voice and heal the deep wounds in her psyche brought on by dispossession.

Some works by Caribbean women challenge the idea of alienation and madness. Instead of showing their female heroines as vulnerable, they offer images of women who find a voice in

order to take back power over their lives and destinies. These works open up new pathways for women and the Caribbean as a whole. Such is the endeavor of Simone-Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle* in which the author affirms life over death and destruction, and the acquiring of a unique identity through female identification.

Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle is a description of life in Guadeloupe during the beginning of the twentieth century. The novel focuses primarily on the life of Télumée Lougandor, a woman who was raised by her grandmother Toussine, or *Reine Sans Nom* (Queen Without a Name). The novel begins with Télumée as an old woman who stands in her garden and reflects back on the experiences that shaped her life. The novel is divided into two sections: "la présentation des miens" (My people) and "l'histoire de ma vie" (My story). The first section narrates the matriarchal lineage that Télumée is a part of and shares in. Télumée comes from a lineage of strong women with *deux cœurs*, two hearts. The influence of the Lougandor women, especially their oral tales and proverbs, becomes an important aspect of Télumée's life because it is through the lives and experiences of the Lougandors that Télumée learns to direct her own life and find her "second heart." Most importantly, it allows her to tell her own story, and as Ronnie Scharfman asserts in the article "Mirroring and Mothering," "this retroreflection [on the lives of Télumée's ancestors] is the precondition for reflection and introspection" (89). The key to Télumée's ability to acquire her own voice and become the subject of her narrative comes from her being able to position herself within a female history.

Throughout the novel, Simone Schwarz-Bart actively participates in and places women in a distinct Caribbean discourse. She definitely values self-esteem and self-worth in women, and she articulates these qualities to the reader through writing. Writing therefore becomes the vessel to communicate the experiences of the Caribbean woman. She is very much concerned with informing the world of these experiences—ones that are least often found in official historical records. She helps create a new definition of the Afro-Caribbean reality, and, furthermore, her works formulate a redefinition of the Caribbean woman's reality. With her novel, Schwarz-Bart shows that the idea of an entire Caribbean self and Caribbean history is possible—one that is situated firmly in the Caribbean's culture and language. The novel, therefore, has features of *Antillanité* that predates and exemplifies what Glissant would later define thoroughly in his *Discours antillais*.

It is evident in this discussion of Glissant's theory of *Antillanité* and the introductory discussion of Schwarz-Bart's novel that there exists a French-Caribbean women's literary tradition that coincides with and reflects the major ideas made apparent by the *Antillanité* movement. Likewise, Schwarz-Bart's text features characteristics of *Créolité*, the third major literary and philosophical current in the French-Caribbean that directly elaborates on Glissant's *Antillanité*.

Créolité

Créolité, or "Creoleness," was a movement started by Martinican authors Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphael Confiant, and the linguist Jean Bernabé in the 1980s. This neologism which concerns itself with Caribbean culture and the re-visioning of history is an extension of

Glissant's *Antillanité* which strives for self-acceptance (*une acceptation de soi*) in a post-colonial world. While the Creolistes saw Glissant's *Antillanité* as more theoretical, they viewed their *Créolité* as practical in scope. It focuses particularly on the redefinition of Caribbean culture through the language and folk traditions that characterize the diverse population of the islands. As Richard and Sally Price state in their article "Shadowboxing the Mangrove," "the Creolites see themselves as stressing the historical interpenetration of peoples and cultures that created a truly new, syncretic Creole culture" (129). *Créolité* is based on hybridity, and the constant metaphor used to describe this phenomenon is *métissage* (the French word for racial mixture). It is a *callaloo*, a cultural interaction and synthesis which takes all of the contradictions and conflicts to create a distinctive "new" society and body of writing. *Antillanité* and *Créolité* diverge on their emphasis of language for authentic expression. Even though language is discussed in Glissant's *Discours antillais*, language is at the root of *Créolité*.

The Creolistes believe that the authenticity of one's literature is expressed through one's language. Language is the foundation from which the literature takes shape. Since language and culture are intertwined, language informs the reader not only of a specific culture, but also about people's identities and self-perception, and literature is the platform on which these identities, perceptions, values, and attitudes are showcased: "the language one uses, the skill with which language is employed and the authority which informs it marks (though does not define) a person geographically, socially, and economically" (Newson and Strong-Leek 13). Much is at stake when writing in one's own language since without the language of one's own, a culture remains underrepresented because not all viewpoints are

provided. It is therefore important to tell one's own stories in one's own words. Opal Palmer Adisa affirms, "The discussion of language is not merely an academic or literary exercise; it is at the very root of Caribbean selfhood because without voice, without a language of our own, we will always be lagging behind as poor imitators" (Adisa 24). As the African-American poet, June Jordan, states, "language is political. And language, its reward, currency, punishment, and/or eradication—is political in its meaning and consequence" (Jordan 72; see Adisa 17). Language is political and it requires courage and acceptance for the Creole writer to use her people's language, the native language, when writing about the truth of people's lives because it is through language that the Creole writer articulates her reality on her own terms.

Frantz Fanon proclaims in *Black Skin, White Masks*, "to speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (Fanon 17-18; see Adisa 21). Fanon continues: "every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is with the culture of the mother country" (17-18; 21). How does the writer reconcile the colonizer's language (the foreign language) with her language (the local language)? In postcolonial regions like the Caribbean, the writer faces the challenge of articulating her people's reality in her own language since language is at the heart of culture. This phenomenon can be seen in the works of many writers who subscribe to *Créolité*.

In *Éloge de la Créolité (In Praise of Creoleness)*, the manifesto on Creole culture and literature, Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé discuss the author's position in a post-colonial society:

It is a terrible condition to perceive one's interior architecture, one's world, the instants of one's days, one's own values, with the eyes of the other. . . This [cultural, political, and economic dependence] determined a writing for the Other, a borrowed writing, steeped in French values. . . which did nothing else but maintain in minds the domination of an elsewhere. (886)

According to the authors of the *Éloge*, before the acceptance of "Creoleness," French-Caribbean writings (like those by the Negritudistes) were "Frenchified," produced in the French tradition and had no distinct connection to the Caribbean. *Créolité* seeks to reestablish the author's connection with the land and with the Caribbean milieu through language. For the authors of the *Éloge*, "Creoleness is an annihilation of false universality, of monolingualism, and of purity" (892). If the French language and culture are used as means of control, the people of the Caribbean manipulate the language for their own means to subvert power. As the authors of the *Éloge* further mention:

We made the French language ours. We extended the meaning of some of its words, deviated others. And we preserved many of its words which were no longer used. In short, *we inhabited it*. It was alive in us. In it we built our own language, this language

which was chased by cultural kapos and viewed as a profanation of the idolized French Language. (900)

The Creolistes created a “neo-French,” a hybridized French that emphasizes the Creole language to describe their distinct experiences in the Caribbean. Language is what links the West Indian to the land, to his past, and to his history.

Since Creole is a hybrid of African, French, and island cultures, it is no surprise that some facets of each of these cultures would be adopted by the Creolistes to define Caribbean culture. One feature in particular, African folklore and the art of oral storytelling brought to the islands by slaves, is central to *Créolité*. As the *Éloge* authors explain, “Creoleness, has still today, its privileged mode: orality. Provider of tales, proverbs, ‘titim,’ nursery rhymes, songs, etc., orality is our intelligence; it is our reading of this world, the experimentation, still blind, of our complexity” (895). The Creolistes seek to reclaim the past creative literary modes of their ancestors and enrich the writings of the present. Reclaiming the oral tradition is not a step backwards, but one towards the future to restore true cultural identity and history. By incorporating Creole culture into the new writing, the Creolistes believe they will “create a literature [their own literature] which will obey all the demands of modern writing while taking roots in the traditional configurations of [their] orality” (Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé 896). They will resolve the literary traditions of the colonizer and the colonized and create a new form of literature that will reflect this reconciliation.

As established by *Antillanité*, the Caribbean milieu is polyphonic and polytextual and the relationship between orality and writing is often much at the root of literary explorations. Referencing Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy*, Merle Collins in her essay, "Orality and Writing: A Revisitation," explores the connections between oral literature and written literature and asserts that for Caribbean writers, orality is intuitive; a force that is ingrained in the Caribbean author's psyche that manifests itself through the written word. While authors may not necessarily write in their native tongues—Creole, Jamaican patois, Spanglish, etc.—for whatever reason (publishing standards being one of them), they make the oral visible through the performative nature of character and authorial voice—that is orality:

When we come to speak, then, of connections between orality and writing, we are referring partly to ways in which aspects of the performance mode might be incorporated into the written work; ways, that is, in which we might represent what Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o has referred to as *orature*. (Collins 38)

This performative mode—the addition of oral storytelling techniques such as the chant, dirge, call-response, or proverb into writing—is often included instinctively by Caribbean writers, even by those writers belonging to the diaspora who are far-removed from the island. In a 1979 interview with Héliane and Roger Toumson, Simone Schwarz-Bart discusses this instinctive ability to capture the orality of her language into her writing. When discussing her writing process in *Pluie et Vent*, she explains that she wrote whole passages of her novel first in Creole and retranslated them into French in order for the Creole spirit to be captured. She states that

she is always in between the French and Creole languages and claims that the Creole spirit is intuitive to those born into the language. She states:

C'est une sorte d'intuition. J'ai remarqué que même les gens qui sont très savants sur le créole ne le connaissent pas vraiment . . . Ecoutez parler les vieux, c'est vraiment une langue, un univers. La langue créole est un jaillissement permanent.

It is a type of intuition. I've noted that even people very knowledgeable of Creole don't know it very well . . . listen to how the old speak; it is very much a language, a universe.

The Creole language is a permanent gush. (Toumson 19; Trans. mine)

Collins affirms that whether or not writers have direct contact or understanding of the African and indigenous influences on their Caribbean culture, they are rooted in these influences; they are ingrained in them. For the Caribbean author on the island or abroad, the connection to Caribbean culture, including orality, is almost spiritual.

Echoing Collins in her use of Ong's *Orality and Literacy*, Nathalie Buchet Rogers explains that there is always an "oral residue" present in the writings of cultures originally founded on orality and that there is a dual way of thinking about the world. She quotes Ong, "to varying degrees, many cultures and subcultures, even in a high-technology ambiance, preserve much of the mindset of primary orality" (Ong 11; see Rogers 435). Creole writers are always in the midst of these dual worlds and dual ways of thought. As Michele Praeger writes in "Edouard Glissant:

Towards a Literature of Orality,” “Martinicans, in other words, do not separate writing from speaking, do not necessarily associate speech with usefulness and writing with art, and unlike the French intellectuals, speak as they would write, in ‘texts’” (44). This way of thinking expands the definition of “text” for the Creole author and by realizing that “text” does not necessarily have to connect to “writing, Occidental writing,” the Creole author can liberate herself from western notions of literary modes (Praeger 45). By accepting the oral foundation of their culture, Creolistes experiment with their writing to create an authentic Caribbean literature.

While the Creolistes find a creative and powerful way to find a compromise between the languages and cultures of the colonized and colonizer, there is, as mentioned before, a hole in their argument: women are not mentioned or validated in the movement. When it comes to gender and writing, *Créolité*, like the literary movements of *Négritude* and *Antillanité* that preceded it, seems to privilege the masculine. One notes that Schwarz-Bart’s *Pluie et Vent* was written in 1972, long before the establishment of the *Créolité* movement; however, she is not included in the canon of Creole authors (who are all male). The Creolistes see cultural and literary production as primarily a male activity and limit women in their ability to create both creative and political prose. Some of the literary works by male authors, for instance Chamoiseau’s *Texaco*, include female characters; however, they place these characters on the sidelines. They are rarely narrators or writers.

Even though the Creolistes do acknowledge the works by fellow women authors such as Maryse Condé and Simone Schwarz-Bart, they sometimes reduce these women authors to their

subject positions, such as their physical appearance. When the Creolistes write, for instance, in their *Lettres Créoles* of Schwarz-Bart, they describe her and limit her to her physical appearance. Chamoiseau and Confiant state in their *Lettres Créoles*:

A meeting with the Guadeloupean novelist Simone Schwarz-Bart is always a pleasure. Beautiful in her inalterable manner, the hair flowing free in the wake of her former braids, the blasé look of her eyelids, the wide smile, a simultaneous seductiveness and simplicity. . . to reread and reread once more her *Télumée Miracle* is to be enriched each time. . . . (qtd. in Price 124-125)

While the authors praise Schwarz-Bart for her work, they commend her more for being an attractive woman. Her prose did not earn her full recognition by her male counterparts mostly, it seems, because of her sex. Her inclusion and acknowledgment in their *Lettres Créoles* seems, as the critic A. James Arnold claims, “A tactical necessity on their part” (qtd. in Price 125).

The Creolistes also see these literary works by their female counterparts as minor works of fiction with interesting narratives but no real political agenda. Schwarz-Bart herself has been charged with “lack of militancy [in her novel] and accused of sharing the passivity of her women characters who accept and even glorify ill-treatment” (Jones xv). Some actual reviews of *Pluie et Vent* include:

“Madame Schwarz-Bart makes pity for the poor seem impossibly smug.”

“This is poverty gilded over by literature and veiled in exoticism.” (qtd. in Schwarz-Bart, *Bridge of Beyond* 174)

For the Creolistes, literature is a means of subverting the oppressive and dominant power through language. Literary works are vessels to bring about social change. Glissant himself in *Le Discours antillais* proposes that one of the purposes of the author is to make readers aware of oppression and inspire action. Some believe Schwarz-Bart, as a woman, loses sight of this goal and is apolitical; a claim that is problematic since it assumes that Schwarz-Bart’s novel must have an overt political agenda to be successful.

On the contrary, French-Caribbean women writers like Schwarz-Bart are ever concerned with social change. Her contemporary, Maryse Condé even writes in *Le Roman Antillais* that the Caribbean writer must be a modern-day maroon—one of the few heroes Afro-Caribbean people have ever had:

Le rôle de l’écrivain sera donc celui-là. Rappeler les révoltes, les soulèvements, les empoisonnements massifs des maîtres, en un mot la résistance et le marronnage...En fait, le marronnage, c’est-à-dire le refus de la domination de l’Occident, symbolise une des constantes de l’attitude antillaise. (qtd. in Scarboro 14)

The role of the writer will thus be this: to remind us of the revolts, the uprisings, the massive poisonings of masters, in one word resistance and marooning. In fact,

marooning, that is, the refusal of western domination symbolizes one of the constants of the West Indian attitude. (Trans. mine)

In an interview, as a challenge to those critics who view her as politically disengaged, Schwarz-Bart is quoted saying that her writing has wide political and social connotations: “Pour moi c’est un acte politique; mais pas avec un sceau, une marque politique” [for me it is a political act but not with a seal or badge on it] (Toumson 22; Trans. mine). What can be more challenging to the social and literary norms created by men than writing about a woman who is both the center of the novel and the storyteller? This is a challenge to the Creolistes’ view that storytellers are always men, and as Condé mentions in her essay “Order, Disorder, Freedom, and the West Indian Novel,” women writers bring about disorder to the conventions of literature because they modify them (130).

Extending Condé’s claim and using Sylvaine Telchild’s novel as an example, Odile Ferly demonstrates in “Writing Cultural and Gender Difference: Sylviane Telchid’s *Throvia de la Dominique*” how works by French-Caribbean women novelists such as Schwarz-Bart are true examples of the literary movement *Créolité*, even somewhat more so than those by their male counterparts who have denied women a rightful place in the movement.

As already established, literature of the *Créolité* movement is founded on the oral tradition. Ferly explains how the Creolistes consider the storyteller (*conteur*) as the center and founder of Creole culture since he relays the stories and histories of his people orally from generation to generation. The Creolistes regard the storyteller as being always male which thus

excludes women from the process of preserving and transmitting national identity and culture.

In *Lettres Créoles* Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé write:

C'est lui [le conteur] le seul producteur de littérature audible, une littérature articulée dans l'ethno-texte de la parole et qui, dans la parole, se forge un langage soumis aux ambivalences de la créolisation, à l'opacité de Détour pour survivre et à l'inédit insoupçonné de la culture créole. (qtd. in Ferly 8)

He [the storyteller] is the sole producer of audible literature, a literature rooted in the ethno-text of the oral word and which, within the world of orality, forges a language subject to the ambivalences of creolization, the opacity of the roundabout route taken in order to survive, and to the unsuspected novelty of Creole culture. (Trans. Ferly)

The Creolistes seem to forget one important fact: throughout the Caribbean women have always played an important role as keepers of history and culture. Storytelling is often a female activity since a female relative (a mother, grandmother, or aunt) recounts the stories of the family and the history of the land to the child. In an interview, Martinican author Ina Césaire affirms that both men and women tell stories but that storytelling in public occasions is kept for men and private occasions for women: "you know, during funeral wakes, women serve the food; they have to cater for forty to fifty people all night long. In addition, when the father comes back in the evening from the cane fields, he eats and goes to bed; he is too tired to tell stories" (Ferly 1). For many French Caribbean women writers such as Gisèle Pineau, Sylvaine

Telchild, and Simone Schwarz-Bart, it is this female relative that trains the author or the fictional female characters in the art of storytelling. Ferly suggests that in the French Caribbean, Creole is not simply a mother tongue for island inhabitants, but a *mothertongue*, the language spoken by women to ensure a culture's survival. The female voice is the medium for cultural and historical preservation.

Despite the Creolistes' omission, women continue to write. One could say that Schwarz-Bart in *Pluie et Vent* wrote a novel based on the *waconteuse*, the female storyteller. *Pluie et Vent* centers on storytelling as a means of communicating family history through the generations. Reine Sans Nom and then Télumée learn to harness their words and reclaim the history of their community. Reine Sans Nom, the first storyteller in the novel, remembers her history through songs: "She sang 'Yaya,' 'Ti-Rose Congo,' 'Agoulou,' 'Trouble Brought on Yourself,' and many other splendid things that no longer charm the ears of the living. She knew old slave songs too. . ." (Schwarz-Bart, *Bridge of Beyond* 31; Trans. Bray). About the writing style Schwarz-Bart chose, the author even states in an interview: "c'est la technique orale, celle du conte, du griot . . . il fallait que nous nous retrouvions" [she chose to use the form of oral folktale, of the female storyteller, the "waconteuse," the African griot, because it was necessary for the Caribbean people to rediscover themselves] (Toumon 20; see Wilson 186). The female storyteller learns to gain mastery over self and language.

For Télumée especially, storytelling provides a world "où les arbres crient, les poissons volent, les oiseaux captivent le chasseur et le nègre est enfant de Dieu" [where trees cry out,

fish fly, birds capture the hunter, and the black person is a child of God] (Schwarz-Bart 79; Trans. mine). Proverbs and stories which are rooted in the land and the magical realm, and are from the oral tradition are the ways in which Télumée and her fellow islanders come to understand and comprehend the world around them. The Creole culture is most important for an individual's development, and as the authors of the *Éloge* interestingly point out in one of their footnotes, the word "Creole" derives from the Spanish word *crillo*, which comes from the Latin verb *criare* and means "to raise" or "to educate" (906). What an interesting fact given the relationship between orality and Creole education.

Schwarz-Bart's novel, as one example of French-Caribbean women's writing, embodies *Antillanité* in that it is rooted in the land and *Créolité* in its use of the oral tradition to express the world in which the characters live and to provide an alternative viewpoint in how individuals acquire knowledge in the French-Caribbean milieu. Education is not received in schools run under French standards, but through the spoken word transmitted and preserved across generations. For this reason, orality becomes the source of empowerment and strength for the French-Caribbean individual. Schwarz-Bart, who although writes in French, conveys the oral culture of her people through the use of proverbs and other oral storytelling techniques. Her novel shows how a writer can inhabit the French language, the language of the colonizer, and make it one's own—as stressed by the Creolistes. By combining orality and literacy she demonstrates that French-Caribbean authors who live in the Caribbean Creole universe are always in the midst of these dual worlds and dual ways of thought. They seize the rhizomatic

opportunities that the Caribbean Creole universe provides and create new offshoots; new possibilities for defining the French-Caribbean identity.

Even though *Négritude*, *Antillanité*, and *Créolité* may have imperfect definitions in that they stop short of describing the Caribbean woman's experience, they have directly influenced the literary tradition that has sprung forth from the French-Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. They have provided French-Caribbean writers and scholars the theoretical basis to define the Antillean's place in the world and create a culture and identity that is unique to the culture imposed by French colonialism. *Négritude* stressed that the Afro-Caribbean look towards Africa for identity construction and would later become the foundation for *Antillanité* and *Créolité's* call for identification in terms of the cultural and linguistic *métissage* in the French-Caribbean. As the "sons of Césaire," Glissant and later Chamoiseau, Confiant, and Bernabé, would define a French-Caribbean identity that is rooted in the Caribbean milieu and the Creole language itself. As illustrated by the examination of Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*, it is evident that alongside the development of these literary and philosophical movements, there emerged a distinct French-Caribbean women's literary tradition whose works have rightful places next to the works of male counterparts.

CHAPTER THREE: *ORALITURE*: REMEDIATION AND THE ROLE OF STORYTELLING IN THE FRENCH CARIBBEAN

In *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle*, Télumée explains her grandmother's gift of storytelling:

Elle sentait ses mots, ses phrases, possédait l'art de les arranger en images et en sons, en musique pure, en exaltation. Elle savait parler, elle aimait parler pour ses deux enfants, Élie et moi . . . avec une parole, on empêche un homme de se briser, ainsi s'exprimait-elle. Les contes étaient disposés en elle comme les pages d'un livre [. . .].
(Schwarz-Bart 79)

She *felt* her words, her phrases, possessing an art of arranging them in *images* and in *sounds*, in *pure music*, in exaltation. She knew how to speak, she loved to speak for her two children, Elie and me . . . with one word, one prevents a man from annihilating himself, so she explained. The stories were arranged in her like the pages of a book [. . .]. (Trans. and emphasis mine)

As explained briefly in Chapter Two of this dissertation, the important values that Télumée acquires (strength, resistance, and the pride in being a Caribbean woman) become significant themes in the novel. These values are imparted to her through an education based on orality. Storytelling plays a significant role not only in the life of Télumée, but for individuals throughout the Caribbean. Not only did Chapter Two of this dissertation establish that there is a

distinct womanist discourse in the region but that there exists a strong connection between orality and literacy in the Caribbean.

Before commencing my discussion of the translation of *Pluie et Vent* into English in Chapter Four, I will expand upon the role of language (orality and writing) in the French Caribbean. I will also discuss the act of translation performed by authors in the French-Caribbean—specifically Schwarz-Bart in this dissertation—who remediate their works from thought and speech (Creole) to print (French), allowing orality and literacy to exist simultaneously as *oraliture*. Schwarz-Bart’s act of writing down a fictional oral history is a type of translation. The text moves from the oral (Creole) to the written (French). To use Jay David Bolter’s concept of remediation explained in *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*, the text’s materiality transforms from vocal performance to written performance.

While Schwarz-Bart writes in the colonizer’s language, French, she does not compromise the “Creoleness,” the orality of the text, when writing and uses Creole ideas and philosophies with French for expression. As confirmed by Walter Ong in *Orality and Literacy*, as well Patrick Concoran in *The Cambridge Introduction to Francophone literature*, in regions with a strong oral tradition such as the Caribbean, there remains an oral residue made apparent in the literature of the region, and Schwarz-Bart’s novel is no exception with its reference to Creole proverbs and storytelling techniques. How does Schwarz-Bart capture the Caribbean discourse and

Créolité of her characters by writing in French? How does her creolized French capture the hybrid, polytextual, and polyphonic environment in which she writes?

The Role of Language in the French-Caribbean

Language plays an important role in the postcolonial milieu including the Caribbean. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* explain language is a technology used to express cultural experiences and is a means to subvert dominating ideologies and status quos. Language, as a medium of power in the postcolonial milieu, is utilized by postcolonial writers (the voices of the colonized) to replace the dominant discourse with a discourse that adapts to and functions in harmony with the postcolonial place. For the authors, this replacement is done in two ways: abrogation and appropriation. The process of abrogation rejects the dominant discourse, the colonizer's language, and denies it its sole power as the unique means of legitimate communication. Appropriation redefines and molds the dominant language for new uses to express the widely different cultural experiences of the colonized (37-38). Postcolonial literature, therefore, is born out of the linguistic tension that exists between the abrogated imperial language and its appropriation into the local, vernacular language.

Many writers in the French-Caribbean, including Simone Schwarz-Bart, appropriate the French language to express the Creole culture that their people inhabit. As explained in Chapter Two of this dissertation, such was the endeavor of the Creolistes like Chamoiseau and Confiant. The subscribers of *Créolité* validate Creole language and culture, which historically had been perceived by imperialist sensibilities as lacking prestige. Patrick Corcoran in *The Cambridge*

Introduction to Francophone Literature explains that the ability to speak and write in French during the colonial period and onward became a highly desirable trait (in order to gain social mobility), so Creole was relegated to the sidelines and discouraged (Corcoran 191). The poet L.G. Damas writes about Creole's lowly position and its impact on the Creole speaker's selfhood in his poem "Hoquet":

Taisez vous

Vous ai-je ou non dit qu'il vous fallait parler français

le français de France

le français du français

le français français

Désastre

parlez-moi du désastre

parlez-m'en

Be quiet

Have I, or have I not, told you that you must speak French

French from France

The Frenchman's French

French French

What a disaster

Tell me about the disaster

Tell me about it. (Damas 37; trans. by Corcoran 191)

For the poet, to speak in French is to adopt a nationhood and culture that is not necessarily a reality for the Creole speaker. The adoption of the language of the colonizer leads to an inferiority complex, rendering the speaker caught in between two realities. The Creolistes sought to overturn this inferiority complex and elevate the status of Creole culture and language. They wanted to make something beautiful out of something considered lowly, and show that both languages could exist simultaneously.

The Creolistes promoted the unpretentious and authentic everyday nature of Creole that is opposite of French high culture. Concoran writes that “. . . the authors of the *Éloge* would argue that this is precisely why Creole culture can claim authenticity: it is a means by which the people actually engage with, and seek to act upon and interpret the world they collectively inhabit” (192). Though recognizing the importance of Creole, the object is not to dispose of French as a medium of expression, but to “creolize” it, denationalize it and therefore take ownership of the colonizer’s language (195). This non-rejection of the “master’s language” is not entirely perceived as a negative choice either. Saint Lucian writer Derek Walcott, for example, “advocates appropriation and celebration, arguing that to the Caribbean writer falls the enviable task, (unavailable to Europe and Europeans) of ‘giving things their name’” (Ashcroft, et al 49). This “Adamic celebration” (49) that Walcott proposes allows the postcolonial writer to establish new pathways and relationships with her universe by joining the

old, colonial culture and language with the new, postcolonial experience. For Walcott, appropriation is a rhetorical technique to establish a unique experience and redefinition of a certain group of peoples like those in Walcott's shared Caribbean.

The act of appropriating language, and in turn writing, allows for the creation of a distinct postcolonial discourse; and for the purposes of this dissertation, a Caribbean discourse.

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin write:

It is through an appropriation of the power invested in writing that this discourse can take hold of the marginality imposed on it and make hybridity and syncreticity the source of literary and cultural redefinition. In writing out the condition of 'Otherness' post-colonial texts assert the complex of intersecting 'peripheries' as the actual substance of experience. (77)

The appropriation of language into a hybrid text creates a new discourse with multiple languages at play in the textual situation and it is polyphonic.

Creole culture and language is also born out of *bricolage*—the juxtaposition of varying elements to create a new, hybrid existence. The Creolists emphasize this juxtaposition and hybridization as a mode of resistance to dominant discourses; in this case colonial French discourse and its aftereffects. Conrath terms this resistance as "'compère lapinesque' [Br-er Rabbit-like]: the stubborn, cunning, unimpressive, mundane forms of resistance to domination that finds no place in written histories" (Concoran 192). *Créolité* rejects dominant discourses that determine societal roles and linguistic rules. It focuses instead of the daily and ordinary

experiences of Caribbean people—those activities that are left out of history books and do not get any attention.

The Creolistes are motivated by the desire to know themselves in their contextualized history, in their daily lives. They are concerned with what happens in the remainder; “Le vécu reel antillais” (Corcoran 193). Creolistes seek to promote the alternative ways of knowing—to borrow the term from postmodern theorist Francois Lyotard. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin mention that Lyotard seeks to dismantle the established notions about language and textuality. His critique of western perceptions of science intersects with some of the concepts examined in post-colonial criticism (Ashcroft, et al 163). In *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard explains how narrative is an alternative type of knowledge, however scientific ways of knowing are oftentimes privileged in the western world. Lyotard writes:

In the first place, scientific knowledge does not represent the totality of knowledge; it has always existed in addition to, and in competition and conflict with, another kind of knowledge, which I will call narrative...I do not mean to say that narrative knowledge can prevail over science, but its model is related to ideas of internal equilibrium and conviviality next to which contemporary scientific knowledge cuts a poor figure.

(Benitez-Rojo 167)

Commenting on this passage from Lyotard, Benitez-Rojo explains that narrative knowledge in the Caribbean exists predating and surpassing Western thought (termed by Lyotard as science).

Benitez-Rojo writes:

The discourse that can explain the world through modality People of the Sea has always existed, but the West left it irrecoverably behind following a process that extends from the Greeks to Gutenberg, whose invention of movable type in 1440 marks the point of no return, since, using it, scientific discourse could then propagate effectively, through its very transmission, the 'proofs' that brought credulity and certified legitimacy. (167)

With print came the tension between orality and literacy. It is not a question, though, of which would be privileged above the other, but what new pathways could be forged? According to Lyotard, narrative follows a rhythm. For Benitez-Rojo:

. . .The narrative practice of the Peoples of the Sea is very different from the West's narrative of legitimation, since in the latter the problem of legitimacy is the subject of an extended process of inquiry, verification, and comment, while in the former the story itself instantly provides its own legitimacy whenever it is spoken in the present moment in the narrative's rhythmic voice, whose competence lies only in the speaker's having listened to the myth or the fable issuing from someone's mouth. (168)

New ideas or concepts would not replace existing ways of knowing, but instead weave themselves into the established knowledge bases, thus expanding our understanding. As Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin explain, wherever narrative governs, like in oral societies, "ways of knowing are legitimized as a product of actual social relations and not valorized and reified as a separate 'objective' category above and beyond other categories" (Ashcroft, et al 163).

Language and alternative ways of knowing, therefore, are at the heart of literature produced during the *Créolité* movement and even preceding it since Schwarz-Bart's text predates the *Éloge*, and literature is a cultural practice in the Caribbean that addresses these issues of language. The object is not to dispose of French as a medium of expression, but to creolize it and therefore take ownership of the colonizer's language (Corcoran 195). Since the Creole language belongs to the oral tradition, writers standardize the language in a written form that manifests itself through the medium of the written French language. While few texts exist solely written in Creole, the oral language has been sprinkled in through the linguistic medium of French leaving an oral residue that remains in the storytelling techniques made apparent in the literature of the region like *Pluie et vent*. Corcoran writes:

The real question that flows from this difficulty [of transcribing Creole into French] is not so much how to arrive at a standardized written form of Creole (because any amount of work on the language alone can do little to bridge the cultural gap that it represents), as how to integrate into literature the Creole identity that has been repressed, suppressed, and treated with contempt over such a long period of time. (195)

Authors concerned over the oral nature of Creole have had to question how to use the French language as a tool, a technology, to express Creole culture. An example of the difficulty of using French to express the Creole realities is found in the work of Rafael Confiant. In his book *Le Cahier de romances*, Confiant explains the writer's block he experienced when he wanted one of his characters in *Les Aventures de Dambo, le fier nègre-marron* to use the word "wolf." He

realized that the wolf did not exist in the Caribbean, so while the word (and animal) was available to him because of his knowledge of the French language, the author could not have his protagonist use this word since it was not a part of his Caribbean experience. He questioned, could a runaway slave in the Caribbean really use the French expression “un faim de loup” [literally, a wolf’s appetite] to express intense hunger if the wolf did not exist in the Caribbean menagerie (Corcoran 197)? Here, the French language was inadequate to describe the Caribbean experience and the author questioned what cultural equivalent could be available.

Finding the adequate language for literature becomes a political issue for many Caribbean authors. Chamoiseau writes in *Ecrire en pays dominé*, “comment écrire alors que ton imaginaire s’abreuve du matin jusqu’aux rêves, à des images, des pensées, des valeurs qui ne sont pas les tiennes? [. . .] comment écrire dominé? [How can you write when, from the moment you wake to the moment you drift off to sleep, your imagination is feeding on images, thoughts, values that don’t belong to you? [. . .] how can you write while dominated?] (Chamoiseau 17; trans. by Corcoran 198). As demonstrated by the Confiant example above, both French and Creole are present and a tension exists for the writer in these dual realities. It is the task of the writer, thus, to reconcile the two and have them exist side-by-side in the text. Chamoiseau continues, “quand j’écris je dois faire en sorte, pour exprimer vraiment ce que je suis, de mobiliser, de ramener le contour créole à côté de tous ces écrivains qui me sont donnés par la littérature française. Je construis mon langage entre langue créole et langue français” [when I write, in order to express who I am I have to act in such a way that I mobilize, and bring

back to life, the Creole storyteller alongside all those writers that French literature has bequeathed me. I build my idiom between the Creole language and the French language] (Chamoiseau 17; trans. by Corcoran 198). The quest for the most suitable language for expression is a performance, making the writer consider his/her linguistic selections at all times during the writing process.

Edouard Glissant also comments on the importance of language in Creole culture and the connection between orality and literacy in *le Discours antillais*. He explains that the landscape of the region (rivers and trees included) plays a role in situating the Caribbean and defining the Creole universe. Language is the other key element in defining a Creole culture and identity. Corcoran writes, “The interface between the oral traditions of Creole culture and the written tradition of French culture is the space where Glissant’s involvement in literary activity is conducted, as a search for an appropriate idiom (‘un langage’)” (225). In *Le Discours antillais*, Glissant explains:

Mon langage tente de se construire à la limite de l’écriture et du parler; de signaler un tel passage . . . j’évoque un synthèse, synthèse de la syntaxe écrite et de la rythmique parlée, de l’aquis de l’écriture et du réflexe oral, de la solitude d’écriture et de la participation au chanter commun”

My language seeks to constitute itself at the limits between writing and speech; to point out the passage from the one to the other . . . I foreground a synthesis, the coming

together of the syntax of writing and the rhythms of speech, of what is accumulated in the written form and the instinct of the oral, of the solitude of writing and the participation in a common melody. (Glissant 439-40; trans. by Corcoran 225).

In the writing of Caribbean literary texts, an intersection between orality and literacy occur. The issue is not that one language or medium of storytelling has dominion over another, it is what occurs at these intersections that matters.

The *Oraliteraine*: Women Storytellers in the Caribbean

As I have already established, Caribbean women's discourse centers around the voices of women who through oral storytelling and writing expose the historical absence of women storytellers in the region, challenge preexisting constructs of women in the Caribbean, and provide an alternative view of Caribbean history and events from a womanist perspective. Brinda Mehta in "The Shaman Woman, Resistance, and the Powers of Transformation: A Tribute to Ma CIA in Simone Schwarz-Bart's *The Bridge of Beyond*" astutely summarizes this role of women's storytelling in the Caribbean: "Women's access to oral history serves as a rite/write of passage for female individuation and self-affirmation, calling for a reinsertion of the feminine in literary expression to rectify the traditional exclusion of black women from literary production" (235). The womanist perspective, which has been historically under-represented, finds an outlet in works by and about Caribbean women, including Schwarz-Bart's. Redefining Chamoiseau and Confiant's concept of the *oraliturain*—the oral storyteller's occupation—in their *Lettres creoles*, Renée Larrier in *Francophone Women Writers of the*

Caribbean proposes the use of the female equivalent of the word, *oralitouraine*, to recognize women's rightful occupation as oral storytellers as well.

As exemplified in works by Caribbean women writers such as *Pluie et Vent*, women are the guardians of culture who pass onto the younger generations the oral stories and values of their community. On this role, Schwarz-Bart comments:

Ce sont les femmes qui ont tout sauvé, tout préservé, y compris l'âme des hommes. Ce sont des gardiennes jalouses qui ont toujours lutté en silence. Quand l'homme antillaise faisait des enfants sans revendiquer la paternité, celle qui devait assumer la lignée, accomplir les tâches quotidiennes, s'occuper des enfants tout en leur transmettant les traditions ancestrales, c'étaient naturellement la femme. (Green 131)

It is women who have saved, preserved everything, including men's souls. They are the jealous guardians who have fought in silence. When a Caribbean man made babies without claiming paternity, the one who had to assume responsibility, accomplished the daily tasks, care for the children all while passing onto them the ancestral traditions, was naturally the woman. (Trans. by Green)

Although not recognized as much as they should, women play an important role in Caribbean society because they are the keepers and transmitters of knowledge. As Trinh T. Minh-Ha

states, “the world’s earliest archives or libraries were the memories of women” (qtd. in Larrier 17).

Not only are women in the Caribbean valued for their role as living archives of knowledge, but because their discourse goes beyond literacy. In other words, their discourse transcends written language and print, and for the French Caribbean, this discourse transcends the formal French language. Communication and the meanings behind their communication are also inscribed in the way they dress, how they perform in daily life, and in the places and culture they inhabit—what encompasses the Creole universe. The words emphasized in the quote from *Pluie et vent* that opened this chapter exemplify this transcendence. As a storyteller, Reine sans Nom does more than speak her words. She *feels* them and makes them into image and sound, like pure music. She inhabits her words and her words transcend linguistics. They are meant to be felt, painted, and even sung or composed, like music.

Supporting this viewpoint, Brinda Mehta writes, “In . . . *Pluie et Vent* women go beyond images and words, metaphors and symbols. In *Pluie et Vent* Télumée’s grandmother, Reine Sans Nom (Queen Without a Name), claims there is an ‘invisible thread’ going from home to home keeping the community together; this symbol is rooted, however, in practices that nourish this sense of community and make the connection a reality” (259), and storytelling (with or without words) is one of those connections. The Creole universe encompasses that which cannot be simply described through semantics. Life itself is discourse, like an invisible thread, which is rooted and passed down in a community. Women storytellers in the Creole

universe are the mediators between the spiritual and physical worlds; between past and present who use more than words to communicate.

Orality and Literacy in *Pluie et Vent*

In *Pluie et Vent*, orality and literacy are joined through storytelling and the Creole education that Télumée receives from the influencing women in her life notably Reine Sans Nom and the sorceress Man Cia. Ivette Romero-Cesareo writes in “Sorcerers, She-Devils, and Shipwrecked Women: Writing Religion in French-Caribbean Literature”:

In *Pluie et Vent* women are responsible for exegesis and utterance. Reading and speaking become two aspects of a single social practice . . . In *Pluie et Vent* the most powerful figure is Ma Cia, the sorceress, who can read and interpret the signs of the spirit world as well as those of nature and the human body . . . Ma Cia initiates Télumée into the secrets of plants and teaches her the human body, its centers, its weaknesses. . . (260)

Man Cia passes down knowledge to Télumée and she in turn becomes the healer: “Not only does Télumée ‘write’ (‘make signs’) the way she has been taught, but she also creates new ‘vocabulary’ (signs) according to the changing needs of her community” (Romero-Cesareo 261). It is this alternative education, rooted in the Creole universe that encompasses her life, which allows Télumée to develop the strength she needs to conduct her life.

One of the most significant themes in the novel is the wisdom that Télumée develops from Reine Sans Nom’s proverbs and stories. Proverbs play a significant role in the Creole

universe since they have historically embodied the resistance to oppressive power systems, writing included. On this Susanne Muhleisen writes in “Encoding the Voice: Caribbean Women’s Writing and Creole”:

Power establishment and maintenance have always been shaped by parameters which, following Walter J. Ong’s influential analysis, we may characterize as written language, literate language and textualized language, i.e. the status of codification, the interplay between oral and literate thought and communication as well as the cultural ties of the language to the textual monuments. The oral languages that form low varieties of the diglossia, by contrast, must continuously challenge the position of semiotic power by trying to establish alternative ways and means of communicative processes. It is here that oral elements like proverbs, jokes, tales, songs, rumor and gossip have become functional as sites of popular resistance. Their revolutionary potential notwithstanding, oral traditions as combative concepts (in their role in slave rebellions and plantations communications, for instance) have ultimately affirmed the divide between oral and literate. (170)

For Muhleisen, oral traditions have a militant and revolutionary power. This revolutionary power is evident in *Pluie et Vent*. Reine Sans Nom’s proverbs and stories express the philosophy of resistance embedded in her community, which are important to the Lougandors. What sets the Lougandors apart from the other women of Guadeloupe is their refusal to view their suffering as a misfortune, but rather treat it as a part of life. Télumée learns this

philosophy through her many experiences, both good and bad. She is also greatly inspired by her grandmother's proverbs, one, in particular, which refers to Télumée's position as a woman: "Si lourds que soient tes seins, tu seras toujours assez forte pour les supporter" [No matter how heavy your breasts are, you'll always be strong enough to support them]¹ (Schwarz-Bart 68). In Télumée's world, the woman is a figure of strength that can resist and overcome even the worse situations that life may bring.

The philosophy of resistance is also illustrated in the allegory of Wvabor Haute Jambes (Wvabor Longlegs) and his horse, Mes Deux Yeux (My Two Eyes), a story told to Télumée on her grandmother's knee. As Scharfman states, "the story of Wvabor Longlegs is a kind of Genesis, the tale of the fictional origins of man and of madness" (95). It serves as an educational tool for Télumée. Wvabor lost direction in his life because he allowed his horse to lead him astray. With this allegory, Reine Sans Nom teaches Télumée the important lesson that one needs to control and lead her own life:

Si grand que soit le mal, l'homme doit se faire encore plus grand, dût-il s'ajuster des échasses...derrière une peine il y a une autre peine, la misère est une vague sans fin, mais le cheval ne doit pas te conduire, c'est toi qui dois conduire le cheval. (Schwarz-Bart 82)

However tall trouble is, man² must make himself even taller, even if it means adjusting one's stilts...behind one pain there is another, misery is a wave without end, but the horse must not guide you, it is you that must guide the horse. (Trans. mine)

Wvabor Longlegs' story is a myth about internal enslavement and the struggle for control. In a larger sense, it can mean a woman's struggle to articulate her own history in her own words: "whether the horse be a figure for sensual love, for madness, for narrative, the structure of the dynamic is still the same. In all instances, the question is one of struggling against the forces of domination, without getting carried away or broken" (Scharfman 96). Télumée truly hears these words and adopts this philosophy. They accompany her through all the disasters in her life: the racist insults of the Desaragne family, the rejection by her true love, Elie, and the loss of loved ones like Reine Sans Nom, Man Cia, Angebert, and Sonore. Instead of succumbing to *la folie Antillaise*, she remains steadfast: "me felicitant d'être sur terre une petite negresse³ irreductible" [happy to be an irreducible little black woman on the earth] (Schwarz-Bart 94).

Télumée does not fall victim to the self-loathing described in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* that affects her fellow countrymen—a consequence of many who are in oppressive systems in the Caribbean. Instead, she is able to demonstrate the mastery over self needed to overcome the forces that lead to failure. Télumée, as an old woman, has withstood the rains and the winds (les pluies et les vents) of her life. She has truly gained her second heart as her ancestors have. She has no regrets and wishes to relive her life in the exact way she has: "Télumée's life is rooted in positive values and a belief in herself acquired on her grandmother's

knee. It is a security conferred by a belief in an alternative vision of reality to which many Antillais do not subscribe to or have access” (Wilson 54). *Pluie et Vent* stresses the importance of individual courage and female solidarity found in the family.

By the novel’s end, Télumée has lost all that she loved, yet remains intact: “without belongings, she knows exactly where she belongs” (Scharfman 99). The one thing she has left, her garden, becomes a place where she can cultivate happiness and have control despite the ravaging elements. The novel therefore has a satisfying conclusion since it encourages the resilience of women. As Scharfman states, “it is a gratifying conclusion, both in aesthetic terms and in terms of the problematic of identity, that in the end of her voyage Télumée should be renamed by the community as her grandmother was before her . . . she is dubbed Télumée Miracle” (99). What is the miracle? It is that of the strength and success of women. Télumée’s success becomes a symbol of the value of female bonding in formulating identity and deconstructing oppression.

In a 1979 interview conducted by Roger and Héliane Toumson in *Textes Etudes et Documents*, Schwarz-Bart says of her novel *Pluie et Vent*: “C’est une espace de mémoire que j’ai voulu restituer” [it is a space of memory that I wished to restore] (15). It is important to note that the French verb *restituer* (“to restore”) can mean to give back that which has been stolen. What an interesting choice of words given the history of silenced voices in the Caribbean, particularly those of women. According to Wilson, she sees her text as neither a novel nor a story, but as a piece of memory, a piece of history (185). Although most believe *Pluie et Vent* is

a fictional autobiography, the author says that the character, Télumée, is based on a real woman from her hometown Goyave. According to the author, *Pluie et Vent* is not a literary account of the life of Stephanie Priccin (known as Fanotte), but a homage to her, “une collecte de moments privilégiés” [a collection of privileged memories] (qtd. in Mckinney 58). The novel is a celebration of women who are rarely heard of in Caribbean history; it is a site for reclamation.

Schwarz-Bart explained that Fanotte’s worst fear was that the meaning of her life experiences would be lost, for young Antilleans no longer listened to or relayed the stories of the older generation (Mckinney 58). She states in the Toumson interview, “sa vie résumait toute une fresque, toute une tranche de la vie des Antillais. Je pense, voyez-vous, comme les Africains, que lorsqu’un vieux meurt, toute une bibliothèque disparaît...” [her life summed up an entire fresco, a slice of Caribbean life. I thought, you see, of the Africans, that when the old die, an entire library disappears] (Toumson 15; trans. mine). By transcribing Fanotte’s voice through Télumée into fiction, as a printed text, the author ensures that such a memory is preserved. The novel, then, becomes a revisioning of history told from the perspective of a woman who would most likely not have a venue to be heard under any other circumstances: “As Télumée remembers, Schwarz-Bart strives to correct the master’s version, the silences and distortions of her story/history, personal and public” (Wilson 186).

Later in this interview, Schwarz-Bart remarked that her editor wanted her to omit the first section of her novel, but for her without it “there was no novel” because “c’est notre mémoire” [it is our memory] (Toumson 20). She adds in Creole that this memory is “un tel sé pitit a tel moun” [it is that which makes the child] (20). Télumée’s history is part of the story of

Caribbean people, of Caribbean women, who although marginal have the power to rebuild their lives and relationships that will enable them to survive intact. It is a collective memory, *histoire*, story, of a particular people. In the interview with Toumson, Schwarz-Bart herself speaks of her need to transcribe to the reader her idea of the French-Creole reality. She wants to communicate “*tout un univers Créole*,” the Creole universe the reader encounters in *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée Miracle* (Toumson 18). In Télumée’s Creole world, the island and all its characteristics (language included) reign supreme, and the female narrator challenges the dominant tradition of western storytelling techniques.

Pluie et Vent can be read as what Ann Scarboro calls *un roman d’initiation*, a coming-of-age novel in which the main character Télumée is initiated into the world through her grandmother’s proverbs and stories. True education does not come from school, the colonial educational system, where the villagers learn to respect and revere the far-removed culture of France. Instead, they learn about their own land, their own history, and their own way of being from an oral education. For example, when Télumée asks her grandmother’s friend, Man Cia, what is a slave and what is a master, the sorceress describes them using the myth of the White of Whites, the first master “who would take a [slave] in his arms and squeeze him until his spleen burst” (Schwarz-Bart; trans. Bray 38). The descendants of this man are still living in the large white houses scattered on Guadeloupe. From this story, Télumée realizes that “slavery was not some foreign country, some distant region from which a very few old people came, like the two or three who still survived in Fond-Zombi” (Schwarz-Bart; trans. Bray 39). Slavery occurred right at home and is still ever-present in the landscape.

Thanks to Reine Sans Nom and Man Cia, Télumée is taught that the means of overcoming a life of despair is through language: “avec une parole, on empêche un homme de se briser” [with a word, one prevents a man from annihilating himself] (Schwarz-Bart 79). Words in stories are powerful and are sources of imagery to help her and her people describe and philosophize about life. In fact, each character in *Pluie et Vent* uses some sort of Creole proverb to come to terms with the world around them. For example, for Angebert, Télumée’s father, life is not “une jungle où l’on se fraie une voie par tout les moyens . . . pillez, brisez, dévalisez, je ne suis pas du tournoi” [a jungle where one makes his way out by any means available . . . loot, break, steal, I am not part of that tournament] (Schwarz-Bart 34-35). Commenting on her small stature and the hard labor she does as a laundress, Télumée’s mother, Victoire, declares, “petite hachette coup gros bois et s’il plait à Dieu, nous irons encore comme ça” [a small ax cuts a large tree and if it pleases God, we will continue to manage] (Schwarz-Bart 31). The proverbs define the world in few words. They function as a means of survival and allow the inhabitants of the Caribbean to connect intimately with their land and with the African heritage that is their foundation.

Télumée’s lessons are communicated in the language and images of folk wisdom, but why, then, does Schwarz-Bart write her novel in French, the language of the colonizer? To explain this precarious situation, Nathalie Buchet Rogers in her article “Oralité et Écriture dans *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*” writes that the proverbs are not included in the text for local color, but to illustrate the tension between a culture that is strongly founded on oral tradition and the presence of written culture from the western world (435). Some have called Schwarz-

Bart's slide between French and Creole as a "Creole voice in standard French" (Wilson 187).

About her writing method Schwarz-Bart explains in the Toumson interview:

J'ai l'impression de mettre, dans cette espèce de langue française que j'écris à ma manière créole, l'esprit de notre langue. J'écrirais pour moi en créole. Quelquefois il ya a des passages où je suis bloquée : j'écris d'abord en créole, après, je reprends en français, et cela vient, car j'ai trouvé, l'esprit est venu. Ce que je voulais faire m'est apparu. En utilisant la langue créole, je trouve la voie et je retranscris. (Toumson 19)

I feel like putting, in that kind of French that I write, my version of Creole, the spirit of our language. I write to myself in Creole. Sometimes there are passages where I get stuck: I write in Creole first, then after I resume in French, it comes, I find it, the spirit comes to me. What I wanted to do came to me. By using the Creole language I find the way and I transcribe. (Trans. mine)

Translating whole passages from Creole into French allows for the Creole universe to be communicated. As Andre Schwarz-Bart (Schwarz-Bart's husband) explains in the same interview, Simone Schwarz-Bart constantly switches between and lives in both French and Creole. She transforms the French language so as not to lose her attachment to Guadeloupe. He states directly to her: "Nous pourrions monter sur la lune, et tu poserais tes pieds sur la Guadeloupe . . . Tu n'as jamais vraiment posé tes pieds sur la langue française" [We could go to

the moon but you would still have your feet planted on Guadeloupe . . . you never really planted your feet in the French language] (Toumson 19).

In response, Schwarz-Bart explains that the act of code switching is intuitive because the Creole language is intuitive. Creole is its own universe (19). Through translation undertaken during the writing process as well as the use of Creole proverbs in the novel, Schwarz-Bart finds a creative medium to illustrate the hybrid culture of Guadeloupe and invites the reader to immerse herself in the world of her characters. The author unites both the oral and written traditions, and becomes the translator of her culture.

While Télumée and her people speak and tell their tales in Creole, Schwarz-Bart translates them into French in order to reach a larger audience and give them a glimpse into daily Creole peasant life. One example is Man Cia's French version of a Creole proverb: "Soit un vrai tambour à deux faces" [be a drum with two sides]. As Jean Bernabé points out in "Contribution à l'étude de la diglossie littéraire: le cas de *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* de Simone Schwarz-Bart", this proverb comes from the Creole *tanbou a dé bonda* (118). Another, "however heavy a woman's breasts, her chest is always strong enough to carry them" is originally known in Creole as *tété pa janmen two lou pou lèstomak* (126). If one of the goals of Caribbean Creole womanist discourse is to communicate a French-Creole woman's perspective, Schwarz-Bart uses the colonizer's language to communicate the Creole universe to as many people as possible: "Schwarz-Bart has attempted to render the consciousness of a Creole speaker not by creolized dialogues or footnotes, but by sustaining the strangeness of an

unfamiliar world-view” (Jones xiii). Through the act of writing the novel, Schwarz-Bart ensures that the oral tradition that is so valued by her and people will be “heard” by the reader. She also makes sure that readers will comprehend Télumée’s world and more largely, the real women who influenced her as a Caribbean woman—one of her goals for writing the novel.⁴ Restating the words of the Creolistes, Schwarz-Bart makes the French language hers. She allows the Creole universe to inhabit the standard, formal language of writing.

At the heart of *Créolité* is the quest for acceptance. Schwarz-Bart and other French-Caribbean writers seek to communicate and legitimize the Creole culture that defines who they are to the world at large. It is important, then, to keep these goals in mind to understand why the translation of a text like *Pluie et Vent* is essential. Translation requires the accurate communication of culture as well as language. If the novel is based and centered on the oral tradition and the intimate relationship between the Creole and French languages, the translator must take into consideration the polyphonic and polytextual circumstances that surround the text. For a reader who is not familiar with the Creole universe or the creolized French language in which Schwarz-Bart writes in, she must trust the translator since the translated text is the one opportunity to become acquainted with the author’s ideas. Does the English version of Schwarz-Bart’s novel convey the Creole Universe? Does the English language impose itself on the French/Creole relationship? Chapter Four will seek to answer these important questions.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE “MAMMY” PROBLEM: PARATEXTS AND THE CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF *PLUIE ET VENT SUR TÉLUMÉE MIRACLE*

After establishing Schwarz-Bart’s place in French-Caribbean literature and the value of her work for understanding the postcolonial Caribbean womanist and Creole consciousness, I will now examine the translation of her novel into English and question the impact this translation has on foreign audience reception, particularly English language readers from the United States. I will focus on its English translation and not any other (such as its Dutch or Portuguese versions) since its English translation is the most well-known and used widely in Caribbean literature courses taught in English that include Schwarz-Bart’s work in the curriculum. I must also make mention that examining the English translation is worthwhile since at the moment English is considered a global language; one of the most dominant and wide-spread languages in the world used in business and on the internet.⁵ If Schwarz-Bart’s novel illustrates the previously untold experiences of Caribbean women and unites the oral and written cultures that define French-Caribbean reality, then the translator of her novel must be ever-mindful of these characteristics to make sure its connotations are not misconstrued as has been the case for other postcolonial works like hers.

Anne Donadey and H. Adlai Murdoch discuss the misreading of postcolonial works in *Postcolonial Theory and Francophone Literary Studies*. They claim that there has been an increase in the study of postcolonial literature and theory, but only a few non-English scholars have been analyzed. When they have been approached, their works have been read in English translation and have in many instances been taken out of context (2). In this same book, E.

Anthony Hurley explains this misinterpretation using the example of the English translation of Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. The main chapter, titled "L'Expérience Vécue du Noir" [The Black Person's Lived Experience], of Fanon's well-known book has been instead translated as "The Fact of Blackness," and by "replacing *experience* with *fact* and *black person* with *blackness* [it] moves the reader away from the subjective experience of black individuals. It connotes a unitary conception of what it means to be black and makes Fanon appear more rigidly essentialist than he in fact is" (2). From this example, it is evident that translations can distort meaning. Readers and scholars of translated works, therefore, must be aware of possible distortion and seek out secondary sources or alternative translations that will clarify questions and misconceptions. What happens, though, when only one translation is available as is the case for the English language version of Schwarz-Bart's novel? Given the subjective nature of the translation process, can and should the reader take the translator's word for its closeness to the original? This chapter will seek to answer these questions.

Translation once consisted of translating verbatim the original text.⁶ In the last twenty years or so, translation studies have taken a cultural turn. No translation or text exists in a vacuum; therefore, such contributing factors as culture that have shaped the literary text and rewriting must be considered. Translations are made to respond to the demands and interests of individuals in a given culture, especially when two or more cultures exist in one region (Bassnett and Lefevere 7). Translating word-for-word could not guarantee that the translation would have an effect on readers in the target culture as it did on the source culture; thus adaptation of concepts and ideas in the literary text had to be made. Oftentimes, word

equivalents do not translate accurately across cultures, especially if the target culture does not have the same experiences as the source culture. As briefly mentioned in Chapter Three, Rapahel Confiant explains the writer's block he experienced when trying to translate the term "hungry like a wolf" in one of his novels set in the Caribbean. He realized that the wolf was not an animal that existed in the Caribbean, so while the word was available to him because of the knowledge of the French language, the author could not have his protagonist use this expression since the word was not a part of the Caribbean experience. While the sign (word) might exist in the language that two cultures share, the signified (concept) might not.

According to Lefevere and Bassnett, a culture assigns different functions to the translation of different texts: "the way translations are supposed to function depends both on the audience they are intended for, and on the status of the source text they are supposed to represent in their own culture (8). The rise of French-Caribbean texts in translated form perhaps grew out of the desire for English-speaking audiences to acquaint themselves with the experiences of the postcolonial world, quite possibly a result of Multiculturalism. Translation is therefore vital for the understanding and interaction between cultures since it allows texts to circulate in broader and more popular areas. Translation has an ambassadorial function since it acquaints readers with ideas and expressions from other parts of the world that would otherwise remain unknown because of lack of language knowledge.

According to Lefevere, translation is perhaps the most influential and recognizable form of rewriting since it is able to circulate the image and works of an author in another culture

beyond the borders of her own. It leads to renown and transmission among larger audiences and is a force of evolution in the literary world (*Translation, Rewriting* 9). Translations can introduce new concepts, new genres, and new voices and provides new ways for literary innovation. Also, together with “historiography, anthologizing and criticism, it prepares works for inclusion in the canon of world literature” (Lefevere, *Translation: Its Geneology* 27) because of its ambassadorial function of acquainting readers to new perspectives in the writing of literature.

Paradoxically, rewritings, whatever their form, can also repress innovation since they can alter a reader’s understanding of a given text and the interpretation of authorial intention. Translation has inevitably this negative aspect because it is, as a rewriting, “manipulation undertaken in the service of power” (Bassnett and Lefevere vix). This power comes from the publishing company who owns the rights to the book and hires translators to rewrite the work into a particular language that will reach a target audience. Bassnett and Lefevere write:

The publisher who allows the translator to manipulate the original [text] does, at the same time, have the power to introduce [the author] to a new audience, albeit, not in optimal conditions. And the conditions are not optimal because the publisher has to bow to another kind of power, that wielded by his/her banker(s): s/he won’t be able to publish anything anymore in the not too distant future if what s/he publishes now doesn’t sell. (6)

Larger and more receptive audiences generate more profits for the publishing company. It is not so much the accuracy of a translated text that matters but the amount of revenue it can produce. For this reason, literary works are sometimes not translated as accurately as they should be. Either the publishing house will allow the translator to make painstaking efforts to accurately transcribe the source text and author's ideas, or, as happens so frequently, will regard the target audience's profits more important, thus manipulating the text in the way it sees fit (11). The translator can thus "colonize" the text with a different agenda. For postcolonial works such as Schwarz-Bart's, it is ever important that authorial voices such as hers are not overshadowed. After the long and complex struggle to tell their stories, postcolonial authors should not be brought to silence again because of an inaccurate translation or another dominating voice.

The Anonymity of the Translator

One complication that arises with translated texts is the anonymity of the translator. These individuals are trusted with the significant task of transcribing words and cultures from one language to another yet they remain unknown. As the writer Murray Bail states, "below and parallel to the authors they translate, the names of some translators become permanent fixtures, like pilot fish alongside whales. Their names are smaller, faceless" (6). Translators are trusted with the task of being "cultural intermediaries"⁷ but most of the time no one knows the choices they make when translating. Barbara Bray, for instance, the translator of *Pluie et Vent*, has her name alongside Schwarz-Bart's on the cover of the book, but no lay reader truly knows who she is since there is no blurb about her on any English editions of *The Bridge of Beyond*.⁸

The commercial interests of publishing companies are usually behind this anonymity. It is not uncommon for trade publishers or large commercial presses to hide the fact that a work is a translation. Having evidence of the translator's name or a blurb on translation on the book cover would identify the book's foreignness, reducing the chance for the translation's commercial success (Watts 166). Commercial reasons drive the concealment of a translator's name or biographical information. If audiences deem the work too foreign, they may not buy the book.

Until recently, finding information on Bray proved to be difficult. Before her death in February 2010, her professional information was found on the official website of MacNaughton Lord, the agency that represented Bray, which maintained that she was well-known in the literary community. Obituaries that appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times Online*, and *The Telegraph* in the weeks following her death at eighty-five offered more insight into the life of this accomplished translator. Through her death, readers have gained knowledge about her that would otherwise remain unknown.

Bray, a former script drama editor at the BBC and intimate friend of Samuel Beckett, was Britain's leading freelance literary translator, having won several awards in translation. While her specialization was in broadcasting and theatre, Bray translated many well-renowned French literary works into English, including those by Marguerite Duras, Jean-Paul Sartre, Julie Kristeva, Marcel Proust, and Allan Robbe-Grillet (among others). It is important to note that the majority of the texts she translated are all by canonical and traditional European authors. Given

this fact of her expertise, how then was Bray chosen to translate Schwarz-Bart's novel? Could a European woman, who in postcolonial terms was essentially from the colonizer's culture, truly grasp and understand Schwarz-Bart's position as a French-Caribbean Creole woman and provide a translation that mirrors the distinct Creole culture manifested in the novel? Is there a risk of having the postcolonial, Caribbean consciousness overshadowed by the Eurocentric ideology of the translator?

In an interview, Maryse Condé mentions that Bray was selected to translate her novel *Ségou*, a story of the black experience in Africa. About Bray she affirms:

While [Bray] may have been a very effective translator for someone like Marguerite Duras, she did not have sufficient knowledge of West Africa, and there were evident lapses—choices of words and phrases that were wrong or went against the grain of the text. When knowledge of content is insufficient, translators must be counted as enemies. (Apter 92)

It is apparent from this statement that Condé is not pleased with the translation of her book and views Bray as unqualified to render her work. For Condé, not just any translator (well-renowned or not) will suffice unless she has a sound knowledge of the culture that she is translating.

In her article "The Politics of Translation," Gayatri Spivak supports Condé's view that the translator must have a rooted knowledge in the language. She writes:

In my view, the translator from a Third World Language should be sufficiently in touch with what is going on in literary production in that language (404). . . . The translator has to make herself, in the case of Third World women writing, almost better equipped than the translator who is dealing with the western European languages, because of the fact that there is so much of the old colonial attitude, slightly displaced, at work in the translation racket. Post-structuralism can radicalize the field of preparation so that simply boning up on the language is not enough; there is also that special relationship to the staging of language as the production of agency that one must attend to. (405)

For Spivak, knowledge of a particular language is not sufficient a qualification to translate a work, especially a work by a postcolonial author. Instead, the translator must understand the politics of the language in which she renders.

If translators should have an intimate knowledge of the language that they render including the politics and culture imbued in the language, yet often they don't, how should the reader view the translated text? Is the translation an extension of the original or is it independent from the original? Maryse Condé provides an interesting answer. Further on in the Apter interview, Condé states:

I recognize that my works have to be translated, but they are really not me. Only the original really counts for me. Some people say that translation adds to the original. For me it is another work, perhaps an interesting one, but very distant from the original.

(Apter 91)

Condé thinks that translations are different works altogether, distant from the original version. Because of the difference, she will not read her works in translation, yet paradoxically she understands that translations are necessary for the wide circulation of her works.

Unfortunately, Schwarz-Bart has never commented on Bray's translations of her novels, but one wonders if she shares the same feelings towards translation as her fellow author Condé. Because Condé and Schwarz-Bart write in the same time period, often about the same postcolonial themes, and use Creole ideas and expressions to convey meaning, it would seem that Schwarz-Bart might have issues with translation as well. One wonders if Bray ever interacted with the Caribbean people and was familiar with the history and the plight of Caribbean women. Did she have any rapport with the Caribbean authors that she translated? The answer to this question does not appear likely since the publishing house for which she translated negotiated her work for her. She more than likely did not have much of a choice except to accept or decline the job offer.

Paratexts, Publishing Houses, and the Selection of Translators

Richard Philcox, Condé's husband and official translator, sheds some light on how translators are chosen to interpret literary texts. In an interview, Philcox mentions that in France the editors of publishing companies hold the rights to an author's work. Editors have the power to negotiate translation rights and it is the publishing house that usually chooses the translators from a list of distinguished individuals. It is for this reason that Bray was chosen over him to translate *Ségou* in 1987. At the time he was relatively unknown (Kadish and Massardier-Kennedy 750). From this explanation, one can see that the translation relationship is between

the publishing house and the translator, not between the author and translator. Author Yanik Lahens in *L'Exil: Entre l'ancrage et la fuite l'écrivain haïtien* (1990), summarizes the power of the publishing industry well:

Nous savons que de plus en plus, c'est l'institution littéraire (l'enseignement, la recherché, la critique, l'édition) qui porte la création et non l'inverse.

We are aware that it is increasingly the literary institution (teaching, research, criticism, publishing) that subtends creation and not the other way around. (qtd. in Watts 1, trans. Watts)

Publishing companies wield incredible amounts of influence since the writing market is a commodity driven business. Positive audience reception, which drives increased profitability, is the motivating factor in the translation and production of literary texts.

Richard Watts writes broadly on the role of the publishing house in the production of postcolonial texts in his book *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* (2005). In his book, Watts provides a history of literary print culture in the Francophone colonial and postcolonial world and the relations between the French literary industry and its colonies as well as the cultural history of the mediating effects of the "paratext." Watts explains that the titles, covers, illustrations, prefaces, and appendices that accompany the text are the "ritualized forms of the publishing world" (2). He borrows the term "paratext" from Gérard Genette to describe these accompaniments determined by the literary

network, which situate the text in a certain discourse and impose upon it a certain interpretation and readership. Watts explains that what is at stake is the text's circulation, or reader reception. He writes:

The splashy covers of mass-market paperback fiction produced (though not always written) by franchise authors suggest that the objective is the largest quantity of readers possible, whereas a comprehensive analysis of the work in the paratext signals that the quality of the reading is privileged. (2)

For the Francophone colonial and postcolonial literary world, on which Watts' research centers, this use of the paratext to promote and control "provokes political, cultural, and social tensions between its creators and the metropolitan literary institution" (3). For Watts, the manufactured identity of Francophone literary works in the literary world determines how readers perceive and accept them, which can lead to an underlying tension for all parties involved.

Since translation affects the changing perception of literary texts, it too mediates paratexts. One question asked during the translation process is the following: for whom are these texts written? We are reminded that translation (both linguistic and cultural) is not a neutral practice. For the purposes of his study, Watts explains that everything considered to be a part of the paratext is motivated by the influences of those who introduce the text to the literary milieu. For Francophone literature, the paratext mediates and translates the text's "other" and foreign qualities for its readership during the colonial and even postcolonial periods (Watts 9).

Echoing Watts, Nadège Veldwachter explains in her article “Simone Schwarz-Bart, Maryse Condé, and Raphael Confiant in English Translation: Texts and Margins” (2009) how the works of French-Caribbean writers are marketed and made available for foreign consumer readership. She describes how translation and other paratexts naturalize a foreign work into a new readership and reconfigure the reader’s understanding of the text. Reader reception is influenced by these supplementary texts which are mediated by the act of linguistic and cultural translation. Like Watts, Veldwachter claims that these ancillary discourses read through transnational channels are problematic since they have the power to influence the foreign reader’s reading of the text. She confirms that the issue of an original French language versus an English translation draws attention to the increased transnational and transcultural readings of French-Caribbean texts which affect readers’ understanding of them (229).

While Veldwachter is not so much concerned with potential inaccuracies in linguistic translation as I am, she does mention that the translation of French-Caribbean texts is a daunting task since “we are dealing with texts where the language moves seamlessly between Creole and French and the translator has to render the *parole* of the author as faithfully as possible” (229). Summarizing the related ideas made by both Elizabeth Wilson in “Translating Caribbean Landscape” and Gayatri Spivak in “The Politics of Translation,” Veldwachter points out “that perhaps the choices [in translation] made do not affect the denotative value of the text, but what may suffer is its connotative value, which is the very substance of literary texts” (229). As a paratext, translation provides a partial understanding to readers who do not have access to the original text but its modified, translated version.

Given this explanation of the paratext and for the purposes of my study on Schwarz-Bart's novel, I will view translation not only as a mediator of language but of culture as well. To clarify, the function of the paratext is two-fold. Its primary purpose, according to Genette, is to draw readers towards the text, and its secondary purpose, according to Watts and Velderwachter, is its ambassadorial function that draws a targeted readership to the foreign. As Watts explains:

The paratext translates through its abbreviated textual forms (prefaces, dedications, jacket copy, etc.) as well as iconic forms (cover art, illustrations). This gives readers who might not otherwise be immediately able to 'read' the text's cultural difference access to it. In turn, this renders the text, lest we forget the commercial imperatives of the paratext, a more approachable and desirable commodity. Translation, a central trope of postcolonial studies, is the mechanism by which the real or perceived cultural difference embedded in a text is identified and made knowable. (19)

The translation (both linguistically and culturally) of literary texts is influential in part because it is an act completed under the service of power—the authority of the publishing company. The decisions made by publishing companies affect the marketing of the literary text—how the text is packaged, what paratexts are included, how the text is perceived—and the selection of translators who not only have to bridge the linguistic gap for a targeted readership, but sell the entire package to it as well. Considering this discussion of paratexts, translation, and publishing houses, one can assume, then, that Schwarz-Bart had little say in who was chosen to translate

her novel. How has this distant and non-existent relationship affected the linguistic and cultural translation of the English version of *Pluie et Vent*, if at all? I will now provide a few examples of the nuances in linguistic and cultural translation found in the English language version of *Pluie et Vent*, titled *The Bridge of Beyond*, to help illustrate how translation choices might affect the unsuspecting reader.

Long and Meandering Paragraphs in *Pluie et Vent*

In her introduction to *The Bridge of Beyond*, Bridget Jones shows how Bray's translation accurately conveys the novel's main idea. There is no doubt that an English-speaking reader would understand what the book is about; thus there is no argument with plot development. One technique with which Jones believes Bray is successful is the breaking up of paragraph-long sentences into shorter ones, which alter the style of the novel. As Jones' introduction states:

This is an unusually good translation in view of the complex problems posed by the style of the novel. At times, the English seems to improve on the original, since Barbara Bray, a very experienced literary translator, favors a plainer and more direct text which checks the tendency to whimsical rambling. . . . [She] goes for economy without pursuing finer shades of meaning. (xiv)

This idea of how Bray has minimized the original text is exemplified in the opening lines of the novel. In the original version, Schwarz-Bart writes:

Le pays dépend bien souvent du cœur de l'homme: il est minuscule si le cœur est petit, et immense si le cœur est grand. Je n'ai jamais souffert de l'exiguïté de mon pays, sans

pour autant prétendre que j'aie un grand cœur (11).

A country often depends on one's heart: it is miniscule if the heart is small and immense if the heart is big. I have never suffered from the insufficiency of my country, although I don't pretend I have a big heart. (trans. mine)⁹

Bray translates:

A man's country may be cramped or vast according to the size of his heart. I've never found my country too small, though that isn't to say my heart is great. (2)

These differences in translation show how Bray reduces essentially three sentences into two. One should make note that because of this reduction the paperback version of *The Bridge of Beyond* is close to one hundred pages shorter than the original paperback French edition. For Jones, the plot's details are conveyed and Bray's style is more concise and direct which contributes, Jones assumes, to the overall reading experience for the English language reader who favors a more direct style.

Françoise Massardier-Kenney in the article "La question de la traduction plurielle ou les traducteurs de Maryse Condé" mentions that modifications in style and structure are common in a few of Condé's translations. She writes, for instance, that Victoria Reiter, the translator of Condé's *La vie scélérate* into English reduces complex sentences into shorter sections and restructures paragraphs, which affect the style and organization of the author's original work,

and result in the image of a writer with “multiple personalities”—an author that is too foreign and requires work to be understood while at the same time being “marked by a familiar exoticism” (Veldwachter 231). Instead of being exposed to an unfamiliar style, the English-language reader accesses a familiar discourse when reading the translated version, which according to Jones’ preface to *The Bridge of Beyond*, is appreciated since translators correct and improve upon the author’s tendency to “whimsical ramblings.”

On the other hand, is Schwarz-Bart’s style a “complex problem,” as Jones claims, which must be corrected? One may view Schwarz-Bart’s “ramblings” as an important cultural practice that she wishes to impress on the reader. Since *Pluie et Vent* is (stylistically) partly a transcription of oral stories told through the generations, the ramblings may be considered a literary technique that seeks to achieve the characteristics of oral storytelling. Oftentimes, when stories are told orally, there is no clear distinction where a sentence (a new moment) ends and another begins. Because of their fleeting nature, oral stories are more flexible with digressions, interruptions of added details, and fragments of other stories and proverbs. In this case, the ramblings, which create multiple pathways from one point of departure, also mimic the rhizomatic and hypertextual environment that defines the Caribbean. Could this be the literary technique Schwarz-Bart is trying to achieve?

Translating Flora and Fauna as Metaphor in *Pluie et Vent*

While the shortening of paragraphs and sentences may be viewed as a constructive trait for some, other questionable translation choices appear in Bray’s translation which are worth examining. One of these is the matter of Caribbean-specific vocabulary. As with the translation

of Condé's *Ségou*, Bray has difficulty with the vocabulary of Caribbean flora and fauna and character nicknames in *The Bridge of Beyond*: "either names are left in the original, justifiable with place names, but less so with fish or plants, or approximations are attempted" (Jones xiv). For example, Bray leaves the word *mombin* in its original: "You smell of cinnamon in spite of the mombins" (Schwarz-Bart 65). For a reader who is not familiar with Caribbean flora and fauna, she would have no knowledge of what a *mombin* is. The translator might have looked up the word and found it to mean "kumquat," thus clarifying meaning for the reader, or have consistently left all of the flora names in the original for local color—to attempt to exemplify in English the tension that exists between the French and Creole of the original text. Whatever choice, consistency is needed.

In another example, the tree, *balisier rouge*, is translated into the English as a "red canna tree" when in fact it is actually known as a "heliconia" (Jones xiv). The more accurate equivalent would have sufficed since the type of plant may conjure up a certain image for the reader who looks up its characteristics. In many Caribbean novels, Caribbean flora functions as symbolic and metaphoric imagery. For instance, in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*—a reinterpretation of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*—the main character, Antoinette, is likened to a flamboyant tree. The flamboyant tree is often known as the "flame tree" because it looks like it is on fire, and on many islands, including my birthplace of Puerto Rico, the flame tree is a symbol of the Caribbean. Antoinette's comparison to a flame tree suits her well since it is with fire that she seeks revenge at the end of the novel on those who displaced her from her Caribbean home. Like Rhys, Schwarz-Bart is often very particular as to how she describes her

characters with nature images since usually the nature image stands for something more. As clarification, Télumée, in all her strength and splendor after marrying her true love Élie, is compared to a heliconia, a plant that is much sturdier than a red canna¹⁰:

Je me suis retrouvée sous le regard d'Élie, l'âme vide et légère, un *balisier rouge* tout droit (Schwarz-Bart 144; emphasis added).

I found myself in Élie's sight, my soul light and free, a tall heliconia (Trans mine).

I was back again in Élie's sight, a tall *red canna*, my soul light and free (Trans. Bray 94; emphasis added).

According to biologist Donna Johnson in her article "Life on the Heliconia Plant," a heliconia is a plant (similar in appearance to a bird of paradise) with a waxy and significantly thick stem and banana-like leaves. It bears tough, colorful bracts that protect its flowers from insects and the elements (Johnson 4). While a red canna is related to a heliconia, it is different in several ways, most notably in its stem, which is much narrower than that of a heliconia. Its flowers are much more exposed and fragile making them less-equipped to handle the elements. A heliconia is much more durable and resistant than a red canna; thus Télumée's comparison to the heliconia plant is more suitable since she herself is resilient against the elements (which are for her

sorrow and misfortune). Although a slight variance, by mistranslating the name of the plant, the symbolic importance is diminished.

Télumée is also likened to a *filao* or casurina, a flamboyant (flame tree), and a bamboo: “Sway like a filao, shine like a flame tree, creak and groan like a bamboo, but find your woman’s walk and change to a valiant step, my beauty” (Schwarz-Bart; trans. mine 80). All of these trees, like the heliconia, are known for sturdiness and splendor. They all suit *Pluie et Vent*’s theme of female strength and resilience. They all can withstand the elements (the rains and the winds) and flourish in beauty when the storms have calmed, as Télumée does by the end of the novel. Given the symbolic importance of nature in the novel, it is therefore very useful to provide a correct translation for the metaphor to function properly in the text.

“Writing Back” and Leaving Culturally-Specific Words “As Is”

Not only do postcolonial writers from around the world, Schwarz-Bart in Guadeloupe, Michelle Cliff in Jamaica, Sandra Cisneros in the United States, or Ana Lydia Vega in Puerto Rico, include regional and culturally-specific words in their works to demonstrate the tensions that exist between the languages with which they interact, but to “write back” and affirm the postcolonial vision of the world.

To help illustrate this technique for the English language reader, the novel *Potiki* by the New Zealand author Patricia Grace is a good example. Her novel is considered bilingual in that it includes words and entire passages in Maori along with the English text. Since the Maori words are not translated, the reader must work harder to find contextual meaning and understanding.

It is Grace's way of "writing back" which speaks directly to the historic imposition of the colonizer's language (English) onto the Maori culture and lets the reader know that sometimes one language cannot accurately convey a culture. Like the Creolists in the Caribbean, Grace in New Zealand has manipulated the language to create a linguistic hybrid that includes all of the languages (and in extension culture) that make up their identity. The preservation and promotion of the Maori language and culture is achieved without excluding English.

Maori is a language with a significant oral tradition and as an ambassador for the Maori culture, Grace's use of Maori in *Potiki* is a means of legitimizing this oral tradition. This technique of including the colonized's language with that of the colonizer's (English), gives the reader the impression that Maori is just as valid and sophisticated as other written traditions such as English. Since in language resides culture, writing becomes a political act in that it gives voice to the oppressed and validates cultural identity amidst the dominating Western culture. Through language, Grace invites readers to share in the Maori struggle to find and validate their culture. She shows that one language cannot authentically express or reflect cultural experiences, and that to find meaning, one must be an active participant in the process. Writing back is a way to communicate a rich and complex culture that would otherwise be silenced.

Potiki is written in English; however, Maori words, phrases, and expressions are interspersed throughout the text. There are no footnotes, keys, or dictionaries found in the book to help the reader translate the Maori. In order to find meaning, the reader must examine the context in which the words are found and really make an effort to derive understanding.

For instance, the word *wharekai* is used frequently in the novel; however, unless a reader were fluent in Maori, he would not know from linguistic or phonetic clues what it might mean. He must examine the context, like in the sentence: “I knew then that all the people were at the meeting-house, and that in the wharekai the tables would have been set for morning and food prepared” (25). From the context clues, one comes to learn that a *wharekai* is a “meeting-house” or gathering place, and thus, a new word is added to the reader’s vocabulary.

There are some instances, where no contextual clues are given and the reader must simply accept the untranslated text at face value. In fact, much of Granny Tamihana’s dialogue is strictly in Maori, such as in the sentence: “. . . Granny Tamihana hobbled up onto the verandah and called out to her, ‘Haere mai te awhina o te iwi. Haere mai kit e kai, haere mai kit e inu ti’” (20). At the end of the novel, the text is written only in Maori. Here, language is used strictly between and reserved for the characters and the reader is merely an observer looking into a specific moment in a new and unfamiliar cultural experience. The reader can imply what might be happening or what might be said, but the author does not provide any translational assistance.

Through this example of Grace’s *Potiki*, we can see that both the languages of the colonizer (English) and colonized (Maori) are used not only to provide local color, but also to convey the Maori experience and identity. Similarly, Schwarz-Bart uses a Creolized French to convey the French-Caribbean woman’s experience in *Pluie et Vent*. While Grace’s novel does not need to be translated to reach English readers since it is already primarily in English,

Schwarz-Bart's text needs that extra mediation of translation to reach an English-language audience. To provide a sound translation of Schwarz-Bart's text, either the translator will have to find word equivalents or leave the culturally-specific terms in their original form (as in *Potiki*) and have the reader work to find meaning. To once again paraphrase Venuti in *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*, either the translator will bring the reader closer to the author or the author closer to the reader.

Cultural Equivalents, Untranslatability, and the "Mammy" Problem

Even though translation now consists of sense-for-sense translation opposed to word-for-word translation to decipher meaning in literary texts, finding functional and cultural equivalents can be difficult as is the case for *Pluie et Vent*. Sometimes descriptions and concepts which are native to the author's culture are too complex to translate properly or are simply untranslatable.

Palma Zlateva writes about this difficulty in her essay "Text and Pre-Text":

An author constructs a world based on the inventory of her native language and for an audience which shares her universe of discourse. [. . .] When a translator plays the part of the reader, on the other hand, she must apply both her knowledge and her intuition to the author's universe of discourse, very conscientiously, but also very cautiously. The translator's knowledge is very often not the result of direct observation, but rather the result of information about the author's universe of discourse acquired from other

texts. In practice the translator often knows more about the literary tradition the author writes in, but less about her living reality. (31)

Only when one translates or edits does one realize how important the translator's experience of the author's world is. Sometimes cultural references do not translate well because the translator does not have first-hand knowledge of the author's culture. Instead, as Zlateva writes, translators gain their knowledge of the author's culture from secondary sources.

An example of this problem is found in Bray's translation of Reine Sans Nom's physical description. In *Pluie et Vent*, Schwarz-Bart writes: "Reine Sans Nom était habillé à la manière des 'negresses à mouchoir,' qui portent un madras en guise de coiffe" (48) [Reine Sans Nom was dressed in the "handkerchief black woman" style wearing a madras scarf as a headdress].¹¹ Bray translates this sentence: "Queen Without a Name was dressed in 'mammy' style with a head scarf" (28). While Bray's translation is a lot less choppy than mine, its accuracy is questionable since it invokes a certain image for the reader, the American reader especially: the image of the "mammy."

"Mammy" is an example of what Johanna Drucker and Emily McVarish term in *Graphic Design History: A Critical Guide*, an "agent of ideology." An image such as "Mammy" generates a certain set of beliefs or ideas for the viewer. These beliefs are formed by the exposure to such graphic representations (84). In their preface, Drucker and McVarish explain that graphic design does not exist in a vacuum, nor does it subsist outside of a context: "graphic artifacts always serve a purpose and contain an agenda, no matter how neutral or natural they appear to be"

(xiii-xvii). There is always a message communicated by the object, sometimes blatantly or for reasons not readily known to the viewer.

“Mammy” is a Jim Crow Era caricature of African-American women. She is a racial stereotype created by defenders of slavery and is unique to the United States (Morgan 87). For Bray to describe Reine Sans Nom in this way is to reduce her to an object, a racist and foreign one no less. Bray, a British translator, assumes and approximates an American stereotype for Schwarz-Bart’s description. The “mammy” conjures up the dominant slave-era ideology that justified the exploitation of female slaves and contributed to the social construction of a black woman’s gender and low sociopolitical status (Simms 880). With this description, how may the American reader perceive Reine Sans Nom? Would the reader envision Reine Sans Nom as an Aunt Jemima portrait on a pancake box? To view Reine Sans Nom in this way would only perpetuate a long lasting stereotype of black women, and unfairly categorize her with a uniquely American stereotype. One cannot lump all women of African descent into the same category. Each culture is distinctive.

The use of the term “mammy” is not only problematic because it approximates an American racist stereotype, but because it continues to propagate the unfair representations of African and Caribbean women in literature and media that have been prevalent throughout colonial and postcolonial history. In his article “La femme antillaise et son corps,” writer Ernest Pepin sums up this unjust representation succinctly: “la femme antillaise ne maitrise pas l’image de son corps” [the Caribbean woman does not control the image of her body] (qtd. and

trans. Larrier 28). This lack of bodily control is due to objectification by racist and colonial sensibilities who seldom favor women's perspectives. Renée Larrier explains in *Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean*:

Whether it was outsiders (European anthropologists, sociologists, travel writers, novelists, poets, literary critics) or insiders (African or Caribbean *griots*, autobiographers, novelists, poets, or literary critics), women's perspectives have been rarely presented, their voices seldom privileged. (28)

As explained in Chapter Two of this dissertation, until the 1970s when Caribbean women, including Condé and Schwarz-Bart, began to write fiction in large numbers, the womanist perspective on the lives of Caribbean women were scarcely heard. Instead, portraits of women in Caribbean writings were objectified and constructed by others. In general, images of African and Caribbean people by outside cultures have been mediated by the prevailing ideology of the day. Advertisements, literature, art work, anthropological and travel writings, and scientific studies of a given time period reflected the perceptions that others had on African and Caribbean people, and unfortunately because of their gender, African and Caribbean women were especially objectified and commodified for the entertainment or pleasure of others. Caricatures with oversized body parts such as lips and breasts exploited the bodies of African and Caribbean women and contributed to mythmaking; what bell hooks calls "consumer cannibalism" (Larrier 32).

The image of “mammy” thus contributes to the myth of the black woman’s servility and “otherness”—an otherness that is grotesque and opposed to the Western ideals of beauty, which were favored by those who invented the “mammy” image. “Mammy” is faithful to her white master, dull-headed, always on call, non-threatening, and asexual. As Simm states in the article “Controlling Images and the Gender Construction of Enslaved African Women”:

The mammy image contributed to the stability of white male domination by portraying an ideal type of the Black female slave in her relationship with her master. Through her genuine devotion to servitude and consent to subordination, the mammy exemplified the ruling class definition of white male superiority and the Black female subaltern.

(882)

“Mammy,” therefore, stands for everything Reine Sans Nom is not. In *Pluie et Vent*, Schwarz-Bart challenges these dominant, racist ideals with characters such as Reine Sans Nom and the other Lougandor women.

Influenced by *Négritude* and *Antillanité*, Schwarz-Bart describes her characters with terms that appeal to Caribbean aesthetics, for instance, “flesh of mauve coco plums” (7), “skin [with] glints the color of rosewood” (17), etc. The reader should not view Reine Sans Nom as a “mammy,” but as the strong, “fighting cock” she is:

We Lougandors are not pedigree cocks, we’re fighting cocks. We know the ring, the crowd, fighting, death. We know victory and eyes gouged out. And all that has never

stopped us from living, relying neither on happiness nor on sorrow for existence, like tamarind leaves that close at night and open in the day (Schwarz-Bart 80).

To avoid the “mammy” image, Bray might have researched the description more thoroughly or provided a footnote to explain her choice of words. Since “mammy” is a loaded word, it would have sufficed to describe Reine Sans Nom’s way of dress without giving an approximation since translating the untranslatable (that which does not have a direct equivalent) leads to trouble. Sometimes, it seems, one culture cannot be substituted for another.

The untranslatable “refers to the conceptual differences carried by the differences between languages, not in pure form, but via the fractured histories of translation through which European philosophies have been constituted” (Osborne 9; see Apter 585).

Untranslatability is something from a source language that cannot be communicated in a target language. It is a “kernel of the foreign that remains” (Apter 584) and a name or idea that is mistranslated (which must be retranslated). Given these definitions, Schwarz-Bart’s phrase *negresse à mouchoir* fits this idea of the untranslatable. How can it be rendered appropriately without negatively influencing the reader of Schwarz-Bart’s work in English translation? In Chapter Five of this dissertation, I will provide solutions to the “mammy” problem found in Schwarz-Bart’s English translation through a discussion of electronic writing systems.

Translating Titles: *The Bridge of Beyond*?

Perhaps the most noticeable and questionable element of Bray’s translation is her rendition of the novel’s title. Schwarz-Bart’s title for her novel is *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée*

Miracle (literally, Rain and Wind on Télumée the Miracle Woman). Bray renders the English version as *The Bridge of Beyond*. Why would Bray choose to deviate so far from the original, and why would she rename another's work? Although these questions are difficult to answer since one cannot truly understand the translator's intentions, one can question her choice.

As already established, Schwarz-Bart's novel explores the resilience of women in a harsh, postcolonial Caribbean environment. Despite adversity, women have authority to steer their lives and tell their own version of the history of their people, thus challenging the powers that conspire to bring them down. Télumée triumphs over the rains and the winds of her life and she forever ingrains her experiences on paper uniting both the oral and written traditions of Guadeloupe.

Usually a title gives the reader an idea of the narrative to come. If this is true, how can *The Bridge of Beyond* express these central themes of *Pluie et Vent*? Why does the title focus on a place and not on the woman who makes the entire story possible? Since part of the purpose of translation in the publishing world is market-driven, perhaps Bray changed the title to make it more appealing to a larger audience. Translating the title literally might make it too unfamiliar for English-speaking audiences. The literal translation perhaps sounds too foreign, and is thereby less marketable. Finding a functional equivalent would, therefore, clarify the idea behind the original for the readers.

In the novel, the "bridge of beyond" (*le pont de l'Autre Bord*) is a bridge that unites the town of L'Abandonnée to the rural region of Fond-Zombi. Télumée must cross this bridge in

order to get to her grandmother's house. It is a treacherous bridge to cross consisting of disintegrating planks with a river running below:

Et soudain se fut l'Autre Bord, la région de Fond-Zombi qui déferlait devant mes yeux, dans une lointaine éclaircie fantastique. . . de-ci de-là apparaissaient des cases appuyées les unes contre les autres, autour de la cour commune, ou bien se tassant sur leur propre solitude, livrées à elles-mêmes, au mystère des bois, aux esprits, à la grâce de Dieu. (*Pluie et Vent* 47-48)

And suddenly there was the Other Side,¹² the region of Fond-Zombi that unfolded before my eyes, in a fantastic plain. . . here and there appeared houses resting on top of one another, around the common yard, or settled on their own solitude, given over to themselves, to the mystery of the woods, to the spirits, to the grace of God. (trans. mine)

Télumée's act of crossing the bridge changes her life because it is "beyond" the bridge where she is introduced to her grandmother's world of magic. This is Elizabeth Wilson's explanation for Bray's title:

Télumée is sent to live with her grandmother and is led across the bridge of beyond separating her from the ordinary world and bringing her into the mysterious world of the morne (hill), with its rich heritage of legend and myth. There, cut off in her

grandmother's hut Télumée is initiated into her grandmother's world. Toussine symbolically leads the young Télumée safely across the dangerous bridge. In her grandmother's tiny room, isolation from the ordinary world becomes a positive, enriching experience. (Wilson 55)

While crossing the bridge is essential indeed for Télumée's growth, why emphasize isolation by making this the title? Télumée is not alone in her experience. As Reine Sans Nom tells Télumée: "You see, the houses are nothing without the threads that join them together. And what you feel in the afternoon under your tree is nothing but a thread that the village weaves and throws out to you and your cabin" (Schwarz-Bart 85). It is Télumée's entrance into the community at Fond-Zombi that truly shapes the woman she becomes. She does not grow and develop alone, but among family and friends.

Her story is her family's history, and can stand for the story of Caribbean women as a whole. Schwarz-Bart's emphasis on the rains and the winds of life in the title solidifies her intentions of making her story the history of her people—all who have withstood the elements to survive: "thus the meaning of the novel's French title is extended beyond its specific reference to Télumée's fortitude, to embrace every member of her race and to indicate their innate ability to survive" (Ormerod 108-109). As Télumée states at the end of the novel, "as I struggled others will struggle" (Schwarz-Bart 172). All individuals can endure the rains and winds; for that reason, to rename the book would only overlook this intention.

It seems, then, that the title *The Bridge of Beyond* is not only a rewriting but a complete rethinking of the original concept. This situation can get tricky since most of the time the reader of the translated text has no idea that the title has been rewritten without doing research on it. As a paratext, the title situates the text in a certain discourse and affects how readers perceived and interpret the text. By rewriting the text, the translator has manipulated the audience to think a certain way and to expect something that may not be there. The reader should not assume that the translation is completely akin to the original. Instead, to read a literary work in translation is to know that some sort of manipulation has taken place. Also, the reader should not assume that the translator is a native informant of the text. As this chapter has discussed, most of the time, the translator has been contracted by the publishing house to rewrite the work, and may not be truly invested in its accuracy. They may have no relationship with the author or the original text, which makes one question, is it appropriate for a cultural outsider to translate a work, especially a postcolonial work such as Schwarz-Bart's?

According to the Creolists, no person who writes in or translates the Creole language or culture can ever succeed "without an intuitive knowledge of the poetics of the Creole language" (Éloge 899). For Schwarz-Bart's novel, which uses Creole concepts to authenticate and firmly establish her people's position in the world, it is imperative that her translator know this ideology.

As the examples discussed previously in this chapter have demonstrated, there are nuances in the linguistic and cultural translation of *Pluie et Vent* that translators must be

mindful of, for instance the use of Caribbean-specific flora terms which function as metaphor in the text and the inclusion of untranslatable phrases such as *negresse à mouchoir*. We are reminded that translation affects the changing perceptions and interpretations of literary texts.

As a paratext, it is a mediator of language and culture. Instead of providing mistranslations of untranslatable phrases, for instance using the racist and unacceptable term “mammy” to describe a *negresse à mouchoir*, the translator might need to research or experience first-hand the culture behind the language to have some relationship to the text she is translating. She should not remain anonymous—a simple name on a title page—but allow the reader to understand her technique and intentions. It would seem that in order to reconcile the translator’s intentions with the text, she might need to write a preface or introduction explaining her reasons for the choices she made in translating the text. In the same way the author affirms her voice, the translator should affirm her objectives as well, and as I will demonstrate in Chapter Five, translators can make their affirmations known through the use of electronic writing and publishing systems.

CHAPTER FIVE: MANIFESTATIONS OF CONNOTATION: SOLVING THE “MAMMY” PROBLEM THROUGH A DIGITAL TRANSLATION

The previous chapter presented several of the problems found in the sole English translation of Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée Miracle* called *The Bridge of Beyond*, and explained why some of these problems exist. There is no doubt that publishing houses play a significant role in the marketing of translations to a particular target readership and the selection of translators to translate their publications who oftentimes do not have a personal or professional relationship with the authors of these publications. Translators do not have the sole role of bridging the linguistic gap for readers but also the role of “selling” the entire literary package to readers through their methods of translation. Translation, therefore, is not just an act undertaken in the service of power, but a mediator of cultural contexts and reader reception of the foreign.

The paratexts included with the text, including translation, affect reader reception and reader interpretation. Since the paratext is usually constructed by another party other than the author, it is subject to falling short in its accuracy to the original cultural context of its production. The makers of paratexts, thus, face a similar dilemma to that of the cultural anthropologist: how does one accurately depict a distinct culture through language, visuals, or interpretation? (Watts 111). Watts concludes *Packaging Post/Coloniality: The Manufacture of Literary Identity in the Francophone World* that, for better or for worse, a text is modified by the paratexts surrounding it, transforming it into the *book* which is our only medium of encounter with it (173; emphasis added).

What Watts failed to see in this conclusion, published in 2005, is that a text is not solely limited to the medium of the book, especially now in the 21st century when the idea of the book is not limited to print. Readers now do not have the sole option of receiving their information through print. Instead, the open and mobile system that the digital and electronic provide makes accessibility as well as the potential of understanding and interpreting texts more promising. What possibilities are there for the translation of a text when it is not limited to its print materiality? How can we convey renderings, multiple viewpoints, manifestations of connotation, and paratexts through the electronic to encourage better reader reception and interpretation? What are the possibilities of a digital English translation of Schwarz-Bart's novel and what would this translation including critical scholarly information look like?

Part One of this chapter will focus on current electronic translation technologies and methods, specifically Machine Translation (MT) and Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT). While these technologies and methods prove useful in the translation of internet and business documents, they fall short of adequately rendering literary texts. It is for this reason translators must rely on more than these technologies and methods to produce new, hypermediated literary translations. They should also consider current electronic textual editing methods such as TEI to assist with translation. Part Two of this chapter, therefore, will discuss electronic textual editing as a method for computer-assisted translation. Finally, Part Three of this chapter will put theory into practice by providing prototypical renditions of Schwarz-Bart's text in digital form as well as a sample chapter mark-up of *Pluie et Vent* using TEI standards. These sample

electronic translations of Schwarz-Bart's text seek to solve the "Mammy problem" and envision a new method for literary translation.

* * *

In the editorial "Charting the Future of Translation Publishing" in the *Translation Review* (2005), Rainer Schulte calls for individuals to take up the task of reviewing translations so that rewritings can occur more frequently and there is transparency in the editorial and translation process of a text. He writes:

We as readers need to be provided with perspectives that place translations in their present and past context and also illuminate for us the specific interpretive nature of a translation . . . Furthermore, we need articles and essays that deal with the assessment of the totally available translations of a given writer. Here I propose that the academic world wake up and institute seminars and workshops into the curriculum that would train graduate students in the art and craft of writing reviews of translations. Interesting and stimulating doctoral dissertations lie ahead! (Schulte 2)

In this dissertation, I am taking up Schulte's call by proposing a different method for translating Schwarz-Bart's text into English that uses hypermedia and electronic textual editing tools. Using hypermedia and electronic textual editing will allow for multiple perspectives to be made available to the reader who chooses to dig deeper into the text.

Agreeing with cultural translation theorists, I have argued that translators consider the cultural contexts in which the text resides, not just the linguistic aspects of a text's language.

Schulte calls these cultural contexts the “anthropological dimension of a text.” The anthropological dimension of a text according to Schulte takes into account not only the linguistic issues of the literary text, but takes into consideration the social, cultural, and aesthetic dimensions developed by the traditions of a particular country which will reconnect words with their sensuous origins (Schulte 2). The translator must now not only consider presenting the reader these anthropological dimensions of the text, but also consider the text’s potential to exist in an electronic format.

In the 21st century, it is no longer enough to engage the reader with the printed word when there are the visual and audile dimensions to consider as well. Schulte continues:

In his book *The Civilization of Illiteracy*, Mihai Nadin argues that verbal literacy is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the 21st century. That statement should also be discussed seriously in the context of translation studies. The visual and musical worlds have drastically reduced the impetus in students to read works of literature, especially collections of poetry. (2)

The advancement of hypermedia and electronic technologies continues to influence how we think about and view the world, as well as how we read and interpret the world. Translators in the 21st century rendering in the midst of these technological innovations are not solely confined to using print media as their primary tools for translation, but can find assistance through electronic writing and editing technologies as well.

Readers in the 21st century are also acquiring knowledge beyond print. Jeff Gomez asserts in his book, *Print is Dead*, that for this current, electronic generation, “inspiration is coming from elsewhere; personalities, careers, and works of art are being downloaded instead” (14). Given these electronic, “on-demand” cultural shifts, one begins to question how the translation of literature will change if the current and subsequent generations of readers are raised on blogs, wikis, MP3 players, television, Kindle and other e-readers, Facebook, Second Life and YouTube. Since the idea of being “offline” is increasingly becoming rare, how can translators of literary texts capitalize on electronic writing and editing technologies to remediate their methods to reach the 21st century reader?¹³ Since Schwarz-Bart’s *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle* is the text of study in this dissertation, how can its retranslation and remediation into an electronic form engage 21st century readers as well as evolve translation practices?

Whether translating for print or for the electronic, why should translators retranslate works? Schulte explains that there are a myriad of reasons for the retranslation of the same work, some of the most popular being: to update the language of the text to reflect the discourse of the present day; to improve on a previous translation; to include new scholarly discoveries; and to bring new interpretations and perspectives to the translation in view of cultural discoveries and aesthetic changes (Schulte 1). *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle* fits into these criteria for retranslation as the examples I provided in Chapter Four suggested, but why remediate this new translation to a digital space?

Using the new media terms “rhizome” and “hypertext” to describe the Caribbean text where different cultures and discourses interact with one another against the backdrop of the narrative, I claim that *Pluie et Vent* is a hypertextual, rhizomatic Caribbean narrative that is prime for digital remediation because it shares these same characteristics with digital writing spaces. As I explained in Chapter Three, Schwarz-Bart’s text is a performative space in that it allows orality and literacy, the old and the new, to exist simultaneously in the text. The orality of the text and the written narrative communicate and encode the cultural experiences of a people through Schwarz-Bart’s use of a Creolized French. The oral proverbs she provides (which have been translated and transcribed by the author into written French) are lexias that interconnect with the story to create a fragmented narrative space.

* * *

Part One: Current Electronic Translation Technologies

As stated above, the advent of electronic technologies for everyday use have affected aspects of society including commerce, entertainment, education, and scholarly pursuits. Some core Texts and Technology texts such as Jeff Rice’s *The Rhetoric of Cool*, Marcel O’Gorman’s *E-Crit*, David J. Bolter’s *Writing Spaces*, and Jerome McGann’s *Radiant Textuality* have specifically examined the ways that systems of writing and methods of editing continually evolve to accommodate this electronic technological shift. As Part One will explain, one form of writing in particular, translation—the rendering of a text from one system of signs (language) into another, has not been left untouched either and has been impacted by the invention of electronic technologies to assist with the methods of translation. The development of machine

translation (MT) and computer assisted translation (CAT) techniques have caused translation scholars and practitioners to reexamine their approaches to translation and to evaluate the effects these electronic translation technologies are having on the profession, specifically the translation of internet documents (emails and webpages), and legal, medical, business, and technical documents.

Also, the continued developments in electronic textual editing such as TEI have opened up new pathways and possibilities for the rendering and study of texts in other languages. The theory and use behind translation technologies is grounded in their practical use. In order to understand how a translated edition of Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent* is even possible, I must first explain the current translation technologies—MT and CAT—and the current methodologies in practice that have grown in use due to MT and CAT, specifically bilingual corpora and concordance building and translation memories. Finally, I will consider how electronic textual editing methods can be used in conjunction with CAT to examine literary translation, a field with which automatic electronic translation has not been successful.

To understand the current uses of electronic translation technologies, it is important to briefly mention their history and why they were first originally developed. According to the authors in the anthology *Translation Information and Technology*, Jan Hajic in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, and Crasiunescu, Gerding-Salas, and Stringer-O'Keeffe in the article "Machine Translation and Computer-Assisted Translation: A New Way of Translating," the history of electronic technology and translation dates back to the Cold War when the need to

translate and decode massive amounts of documents produced by the United States and the Soviet Union arose. This high demand for translations revealed some inefficiency in the translation process, particularly in specialized areas of knowledge, which increased interest in building a translation machine that would resolve these inefficiencies. The invention of the computer led to attempts to use it as a tool for the translation of languages. The American scientist Warren Weaver first published his ideas for the use of computers to assist in translation in the 1940s, and universities began to initiate research in the emerging field. As a result of this research, the first machine translation programs consisted of bilingual dictionaries that would automatically offer words from a source language and several equivalents in the target language as well syntax rules for word order. Initial trials with these first machine translation programs proved to be problematic due to the complicated rules of language study and were not as efficient as researchers had hoped.

By 1964, the U.S. government created the Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee (ALPAC) to evaluate the present conditions of MT. ALPAC decided that current MT technologies were not very efficient and thus recommended that there be a limit to further research and innovation in the field. It was not until the 1980s when computer technologies increased in their powering capabilities and became less expensive that more developments in MT were produced. The increasing global market also played a role in the reemergence of electronic translation technologies and such countries as France, Japan, and the United States began developing electronic translation programs that would meet the demands of commercial industry.

In the 1990s with the increased use of computers for personal use, electronic translation technologies began to transition away from the mainframe computer. It was also during this decade that the approaches to MT changed. MT no longer perceived language as a static entity governed by fixed rules, but was dynamic and changed according to context, specifically time and culture. The cultural turn that translation studies took in the 1990s influenced MT as well. Language used in translated texts needed to be contextualized and it is for this reason that MT not only changed from focusing solely on grammatical rules but on bodies of texts and examples (searching existing corpora and established bilingual dictionaries). Reverso, a free online translation service, works in this manner. It searches existing dictionaries and online web documents to assist with translation.

Currently, MT continues to progress and large companies use online programs and store-bought software to meet the demand for the “right to know” in another language. Online programs like wordreference.com (an online bilingual dictionary), WorldLingo (powered through MS Word), Google Translate, and Babelfish allow users to translate their own documents with ease. I must note that these MT technologies are primarily used for comprehension purposes, not for accurate renderings that require the intervention of a human translator. These online programs are examples of User-Centered technology, which gives users the right to access information on their own terms without going through an intermediary, or “black box.” Translators build their own translation memories and custom dictionaries and corpora to assist with subsequent translation tasks.

Crașiunescu, Gerding-Salas, and Stringer-O’Keeffe explain that currently the instant access and flexibility capabilities of electronic technologies and the developments for a global market have led to a need for continued and efficient methods in translation. According to the authors, the demand for translations is not currently satisfied due to the lack of human translators, especially in language fields that are only gaining popularity now because of the global market. Also the cost of translations makes companies avoid the practice. The cost of translation is high because the productivity of a human translator is limited. While statistics vary, the general rule is that to produce a good translation of a difficult text, a human translator cannot process more than 4-6 pages or 2,000 words a day (Crașiunescu, et al). The economic need of finding more reasonably priced options for international exchange has resulted in the research and development of electronic translation tools to assist translators in finding information to help render documents in a swift manner.

Chan Sin-Wai in “Translation and Information Technology: Machine and Machine-aided Translation in the New Century” also expresses that information technology has created a global village and has impacted translation. The shortage of human translators in such developing economic superpowers as China and India can be alleviated by machine translation. He mentions that the purpose of machine and computer assisted translation is to function as a tool to remove linguistic barriers in order to handle an increasing amount of documents on the internet that are unfamiliar to users.

As Snell Hornby explains in *The Turns of Translation Studies*, the goal of MT is to produce a translation without human intervention. As a technology first created by computer scientists for the use in linguistics, it takes advantage of the computer's ability to calculate in order to examine the structure of a sentence, statement, or block of text in the source language and break it down into translatable elements that can then be recreated in the target language. This method is known as statistical machine translation which relies on probability distribution and applied mathematics. The probability distribution formula is programmed into the computer to look for the frequency of word matches in a given source and target language by scanning through multilingual dictionaries and corpora of texts that have already been translated and programmed into the MT system. The higher the frequency, the higher the probability that a source language string is the translation of a target language string, which the MT system then provides that output to the user.

Beverly Adab in "The Internet and Other IT Resources: Tools for Translators within a Translation Programme" mentions the development of MT is based on supply and demand. The global market has increased the need for quick and efficient translations, yet MT still only represents a small portion of the translation market. Translation software companies, such as Systran (a leader in MT software), though, are responsible for much of the translations we see online as with Babelfish on Yahoo, translation tools on the social networking site LinkedIn, and RSS feeds. It also supplies translation solutions for government and e-commerce and prides itself on removing the language barriers that might exist in global enterprise. Systran also provides solutions for the home translator to make the translation of e-mails, instant messages,

letters, and other documents much easier. By using the software with Windows applications, the home translator receives real-time translations through statistical machine translation. There is no need to open up more programs or windows that will clog the desktop interface. Systran prides itself on real-time, on-the-go translations for the busy industry translator.

While electronic translation companies and translators who use e-translation tools for their work tout the benefits of MT, Crasiunescu, Gerding-Salas, and Stringer-O’Keeffe mention that electronic translation systems still require human intervention for post-editing since language is highly dependent on context, denotations, and connotations. The authors suggest that at the present time, automatic translation systems are primarily useful now to save time and to get the “gist” of a document such as a webpage. It still is limited to concrete situations where there is an exact equivalent. In defense of electronic translation, though, there are plenty of examples where human translators fall short of polished translations in their first attempt as well. In previous chapters, this dissertation has provided several examples where translators provide questionable interpretations. Translation, no matter the medium used to render it, requires extensive revision, which is considered a critical stage of the process. Electronic translation helps move the translator towards this critical stage more rapidly by producing an automatic “rough draft” so that the translator can spend more time on the demanding and painstaking revision process. The general rule for anyone who reads or uses an automatic translation is that while it might be a close approximation (appearing coherent and “correct” on the surface), it is still not a final product.

This rule is especially true for literary texts. Currently, electronic translation software is not programmed to render successfully the figurative language found in literary texts. Since the software relies on statistical formulas that when programmed into the system search for word usage frequencies, the software only translates what it has been programmed for, usually literal word equivalents. As a consequence, the electronic translation of literary texts often provides strange and often amusing results. One such example is the translation of lines 19-21 of Canto XII in Dante's *Inferno*. To put Google Translate to the test, I typed these highly poetic lines into the Google Translate interface and received an outrageous result. In this canto, Virgil and Dante reach the first ring of the seventh circle of Hell where the souls of those violent against their neighbors boil in a river of blood. Centaurs stand at the bank of the river shooting arrows at those souls who try to come out of the river. Chiron, the head centaur, notices Dante and raises an arrow to shoot him, but Virgil commands him to leave him alone since he and Dante are merely passing through and observing the punishments of these sinners. Virgil states to Chiron:

Pàrtiti, bestia, ché questi non vene
ammaestrato da la tua sorella,
ma vassi per veder le vostre pene. (12.19-21)

The online *Princeton Dante Project* which uses the 2000 Doubleday edition of Robert and Jean Hollander's translation renders these lines as:

Get away, you beast, for this man
Does not come tutored by your sister,
He comes to view your punishments.

The online *World of Dante* which uses the 1980 Bantam Books' edition of Adam Mandelbaum's translation translates these lines as:

Be off, you beast; this man who comes has not
been tutored by your sister; all he wants
in coming here is to observe your torments.

Google Translate's initial translated output offers the following:

Get thee gone, beast, for this one cometh not
Instructed by thy sister,
but he comes to see your penis.

The Italian word for punishment is *pena* and its plural form is *pene*. *Pene* also means "penis" in Italian, and this anatomical word is the first definition in the Italian dictionary for this word entry. Since the machine cannot discern multiple denotations of a word because it is not programmed to do so, it picks up the first word in its dictionary database, which in this case is "penis." Google Translate provides a new function where users can click individual words or phrases in the translation output to find alternative translation choices, and it is here where the alternative words "pain" or "penalties" or "punishments" are provided. If the user does not

have the discerning eye to choose one of these alternatives to render more soundly the connotation of the passage, though, and the initial translation output is left “as-is”, the user is left with a shocking result.

It is not just the highly figurative language found in poetry that Google Translate has difficulties with, but fictional prose, news articles, and speeches as well. Danielle Belopotosky provides a useful table for comparison in “Putting Google to the Test in Translation” in *The New York Times*. In this table, she provides various renditions by a human translator, Google Translate, Babel Fish for Yahoo, and Microsoft Bing Translator of several excerpts of texts including Antoine de Saint-Exupéry’s *Le Petit Prince*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s *Cien Años de Soledad*, and Franz Kafka’s *Die Verwandlung (The Metamorphosis)*. As one can see from the table, some renditions are better than others and some automatic translation software actually provide state-of-the-art renditions of these literary excerpts. The reason for this accuracy, Miguel Helft explains in “Google’s Computing Power Refines Translation Tool,” is not that the software has been programmed to individually render and recognize literary language, but has instead repeated a rendition originally made by a human translator in print that has been uploaded to the Google database through its book scanning project Google Books.

Kit Chunyu explains that there are several methods to MT: direct and transfer. The direct method relies on functional equivalence, or word-for word translation, and links a word in the source language to a corresponding word in the target language, for instance Spanish to English. The translation provides for only one direction and cannot be translated the other way

around, back from English to Spanish. While the dictionaries used for this method are relatively thorough, programming for grammar and syntax are not as developed which can result in unconjugated verbs in sentences. For instance, the sentence: “She buys three books” would be translated into French: “elle acheter trois livre.” Here, while meaning can be derived from this sentence, the direct method does not conjugate the verb “to buy” (*acheter*) into *achète* to agree with the third-person pronoun *elle* and does not make the word for book (*livre*) plural to agree the quantity of books being purchased: “three” (*trois*). MT software such as Google Translate and Systran use this method, hence the syntactical, grammatical, and vocabulary errors found in the renderings. These technologies are designed to look for the overall comprehension of a document, not necessarily the grammatical soundness.

According to Crasiunescu and her fellow authors, MT focuses on decoding the source language, while human translation focuses on comprehension of the target language, even if it means reinterpreting the source language to derive better meaning in the target language. Some of the negatives about MT are its inability to find functional equivalents of words in a particular context (it can only translate using what has been pre-programmed for it to do) and its errors in language usage including grammatical errors in the target language. From the Google Translate example above, which renders Canto XII of Dante’s *Inferno*, we can see that one change in the SL, here a plural version of the word *pena* (penalty), can rend a passage shockingly out of context.

Aside from Machine Translation (MT), Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) uses databases full of specific field terminologies and translation memories to help the translator work accurately in a shorter amount of time. Translators who use CAT claim that working with a document electronically allows for non-sequential access to information and real-time editing and analysis. One of the major differences between MT and CAT is that electronic translation technologies are used to assist the translator throughout the entire translation process, not just in the editing stages. As an example of human-computer interaction, the computer becomes a workstation where the translator accesses all of her tools for translation on one interface resulting in a convenient and time-saving process.

CAT has led to the development of specific translated texts that assist in translation methods. These are interactive electronic dictionaries and glossaries of terminology (as found on wordreference.com), concordances, existing bilingual texts translated by a human translator in print and accessed online, and translation memories—databases that the translator has compiled of existing translated works. Some dictionaries, e.g., wordreference.com, which I have used in my own freelance translation work, include an online forum where users pose questions to other users (many of them who are native speakers in the target language) on word choice and word usage. This forum is especially useful when translating colloquialisms or specific industry terms that aren't easily found in other locations. I have used the [wordreference](http://wordreference.com) forum when translating customer emails to pose questions on the specific terminology of chemical and medical names in French.

Concordances help translators analyze the frequency of words in a particular text and look for patterns to help streamline the translation of documents with frequently occurring terms (e.g., an instruction booklet) for consistency in terminology. As mentioned by Crasiunescu, Gerding-Salas, and Stringer-O’Keeffe, though, concordances have not been as useful for literary translators since they are constantly faced with metaphors and other figurative language. Many times a particular word does not have the same meaning each time it is used in a text. Also, as explained above, for Google Translate, it is not the machine that renders; instead, the program searches out already printed texts in its Google Books database to use.

Perhaps one of the more useful CAT tools is the translation memory which grew out of the growing popularity of corpus translation in the late 1990s. Lawrence Venuti in *The Translation Studies Reader* explains that Mona Baker first thought to use corpora to assist with the translation of documents. Translation memories move this practice online. A translation memory is a database that stores a translator’s previous translations for future use. It usually stores whole phrases and sentences in both the SL and TL. A translation memory can either be automatic or interactive depending on the needs of the translator. If interactive, the translator will select each sentence segment separately and run the translation memory to scan for identical segments in the memory and provide possible choices for rendering. The translation memory function found on Google Translate works in this manner. If automatic, the translation memory will repeatedly scan a source language text and insert translations that are stored in its memory into the TL text. This process is especially useful for texts with repeated phrases and

terminology, such as instruction booklets, recipes, and menus. Translation tools, including the translation memory and the bilingual corpus, which have been created out of CAT, have led to further exploration of these tools to improve electronic translation technologies. Chang Baobao and Kit Chunyu, for instance, are exploring the ways in which all CAT tools can be combined to create a multi-system translation tool that removes discrepancies when translating Chinese government documents.

Of course, as with other technologies developed throughout time, translation technologies are not without their criticisms. One of the most popular criticisms is that electronic translation technology will replace the role of the human translator. This claim is a bit exaggerated given that electronic translation technologies do not replace the human translator but assist him/her with the rendering process. Paris Lau Chi-Chuen speculates on the role of the translator in the 21st century. Using Benjamin's "Work in the Age of Mechanical Production," she explains that machine translation has altered the organic relationship with the text's language, like mechanical reproduction had done to art in Benjamin's time. Chi-Chuen presents herself as hostile towards technology and presents an exaggerated claim that MT is an inferior version to the original and will be the death of the translator. She assumes that translators have to make themselves machines to compete. What Chi-chuen fails to consider, though, is that the idea of translation as an inferior version to the original is an argument that has been made throughout translation history. As argued by Bassnett and Trivedi, the idea of translation's inferiority first arose as a result of the invention of printing, the spread of literacy, and the emergence of the notion of an author as owner of the text.

As the Dante's *Inferno* example above demonstrates, what seems to be the most significant issue with electronic translation tools at the moment is that they have not been able to render successfully literary texts because of problems of equivalence. Because electronic translation tools can only search for what they have been programmed for, the rendering of figurative language needs post-editing by a human translator. Currently, the mechanical cannot render the figurative and poetic, but perhaps with the assistance of current electronic textual editing methods, this age-old problem might be solved and it is here where we see the potential of creating an electronic translated edition of Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*.

* * *

Part Two: Electronic Textual Editing and the Translator as Programmer and Inventor

In *The Literary Text in the Digital Age*, Richard J. Finneran explains that the emergence of new technologies coincides with the postmodern shifts in textual theory, most notably that there is no single, definitive textual edition. For translators, scholars, and readers of literary translations, the examination of multiple versions of a particular literary text need to be examined to derive full understanding of the language and contexts in which the text resides, especially when considering figurative language, since it can be so opaque to understand. If we agree that the text is part of a system that has many branches and layers, electronic textual editing in conjunction with translation methods can assist in exposing these multiple layers for further examination.

According to Kenneth Price, in his chapter “Electronic Scholarly Editions” in *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*, electronic editing allows scholars to avoid having to make a choice on which texts to include, which has been a contentious issue, and provides a wide variety of resources to interpret a text. This variety is especially useful for translated editions since oftentimes multiple translations of a text exist with differences in rendering. Price mentions that providing researchers and readers with the multiple versions of a text will allow them to develop their own questions and opinions in regards to a particular literary text.

According to Price, one of the potentials for the electronic scholarly edition is its ability to store massive amounts of information through TEI-conformant XML, and scholars are no longer limited to the materiality and size of a printed page. The electronic text edition provides for depth and richness in its ability to store not only the transcribed version, but the original as well for comparison, which is beneficial for translated texts since readers and other translation scholars can make comparisons between translated versions and the original for deeper study, all in one place. Essential information for literary interpretation is stored together in one interface.

Van Hulle, in his article on Samuel Beckett’s authorial translations in the *Electronic Textual Editing* anthology, demonstrates this potential by providing the multiple electronic versions of Beckett’s *Stirrings Still/Soubresauts* through TEI-conformant XML and the approaches to editing that he uses. These methods aim to capture the work in all of its stages to give a comprehensive presentation of how all of these stages contribute to the overall

makeup of the oeuvre, and also exemplify what McGann considers being the algorithmic nature of the text—texts produce other texts and are a part of a system that keeps on growing (McGann 151). The scholarly edition aims to communicate the editor's notions, perspectives, and theories of a text in order to promote literary debate and explore new ways of understanding and studying the text.

As a type of computer assistance to translation, electronic textual editing can provide a new method for the translator to store larger amounts of information for future use (a translation memory) and include a plethora of information to assist with the study of a given literary text. Also, since the digital interface provides opportunities to incorporate multimedia into the text being interpreted, the translator is not limited to just words to translate, but visuals and sounds as well to manifest denotations and connotations. For the reader of the electronic translation edition, this information also becomes accessible from one interface allowing for convenience of interpretation as well as new opportunities to approach interpreting a work because of the multimedia available to her.

It has been established by translation theorists such as Eugene Nida and Juliane House that when rendering either word-for-word or sense-for-sense that the translator make transparent his choices known with the addition of annotations, footnotes, and endnotes to a text. Using a hypertext medium allows the translator to include annotations and endnotes to help explain the choices they have made in rendering a text. The MLA Guidelines for Scholars of Electronic Editions even mentions that for an edition to be considered scholarly it must include

annotations (Burnard, et al 48). For texts such as those by Schwarz-Bart, which have been out-of-print in a target language, there is also the potential to reach a wider audience through the internet and other electronic media, which might circulate certain Caribbean works out of the Caribbean Studies milieu. While determining a potential audience might be a difficult task for editors and translators undertaking a project, the opportunity to expand readership and democratize knowledge is appealing.

Using electronic textual editing as a method for computer translation, the translator becomes not only an editor, but a programmer who uses the language of the computer to help render and annotate. The role, then, of the translator has expanded. He or she is not just a writer, but a scholar skilled in translation technology, which is what electronic translation theorists call for (see Crasinuescu, et al). The translator, using TEI guidelines, learns the best practices for rendering into a new language such as XML to encode literary data and remediate the text into a digital form. In the book *The Rhetoric of XML* (2009), J.D. Applen and Rudy McDaniel provide several examples of how XML knowledge can be applied to real-world work scenarios. In their industry examples they constantly refer to technical communicators as “knowledge managers.” The same term can be applied to translators in the 21st century who use TEI to assist in their translation work.

As a knowledge-management technology, XML allows users to identify, separate, and recombine precise data for various purposes. Using designated software, XML allows users to search and retrieve specific data that might exist in a large database or website that has been

coded or marked in XML with precision. Mark-up tags indicating specific data in a text are created for the computer to read and process since computers must be informed of the exact symbols and codes used in a particular language system. By using XML, users can create and reuse their own tags for specific information in various situations. Finally, XML allows users to exchange information with others more efficiently (Applen and McDaniel 42). XML gives users the freedom to define and name elements with greater specificity and in the manner in which they choose.

The Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) has created standards for representing texts in digital form. These standards encompass the use of XML to render literary texts. TEI mark-up standards make possible the publication, searching, and analysis of a text online as well as the preservation of a printed text in digital form. Once a text has been marked-up using TEI-conformant XML, it can then be encoded with a stylesheet such as XSLT, which in turn makes the text's visual manifestation possible on the internet.

The TEI guidelines provide specific mark-up language tags to use for the coding of various literary genres such as prose, poetry, and drama. Every text encoded in XML using the TEI standards must have a header and a body. The header of the TEI document includes the title of the text being encoded, the publication details, revision history (publication statement), and the source or bibliographic information about the text. The body information (rendered as <text> and <body>) include the contents of the text (Van den Branden, Terras, and Vanhoutte, *TEI by Example*). Specific tags used in the body help designate the layout of the text including

paragraphing, spacing, and page breaks. There are also tags to designate stylized words such as italics, typos, numbers, and abbreviations. Finally, programmers can mark up specific words (<terms>) for further study.

Considering the discussion of XML and TEI above, translators can profit from this attribute of classifying and defining elements together in their work. Comparative (equivalent) words or phrases in the target language and source language can be more easily identified, for instance, when doing a side-by-side comparison. The translator who uses electronic writing methods such as TEI-conformant XML is a programmer who connects target and source languages and compiles sources for better translation practices.

Towards the end of their book Appen and McDaniel summarize that students and scholars who wish to utilize electronic writing tools must be “theorist-practitioners” and “symbolic-analysts” who understand “both technological issues as well as the larger social, cultural, and critical contexts that inform and surround those technologies” (320). For XML, these technical communicators must understand how the language functions and how knowledge is created in information systems. They summarize, “in other words, we can never manipulate pure units of knowledge, but only the imperfectly defined and socially constructed symbols that represent aspects or facets of knowledge” (320). The same can be said for translation as a method.

Price continues in “Electronic Scholarly Editions” that the undertaking of an electronic text edition of a translated text becomes a “social text” where renderings undertaken by other

national languages are of key interest. Here is where one of the potential areas for electronic textual editing that Price mentions lies. Price concludes that a Spanish language version of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* has already been created on his *Walt Whitman Archive* in order for the archive to reach a larger audience outside of English speaking borders. This translation, then, becomes a part of the body of works found in the scholarly edition and adds to new layers for understanding and study. Also, current TEI projects including the *World of Dante* provide for side-by-side translation comparisons on the screen as well as other forms of multimedia such as maps, audio files, and videos to facilitate both teaching and interpretation. Offering side-by-side comparisons and multiple renderings, which expose the problems of equivalence, provides for the thorough examination of one particular source text for scholars and interested readers alike. Translating literature with the use of electronic textual editing enables the text to exist in a complex dialogue of texts allowing for expanded intratextual and interdisciplinary study and readership.

Not only does the translator become a programmer of language, but an inventor of texts as well. In *The Rhetoric of Cool*, Jeff Rice asserts that writers who write with new media become remixers, *flaneurs*, and inventors who are not concerned with rehashing the old, but are instead creating a new authenticity. They create this new authenticity through appropriation: a rhetorical stance that is “. . . dependent not on balance but on how terms or ideas are appropriated” (Rice 48). Writers with new media practice what Greg Ulmer terms heuristics, or writing towards invention. Building on Rice's claim, I emphasize that translators, as writers, become inventors as well through new media since the translation profession uses

appropriation. Translators use appropriation to convey meaning and to domesticate the foreign for a certain domestic readership, which results in dualities and hybridity, and these “moments of dual meanings serve inventive strategies in new media writing” (Rice 56). Demonstrating this act of translational appropriation through new media provides a space for these dual (or triple or multiple) meanings and all possibilities. While translators employ various cultural signifiers for their renderings, often leading to conflict, translators who use hypermedia can reveal all of these cultural signifiers so that they do not have to choose just one. Quoting Rice:

Writers [in this case, translators] composing with hypertext can combine their own material with an endless stream of quotations, essays, cartoons, reports, advertisements, sounds, images, and so forth, in order to generate an interconnecting network of knowledge to practice discovery through this interlinking. (Rice 81)

New media can assist translators who bridge the linguistic and cultural gap between author and reader since the text is no longer closed. As Rice astutely explains, “Whereas the nature of print is closed, hypertext was meant to generate open texts via the link’s ability to join a variety of authorial positions” (83). A hypermediated text provides for connections and associations where the closed, printed text may not in its ability to link outside of the text in question as well as to leave those links open for further connections. The importance of the hypermediated text is not just a question of what appears on screen, but “how the medium shapes thoughts” (Rice 85) and encourages writers and readers to search out conflicting viewpoints through connections.

* * *

Part Three: Solving the “Mammy Problem” through a Digital Translation of *Pluie et Vent*

Given the current potential of electronic editing and writing methods such as TEI to assist with the translation of texts described above, what might a new, digital English of Schwarz-Bart’s *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle* look like? How can the translator of this work solve the “mammy problem” presented in Chapter Four of this dissertation? This section will answer these questions through sample, digital translation prototypes and explanations, as well as a sample TEI-conformant mark-up of the *Pluie et Vent* chapter in which the “mammy problem” appears.

To review, Chapter Four of this dissertation presented the “mammy problem”: Barbara Bray translated the term *negresse à mouchoir* [handkerchief black woman], used by Schwarz-Bart to describe the character Reine Sans Nom, as “mammy,” which is a loaded and racist term for American readers. Since *negresse à mouchoir* has no direct or functional equivalent in English, it is an untranslatable term—a phrase that cannot be communicated by another phrase or word in a target language. The translator of a new English translation of Schwarz-Bart’s work is thus faced with the challenge of representing this untranslatable phrase and also acknowledging the mistranslation made by the previous English translator not only to justify the retranslation, but also to provide interested readers with a history and analysis of translation methods for this text. Since the digital space is an open space, the medium can allow these multiple perspectives to exist together.

The following diagrams provide one possibility for the appearance of a new, digital English translation of *Pluie et Vent*, using the “mammy problem” and one possible solution as the primary example. The first diagram is a site map depicting the overall plan of the digital translation and the subsequent four are screen shots—in their first prototypical stage—of what the user (reader) will encounter if accessing this digital translation on a personal computer or a mobile reading device such as a Kindle. This digital translation provides three versions for comparison: the French original, the Barbara Bray translation, and the new English translation. Readers can choose to simply read the new translation for leisure or access specific instances of the French original, Bray translation, or both along with the new translation for deeper textual analysis. What is important is that the new translation edition provides these other options to give readers access to choices and to show transparency in the translation process.

For the purposes for this new translation, I have decided to leave the term *negresse à mouchoir* in French when translating the sentence into English not only to demonstrate to the reader that this phrase is a culturally specific term, but also to illustrate the tension that exists when two languages inhabit a text as it does in *Pluie et Vent*. Figure 1 visualizes the factors the translator has to consider when translating this sentence into English, as well as some of the paths the translator can provide to readers for further study. This visualization becomes the site map for the new translation.

How Does the Translator Explain “Negresse à Mouchoir” in English Through the Digital? A Site Map:

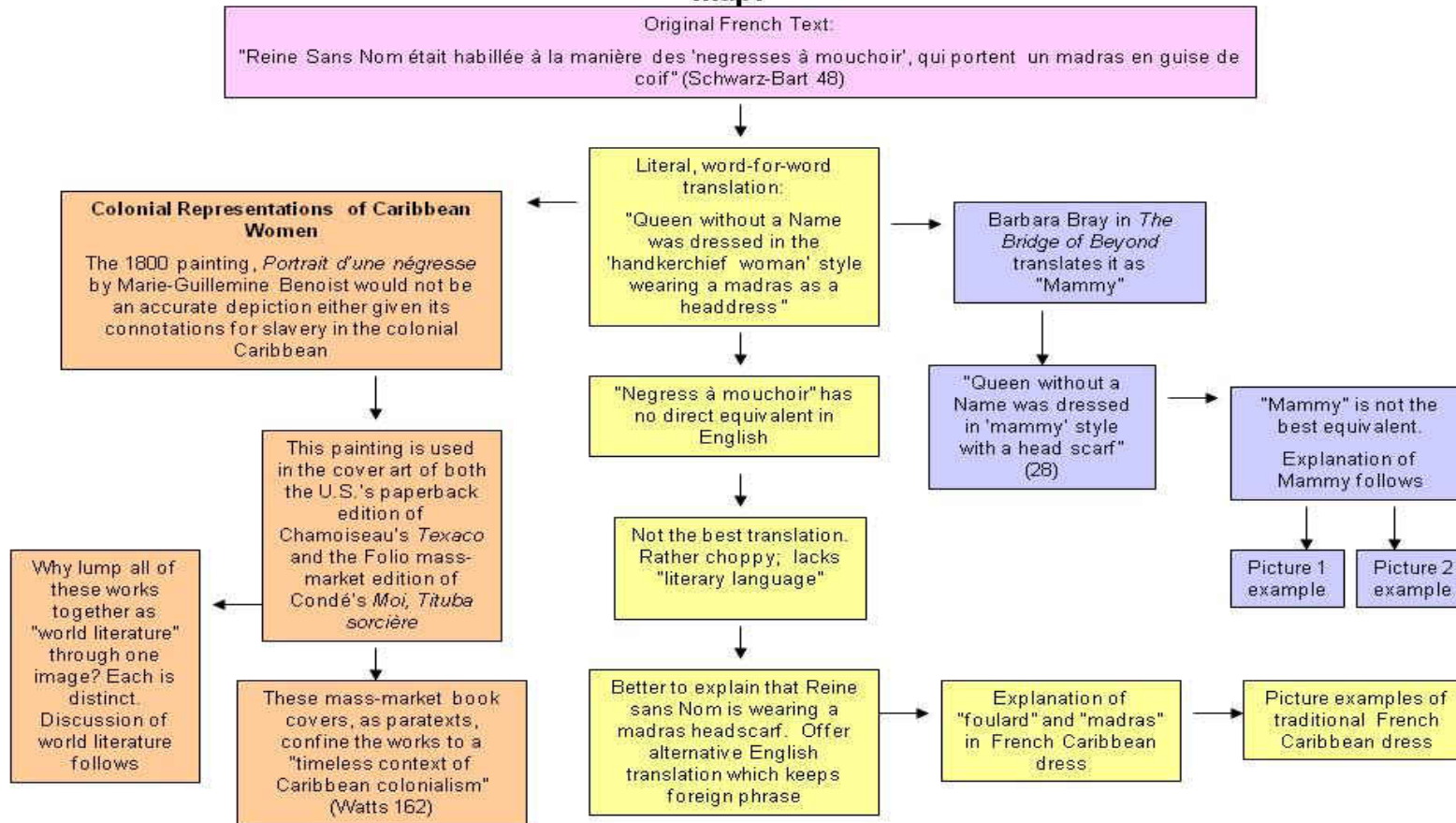


Figure 1: Site map for explaining *Negresse à Mouchoir* in English

In Figure 1, three possible paths for textual analysis have been provided by the translator. The middle path (in yellow) explains the term *negresse à mouchoir* for English readers and why it has been left in its original French form in this new English translation. Since there is no direct equivalent for the term, the translator will have to provide a definition that is more than a few words. One possibility is to provide an explanation of the use of the *foulard* (head scarf) and madras fabric in traditional French Caribbean dress (what Schwarz-Bart is describing her character Reine Sans Nom to be wearing) and sample pictures of the attire. Not only will the reader have a visualization and comprehension of the foreign term, but a lesson in French Caribbean dress as well.

Another possible path to provide for deeper study is a short discussion of colonial representations of Caribbean women (shown in peach in figure 1). This path, if readers so choose to select, explains how the 1800 painting *Portrait d'une negresse* by Marie-Guillemine Benoit has been used as cover art for the English language translations of two of Schwarz-Bart's contemporaries Patrick Chamoiseau's *Texaco* and Maryse Condé's *Moi, Tituba Sorcière*. Although this painting depicts a black Caribbean woman with a headscarf, it is mostly known for its colonial connotations and slavery, and therefore cannot be used to illustrate the *negresse à mouchoir* that Schwarz-Bart writes about. The two are not the same. If the reader wants to dig even deeper, this path provides a discussion of how one image, functioning as paratext, can lump individual works into one general category of world literature removing the individual works' distinct characteristics. Although, for instance, Condé and Chamoiseau are both French-

Caribbean writers, their two works are significantly different; yet having the same image on their book covers would suggest that to the unsuspecting reader they are similar.

Finally, the third path provided by the translator (in purple) would explain Barbara Bray's use of the term "mammy" to denote *negresse à mouchoir*. A discussion of the loaded term "mammy" along with visual samples would be provided to show the interested reader how the term is not an accurate or fair equivalent. This explanation would provide more reason why the term has been left in its French original in the new translation. Also, since readers would have visuals of the "mammy" stereotype and women in traditional French Caribbean dress to compare, they will have a better understanding of what the foreign term means and what Reine Sans Nom looks like.

By showing what a *negresse à mouchoir* is and is not, these three paths give the reader an accurate understanding of what the term really connotes and also offer more opportunities for critical study. Of course, the paths are not only limited to these three. In theory, more paths could be created by the translator and linked to other literary texts since the digital, as Jerome McGann reminds us, presents the algorithmic nature of the textual system: texts produce and link to other texts (151).

Now that the site map for the digital translation has been provided, what would the digital translation interface look like on the user's end? Figure 2 shows the *negresse à mouchoir* sentence as it would appear on a computer screen or on the screen of a popular e-reader. The foreign term is highlighted indicating to the reader that a hyperlink is available for further

explanation. The arrow at the bottom right of the screen indicates that a drop-down menu of the alternate translations is available as well:

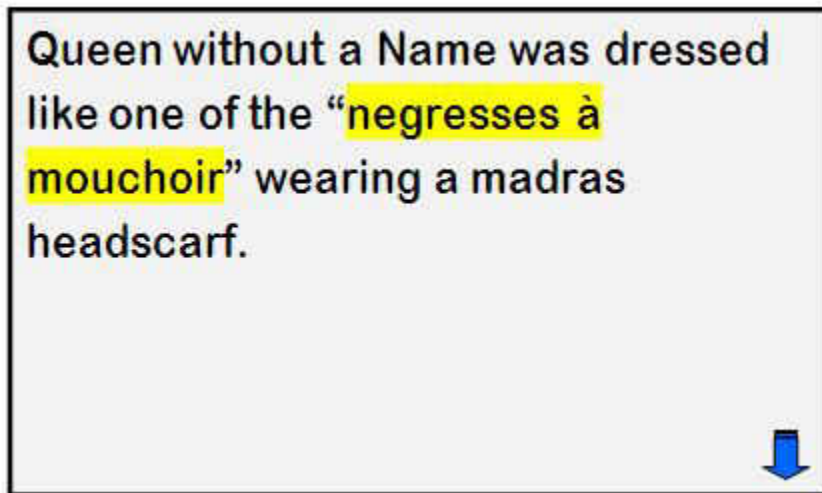


Figure 2: Screen shot of new English translation

If the reader clicks on the arrow (figure 3), the French original by Schwarz-Bart will appear with the phrase *negresse à mouchoir* highlighted to not only show that a hyperlink is attached, but to also indicate to the reader that the terms are the same. Another arrow appears as well to show that another sentence variation is available:

Queen without a Name was dressed like one of the “negresses à mouchoir” wearing a madras headscarf.

[French Original](#) :

Reine Sans Nom était habillée à la manière des « negresses à mouchoir », qui portent un madras en guise de coif.






Figure 3: New translation with French original

If the arrow is clicked again, the Bray translation appears with the word “mammy” highlighted to indicate that a hyperlink is attached and to also show that the word “mammy” has been used to indicate *negresse à mouchoir* in this translation. Whichever screen from which the highlighted term is clicked, three thumbnails appear showing the information that the reader can click on to find out more about this term *negresse à mouchoir*. Figure 4 shows all three drop down menus and thumbnails:


<p>Queen without a Name was dressed like one of the “negresses à mouchoir” wearing a madras headscarf.</p>
<p><u>French Original:</u></p> <p>Reine Sans Nom était habillée à la manière des « negresses à mouchoir », qui portent un madras en guise de coif.</p>
<p><u>1972 English Translation by Barbara Bray:</u></p> <p>Queen without a Name was dressed in “Mammy” style with a head scarf.</p>



What is a
"negresse à
mouchoir?"



Colonial
representations
of Caribbean
women



What is a
Mammy?

Figure 4: All three translations for comparison and thumbnails

When the reader clicks on each thumbnail, subsequent information for each section is provided on a separate screen. The following table (figure 5) lists the information provided in each section, which is outlined in the site map discussion above. Readers can choose to explore as much or as little of this information as they want, however, the translator has provided options and explanations for the analysis of the translations provided. Figure 5 appears below:



What is a "Negresse à mouchoir"?

- Explanation of the term "Negresse à mouchoir"
- Explanation of traditional French-Caribbean women's dress
- Explanation of the terms "foulard" and "madras" in French-Caribbean dress
- Picture examples of French-Caribbean dress



Colonial Representations of Caribbean Women

- Explanation of the thumbnail picture above, *Portrait d'une Negresse*, by Marie-Guillemine Benoist (including a larger-sized version of this painting for review)
- Discussion of the painting as a popular choice for cover art, including the U.S.'s paperback edition of Chamoiseau's *Texaco* and the Folio mass-market edition of Condé's *Moi, Tituba sorcière*
- Discussion of cover art as a paratext which contextualizes the works in a timeless colonial period
- Discussion of how distinct literary works can be lumped together as world literature through one image, which is unfair. Explanation of world literature follows



What is a Mammy?

- Explanation of what a Mammy is--an archetype of slavery
- Explanation of why using the term "Mammy" in this English translation of *Pluie et Vent* is not the best equivalent
- Picture examples of Mammy

Figure 5: List of information available for each thumbnail

Through the use of hyperlinked annotations in a drop-down menu, the translator is able to provide an explanation for an untranslatable phrase, a critique of an existing translation, and opportunities for further inquiry and study. Visual depictions are also able to manifest connotations for the reader when words prove inadequate. As the example above shows us, while a phrase like *negresse à mouchoir* has no exact French to English word equivalent, a visual manifestation allows readers to gain understanding of a seemingly foreign concept.

The diagrams above show us the interface of the digital translation from the user end, but what steps must the translator take to remediate Schwarz-Bart's text for digital publication? The following figures depict sections of a sample chapter of Schwarz-Bart's original French novel marked-up in TEI-conformant XML. This chapter—Chapter One of Part Two of the novel, *Histoire de ma vie*—includes the problematic phrase *negresse à mouchoir*. While the entire mark-up of Schwarz-Bart's chapter appears in this dissertation's appendix, I will explain here the process of encoding its TEI header and the paragraph of the body of text in which the phrase *negresse à mouchoir* appears. The samples below use TEI_All as opposed to TEI Lite since all elements are available in TEI_All. TEI Lite is more customized.

The TEI header for Schwarz-Bart's chapter is reproduced below:

```

4 <teiHeader>
5 <fileDesc>
6 <titleStmt>
7 <title>Pluie et Vent sur Telumee Miracle</title>
8 <author>Schwarz-Bart, Simone</author>
9 <respStmt>
10 <name>DiLiberto, Stacey L.</name>
11 <resp>Transcription and initial TEI coding</resp>
12 </respStmt>
13 <respStmt>
14 <resp>Coding assistance</resp>
15 <orgName>Center for Humanities and Digital Research</orgName>
16 </respStmt>
17 </titleStmt>
18 <publicationStmt>
19 <p>Part of a dissertation for the Texts & Technology Ph.D. Program at the University of
20 Central Florida, <date>2011</date>.</p>
21 <p>Coding done on <date when="2011-08-30"/></p>
22 </publicationStmt>
23 <sourceDesc>
24 <biblStruct>
25 <monogr>
26 <author>Schwarz-Bart, Simone</author>
27 <title>Pluie et Vent sur Telumee Miracle</title>
28 <imprint>
29 <pubPlace>Paris</pubPlace>
30 <publisher>Editions du Seuil</publisher>
31 <date>1972</date>
32 </imprint>
33 </monogr>
34 </biblStruct>
35 </sourceDesc>
36 </fileDesc>
37 </teiHeader>

```

Figure 6: TEI Header of Schwarz-Bart Sample Chapter

All TEI headers (<teiHeader>) should include several components: the title of the text being encoded, the responsibility statement, the publication details, revision history (publication statement), and the source or bibliographic information about the text. The title statement (<titlestmt>) includes the title (<title>) of the text being encoded, in this case *Pluie et Vent sur Télumée Miracle*, and the author (<author>) of the text, Simone Schwarz-Bart.

The responsibility statement (<respStmt>) indicates the parties responsible for the printed text's digital encoding. Figure 6 above has two responsibility statements since two parties were involved in assisting and producing this encoding: myself and Will Dorner in the Center for Humanities and Digital Research at the University of Central Florida (designated as <orgName>).

The publication statement (<publicationStmt>) provides information about the publication of the digital edition, including its publication date. In this case, the encoding was completed on August 30, 2011 (<date>) as part of this dissertation for the Texts and Technology program at the University of Central Florida.

Finally, the TEI header must include the bibliographical information of the text being encoded, designated with the code <biblStruct>. For this project we encoded the 1972 edition of Schwarz-Bart's text published by Editions de Seuil. The bibliographical information includes the title of the text being remediated and its place and date of publication.

Once the TEI header is encoded, the translator can move onto the body of the text. There are several issues the translator must consider when remediating Schwarz-Bart's printed

text into digital form. One issue is the formatting of the text. Does the translator want to preserve the layout of the printed text or does she want to modify it? Although line breaks (<lb>) were not preserved in this digital rendering since its layout will vary on an e-reader interface, including line breaks allows the text to appear on screen as it would in print.

Page breaks were preserved in the digital sample below as was white space, which appears in the full chapter mark-up in the appendix. Another aspect of the text that was preserved from the printed text was the language itself. As the XML encoded paragraph sample (Figure 7) demonstrates below, a more conservative approach which seeks to mimic the language of the printed text requires more mark-up and time. Since the French text is abundant in accent marks, the translator must take care to transcribe the accented words into the XML coding. If not, the words would be misspelled:

<p> Dans la case, un lit de fer était recouvert du drap du pauvre, quatre sacs de farine dont les inscriptions surnageaient, en dépit des nombreuses lessives. A lui seul, le lit occupait la moitié de l'espace. De l'autre côté il y avait une table, deux chaises, une berceuse de bois naturel, sans vernis. Grand-mère ouvrit une boîte métallique et en retira deux galettes de manioc. Puis, pour faire descendre toute cette sécheresse, nous bûmes à petites lampées l'eau de la potiche de terre qui trônait au milieu de la table. A la lueur du fanal, je me risquai à regarder grand-mère en face, à la contempler sans détours ni ruses, pour la première fois. Reine Sans Nom était habillée à la manière des « <term>négresses à mouchoir</term> », qui portent un madras en guise de coiffe. Lui enserrant bien le front, le tissu retombait sur son dos en trois pointes effilées, à la « tout m'amuse, rien ne m'attache ». Elle avait un visage un peu triangulaire, bouche <pb n="48"/> fine, court nez droit, régulier, avec des yeux d'un noir pâli, atténué, à la manière d'un vêtement qui a trop passé au soleil et à la pluie. Grande, sèche, à peine voûtée, ses pieds et ses mains étaient particulièrement décharnés et elle se tenait fière dans sa berceuse, m'examinant elle aussi sous toutes les coutures, cependant que je la contemplais de la sorte. Sous ce regard lointain, calme et heureux qui était le sien, la pièce me parut tout à coup immense et je sentis que d'autres personnes s'y trouvaient, pour lesquelles Reine Sans Nom m'examinait, m'embrassait maintenant, poussant de petits soupirs d'aise. Nous n'étions pas seulement deux vivantes dans une case, au milieu de la nuit, c'était autre chose et bien davantage, me semblait-il, mais je ne savais quoi. A la fin elle chuchota rêveusement, tant pour moi que pour elle-même... je croyais que ma chance était morte, mais aujourd'hui je le vois bien : je suis née négresse à chance, et je mourrai négresse à chance. </p>

Figure 7: XML mark-up of Schwarz-Bart paragraph in which phrase *négresse à mouchoir* appears

In Figure 7, the paragraph is indicated by the <p> tag. Since a conservative approach was taken to represent the text as it appears in print, page breaks also had to be designated. In this case <pb n="48"> </pb n="48"/> represents that the encoded paragraph was split over a page boundary in the source—that it ran from the bottom of page 48 to the top of page 49. Although this is only a portion of the entire chapter that has been encoded, as the appendix of the full-coding will show, I wanted to preserve the paragraph spacing as well as the run-on sentences and dense paragraphs which appear in the original text. The run-ons and dense blocks of text are rhetorical techniques used by Schwarz-Bart to mimic the oral nature of the text, described in Chapter Four of this dissertation. In the coding above, the term *negresse à mouchoir* is designated by a specific <term> tag since it is the phrase that will include annotations for further study. Once the encoded text is encoded and transformed with a stylesheet for representation on the internet, the <term> tag will help construct the visual layout and linking to annotations and references to explain this term.

Since XML does not use predefined tags, it requires a stylesheet to describe to the web browser how the XML encoded document should be displayed. One very powerful language for such stylesheets is XSLT, Extensible Stylesheet Language Transformations. Using templates to match and manipulate encoded elements in an XML file, XSLT converts an XML document into another XML document or any other document that is recognized by a web browser, such as HTML. XSLT can add or subtract encoded elements in an XML document, rearrange and sort elements, link elements, or categorize elements into a specific visual layout.

It must be noted that the TEI Guidelines include recommendations for how to encode translations (see 16.4.2 Alignment of Parallel Texts and 16.4.3 A Three-Way Alignment), which is especially useful for individuals undertaking a sustained scholarly edition that considers full-text comparisons. Since the digital translation I am proposing is not a full side-by-side comparison, but instead an English translation that includes drop-down menus with supplemental annotations (including terms and phrases from the French original), it is not necessary to use these recommendations. For Schwarz-Bart's digital translation that I propose, the translator would need to specify certain commands and attributes in the XML mark-up so that XSLT can manipulate and manifest the data for display on the user's end. To manifest, for instance the appearance of drop-down menus associated with the term *negresse à mouchoir* (as illustrated in Figures 2 - 4), the translator could use the stylesheet to convert the XML coding into HTML. HTML uses the <select> code, which is a code that creates drop-down lists ("XSLT Tutorial"). The translator could also associate a color to highlight the phrase *negresse à mouchoir*, designating to the reader that the phrase includes further study and links to the term "mammy" in Bray's English translation.

These mark-up examples above demonstrate that there are several levels of translation and coding involved in rendering Schwarz-Bart's text into digital form. Not only must the translator consider the linguistic nuances of the text, but the visual representations of the text on the user end and the coding requirements that are able to manifest a digital version of the text on screen. By moving a new translation of Schwarz-Bart's text to a digital space, translators have more options in how they present their renderings including what information to include

for better textual interpretation and analysis. The role, thus, of the translator has expanded.

This person is not just a translator of language and culture, but an editor who provides scholarly information for critical interpretation. She is also a programmer who is skilled in new media writing and editing tools such as TEI-conformant XML, and uses those tools rhetorically to invent new methods for the electronic translation of literature.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

As an exploratory exercise, this study relied upon historical inquiry, literary analysis, digital rhetoric, translation theories, and translation and XML mark-up samples to examine how electronic publication and electronic writing systems can provide new possibilities for the translation of French Caribbean literary texts in the 21st century. Using Simone Schwarz-Bart's 1972 novel *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* as the primary text for analysis and exploration, I demonstrated the potential of digital technology to aid in the production of literary translations that are mindful not only of the dynamics of language, but of French Caribbean women's discourse as well. This new method of digital translation, which takes into consideration the new media available today for transmitting literature (such as electronic literature platforms, online literary archives and databases, and e-readers), will allow for enhanced textual interpretation and analysis.

As the previous chapter concluded, by moving a new English translation of Schwarz-Bart's text to a digital space, translators have more options in how they present their renderings including what information to include for better textual interpretation and analysis. The role, thus, of the translator has been redefined. This person is not just a translator of language and culture, but an editor who provides scholarly information for critical interpretation. She is also a programmer who is skilled in digital technology, specifically TEI-conformant XML, and uses these tools rhetorically to invent new methods for the electronic translation of literature.

Chapter One of this dissertation provided an introduction, literature review, and rationale for this project. Next, Chapter Two discussed the emergence of Caribbean women's writing and *Pluie et Vent*'s place in the genre. Authors such as Schwarz-Bart provide the Creole/Caribbean woman's perspective on history and culture and show that there is a distinct woman's discourse in the region. It was necessary to place *Pluie et Vent* in this context in order to understand the important task of the translator who renders her work.

Elaborating on this idea, Chapter Three explored how Schwarz-Bart asserts her power and authority as a Caribbean woman who speaks and thinks in Creole, but writes in French. She remediates the oral nature of her language (Creole) into the written performance of the French language. Considering this relationship between orality and literacy in the novel, the translator must provide ways to manifest these polyphonic and polytextual circumstances that surround the text.

In Chapter Four, I examined existing translation theory, including the cultural turn of translation studies, and analyzed sample passages from Schwarz-Bart's novel and Bray's translation. I elaborated on the major issues of translation in the French Caribbean, including the role of paratexts and publishing houses in the publication of these texts.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I focused on the existing methods for computer assisted translation and explained how hypermedia and digital technology such as XSLT and TEI-conformant XML can assist in translation methodology. I also provided sample hypermediated translations of Schwarz-Bart's text as well as mock ups of the encoding of the text, showing

theory in practice. As experimental prototypes, these sample translations can pave the way for future application and study and explore new ways for translation and cultural preservation in the Caribbean.

After having established Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent* in its cultural, historical, and political contexts, and examining Barbara Bray's translation of the novel, it is apparent that all rewritings, whatever their form, are never exactly as the original. Writers do not write and translators do not render in a vacuum. There is always a set of cultural, historical, and political beliefs that influence the writing and rewriting of a text. When I first read the original French edition of Schwarz-Bart's text, *Pluie et Vent* and Bray's translation *The Bridge of Beyond* as an undergraduate student at the University of Central Florida, I noticed differences between the two and began to question Bray's choices in her method of rewriting. These questions informed my thesis research as a graduate student at Montclair State University and have reached fruition here in this dissertation for the Texts and Technology program at UCF.

I have continually asked, what might have lead Bray to her translation choices such as rewriting the title and labeling Reine Sans Nom a "Mammy," which, as we known, is a racist and loaded term? Why are some of the names of Caribbean flora and fauna, which function as symbols and metaphors, left in the original or rendered differently? By asking these questions and searching for the answers to them, I have learned that there is always a context in which the translation takes place, "always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed" (Bassnett and Lefevere 11).

For Bray, the translator, even if she has “mastered the author’s language and tradition in detail, and knows everything about her world, she is still the carrier of another language and another tradition, living in another world” (Bassnett and Lefevere 32). I have learned that often as a cultural outsider, a translator can never know exactly what the author is trying to convey. She might translate plot development accurately, but the attention, as many say, is “in the details,” and as the case for *Pluie et Vent*, in the way colloquial Creole terms, proverbs, and character descriptions are deciphered. Given the subjectivity of the translator as well, the choices in translation that she makes impacts how a reader will perceive the text.

Translation is a paratext in that it is a mediator of language and culture. Because the translation relationship more often exists between the publishing house and the translator, not the translator and the author, the translator’s understanding of the author’s “universe of discourse” is often theoretical since she has never experienced it firsthand. It is for this reason that the translator should strive to have a deeper investment and relationship to the text. Since language expresses culture, translator should be, as Bassnett and LeFevere, suggest “bicultural, not bilingual” (11).

The translator must understand that language is of the utmost importance in the Caribbean. Roger Toumson explains this importance:

Dans l’espace énonciatif antillais, la parole est l’enjeu d’un conflit brutal entre deux histoires, deux cultures, deux pensées. Elle énonce une solution de continuité, une émergence. (qtd. in Scarboro 22)

In the West Indian space of enunciation, the word is at stake in a brutal conflict between two histories, two cultures, two ways of thinking. It enunciates a solution of continuity, of emergence. (Trans. mine)

Schwarz-Bart uses language to proclaim the marginalized, Caribbean womanist voice. The way in which Schwarz-Bart combines French and Creole, then, cannot be overlooked. Schwarz-Bart incorporates nature imagery and the philosophical language of Creole with classical French, creating a multi-dimensional structure that encourages the reader to explore Télumée's Caribbean universe.

We find this structure in the way characters in the novel use natural elements and Creole proverbs to come to terms with the world around them. For instance, when Télumée is solicited sexually by her white employer, Monsieur Desaragne, she tells him, "les canards et les poules se ressemblent, mais les deux espèces ne vont pas ensemble sur l'eau [ducks and chickens resemble each other, but the two species do not go together in water] (Schwarz-Bart 114). She understands that Desaragne's solicitation is wrong and uses images from nature to convey her worldview.

In another example, Laetitia, the woman who ultimately runs off with Elie, warns Télumée:

Voilà ce que tu es pour Élie, ma congresse, une succulente canne congo qu'il aspire, mais auras-tu toujours du suc pour le contenter? Ce n'est pas que je sois jalouse de ta saveur, mais je te le dis: danser trop tôt n'est pas danser . . . alors un conseil, ne te réjouis pas encore. (Schwarz-Bart 141)

That is what you are to Élie, my girl: a succulent Congo cane that he sucks. But, will you always have the juice to satisfy him? It's not that I am jealous of your flavor, but I will tell you: to dance too soon is to not dance at all . . . thus some advice, do not rejoice just yet. (trans. mine)

With the image of the Congo cane, Laetitia advises Télumée to not get too comfortable in her blissful union, for it will come to an end. As with other examples provided in this dissertation, this example illustrates how the Creole universe is tied closely to nature and language. As stated earlier, Schwarz-Bart writes in French but thinks in Creole, and she merges the two in the novel to articulate the Caribbean experience. Since this language relationship is so closely joined, to read the text in English without any acknowledgement of the dynamics of language would lose this connection.

Télumée draws her energy from the language and culture of the island which allows her to find her own identity as a Caribbean woman, and her presence and continuation in that milieu. As she states both at the beginning and end of the novel: "soleil levé, soleil couché, les journées glissent et le sable que soulève la brise enliserà ma barque, mais je mourrai là comme

je suis, debout, dans mon petit jardin, quelle joie!” [sunrise, sunset, the days slip by and the sand blown by the wind will swallow up my boat. But I will die here, where I am, standing in my garden: what happiness!] (Schwarz-Bart 255). She feels right in her place where she is, in Guadeloupe, the island: “the island in Schwarz-Bart’s fiction is not a place to be fled nor a prison in which one slowly dies; it is the locus of self-discovery and human relation” (Shelton 354). Schwarz-Bart affirms the forces of life against those of death and destruction. With her, the ideas of Caribbean self and Caribbean history become possible. Télumée, her heroine, like her ancestors before her, expresses all that is possible to express in spite of adverse conditions threatening her resolve to live.

Because they portray women as strong and resilient individuals, the works of Schwarz-Bart, like those of other Caribbean women authors, are beneficial for studying because they challenge the dominant ideas about history and culture. They give the alternative perspective and write about the voices that oftentimes go unheard. Because of this important and subversive quality, translations of these texts must strive to be accurate since the translated text is the only version most monolingual audiences are exposed to.

In the English-speaking world especially, educational systems have come to rely increasingly on the use of translated literary works in teaching, yet few educators know if the translated text in question is accurate (Bassnett 4). It is essential, then, to understand the translation/rewriting process and the inevitable manipulation of literary texts. Schwarz-Bart has

her own ideology and ideas upon which she draws. The translator must, therefore, recognize these ideas and not make general conclusions about the author or the text.

As illustrated in Chapter Four, *Reine Sans Nom*, a Caribbean woman, cannot be described with a stereotype like “Mammy,” a culturally specific image of African-American women in the U.S. during the Jim Crow Era. Also, just because the setting is the Caribbean does not mean it has to be deemed exotic (for its folkloric and historical detail) and generalized in that way. Translators, as ambassadors of language and culture can aid readers studying works like Schwarz-Bart’s question the universality of canonical texts.

Margaret Willen explains that from canonical texts, readers “extrapolate a set of cultural values considered to be universal” (762). When studying a text like *Pluie et Vent*, readers should not approach this novel seeking only to verify the dominant Eurocentric values learned from canonical texts since “a full or even adequate understanding of another culture is never to be gained by translating it into one’s own terms” (Willen 762). A novel like *Pluie et Vent* validates differences in culture and provides a counterpoint to Eurocentric values. By using Creole and oral storytelling techniques, Schwarz-Bart, informed by *Négritude*, *Antillanité*, and *Créolité*, seeks to define the French-Caribbean womanist identity in terms of its historical, cultural, and racial connections with Africa and the New World, and it is the best practice of the translator to convey this worldview accurately to readers.

Not to read a translation, though, would be unimaginable. If a reader does not know the language of the author, how else would she be exposed to the work unless she learns the new

language? Because the translation is oftentimes the only piece of work that the reader has access to, the translator must be well-aware that the translation of that text must be as accurate as possible. How else will a reader understand the positions and cultures from which the author is coming without renditions? How else can a reader grasp the complicated views of the world without translations? Without them, a lopsided view of the world is given. Some critics of translation believe that the translated product is a “maimed” result. As the author Vissarion Belinsky observed, “To read a work in translation is like kissing a beautiful woman with a handkerchief over her face” (qtd. in Bail 6). While there is always something underneath that the translator does not disclose, the reader must be conscious of these omissions and seek to question them.

We need to study and read translations in order to make ourselves aware that manipulations in the rewriting of literature exist. As Lefevere writes, the study of translations might serve as a means to see through the manipulations of all types of texts: “a study of rewriting will not tell [readers] what to do; it might show them ways of not allowing other people to tell them what to do” (*Translation, Rewriting* 9). We need translation since they broaden and diversify the scope with which we study literature. While some may argue that literal translations render prose less satisfying in an aesthetic fashion, with culturally specific works such as *Pluie et Vent*, the translator must endeavor to make it as close to the original.

There is a way to translate a text without completely rewriting it, and through footnotes, introductions, and prefaces, a translator can explain her translation methods and choices to the reader. Ultimately, we need Schwarz-Bart’s voice of resilience to be heard all

over the world. We need Caribbean women's discourse to challenge status quos and the traditional literary canons in place. If the present English translation does not suffice, we should create a new one that is sensitive to the culture and plight of Caribbean women so that readers will always know that she is "not a statue of salt that is dissolved by the rain" [n'est pas une statue de sel que dissolvent les pluies] (Schwarz-Bart 172; trans. mine).

In this dissertation I have taken up the task of imaging this new English translation that is mindful of Schwarz-Bart's language and culture. Through critical and theoretical analysis and the construction of hypermediated textual translation samples from *Pluie et Vent*, I argue that translators can make their choices known by taking advantage of digital writing and hypermedia tools and using them for computer assisted translation (CAT) and electronic publication. In *Writing Machines*, N. Katherine Hayles explains what the print book can become in the digital age if we examine its visual design and physical nature to find new possibilities for the contexts in which it resides (19). Ultimately, it is not just the content and words that make the page, but the page that makes the text as well. If "materiality is content and content is materiality" as Hayles claims, the remediated, electronic Caribbean literary text can allow new opportunities for invention and interpretation and make Caribbean literature available to larger audiences outside of Caribbean Studies through accessible digital writing spaces not limited to print.

A number of theorists such as George Landow, Greg Ulmer, Jeff Rice, Marcel O'Gorman, N. Katherine Hayles, and Jerome McGann, all see the potential for writing with new media to offer new ways of knowing. Writing with new media allows for more egalitarian approaches to

the acquisition of knowledge, the expansion of cultural and literary borders that are not only limited to the printed page, the de-centering of canonical and privileged texts, and the production of texts that emphasize invention.

As a type of computer assistance to translation, electronic textual editing allows translators to include annotations and endnotes to help explain the choices they have made in rendering a text. It can allow for side-by-side comparison of the original and translated versions of a text through the use of split-screens and roll-over and pop-up hyperlinks. The incorporation of visual elements into the electronic edited text can also provide an added dimension to textual analysis since images can often provide adequate explanations when words prove inadequate. For Schwarz-Bart's text—a text full of vivid imagery—in particular, visuals can be used to help the reader “see” what is being expressed by the author and interpreted by the translator. Visuals are especially useful for rendering untranslatable phrases like *negresse à mouchoir* which was both discussed in Chapters Four and Five of this dissertation. The visual can manifest the connotations associated with a word, phrase, or concept that are either rendered accurately or inaccurately by the translator(s). The visuals can help explain what words alone in a translation often cannot.

In a talk delivered at the Haus der Kulturen in 1998, Edouard Glissant stated: “The internet—for the first time in human history—is open to everyone and addresses everyone. The internet broadens the concept of literature, incorporating the necessity of complete information from everywhere. The internet opens up a stupendous mingling of tongues . . . It

accustoms us to an interesting diversity (Rumpf 267). For Glissant, this digital, secondary orality relates to his concept of a poetics of relation—that the Caribbean is a rhizomatic space because of its mixture of languages, cultures, politics, and histories that create multiple offshoots and possibilities—since it is not restricted to a particular local space, but instead connects users to global spaces (267). Its omnipresence and non-linearity allows for ongoing exchange and simultaneous dialogue which redefines both our individual and collective identities.

Those who write with electronic writing tools consider different writerly (and readerly) perspectives, as well as the simultaneous dialogue that exists in the digital world. Translators of Caribbean literature who use digital technology to assist with translation will mimic and recreate the rhizomatic nature of Caribbean culture since they will consider all of the situations and circumstances that go into the translation and production of a text. They will exemplify the relational poetics and “mingling of tongues” that Glissant calls for: “the poetics of relation requires all the languages of the world. Not to know or to ponder them, but to know (feel) that it is essential for them to exist; that this existence determines the accents of any writing” (Glissant 268; see Rumpf 268).

Walter Ong in *Orality and Literacy* explains that primary orality requires proximity—storytellers and their audiences share the same cultural space—while writing distances the author from his readers (many of which are not from the same cultural place). Secondary orality, for instance the internet, though, restores proximity through a virtual space connecting

author and reader. There is an omnipresence of the world through an electronic medium (Rumpf 270).

Applying this idea to translation, the translator who uses a virtual space to render also remains in closer proximity to the author and to the reader. The author, the text, the reader, and the translator share a virtual space that is not hierarchical but rhizomatic. Here, greater knowledge of the text and the choices made by the translator become available, leading to transparency—a quality that successful translations have. Rumpf writes, “Because of the virtual proximity, technology-based orality allows national and mental limitations to be overcome, because it makes accessible the know-how of the whole-world and disseminates world-wide events” (270). The omnipresence of the whole world through digital and electronic technology, such as the internet, expands our understanding of people and culture.

For translation, it expands linguistic and cultural limitations through the various viewpoints made available: author, reader, translator in one space. Also, when words fail to convey meaning, the visual is available to provide explanation since multimedia is accessible in this digital realm. The omnipresence of the world through the digital and electronic is what Glissant calls *mondialité* (“worldness”), which is another form of Creolization: a synchronous world of fragments and nodes. The multiplicity of discourses found in the Creole text mimics the digital space by “repetition, ruminating, circular speech, the spiral cry, the breaking down of the voice” (Glissant qtd. in Rumpf 271). For translators using electronic writing spaces to render, the translated text becomes a node in the rhizome in that it is a part of the whole—in

this case, the literary system which includes the original text, the translation, secondary research, and the reader's experience.

Writing with new media follows the same rules as the culture of *Créolité*: nonhierarchical, reciprocal exchange. All languages can participate without being overshadowed by another resulting in a hybrid text. This nonhierarchical, reciprocal exchange is especially important for translation so that one voice, that of the translator, does not usurp the author's voice or the reader's interpretation. Such is the endeavor for a digital, hypermediated English translation of Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée Miracle*.

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Doctoral Candidate - Texts and Technology

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CHAPTER: CHAPTER ONE OF PART TWO, *HISTOIRE DE MA VIE*


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<p>Deux ans après la mort d'Angebert, un étranger, un homme du nom de Haut-Colbi fit halte
au village et changea le cours de ma destinée. C'était un nègre caribe bien planté sur
ses jambes, mais on eût dit qu'il évoluait dans l'eau, son véritable élément, on eût dit
qu'il nageait tant était grande sa souplesse. Ses yeux se posaient sur vous comme une
écharpe de soie et sa bouche enjôleuse, son rire en cascade, sa peau sombre aux ombres
violette s'imposaient à toute femme qui le croisait dans la rue, par hasard. L'homme
venait de la Côte-sous-le-vent.</p>
<p> En dépit de ses deux bâtardes, ma mère n'était pas pour autant une femme tombée. Elle
avançait dans la vie avec la même attente, la même légèreté qu'au temps où nulle main
d'homme ne l'avait effleurée. Les années l'avaient juste un peu ouverte, et elle était
maintenant, sous le soleil, une gousse de vanille éclatée qui livre enfin tout son
parfum. Un beau matin, elle partit avec sa grâce en commission, toute chantonnante,
comme d'habitude. C'est alors qu'elle vit Haut-Colbi et que sa chanson s'arrêta net. On
dit qu'ils restèrent une heure dans la contemplation l'un de l'autre, en pleine rue et
sous les yeux de tous, saisis de cet étonnement qui étire le cœur humain quand, pour
la première fois, le rêve coïncide avec la réalité. Ils ne tardèrent pas à se <pb n="45"/>
mettre en case, transformant mon destin. Haut-Colbi passait par hasard dans notre
hameau de L'Abandonnée, il avait vu ma mère et il était resté. </p>
<p>La vérité est qu'on rien, une idée, une lubie, un grain de poussière suffisent à
changer le cours d'une vie. Si Haut-Colbi n'avait pas fait halte au village, ma petite
histoire aurait été bien différente de ce qu'elle fut. Car ma mère avait trouvé son dieu
ce jour-là, et ce dieu était grand amateur de chair féminine, on du moins en avait-il la
réputation. Le premier soin de ma mère fut de m'éloigner, d'écarter ma petite chair de
dix ans pour s'éviter la peine, quelques années plus tard, de danser sur le ventre qui
l'aurait trahie. Aussi décida-t-elle de m'envoyer à Fond-Zombi, auprès de ma grand-mère,
loin de son nègre caribe.</p>
<p> On la blâma beaucoup, et la rumeur publique l'accusa de cracher sur son propre ventre,
pour qui et quoi ?... une bouche enjôleuse, un homme qui venait de la Côte-sous-le-vent.
Mais elle connaissait la vie depuis longtemps, mon amoureuse de mère, avec ses deux
bâtardes en guise de boucles d'oreilles ; et elle savait qu'il faut le plus souvent
arracher ses entrailles et remplir son ventre de paille si l'on veut aller, un peu, sous
le soleil. </p>
<gap ana="white space"/>
<p> Reine Sans Nom n'était guère satisfaite de la manière dont sa fille faisait glisser sa
barque sur les eaux de la vie. Mais lorsque Haut-Colbi s'installa dans notre tour, elle

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commença à trouver que Victoire ne naviguait pas si mal, après tout. A ceux qui critiquaient la conduite de sa fille, elle répondait d'une petite voix tout amusée... mes amis, la vie n'est pas une soupe grasse et pour bien longtemps encore, les hommes connaîtront <pb n="46"/> même lune et même soleil, mêmes tourments d'amour... En vérité, elle jubilait à la seule idée d'avoir mon innocence pour auréoler ses cheveux blancs, et quand elle vint me prendre, elle quitta L'Abandonnée en bénissant ma mère. </p>

<p> C'était la première fois que je quittais la maison mais je n'en éprouvais nulle tristesse. Il y avait au contraire, en moi, une sorte d'exaltation à cheminer sur cette espèce de route blanche, crayeuse, toute bordée de filaos, aux côtés d'une aieule dont j'avais cru la vie terrestre achevée. Nous avançons silencieuses, à petits pas, grand-mère pour ménager son souffle et moi pour ne pas rompre l'émerveillement. Vers le milieu de la journée, nous avons laissé la petite route blanche se débattre sous le soleil, et nous sommes entrées dans un chemin de terre battue, toute rouge et craquelée par la sécheresse. Puis vint un pont flottant par-dessus une rivière étrange où d'immenses courbarils poussaient au bord de l'eau, plongeant l'endroit dans une éternelle pénombre bleuâtre. Penchée sur ma petite personne, grand-mère souriait, exhalait tout son contentement... tiens bon ma petite flûte, nous arrivons au pont de l'Autre Bord... et me prenant d'une main, s'agrippant de l'autre au câble rouillé, elle me fit traverser lentement ce casse-cou de planches pourries, disjointes, sous lesquelles roulaient bouillonnantes les eaux de la rivière. Et soudain ce fut l'Autre Bord, la région de Fond-Zombi qui déferlait devant mes yeux, dans tine lointaine éclaircie fantastique, mornes après mornes, savanes après savanes jusqu'à l'entaille dans le ciel qui était la montagne même et qu'on appelait Balata Bel Bois. De-ci de-là apparaissaient des cases appuyées les unes contre les autres, autour de la tour commune, ou bien se tassant sur leur propre solitude, livrées à elles- <pb n="47"/> mêmes, au mystère des bois, aux esprits, à la grâce de Dieu... </p>

<p> La case de Reine Sans Nom était la dernière du village, elle terminait le monde des humains et semblait adossée à la montagne. Reine Sans Nom ouvrit la porte et me fit entrer dans la petite pièce qui composait tout son logis. Sitôt que j'eus franchi le seuil, je me sentis comme dans une forteresse, à l'abri de toutes choses connues et inconnues, sous la protection de la grande jupe à fronces de grand-mère. Nous avons quitté L'Abandonnée en début de matinée et maintenant la brume allait descendre. Grand-mère alluma un fanal suspendu à la poutre principale du plafond, en baissa la mèche pour économiser le pétrole, m'embrassa furtivement, comme par hasard, me prit la main et m'emmena faire connaissance de son porc, de ses trois lapins, de ses poules, du sentier conduisant à la rivière ; puis, la brume étant tombée, nous rentrâmes.</p>

<p> Dans la case, un lit de fer était recouvert du drap du pauvre, quatre sacs de farine dont les inscriptions surnageaient, en dépit des nombreuses lessives. A lui seul, le lit occupait la moitié de l'espace. De l'autre côté il y avait une table, deux chaises, une berceuse de bois naturel, sans vernis. Grand-mère ouvrit une boîte métallique et en retira deux galettes de manioc. Puis, pour faire descendre toute cette sécheresse, nous bûmes à petites lampées l'eau de la potiche de terre qui trônait au milieu de la table. A la lueur du fanal, je me risquai à regarder grand-mère en face, à la contempler sans détours ni ruses, pour la première fois. Reine Sans Nom était habillée à la manière des « <term>négresses à mouchoir</term> », qui portent un madras en guise de coiffe. Lui

enserrant bien le front, le tissu retombait sur son dos en trois pointes effilées, a la « tout m'amuse, rien ne m'attache ». Elle avait un visage un peu triangulaire, bouche

<pb n="48"/> fine, court nez droit, régulier, avec des yeux d'un noir pâli, atténué, a la manière d'un vêtement qui a trop passé au soleil et à la pluie. Grande, sèche, à peine voûtée, ses pieds et ses mains étaient particulièrement décharnés et elle se tenait fière dans sa berceuse, m'examinant elle aussi sous toutes les coutures, cependant que je la contemplais de la sorte. Sous ce regard lointain, calme et heureux qui était le sien, la pièce me parut tout à coup immense et je sentis que d'autres personnes s'y trouvaient, pour lesquelles Reine Sans Nom m'examinait, m'embrassait maintenant, poussant de petits soupirs d'aise. Nous n'étions pas seulement deux vivantes dans une case, au milieu de la nuit, c'était autre chose et bien davantage, me semblait-il, mais je ne savais quoi. A la fin elle chuchota rêveusement, tant pour moi que pour elle-même... je croyais que ma chance était morte, mais aujourd'hui je le vois bien : je suis née négresse à chance, et je mourrai négresse a chance. </p>

<p>Ainsi s'écoula ma première soirée à Fond-Zombi et cette nuit-là fut sans rêves, car en plein soleil, j'avais rêvé.</p>

<gap ana="white space"/>

<p> Grand-mère n'était plus d'âge à se courber sur la terre des Blancs, amarrer les cannes, arracher les mauvaises herbes et sarcler, couper le vent, mariner son corps au soleil comme elle avait fait toute sa vie. Son temps d'ancienne était venu, le cours de sa vie avait baissé ; c'était maintenant une eau maigre qui s'écoulait lentement entre les pierres, en un petit mouvement quotidien, quelques gestes pour quelques sous. Elle avait son jardin, son porc, ses lapins et ses poules, elle cuisait des galettes de manioc sur une platine, des <pb n="49"/> gâteaux aux cocos, faisait des sucres d'orge, cristallisait des patates douces, des surelles et des fruits-défendus qu'elle remettait tous les matins au père Abel, dont la boutique était contiguë à notre case. Je l'aidais comme je pouvais, allais chercher de l'eau, courais après le porc, les poules, courais après les crabes de terre à carapace velue, si délectables au gros sel, courais après les mauvaises herbes en compagnie des « ti bandes », dans les champs de canne de l'Usine, courais avec ma petite charge d'engrais, courais, sans cesse, avec quelque chose sur la tête : la touque d'eau, le panier d'herbes, la caisse d'engrais qui me brûlait les yeux au premier coup de vent, ou bien me dégoulinait sur le visage, à la pluie, tandis que j'accrochais mes doigts de pieds en terre, surtout dans les crêtes, afin de ne pas renverser la caisse et ma journée avec. </p>

<p> Parfois, un chant s'élevait quelque part, une musique douloureuse venait à ma poitrine et c'était comme si un nuage s'interposait entre ciel et terre, recouvrant le vert des arbres, le jaune des chemins, le noir des peaux humaines d'une couche légère de poussière grise. Cela arrivait surtout au bord de la rivière, le dimanche matin, durant la lessive de Reine Sans Nom, quand les femmes alentour se mettaient à rire, à rire d'une manière très particulière, juste de la bouche et des dents, comme si elles toussaient. Alors, dans la voltige du linge, les femmes bruissaient de paroles empoisonnées, la vie tournait en eau et dérision et Fond-Zombi tout entier semblait gicler, se tordre et se répandre dans l'eau sale, en même temps que les jets de mousse vaporeuse et brillante. L'une d'elles, une certaine dame Vitaline Brindosier, personne grasse et ronde, âgée, les cheveux blancs comme neige et les yeux pleins d'innocence,

avait un talent tout particulier pour jeter le trouble dans les esprits. Quand les âmes devenaient pesantes, quand **<pb n="50"/>** l'heure était à la dérision et à la nullité de la vie du nègre, Mme Brindosier secouait ses bras comme des ailes, victorieusement, et elle clamait que la vie était un vêtement déchire, une loque impossible à recoudre. Et là-dessus elle ne se tenait plus de joie, riait, battait ses beaux bras ronds, ajoutait sur un ton doux-amer... ah, nous les nègres de Guadeloupe, on peut vraiment dire que nous sommes à plat ventre, ah, ah... Et les autres femmes avaient alors ce rire étrange, une sorte de toux brève, juste de la bouche et des dents, et soudain l'ombre descendait sur moi et je me demandais si je n'étais pas venue sur la terre par erreur, cependant que la voix de Reine Sans Nom se faisait entendre, chuchotante, tout contre mon oreille... allons viens, Télumée, viens-t'en très vite, car ce ne sont là que de grosses baleines échouées dont la mer ne veut plus, et si les petits poissons les écoutent, sais-tu ? ils perdront leurs nageoires... Nous sortions précipitamment de la rivière, elle s'appuyant à mon épaule, et le linge empilé sur nos têtes, nous gagnions à pas lents la petite case de bonne-maman. Parfois elle s'arrêtait au bord du chemin, transpirante, et me regardant d'un air amusé... Télumée, mon petit verre en cristal, disait-elle pensivement, trois sentiers sont mauvais pour l'homme : voir la beauté du monde, et dire qu'il est laid, se lever de grand matin pour faire ce dont on est incapable, et donner libre cours à ses songes, sans se surveiller, car qui songe devient victime de son propre songe... Puis elle se remettait en route, susurrant déjà une chanson, quelque biguine des temps anciens qu'elle modulait de façon très particulière, avec une sorte d'ironie voilée, destinée à me faire comprendre, précisément, que certaines paroles étaient nulles et non avenues, toujours bonnes à entendre et meilleures à oublier. Alors je fermais les paupières, et, serrant très fort la main de **<pb n="51"/>** bonne-maman, je me disais que ça devait bien exister, une manière d'accommoder la vie telle que les nègres la supportent, un peu, sans la sentir ainsi sur leurs épaules, à peser, peser jour après jour, heure par heure, seconde par seconde... **</p>**

<p> En arrivant, nous étendions le linge sur les buissons environnants, et la journée finissait là-dessus. C'était l'heure où la brise se lève, monte doucement la colline,

finissait là-dessus. C'était l'heure où la brise se lève, monte doucement la colline, gonflée de toutes les odeurs qu'elle a ramassées en chemin. Grand-mère prenait position dans sa berceuse, au seuil de la case, m'attirait contre ses jupes et, soupirant d'aise à chaque mouvement de ses doigts, entreprenait tranquillement de me faire les nattes. Entre ses mains, le peigne de métal ne griffait que le vent. Elle humectait chaque touffe d'une coulée d'huile de carapate, afin de lui donner souplesse et brillant, et, avec des précautions de couseuse, elle démêlait ses fils, les rassemblait en mèches, puis en tresses rigides, qu'elle enroulait sur toute la surface de mon crâne. Et ne s'interrompant que pour se gratter le cou, le haut du dos, une oreille qui la chagrinait, elle modulait finement des mazoukes lentes, des valse et des biguines doux-sirop, car elle avait le bonheur mélancolique. Il y avait Yaya, Ti-Rose Congo, Agoulou, Peine procurée par soi-même et tant d'autres merveilles des temps anciens, tant de belles choses oubliées, qui ne flattent plus l'oreille des vivants. Elle connaissait aussi de vieux chants d'esclaves et je me demandais pourquoi, les murmurant, grand-mère maniait mes cheveux avec encore plus de douceur, comme si ses doigts en devenaient liquides de pitié. Lorsqu'elle chantait les chansons ordinaires, la voix de Reine Sans Nom ressemblait à son visage où seules les joues, à hauteur de pommette, formaient deux taches de lumière. Mais pour les chants d'esclaves, soudain la fine voix se détachait de ses traits de vieille et, s'élevant <pb n="52"/> dans les airs, montait très haut dans l'aigu, dans le large et le profond, atteignant des régions lointaines et étrangères à Fond-Zombi, et je me demandais si Reine Sans Nom n'était pas descendue sur terre par erreur, elle aussi. Et j'écoutais la voix déchirante, son appel mystérieux, et l'eau commençait à se troubler sérieusement dans ma tête, surtout lorsque grand-mère chantait :

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</p>
<lg rend="italic">
<l>Maman où est où est où est Idahé </l>
<l>Ida est vendue et livrée Idahé</l>
<l>Ida est vendue et livrée Idahé...</l>
</lg>
<p>A ce moment-là, grand-mère se penchait sur moi, caressait mes cheveux et leur faisait un petit compliment, bien qu'elle les sût plus courts et entortillés qu'il n'est convenable. Et j'aimais toujours les entendre, ses compliments, et comme je soupirais contre son ventre, elle me soulevait le menton, plongeait son regard dans le mien et chuchotait, avec un air d'étonnement :</p>
<p>— Télumée, petit verre de cristal, mais qu'est-ce que vous avez donc, dans votre corps vivant... pour faire valser comme ça un vieux cœur de négresse ?...</p>
<pb n="53"/>
</div>
</div>
</body>
<back>
<div>
<p>Back matter here</p>
</div>
</back>
</text>
</TEI>
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ENDNOTES

1 Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

2 The word “homme” in French can mean “man,” but it can also mean “mankind” (both women and men). In this particular passage, Schwarz-Bart is referring to mankind. She is not excluding women from the proverb.

3 The French word, “negre,” (fem. “negresse”) means the color black or “black person.” Bray translates the word as “negro” in the English version. Because “negro” is a loaded word and can be considered a racial slur, I have chosen to use the original French meaning. It is important to note as well that in many parts of the Caribbean, “negro” is considered a term of endearment. For instance “negrito,” the Spanish diminutive of “negro,” is perfectly acceptable in Puerto Rico or Cuba.

4 In the Toumson interview Schwarz Bart states that the life of Fanotte is a symbol for a generation of women that she knew to whom she owes being Caribbean—to feel the way she does. She says that Télumée is a kind of permanence to the Caribbean spirit, to certain values (Toumson 14).

5 Bassnett and Lefevere explain in *Constructing Cultures* that English is the dominant language today so most translations are slanted towards the language.

6 This was known as *Tetrium Comparationis*: every word used in translation is equal to every word used in the original (Bassnett and Lefevere, *Translation, History and Culture*, p. 3).

7 This term is coined by the author Sherry Simon in her book *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission*.

8 Bray is also the translator of Schwarz-Bart’s second novel *Ti Jean, L’horizon*. Once again when translating the book into English, she interestingly changed the title to *Between Two Worlds*. It would perhaps be worthwhile to explore this change in another research endeavor. Why change the title to something so different?

9 I have chosen to translate Schwarz-Bart’s words as literally as possible in order for the non-French speaking reader to make a comparison between the original and Bray’s translation.

10 See *Encarta Encyclopedia 2007* for more information on Caribbean flora.

11 This again is my translation in brackets. Though a bit choppy, I have chosen to translate the sentence as closely as possible to the original so that the reader can see the difference between Bray's translation and Schwarz-Bart's original. Some sentences such as these do not translate well into English without manipulating the meaning.

12 *L'autre bord* literally means "the other side." How Bray translated this word as "beyond" is a mystery. The question, then, arises: should one translate proper place names?

13 See Mimi Sheller's article "Virtual Islands: Mobilities, Connectivity, and the New Caribbean Spatialities," in *Small Axe* 24 (Oct. 2007): 16-33, which analyzes not only the symbolic and material aspects of mobility but also the forms of immobility that are produced along with mobile technologies in the Caribbean. She examines how virtual spaces mediate experiences and perceptions of the Caribbean. The digital creates "virtual islands" that are packaged and presented virtually as imaginary representations for foreign audiences. There remains, however, a "digital divide" among the haves and have-nots on these islands, which is worth considering. Ideally, the digital provides a means for inspiration that comes from elsewhere as my dissertation optimistically suggests, but writers like Sheller remind us that not everyone has access to digital technologies, including many individuals in the Caribbean. As I pursue this project further, I must account for this digital divide.