

Edna Manley's *The Diaries*: Cultural Politics and the Discourse of Self

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“Let me be what I am, a woman
wrestling to find a final image.”

—Edna Manley
The Diaries

A critic of imperialism, race and class privilege, sculptor Edna Manley contributed to the ascendancy of a West Indian cultural aesthetic. Her productivity in the creative arts and her promotion of indigenous cultural organizations were vital to the growth of a post-colonial identity expressing Jamaican national unity and cultural plurality. The wife of Premier Norman W. Manley and the mother of Michael Manley, Jamaica's former Prime Minister, she drew strength from her cross-cultural heritage as a British-trained artist seeking to express the collective unconsciousness of her people. Her creative work finds its symbols in the subaltern currents of Caribbean life in the ongoing processes of community-making that forge a national identity out of peoples displaced from many lands. Her art is integrative: Afro-Caribbean and European themes merge in a symbolic universe suggesting “wholeness.” Her self-reflections, in diary form, also illustrate her determination to link opposing metaphors of the self into a central, organizing image.

In *The Diaries*, visions of a personal reality intersect with the collective histories of her people.¹ Social consciousness and self-liberation are intricately linked; historical events stimulate and are stimulated by the creative process. In contrast to feminist critic Elaine Fido's contention that “the new decolonization battle being fought in the Caribbean is that of woman against man, and the parallels with the more familiar decolonization struggle are many,”² Manley indicates that democratic collectivity is finally achieved through the creative efforts of both men and women to attain self-dignity. She asks her readers to respond creatively to the revolutionary fury that grows steadily in societies dominated by capitalism and by outworn concepts of race, class, and gender:

What helps a lot—though difficult to achieve in these days of stress—is to clutch on to some sort of sense of history. We are going through a period of change—change that has been forced on us by the conditions at the bottom—change long, long overdue. So that we are *all* finding ourselves challenged at the most demanding levels. We speak bitterly, even contemptuously, of the professional class who run away—of the businessmen who move their money out, of the ‘spoilt’ women who don’t want their children to grow up under equal educational facilities, and even those who run because of the new colour prejudice and the fear of being attacked, raped, everything. These things happen in every revolutionary period, and although this has not been a very bloody revolution, it could become that at the drop of a hat. The incidents of violence come nearer and nearer home—and when it happens to us, will we be bitter, will we still see it as part of a process? . . . So stay steady, and steady in the face of any eventuality—one has to hold on to history. (194)

In the transformation of culture, there is no certain road to follow, she tells us; history is written in “one or two ways—the old way of using force and power in the face of suffering and need, or seeing through the madness of the movement into the deep roots of the need for change” (174).

Underlining Manley’s historical vision is a feminism acquired in her youth and fueled by contact with Jamaica’s laboring class. The everyday struggles and creative achievements of women, she argues, are intricately linked to historical processes, to economic and political changes which affect their collective futures. Her four diaries, written between 1939-86, unveil the internal workings of consciousness that led her to unite race with feminist values in her personal symbolic realm. Begun at a time of intense labor unrest and demands for political independence, they reveal a profound need to create a personal landscape, to explore the possibilities of self, and to encounter herself in a mythic realm where archetypes would connect her life with the lives of black women and the oppressed.

Born in Cornwall, the daughter of a Yorkshire clergyman and a Jamaican mother, Manley demonstrated, early in life, a daring, independent mind. To her teachers, she appeared “original,” a rebellious schoolgirl to whom “conventional things are light—airy things to her, capable of destruction at a moment’s notice.”³ In 1921, while studying art in London, she married her cousin, Norman, a dark-skinned intellectual from Jamaica’s “brown middle class” who would later guide the Crown Colony towards independence. Her journey from the Old World to the New began in 1921, less than a year after marriage, when she crossed the Middle Passage with Norman and their infant son, Douglas. Within

a short time, Norman's prosperous law practice enabled him to buy Drumblair, a sprawling estate with spacious lawns, acres of meadows, stables, and a tennis court and to hire maid, cook, chauffeur and nurse, gardener and stable boy.⁴ Many of her friends were young, progressive English women who worked as journalists, teachers, and welfare workers. Wealth freed Manley, soon a mother of two, from routine and allowed her to edit *Focus*, Jamaica's first literary magazine and the nationalist weekly *Public Opinion*. She was also able to sculpt, entertain, ride horses, attend horse races, cricket and boxing matches, parties, ocean outings, and galas. Soon, she became a dynamic mentor to young and aspiring local talents and a commanding presence in Norman's intimate political circle. "Drumblair was open to people of all the varied hues and stations of Jamaican society from the white governor to the poor, black, struggling intuitive artists Edna inspired and nourished," Darrell Levi writes. "She in return often visited them, unaccompanied, at bars in the depths of Kingston's slums, scandalizing the conservative elite."⁵ Participation in popular religious meetings and oral poetry recitals led her, in the words of Rex Nettleford, to find new symbols to express her "artistic voice, a mirror image of self, an archetypal sense of place—in short, an indigenous iconography."⁶ Her "whole approach" to work "changed" while attending pocomania meetings "long before Ranny Williams was born, even; or Louise Bennett," she once explained; "gradually, the whole thing became, more and more almost a sense of destiny."⁷

Manley took part in mass rallies, soup-kitchen lines, and partisan meetings, helping to promote the newly-formed People's National Party (PNP) which Norman headed, all the while continuing to sculpt, teach, and encourage the growth of an authentic West Indian aesthetic. At a time when local art continued to be viewed through the prism of traditional middle-class English models, she created a coherent mythology symbolizing the "new consciousness of self and of country"⁸ by fusing European and African elements in Jamaican national life. Although she soon established an international reputation abroad and created a national audience for art exhibitions, she remained artistically alienated in bourgeois society and in need of self-confidence. "There was nobody to judge things by," she told artist Basil McFarlane, "nobody to share the excitement of the creative life."⁹ For nearly fifty years, she turned to diary writing as a vehicle for exploring her inner life and the social conventions of her age. She explains her need for autobiographical analysis:

So I take a pen and write when the loneliness, the emptiness comes on—might in itself help one to grow and to understand. For this I am sure it isn't wise to meet death without an effort of cognition—it isn't wise to go on with the assumption that courage is the only valid virtue. One has to have thought, one has to have wrestled with the angel. (90)

While sculpting allowed her to explore the possibilities of self, to transform reality through the powers of the imagination, her diaries convey the texture of her life-in-process and the relentless spirit of commitment that led to her political

engagement. Edited by her granddaughter, poet Rachel Manley, they capture her creative and personal growth, allowing a pattern to emerge as swift, bold strokes on canvas gradually produce a picture of a subjective self. Embedded in her description of Renoir's the *Woman Reading* are her essential ideas on her style of self-portraiture:

Paint can go on the canvas so many ways, smoothly, roughly, irritably, full of flicks and swirls; it can go on spontaneously and with speed and this is obvious in every mark left behind, or it can go on ponderously, brooding, slowly. So much for paint, and then, take colour, how it glows framed in its sombre black! And painted on with such a world of wisdom, such knowledge and capacity to leave colour and paint to make their own suggestions with such loose, self assured guidance from the brush. . . . All that and so much more is there, so much that is intimate, and yet so much that is secret and rare. (2-3)

At times, mere notations, the “ordered narrative of the day’s events,”¹⁰ the diaries, like art, reveal a process of subjectivity.

Her audience is perceived as plural: the self, Norman, Rachel, and succeeding generations, all of whom are seen to be intelligent, interested in art, life, self-



Fig.1: Edna modelling the recreation of ‘Tomorrow.’

discovery, and human relationships. As the diarist ages and comes to terms with the inevitability of death, her relationship with the reader shifts. The initial “you” of the first entry, for instance, appears to be both an “other” self and an imagined

reader who may have been Norman (for Manley's letters to her husband are filled with inner probing). Later on, aware of the historical value of the diaries, she often comments didactically on life, politics, and art.¹¹ She captures historical events as a backdrop to her life, seeing history as a place where inner and outer lives meet.

Manley also aims at educating her offspring and future generations of West Indians. In minute details, her diaries chronicle the joys and anguish of a family who introduced a new era of political self-determination to the people of Jamaica. Emotions are explored often in partisan settings: fear during her public speaking debut in a church in Harlem, worry over Norman's Jamaica Welfare program, bitterness toward Alexander Bustamante's "bully-boy" tactics to defeat the PNP,¹² and pride in Michael's acute sensitivity to the spoken language of the folk. Although feminist critics contend that "the female autobiographer has lacked a sense of radical individuality . . . that empowered Augustine and Henry Adams to write their representative lives large,"¹³ Manley's diaries illustrate that the personal is historical. Individuality and community intertwine; creative service leads to self-empowerment. Her diaries also justify partisan failures to present and future generations. "One of the things that future generations may not understand is that with all our faults, our weaknesses, we nevertheless were breaking new soil," she insists. Being the first Jamaican "First Lady" was "a tremendous job—like putting an unbroken horse to draw a chariot. You're there—there's no running away and the footlights are on" (215).

Edited after her death in February, 1987, *The Diaries* demonstrates a persistent conflict between her need for solitude, a precondition for creative growth, and her involvement in communal life. Inspired by the Romantic and Symbolist movements, she saw art as "associative" or what Michael Gilkes refers to as "an impulse toward unity of Being."¹⁴ Throughout her life, she strove to integrate her personal world with the political reality that defined her social landscape. As C. Rhoda Cobham-Sanders points out, Manley wrestled with the dichotomy between Eurocentric conceptions of the artist as an individual talent creating original symbols to express personal aesthetic ideals and Afrocentric perspectives of art as shared communal expression.¹⁵ As artist-diarist, Manley attempts to resolve a dialectical struggle between these two competing views by producing a third, "hybrid" cultural aesthetic with feminist creativity at its center. Cuban poet Nancy Morejón refers to this process of *méstissage*, the interweaving of cultural forms, as

the transmutation between two or more cultural components with the unconscious goal of creating a third cultural entity—in other words a culture—that is new and independent even though rooted in the preceding elements. Reciprocal influence is the determining factor here, for no single element superimposes itself on another; on the contrary, each one changes into the other so that both can be transformed into a third. Nothing seems immutable.¹⁶

Francoise Lionnet points out that “in this constant and balanced form of interaction, reciprocal relations prevent the ossification of culture and encourage systematic change and exchange.”¹⁷

Manley sees her artistic goal explicitly as the fusion of European myth with West Indian social reality. In 1984, for instance, frail, exhausted and depressed, she contemplated suicide while wrestling with *The Listener*, inspired by the tale of Orpheus. As she yearns for the “strength” and the “way” to say farewell, her granddaughter, Rachel, comes to her aid:

Rachel’s poem arrives and she writes of Eurydice—
and there it is at a bound—NOT farewell—but “and
she looked back.” In Rilke’s great poem Orpheus is
summoning her back from death—the gods grant
Orpheus the chance to challenge them and play his
heavenly music, which defies even death. But she
must follow the music as it seems to precede her . .
. she must not look back to see its source. But she
looked back. (286)

Manley re-interprets the ancient myth to fit her crucial needs: coming to terms with Norman’s death,¹⁸ her advancing years, and landscape reft by political terrorism. “How,” she asks, “does one put into contemporary and acceptable form an old Greek legend—born in the land of reggae—born in the land of a place where life and death are perhaps not accepted as tragedy but with a robust, almost emotionally excitable [sic].” Important is the arrested image—one that appears in many of her works—of a person glancing over a shoulder in sudden anticipation. It is an image drawn from her innermost self, symbolizing her ambivalence toward and her deep desire to understand and to accept radical social change. “Karl Marx made his titanic contribution when we were youngsters—and then, bearing his thinking in our minds, we worked, we wrestled with the Jamaican context,” she writes. “God bless Marx, but God help his followers.” To this, she adds, “the women are the force in the Caribbean now—in Jamaica anyway. They have borne the loads” (181).

Manley’s private dwelling place can be found in the rugged coasts and surging waves of Cornwall and in the sunlight and sea-waters of tropical Jamaica. Water imagery permeates her artistic consciousness and the dark, mysterious properties of the ocean womb, the primal flow of life, are the source of her feminine self. The first entry begins with an evocation of mood that is at once pensive, wistful, and restrained. The inner self, dark, mysterious and secret, is likened to a deep, dark pool. As she ponders the recesses of her own psyche, she penetrates into the essence of self-existence as a necessary means toward self growth. “Outside at the bottom of the hill,” she writes, “lies the deep, still pool, without a ripple, without a movement, so secret, so inscrutable, holding its imperturbable mirror to the drifting wane white moon.” Although the moon moves on, “it leaves something, something to remember, something to care for, something to develop and make grow, something that not everyone understands to build on” (3-4).



Fig. 2: Eve (1928)

that such times as one has lived has only succeeded in enveloping one in layers and layers of ties and conventions—and then the rest of life stretches out as a sadly [sic] brief time in which to struggle out of the wrappings to some kind of intellectual and emotional freedom” (2).

From the innermost recesses of consciousness, she struggles to redefine art,

The “ocean my mother” appears, moreover, as the source of her creative inspiration. The diarist perceives herself an “ocean creature” seeking rebirth in the sea’s depths and in the sensuality of its sweeping waves. “I have been wrestling with the idea of an ocean sculpture and all the drawings are locked into the almost obsession about a woman’s figure lying in the water,” she writes. “As a child I had been a little obsessed with the danger—’moods and calm’—almost playful moods of a summer sea. Now as I write I remember in the studio this morning, how the thought came of a Caribbean sea—and this I think came after I had released and faced the fear” (286). Her inner self exists in a world of twilight, “like a great octopus at rest, drifting with the sea, nebulous, yet capable of the most instantaneous and tremendous tension” (6). Female metaphors of moon, water and mist form links between two worlds: the England of her childhood memories and the reality of Jamaica, a place of becoming and of affirmation.

As she ages, she seeks solutions to the difficult transitions that she encounters in life: the loss of youth, fecundity, husband, and financial security. At each stage or “path,” she searches for a center, a point of new departure. Metaphysically, she attempts to transcend the contradictions between the collective self and the seeker of “some kind of intellectual and emotional freedom” (2). Life is a “struggle to free oneself from oneself,” Manley writes in 1939; “at some period one achieves complete self-consciousness, and the realization comes that one’s mind is like a

self, and society. At forty, she explains her need to revisit the past and in remembering, to conclude one period of her life and to enter into a new phase. “And so perhaps the time has come to look back and remember and even to make lists of the rememberings that make an end,” she begins, “for every beginning draws the final line in some conclusion and all the forty years of end are important in this first year of a beginning” (5).

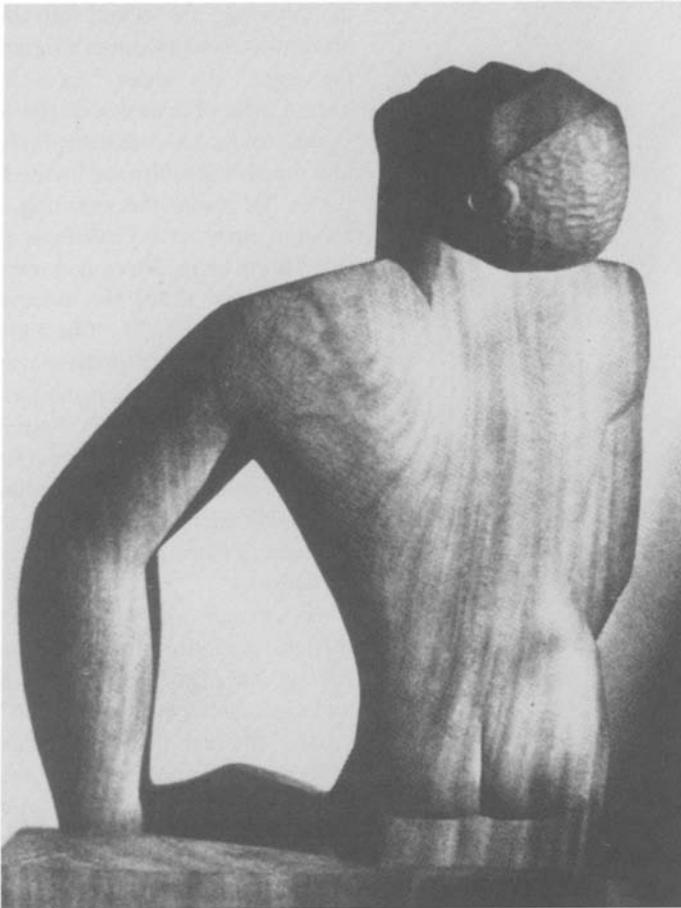


Fig.3: The Negro Aroused

“You Must Lift From the Bottom Up”

Through the working of consciousness that is the very essence of diary-writing, Manley develops a profound awareness of an inner need to transform her aesthetic rendering of race into a personal icon.

Although she had cast her vision of the revolutionary potential of Jamaica’s oppressed black population as early as 1935 in *The Negro Aroused*, it was not until her later years that she embraced race as vital to her own identity and self-worth. “Norman felt you must lift from the bottom up—that you must go to the

people,” she writes at eighty; “I knew nothing of politics—but seeing it in the terms Norman saw it, I learnt it from him” (208-9). In time, she learned to understand “all the difficulties of overcoming a sort of still strangeness that comes from difference of colour and class” (209). But it was not until she experienced the loss of privacy, wealth, husband, and physical strength that she saw herself as a woman of color.¹⁹ Her diaries reveal that life transitions were difficult and often painful; and to survive as an “older woman” in a society comprised overwhelmingly of young black people struggling to free themselves from the burdens of the past, she was forced to seek common ground with men and women who held newer and, at times, opposing views of race in political discourse.

During Michael’s 1972 campaign, while she worked on a number of works portraying the Afro-Caribbean grandmother as an heroic spiritual leader, she alleged black ancestry. “I know that my tie with Jamaica comes very strongly through my mother, as well as through Norman,” she writes in a diary entry; “also, in a deep acceptance of being coloured.”²⁰ She fails to mention, however, that her family in England was both shocked and angered by her sudden racial claim. Whether this was due to a conscious omission or an editorial decision is uncertain. We can only speculate that access to the original diaries might reveal the private repercussions of her public stance.

Changes in Manley’s attitudes toward racial identification and interdependency were gradual and thinly-veiled. In the diary entries of the 1940s, Manley describes the hill people as “almost a lost people,” a “tragic people,” who are “dark and desperate and really very stupid” (26-31). Initial entries attest to a romantic self-image as an existentialist artist and political wife whose creative work interprets social reality for a people in need of artistic vision. As she experiences interdependency in an expanded familial circle, however, she outgrows the early prejudices that had emerged during unsuccessful political campaigns in the hill country. She shows no sympathy for the middle class “leaving in swarms” and driven by “love of money, their special privileges, a refusal to face and accept colour and racial equalities” (144). Psychological ties to the black community can be found in an entry describing her work on a nude, “a young girl—black, three quarters length, standing in a pool of water.” The “pool” of water recalls earlier references to the inner psyche—profound, peaceful, and protected from the banality of social life. Her creative purpose in carving the girl, we are told, is “to find my own handwriting in a nude, my own emphasis and simplification.” She describes the figure as “a very young girl—utterly wild and untamed—not fully mature—caught standing in a river—kinky hair, uncombed—slim arms—very negro. . . . Life hasn’t begun yet for this girl—the men, the childbearing, the weary looks—no I have chosen ‘a bright morning’” (65). The passage reveals her desire to express her personality not in an European image, as in her early sculpture *Eve*, but in the image of a Rastafari youth.

Soon before her death, Manley confided that her understanding of Rastafarianism took time; “but when I did, I quickly understood the difference and I became fascinated with what I felt was a ‘faith’ that was going to grow and spread

... to me it was the identification with a Black God” (291). She realized clearly that Rastafarian imagery, much like her own archetypal symbols, subverts the very patriarchal constructs that dominate traditional myths. “All the white imagery that consciously and unconsciously had found its creative expression in the white Christs all over Europe—all over the world— carried there with the Christian religion, couldn’t *mean* the truth to the black people of the Caribbean or black America” (291). She goes on to relate an anecdote about a “very impressive” head of a stone carving of Sampson mounted on a log of wood that is taken away by Rastas and of how she had accepted, blithely, their transgression. “I think that Sampson could be the first person,” she laughs, “to connect his strength and virility to his hair” (292)!



Fig. 4: *Ghetto Mother*

As she ages, she reacts to the growing urban violence that tears at the very fabric of social life by turning to archetypal images expressing the sanctity of human life and the increasing burdens placed on black women. Indeed, her ability to acquire new strengths, new sources for selfhood, are linked to her own survival within the family and the black community at large. “As I think of survival, I think of my Jamaican woman,” she writes; “I called my woman and children in the end, *Ghetto Mother*—the agony of the ghetto mother” (249). In her mythological world of women-centered themes, the ghetto woman is strong,

resilient, and protective. *The Cry of the Children*, she explains, “came straight out of my *heart*. . . . It is, I know, a naked statement of *me*—and all I went through in 1980 with the killing of the children” (227). Her use of biblical forms to represent the aspirations of her people and her own feelings about death, sorrow, and the burdens of old age appeal, moreover, to Afro-Caribbean cultural traditions. And while the study of poetry, myth, music and psychology helped to enrich her perceptions of human bondings and the discourse of family life, her sculpture expresses deep communal ties with her mother, grandmother, and granddaughter.



Fig. 5: *The Hills of Papine*

In her art and diaries, Manley articulates visions of generational unity among black women. They parallel her own efforts to establish a genealogy among her female Jamaican ancestors. She relates an incident that occurred in 1965, while discussing plans for a statue of Paul Bogle.²¹ She surmounted anti-white sentiment by claiming that she came from Hanover, her mother’s Jamaican birthplace. “We’re a bit backward in Hanover,” she declares, “but still I’m doing the statue and I know about Bogle” (71). She remembers her mother as “a passionately independent woman” (278); and she describes the “mutual” grandmother whom she and Norman shared as a “Horsewoman *par excellence*” adding that “she could ride any horse (like me!), only she was beautiful and had a magic side-saddle seat—whilst I rode like a ‘gamin,’ no seat, no grace, but GOOD and sensitive hands” (250).

As Manley interprets the devastating effects of political violence and economic blight on Jamaican family life, we meet children and grandchildren, the troubled offspring of an unstable society, who depend increasingly on her

precarious resources. “There is so much that is worrying just now, both on the personal front and politically,” she writes; “but the carving and my faith in it is a sort of rock to which I cling” (120). In her later art, binary opposition dissolves as Manley sculpts images of maternal interconnectedness. “It’s been a strange experience,” she confesses while carving *And Would not be Comforted, Weeping for Her Children*, and *Women and Children*. “There’s been no duality over it—only a shrinking away from the subject, a fear that it was negative, and then finally I felt it is the truth” (222).

As diarist, she not only voices communal aspirations but she also instructs the younger generations to find creative remedies for social ills. Her beliefs go beyond traditional Western feminism to embrace society as essentially androgynous. “In spite of his tremendous genius, Blake saw God as a father figure, but what about the mother figure,” she writes in 1981; “when I was at Nomdmi, and very inspired, I was feeling my way toward a Man Woman Godhead” (224). To Manley, “Godhead” signified “stillness at the core” (50), a state of peace and wholeness.

Conclusion

In *The Diaries*, Edna Manley documents a journey to selfhood, a tale of marriage, widowhood and of her identification with the large black Jamaican community. The process of personal growth is uneven as she finds herself trapped often in self-pity and despondency. As she writes and sculpts, she comes to terms with her own womanhood as head of the family and matriarch to a society under stress. Her internal battle finds its reconciliatory images in archetypes emphasizing the strength and determination of black Jamaican women. In a sense her autobiographical journey is also a nationalist vision coinciding with her son’s political campaign for a government that represents, if only on a symbolic level, the aspiration of the popular masses. Hers is a narrative, too, of a woman seeking a room of her own, wanting to nurture and to be loved.

As artist, mother, and grandmother, Manley is concerned with inner growth, national progress, and racial understanding. She expresses her feminism through art, not political agendas. Although as an artist she had embraced feminism at an early age and in her own personal terms, she rejected the feminist movement. “Women’s lib,” she wrote in 1975, “seems cold” (132). Hers was a popular position at the time. The local media had “projected white feminists in Europe and North Americas as ‘women’s libbers,’ hysterical perverts who burned bras and, they implied, probably wanted to kill off the male sex,” Sistren, the feminist writers’ collective, explains.²²

Although she did not link the feminist struggle to the class struggle, Manley believed strongly in the power of women to transform society. By making the private diary available to a public reading, she implicitly challenges women and men to question the direction of social change.²³ Her diaries indicate that through *métissage*, the creative interweaving of cultural traditions, we can construct empowering new images of a communal self, released from the bondage of patriarchal constructs and the power of its institutions.

Notes

¹Rachel Manley, ed. *The Diaries* by Edna Manley (London: Andre Deutsch, 1989). Subsequent page references to *The Diaries* are cited in the text.

²"Radical Woman: Woman and Theatre in the Anglophone Caribbean," *Critical Issues in West Indian Literature* (Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands: Caribbean Books, 1984), 37.

³Letter from her teacher, Miss Hanna, of West Cornwall College. Quoted in Wayne Brown, *Edna Manley: The Private Years, 1900-1938* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1975), 45.

⁴Brown., 152.

⁵*Michael Manley: The Making of a Leader* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1989), 36.

⁶"Tribute to Edna Manley." Mimeographed speech delivered on 15 February 1987, at Kingston Parish Church. In possession of the author.

⁷Pocomania is an Afro-Caribbean religious practice. Williams and Bennett delighted Jamaican audiences with satirical poems that explored communal experiences. "Edna Manley's Retrospective," *Jamaica Journal* 4 (March 1970): 37.

⁸"Edna Manley: Sculptor," *Jamaica Journal* 18 (February-April 1985): 29.

⁹"Edna Manley's Retrospective," 33-37.

¹⁰Robert A. Fothergill, *Private Chronicles* (Cambridge University Press, 1974), 58.

¹¹Wayne Brown's biography of Manley, based largely on her early diaries and the correspondence between Edna and Norman Manley, must have influenced her assessment of the historical value of the diaries.

¹²"Busta," a cousin of Norman, was his political rival for many years. He became Prime Minister while head of the Jamaican Labour Party.

¹³Bella Brodski and Celeste Schenck, eds. *Life/Lines* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 1.

¹⁴*Racial Identity and Individual Consciousness in the Caribbean Novel*. (Georgetown, Guyana: Ministry of Information and Culture, 1974), 5. Manley's

thoughts on “being” appear similar to those of Simone de Beauvoir; however, there is no evidence that she had read any of her works.

¹⁵C. Rhoda Cobham-Sanders provides important insight into Manley’s role in the development of Jamaican literature. She writes that “in the renaissance of the post-1938 era,” Manley enjoyed “the adulation of the young men within the ‘little group’ and was fond of taking up and dropping her protégés on aesthetic as well as personal whims.” See *The Creative Writer and West Indian Society, Jamaica: 1900-1950* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Microfilms, 1981), 56.

¹⁶*Nación y mestizaje en Nicolás Guillén* (Havana: Unión, 1982), 23. Translated by Françoise Lionnet and quoted in *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 15. Mestissage can be compared to the notion of “mestizaje” popular in Latin American literature. It refers to racial misgenation among white and Indian populations. Lionnet argues that it should be used positively to express solidarity among colonized peoples.

¹⁷Lionnet, 16.

¹⁸Norman died on 2 September 1969 at the age of seventy-six. He had been stricken by cardiac asthma in 1968 precipitating a move to Nomdmi.

¹⁹She claimed black ancestry during the time of Michael Manley’s leadership in the PNP and it was popularly held that her new racial identification was a pragmatic attempt to gain votes among the large black voting constituency.

²⁰Entry dated 25 August 1972, *The Diaries*, 111.

²¹Bogle, who led a popular rebellion, is a national hero.

²²Honor Ford Smith, ed. *Lionheart Gal: Life Stories of Jamaican Women* (London: The Women’s Press, 1986), xxiii-xxiv.

²³In the introduction to *The Diaries*, editor Rachel Manley writes, “these diaries she bequeathed to me, often reminding me of their existence and my eventual responsibility for them. I once asked her what I should do with them. She said when the time came I would know.” As editor, she removed, she explains, “a short story included in Diary One, a travelogue of China in Diary Two, a list of odd, hallucinatory incidents” in Diary Three and “the poetry dispersed throughout the diary.”