Caribbean Literary Interventions:
Critiques of Humanism
in the Works of Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones and Sylvia Wynter

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To Frida and Marta

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1. Introduction: Critiques of Humanism Within a Black Caribbean Discourse

> You may have heard a radio news report which aired briefly during the days after the jury's acquittal of the policemen in the Rodney King beating case. The report stated that public officials of the judicial system of Los Angeles routinely used the acronym N.H.I. to refer to any case involving a breach of the rights of young black males who belong to the jobless category of the inner city ghettoes. N.H.I. means 'no humans involved.'
> (Wynter "Open Letter" 42)

Over twenty years after Rodney King became a victim of police brutality, there have been numerous incidents in which black people have been exposed to systemic racial violence. Among others, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Sandra Bland and Philando Castile all died at the hands of police officers in the United States or within police custody (see Lockhart). After the death of Trayvon Martin in 2012 and the following acquittal of his murderer George Zimmermann, the Black Lives Matter movement was started in order to publicly express the need to assert and propagate black humanness. On the homepage of the movement the founders write: "We affirm our humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression." (Black Lives Matter) The acronym N.H.I. Sylvia Wynter exposes in her letter entitled "An Open Letter To My Colleagues"[1] written in 1992, is evidence for the epistemic dehumanisation of black people and the structural racism embedded within the American legal system. The Black Lives Matter movement shows that — even over 20 years after Wynter's letter — there is still the need to challenge the dehumanisation of black people. The movement in itself emphasises how the question of what it means to be human still demands to be answered. Not only are black people killed significantly more often, but the lack of legal consequences and the backlash against a movement such as Black Lives Matter, as in the reactions on Twitter through #BlueLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter, also shows that there still is a concept of the human that legitimises the dehumanisation of black people. It appears that there are different understandings of the human that confront each other. Wynter's letter continues by tracing these different conceptions of the human and examines the historical, social and racial structures that lie behind the acronym N.H.I.. Going back to the emergence of European humanism in the 14th and 15th century, colonialism and its aftermath, Wynter highlights how the concept race emerged as a marker of difference that categorises between humans — "White, of Euroamerican culture and descent, middle class, college-educated and suburban" — and its non-human counterparts, which are black people who express "the *Lack* of the human" (Wynter "Open Letter" 43; original emphasis). Rather than simply condemning police brutality, Wynter

[1] Wynter's letter is addressed to the academic staff at Stanford University where she was a professor in the department of Afro-American Studies.

maintains that anti-black violence is only a symptom that merely touches upon the developments and hierarchies that underly structural racism and the dehumanisation of black people. She reveals structural racism within modern society as one of the reasons why it is necessary re-think humanism from a black, female Caribbean perspective. However, rather than replacing human values as propagated by western humanism, she instead questions and rethinks humanism's almost sacrosanct image of Man, a supposedly superior universal human norm which is usually considered white, male, western and bourgeois.[2]

While being confronted with dehumanisation and structural violence, Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones and Sylvia Wynter challenge and critique humanism's binary structures and this exclusive concept of the human. They go beyond a mere critique, however, and discuss, imagine and express distinct Caribbean conceptions of the human within their literary works, may they be narrative, dramatic, lyrical or autobiographical texts. Their work, which spans from the 1940s to early 2000s, does not aim at replacing humanism, or dissolving its main elements and trains of thought; rather the three intellectuals focus their critique on humanism's origins in colonial and racial structures and ideologies that continue to permeate modern society up until today. Reading humanism through its historic development repositions its standing as an acclaimed universal approach within academia. Hereby, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter expose the divisive hierarchies connected to the humanist ideology and emphasise that Man's universal set of norms is not applicable to all human beings.

In the last twenty years, there has been a growing number of works that offer a transnational black critique of humanism and its conception of the Human. These texts revisit the history of colonisation, the enslavement of black people and the black diaspora in search for a new reading and rewriting of humanism. The overall critique is that black people are not considered human beings in terms of a western, bourgeois understanding of the human. Concepts such as "Posthuman Blackness" (Llivis and King), "postcolonial humanism" (Kumar), an "interhuman perspective" (McKittrick and Wynter "Catastrophe"), "*counterhumanism*" (McKittrick), "revised humanism" (Wynter "The Re-Enchantment" 121), or an "agonistic humanism" (Paul Gilroy) have

[2] This dissertation stresses the equal importance of alternative concepts and multiple perspectives as well as implied hierarchies showing linguistic awareness about the capitalisation of terms and concepts such as humanism and the western world. In this context the capitalisation of Man highlights that it refers to Wynter's critical definition of the term.

emerged to challenge and counter western humanist ideologies.[3] The debate also revolves around the relations between colonialism and humanist ideologies. Lisa Lowe's *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015) emphasises that there is a distinction made between humans and non-humans and Stephanie E. Smallwood's *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (2007) examines the links between processes of enslavement and black people's dehumanisation. The existence of such an array of alternatives highlights how a critique of humanism is an integral part of the current debate that revisits the concept of the human. Particularly the question of what it means to be human is strongly debated within discourses of the Black Atlantic, Black Feminism, Diaspora Studies and many more. Kyla Tompkins asks in her 2018 essay "Writing Against the Human in the Humanities": "One really must wonder: how far into the muck will we have to go before we finally give up on the Human?" (888). Within this discourse on the human, this dissertation acknowledges Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work and life as an "*epistemic* rupture" in order to emphasise to what extend they influence and transform current understandings of what it means to be human (Broeck "Black Feminist Desire" 211; added emphasis). This term is borrowed from Sabine Broeck who argues that: "To read Black Feminist contributions epistemically is to acknowledge their fundamental intervention, which goes straight to the core of transatlantic modernity, on the issue of property." ("Black Feminist Desire" 213) Broeck further asks:

> What would it entail for a radical critique of modernity, including modern and postmodern gender relations, to hear a position that has consistently spoken from the location, the materiality, and the inherited memory of having literally *been* property? ("Black Feminist Desire" 213; original emphasis)

The intellectuals' critique of humanism challenges the western world to radically rethink its conception of the human and simultaneously exposes the dehumanisation of black people, beginning with the rise of humanism and Europe's colonial claims. This analysis of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter' work contributes to filling a large gap, challenging the lack of academic attention they have received and asserting their importance when discussing questions of being human. In their fictional and non-fictional work, they offer black female Caribbean responses to concepts that have since been regarded as post- and de-colonial. Far from simply filling a gendered gap, their work subverts and questions patriarchal, colonial and racial structures within society intersectionally. This is also reflected in their biographies which emphasise their interventions within various western

[3] Within a European discourse in the last ten years, there also have been publications that discuss the concept humanism within a variety of cultures. Among them are Jörn Rüsen's and Henner Laass' *Humanism in Intercultural Perspective: Experiences and Expectations* (2009), Rüsen's *Approaching Humankind: Towards an Intercultural Humanism* and Christoph Antweiler's *Inclusive Humanism* (2012). However, none of these works discusses a Caribbean perspective on the concept.

discourses. Beryl Gilroy (1924-2001) was a novelist, essayist and poet as well as the first black headmistress in London after migrating to the United Kingdom in the early 1950s. Later in life, she also gained her doctorate in counselling psychology (see Gilroy *Leaves* vii). Claudia Jones (1915-1964) was a political activist, poet and communist and was the first black woman imprisoned for her membership in the Communist Party in the McCarthy era. After being deported to London, she was a driving force in establishing a black Caribbean community and was the founder of the London Carnival and the *West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian-Caribbean News* (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 2 and 25). Sylvia Wynter (1928-), next to her academic writing which hugely influenced a Caribbean intellectual tradition, is also a playwright and novelist. She followed an academic career as a lecturer at the University of the West Indies and later as a professor at Stanford University. All three are iconic figures and their intellectual and literary output highlights how often they have been ahead of their time.

Apart from Wynter, whose academic work has been recently received by a wider academic audience, none of the three intellectuals have received much academic attention within a western discourse on humanism. Neither has their work been connected through an analysis of their critique of humanism, yet. Their work is not joined by sharing one certain discourse as one would expect; they are not simply Black Feminist, as that label barely existed during the time of their work. Rather, they correspond within various discourses such as, among others, Marxism, Black Feminism, Post- and Decolonialism, Afro-pessimism and Diaspora Studies. What they share, though, is how they approach and critique concepts subsumed under a western humanist tradition resonating with and predating recent debates on the concept of the human, such as white supremacy, racism and dehumanisation. Within this context, their work often anticipates themes and concepts later becoming associated with their male contemporaries and successors. Take for example Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), or Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994); two scholars whose work largely influenced a post-colonial discourse and has been widely received by an academic audience. Claudia Jones' "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!" (1949) and "The Caribbean Community in Britain" (1964) anticipate Said's *Orientalism* by exposing colonial binaries that exist in American and British society and which depict black people as uncivilised and backward. She challenges the west's often unquestioning acceptance of colonial dichotomies and how they inform American and British culture almost 15 years before Said published his book. Wynter's essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica"[4] (1967) serves as another case in point,

[4] Wynter uses different spellings of this term in her fictional and non-fictional works. This text follows the spelling convention in the essay referenced here.

as it anticipates Bhabha's understanding of hybridity. The essay interprets Jamaican folk dance "as *agent* and *product* of cultural process" while being exposed to colonial influences (Wynter "Jonkonnu" 34; original emphasis). Here, Wynter examines how cultural practices of folk dance have survived processes of colonisation and enslavement.

The recent years have witnessed a rediscovery of Sylvia Wynter's theoretical works. Publications on Wynter's impact on the rethinking and rewriting of humanism are, among others, Anthony Bogues' *Caribbean Reasonings: After Man Towards the Human* (2006), McKittrick's *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (2006) and *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human As Praxis* (2015), a special issue on Wynter's unpublished manuscript Black Metamorphoses in the Caribbean journal Small Axe in 2016, another special issue in *American Quarterly* from 2018, Cristin Ellis' *Antebellum Posthuman: Race and Materiality in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (2018), Aaron Kamugisha's *Beyond Coloniality: Citizenship and Freedom in the Caribbean Intellectual Tradition* (2019) and Alexander G. Weheliye' *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (2014) all revisit and refer to Wynter's theoretical oeuvre. Wynter proves to be the exception, which by no means implies that she is openly received and considered part of a western discourse *on humanism*. Wynter's creative work has not received as much attention, though. In *Disturbers of the Peace* (2013), Kelly Baker Joseph dedicates one chapter to the role of madness in *Hebron*, focussing on its main characters Moses, Obadiah and Kate. In the same year, Sheri-Marie Harrison published an essay that focusses on the role of sexuality and the impact of sexual violence in Hebron concentrating on the characters Rose, her mother Gloria and Miss Gatha. A couple of other essays include Shirley Toland-Dix's "*The Hills of Hebron*: Sylvia Wynter's Disruption of the Narrative of Nation" (2008), Janice Lee Liddell's "The Narrow Enclosure of Motherhood/Martyrdom: A Study of Gatha Randall Barton in Sylvia Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron*" (1990) published in the seminal anthology *Out of the Kumbla,* Natasha Barnes' "Reluctant Matriarch: Sylvia Wynter and the Problematics of Caribbean Feminism" (1999) and Selwyn R. Cudjoe's introduction to *Caribbean Women Writers. Essays From the First International Conference*. The essays mainly discuss Wynter's novel with regard to issues of feminism and/or nationalism and offer insights into connections between Wynter's creative and her theoretical work. They do not discuss, however, the concept humanism or how a critique of humanism runs through Wynter's novel. The secondary sources that engage with Wynter's play *Maskarade* are even more scarce. There is one recent essay by Carole Boyce-Davies called "From Masquerade to *Maskarade*: Caribbean Cultural Resistance and the Rehumanizing Project". Boyce-Davies emphasises that *Maskarade* has not received enough

scholarly attention remaining "outside the frames of analysis of the Wynter intellectual trajectory" due to the fact that western mainstream academia tend to separate theoretical and creative work (204). The essay draws attention to the the overlapping of "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" and *Maskarade* showing that the supposed "creative/theoretical split" does not apply to Caribbean scholars such as Wynter (205). In her analysis, Boyce-Davies focuses on the role of the Jonkonnu festival and African folk-dance as part of a "Caribbean Cultural process" and integrates the play within Wynter's overall project of redefining the human (211). In *Decolonizing the Stage* (1999), Christopher D. Balme shortly mentions Wynter's play by focussing on how it represents Jamaican Jonkonnu performances with an emphasis on the role of masks within a Caribbean context (see 188-189).

There are almost no sources available on either Beryl Gilroy or Claudia Jones. On Gilroy there is her own collection of essays *Leaves in the Wind* that includes critical introductions written by the editor Joan Anim-Addo and a few essays on her novels such as Roxan Bradshaw's "Beryl Gilroy's 'Fact-Fiction': Through the Lens of the 'Quiet Old Lady'". For Claudia Jones, Carole Boyce-Davies, the leading scholar on her work, published a compilation of writings (*Beyond Containment*) and a monograph (*Left of Karl Marx*) on her life and work. In *Left of Karl Marx*, she examines Jones' overall work as a contribution to a "black radical tradition" also dedicating one of her chapters to an analysis of her poetry (*Left* 8).

The corpus for this dissertations highlights the variety of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's works. All three of them wrote fictional and non-fictional texts comprising and combining a variety of literary genres. They wrote political and historical essays, poetry, auto-biographies, dramas, novels, newspaper articles, letters and diary entries. The boundaries between analytical and literary texts, as well as genre categories often blur; their literary texts have analytical elements and vice versa. While their non-fictional work provides the theoretical frame for this dissertation, the main emphasis of the analysis lies on their literary work. At the same time, there is a focus on interrelated themes between Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's fictional and non-fictional works. Within this context, particularly their fictional works offer an alternative answer to the question of what it means to be human and creatively redefines Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's supposed displacement and marginality.

The choice of texts within this study reflects upon a tendency within a Caribbean intellectual tradition that does not distinguish between creative and theoretical work. Boyce-Davies argues that

> the creative/theoretical split, often assigned to writers in the western canon, is perhaps less useful when we begin to evaluate some of the writers who come out of the Caribbean region

> and whose 'theoretical work is intimately connected to the imaginative.'" (Boyce-Davies "*Maskarade*" 205)

A majority of Caribbean intellectuals, including Gilroy, Jones and Wynter, produce fictional and non-fictional work.[5] Within this context, Guyanese historian Elsa Goveia identifies Caribbean intellectuals as being both artistically and politically active members of Caribbean societies, whose subject positions are deeply influenced by the history of colonialism. According to Goveia, the works of Caribbean intellectuals necessarily have to address the political and social dimensions of the societies they live in (see "The Social Framework" 14). This holds definitely true for Gilroy, Jones and Wynter who were indeed invested in political work, next to their writing: Jones as a member of the Communist Party, Gilroy in her drive towards revolutionising the British educational system and Wynter as a theorist who challenges Eurocentric epistemologies within the university system and beyond.

1.1. The Historical Development of Humanism

Gilroy, Jones and Wynter comment on the interrelation between the emergence of humanism and that of colonisation tracing the historic development of both ideologies. They address the enslavement of African peoples, the middle passage, plantation slavery, the black diaspora as well as the colonial framework of the Caribbean that continued to exist even after independence. A close examination of how humanism historically evolved at the same time as Europe's colonial expansion sheds light on how the concept of the human that evolved with it was and continues to be dependent on the dehumanisation of black people. Smallwood emphasises in this context that the transatlantic slave trade was built upon humanist ideologies and led to "the market in human beings" (35). Therefore, the beginnings of the capitalist systems, which represented Europe's progress and universal claims to civilisation, where interlinked with the commodification of black people. In his seminal *Red, White & Black*, Frank Wilderson also highlights the connection between humanism and the oppression of the black subject. He states that the "race of Humanism (White, Asian, South Asian, and Arab) could not have produced itself without the simultaneous production of that walking destruction which became known as the Black" (20) and further asserts that "Black slavery is foundational to modern Humanism's antics" (22). Gilroy, Jones and Wynter trace the historic

[5] Particularly male intellectuals have been identified as being creative writers and intellectuals. Names such as Nicolás Guillén, Kamau Braithwaite, George Lamming, José Martí, or Aimé Césaire, among others, immediately spring to mind, again highlighting a gendered gap.

development of humanism in relation to Europe's colonial endeavour and expose how both movements are intrinsically linked.

The humanism the three intellectuals critique evolved in the fourteenth to sixteenth century in Europe. Humanists were invested in the ideal of the human that they encountered in the classical texts from antiquity. Within a European context, humanists were understood as scholars of the *Studia Humanitatis* in which these early humanists tried to establish connections between Christianity and the worldview they encountered in the ancient texts (see Norman 8). Following the ideal of human life in ancient Greece or Rome, humanists highlighted free choice and self-determination as specific human attributes and thereby contradicted to some extend the traditional views of human nature propagated by Christianity and the church which focused on human dignity as opposed to the ability of rational thought (see 9). Later, in the nineteenth century, this form of humanism was labelled Renaissance humanism by, among others, Jacob Burckhardt (*Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien*) and John Addington Symonds (*The Renaissance in Italy*) (see ibid.). Burckhardt interprets Renaissance humanism as a counter movement to the clerical world of the Middle Ages and Symonds strongly criticises the "ecclesiastical despotism" to which the Renaissance humanists attempted to find an alternative way of understanding human beings, namely outside of the institution of Christianity (10). In this context, Norman notes that Man[6] is no longer understood as "created by God 'in his own image'" (2), but rather as a Man of science, intellect and reason (see 5; cf. 11). In this context, the beginnings of Renaissance humanism herald the decline of clerical authority and lead the way towards secularisation. "Modern secular humanism", as Norman calls it, is closely linked to the movement of Enlightenment, which in the eighteenth century openly propagated the rejection of religion and skepticism towards the institution of the Church highlighting Man's most important attribute: reason (see 11). Followers of the Enlightenment understood the figure Man as grounded in scientific observation of nature and rejected religious, Christian explanations for the nature of humanity. For contemporary scholars, this apparent progress in humanism's definition of the human also entails the "question of the ambiguity of 'man'" (2):

> is humanism a philosophy of exclusion? In setting up an ideal of 'man', is it giving a privileged status to one part of the human species, and relegating to an inferior status those human beings – women, or perhaps the members of non-European cultures – who are excluded by the favoured model? (ibid.)

[6] Chapter 1.2. engages more thoroughly with Man as a concept that Gilroy, Jones and Wynter challenge. Here particular emphasis is on Wynter's critique of the term.

The reaction to this question, but also the very way it is phrased is problematic: First of all, the criticism of humanism it hints at — the critique of a universal conception of Man as the ideal human — is not developed further. The exclusivistic character of Man is only mentioned within a subordinate clause, which almost satirically subsumes all human beings (apart from white, heterosexual male) as "women, or *perhaps* the members of non-European cultures", not even addressing the colonial implications of this thought (emphasis added). The quote reveals that although this question is posed, the text does not engage with its consequences nor does it attempt to find appropriate answers to it.

Where Norman fails to address the problematic implications connected with the concept Man, many other voices do provide critiques of humanism's racist tendencies. Tony Davies in *Humanism* (1996) highlights that one of the consequences of having a universal conception of Man is to "dissolve […] particularities as race, sex and class" (26). He interprets Man as a central concept within humanism, referring to the humanist scholar Burckhardt, who understands humanism as "the discovery of the world and of *man*" (Burckhardt qtd. in Davies 15; emphasis added). Robert Bernasconi and Sybol Cook and their anthology *Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy* (2003) are a rare example for including a black, female, Caribbean perspective on Negritude and in extension also on humanism, namely through the essay "Tropiques and Suzanne Césaire" written by T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting. In *The Posthuman* (2013), Rosi Braidotti refers to the Vitruvian Man as the idealistic and universal representation of Man, which forms the "emblem of Humanism" and its "intrinsically moral powers of human reason" (12). She speaks of the "mutation of the Humanistic ideal into a hegemonic cultural model" that positions Europe and western Man with his access to reason at the centre of its own cultural, political and economic worldview (13-14). Deborah K. Heikes, likewise, in *Rationality, Representation and Race* (2016) offers an insight into the problematic concept reason and its relation to Man, as she argues, while referring to Emmanuel Eze: "[M]odern philosophy's pretension to universality and cross-cultural values has often been just that: a pretense" (Eze qtd. in Heikes 4). She highlights that the age of Enlightenment and humanism was far from being an "Age of Equality," reason and science, but was rather the age of colonialism, slavery and gender oppression (4). The phrase "all men are created equal" only counts "if one is male, wealthy, and white" (4). What all these scholars criticise is a universal, Eurocentric perspective on how to understand human beings. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam fittingly expose this Eurocentric perspective by highlighting how it "thinks of itself in terms of its noblest achievements —science, progress, humanism—while forgetting to add that 'science' was often racist science, that 'progress' could be genocidal, and that humanism could be a mask for barbarism." (*Race in*

Translation 68) Within European humanism the figure Man forms the ideal representation of what it means to be human. Next to being white, male and heterosexual, Man is characterised as rational, scientific and progressive. Reason functions as the new ideal human beings strive towards and becomes the prerequisite for civilisation. In this context, Braidotti further argues that "Europe announces itself as the site of origin of critical reason and self-reflexivity". This leads towards the binary logic of self and other, as Man is stylised as the ideal human being. European, white, heterosexual Man represents and is equated with the rational self and subjectivity, whereas other forms of human beings form its negative opposite, characterised by a lack of reason and self-reflexivity (see 15). These binaries played a crucial role in the legitimisation of Europe's colonial expansion. Humanism's ideals where distributed into the world and universalised as the ideal every human being should strive towards. A supposed lack of reason in other population groups was used to legitimise colonial claims to land and the enslavement of African peoples.

Gilroy, Jones and Wynter have to confront the ideal of Man in their works and the question of what it means to be human as black, Caribbean women; Gilroy was born in formerly British Guyana, Claudia Jones' country of birth is Trinidad and Wynter was born in Cuba, but raised by Jamaican parents in Jamaica. All three address the colonial history of the anglophone Caribbean and deal with the consequences of colonialism in their work. Guyana, Trinidad, and Jamaica gained their independence in the 1960s. In Claudia Jones' work the anti-colonial struggles that led up to the independence of her home country Trinidad are more than visible in her radical call for equal rights for black people and her resentment of racial segregation in the United States. Although Gilroy's and Wynter's work was mainly published after independence, their writings were still influenced by anti-colonial movements. Wynter states: "I would say that movement determined everything I was going to be or have been." ("Re-Enchantment" 125) Fittingly, Gilroy writes: "I write in the name of resistance. I come from Berbice. To resist injustice is in my nature." (*Leaves* 210)

The works of Gilroy, Jones and Wynter challenge humanism as an ideology that promoted racial hierarchies between human beings. The Caribbean societies Gilroy, Jones and Wynter write about were built upon the experience of the enslavement of African and indigenous peoples and plantation slavery. The survivors of the atrocities of the middle passage and enslavement, according to Stephanie E. Smallwood, "had to address the problem of their unique displacement and alienation." (182) The displacement was caused by the commodification of human beings — "the idea of human beings as property" (ibid.). Katherine McKittrick argues that "the plantation context required the impossibility of black humanity" while "normalizing a collective 'mode of knowing' that sustained white supremacy and geographically codified racial differences" ("Rebellion/

Invention/Groove" 82). The colonial history of the Caribbean was based upon processes of dehumanisation of black people and people of colour, as it "benefited from, and calcified, their nonpersonhood and nonbeing" (82). What McKittrick calls "codified racial difference" was put in place by the colonisers in order to secure their hegemonic power and divide all human beings into humans (only applying to the European colonisers), lesser-humans and non-humans (see also Weheliye 3). These structures simultaneously "produced the conditions through which the colonized would radically and creatively redefine […] the representative terms of the human." (80-81) Finding new answers to the question of what it means to be human is a fundamental part of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critique of humanism and its racist and patriarchal structures. The impact their Caribbean heritage has on their works is underlined by Elsa Goveia who offers one of the first black female Caribbean accounts of the colonial history of the Caribbean and its aftermath for Caribbean societies today. Gilroy and Wynter even mention Goveia's scholarly work as a huge contribution to the historical processing of colonialism in the Caribbean praising her as one of the first female anti-colonial scholars (see Gilroy *Leaves* 209; see Wynter "The Re-Enchantment" 128). Goveia's work represents an early inside perspective on the history of colonialism and plantation economy in the West Indies. To Goveia this colonial history poses the key to understanding the social, political and economic formations of the West Indies and Guyanas. She uses an intersectional approach to the study of Caribbean history and culture in order to expose colonial injustice and inequalities.

Goveia's essay the "The Social Framework" (1970) offers an important historical insight into the Caribbean context of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work. It historically explains why all three intellectuals emphasise the importance and role of colonial history and their need for rewriting what it means to be human from a black, female, Caribbean perspective and its linked critique of western humanist ideals. What Goveia examines in her essay — that blackness is used as a structural marker for inferiority — is a recurring critique in Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work and does not change throughout the years they are writing and working in. "The Social Framework" deals with the question of how Caribbean intellectuals, such as Gilroy, Jones and Wynter, are influenced by colonial history in their lives and work and highlights how the institution of the enslavement of African peoples and plantation slavery still informs and undermines the political, social and cultural landscape in the Caribbean. Going back to the history of colonialism, Goveia emphasises that only through the processing of the colonial past is it possible to understand current struggles the West Indies are still facing after having gained their independence (see "The Social Framework" 7; cf.

Chamberlain 174).[7] In this context, her essay addresses two main aspects: Firstly, she exposes a divide between European and Caribbean influences caused by colonial dependence and secondly, she declares that this divide is caused by racial classifications which were institutionalised by the former colonisers.

The colonial dependence, according to Goveia, resulted in a divide in society and culture, a divide established by the binary logics of colonial rule. A set of dichotomies forms the basis of this rupture: European languages are spoken in the upper classes, whereas the Creole languages are considered lower class vernaculars; Christianity is the preferred religion within the upper classes, whereas "Afro-West Indian cult groups" often influenced by African religions are part of the lower classes, and so on (8). The general pattern Goveia uncovers is that European influences are characteristic for the upper classes, whereas most social structures deriving from the Caribbean are attributes of the lower classes. This means that the colonial structures which founded these societies are still dominating the nations that gained independence. To Goveia the divide she portrays here is the main structural element of West Indian society and culture. However in a second step, Goveia connects it to the issue of race:

> [I]t seems to me on the basis of my own historical work that the […] very division between the classes is in fact part of the rationale, part of the integration organisation of the society in which the different classes live differently. I have tried to point out elsewhere that this integrating factor which affects the society as a whole, *is the acceptance of the inferiority of Negroes to whites*. Now this is a very important element […] of the whole society of the West Indies and one which continues to be significant up to the present day"
> (9-10; emphasis added)

Goveia argues that the organisation of society is structured according to the "acceptance of the inferiority" of blackness. Beginning with the colonial encounter, this structure forms the very basis of Caribbean society and is still the foundation for the inequalities within the class system Goveia describes. This "rationale", as Goveia calls it, manifests itself through colonial binaries such as coloniser and colonised, white and black, rational and savage. She claims here that these binaries have been left intact and still structure Caribbean societies even after independence. Furthermore, she makes an important statement about the hierarchies which this structure implies for the human beings living in such a society: "the whites insisted throughout the period of slavery on the inferiority of the Negro groups […] interpreting this inferiority […] as an inferiority of race not just of social position." (10) She goes on by arguing that there is a hierarchy connected to this racial

[7] The use of the term West Indies correlates with Goveia's usage of the West Indies instead of the Caribbean, as she mainly addresses anglophone Caribbean countries.

inferiority, recalling W.E.B. Du Bois' "color-line": "the belief that the blacker you are the more inferior you are and the whiter you are the more superior you are, has not by any means died out in the West Indies." (10; cf. Du Bois 15) The status quo of West Indian society, as Goveia experiences it, is based on the social structures directly derived from the colonial past, including its racist, patriarchal paradigms and a social hierarchy based on skin colour. She asserts that the divide of culture in the West Indies and Guyanas is built upon "the basis of racial inequality" (10). Gilroy, Jones and Wynter thoroughly engage with the history of the Caribbean through a discussion of similar concepts as the ones Goveia names here. They describe and denounce the correlation between blackness and inferiority as well as the displacement of Caribbean cultural traditions. Goveia's argument underlines the importance and relevance of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's intervention as all three challenge racial binaries in order to subvert anti-black thinking and behaviour. They do so by constantly referring to the historical framework of their critique of humanism and by emphasising their need to respond to black misrepresentations within historic accounts.

1.2. Framing the Argument: Working Definitions of Humanism, the Human and Man

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's works offer a critique of humanism which is rooted in their experience as black, female, colonial subjects. They show why it is necessary to rethink and rewrite humanism as a concept. Their critique of humanism and its sub-concepts exposes humanism's racist and patriarchal paradigms as well as processes of dehumanisation. The three intellectuals demonstrate in their work how the majority of the world's population is being excluded from the West's conception of the human "Man" — the rational, secular, male, white and heterosexual humanist subject. Through re-conceptualising their own humanness, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter challenge the figure "Man" and the attributes connected to it. In order to explain what it means to be human as a black, female, Caribbean subject, they constantly have to assert their own humanness and subject positions. Being faced with systemic forms of dehumanisation, the three intellectuals have to resist and challenge colonial and patriarchal structures in their home countries, the United States and the United Kingdom. Their Caribbean origin and the fact that they have experienced different facets of struggles for freedom, equality and independence are embedded in their writings and further underline their critique of humanism. In their work they expose structural racism and how it has shaped the political, social and cultural landscape of their home countries.

The central issue Gilroy, Jones and Wynter address in their fictional and non-fictional work is what does it mean to be human while representing the opposite — the other — to the figure Man,

which is stylised as the ideal human being? From this conflict they move on to subvert the current universalised conception of the "human," in order to re-interpret and re-think what it means to be human for black Caribbean women. They address and challenge processes of othering within humanism and its worldview, as well as western scientific and structural racism that underlies these binary oppositions of self (Man) and other. In relation to that, all three challenge western humanism's emphasis on reason and rationality. This also entails that Gilroy, Jones and Wynter criticise how the other and otherness are represented within European historical accounts and emphasise the need for rewriting history from a black female perspective. Here, they particularly highlight how the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery in the Caribbean influences their lives and work and their own answer to the question of what it means to be human. A critique of the figure Man and its underlying binary structure is the key to understanding and approaching Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critique of the humanism itself. Wynter claims in this context "that the unifying goal of *minority* discourse […] will necessarily be to accelerate the conceptual 'erasing' of the figure of Man." (*Discourse* 208; original emphasis) Wynter declares that it is the ultimate goal to rewrite and reinvent the current order of society — to which the figure Man is symptomatic.

The concept humanism is a "mega-concept", or umbrella term under which several subconcepts are situated such as: rationality/reason, the figure Man, universality, knowledge production, racism and the writing of history. The term "humanism" refers to the humanism developed during the Renaissance and Enlightenment in Europe and its idealisation of the figure Man as a rational, scientific, secular subject and ideal human being. Whereas the concept Man (western humanism's understanding of what it means to be human) is propagated as being *the* human ideal generally, to the three intellectuals and for this working definition it is only one answer to the question of "What does it mean to be human?". Here, particularly the processes of othering that are part and parcel of humanism are central to the analysis of the works of Gilroy, Jones and Wynter. The subconcepts that are subsumed under the umbrella term humanism, are the concepts which Gilroy, Jones and Wynter mainly address, challenge and critique. To understand their critique and their reasons for re-interpreting and rewriting humanism it is necessary to look at the specific aspects of humanism on which they concentrate. Against which definition and aspects of humanism do the intellectuals position themselves?

Central to Wynter's critique of humanism is the dichotomy she draws between Man and the human, which Gilroy and Jones both also expose in their non-fictional and fictional work, albeit from a less theoretical angle. While Wynter offers a theoretical frame for the terms human and Man,

all three intellectuals formulate alternative concepts of the human that confront Man and its humanist ideologies:

> The argument proposes that the struggle of our new millennium will be one between the ongoing imperative of securing the well-being of our present ethnoclass (i.e. Western bourgeois) conception of the human, Man, which overrepresents itself as if it were the human itself, and that of securing the well-being, and therefore the full cognitive and behavioral autonomy of the human species itself/ourselves. (Wynter "Unsettling" 260)

The binary logic Wynter elaborates on here is that there is, on the one hand, the western concept Man and its exclusive concept of the human, and on the other hand, there is the human, to which she counts all human beings. Wynter argues that this dichotomy emerged through the "political and cultural revolution of humanism," in which the "binary opposition between the European settlers and the New World peoples (*indios*) and enslaved peoples of Africa (Negroes)" came into being ("Word of Man" 641; original emphasis). By referring to the "new millennium", she argues that this binary logic is still deeply embedded in modern society and is still characteristic for conflicts the world faces today, such as issues of race, class, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation (see "Unsettling" 260-261). Hereby, Wynter highlights the structural oppression that is part of a humanist world showing how being human depends on norms and values instated by Man and in doing so traces the beginnings of processes of othering. She argues that the principle which governs the code of being and behaviour of Man are "structural oppositions" which create a hierarchy of humans according to a humanist ideology ("Ceremony" 27). Within this context, Wynter traces two phases of reinvention[8] of the human as Man within the western hemisphere: Man developed through the movement of Renaissance humanism into Man1 — as a "ratiocentric and still hybridly religio-secular" being — and Man2 — a "purely secular and biocentric" being ("Unsettling" 282).

The main rupture that promoted the humanists' conception of the figure Man as the universal concept of the human was the discovery of the Americas and the resulting colonial encounter, as well as the enslavement of African peoples. Wynter argues that through Columbus' discovery the hierarchy between different human groups according to their assumed access to reason was instrumentalised in order to oppress and enslave the peoples in the so called New World and

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[8] I follow McKittrick's definition of the concept "reinvention" and "invention". She explains: "*reinvention* is the process through which enslaved and postslavery black communities in the New World came to live and construct black humanity within the context of racial violence — a range of rebellious acts that affirmed black humanity and black life were and are imperative to reinvention. *Invention* is meant to signal those cultural practices and texts — marronage, mutinies, funerals, carnivals, dramas, visual arts, fictions, poems, fights, dances, music making and listening, revolts — that emerged alongside reinvented black lives. I want to point out, too, the relational workings of reinvention and invention: […] One cannot reinvent the human without rebellious inventions, and rebellious inventions require reinvented lives." ("Rebellion/Invention/ Groove" 81)

Africa.[9] These processes of othering led to what Wynter calls "a ratio-ontological principle of Sameness and Difference" (Ceremony 34). This principle "differentiated human groups along a continuum of different degrees of rationality" and was considered to be universally applicable — "a universal law of Nature beyond human control" — that marked the emergence of the concept race (ibid.). The difference between natural slaves and natural masters was legitimised through the humanist argument that these two categories were based on a different distribution of rationality — the Spanish inherited a high degree of rationality whereas the indigenous represented a lack of reason — which was perceived as an "*innately* determined difference." ("1492" 35; original emphasis) However, within this hierarchy the colonisers distinguish between "natural slaves" and "*civil slaves*" (ibid.; original emphasis). Natural slaves refer to the indigenous peoples of America who were treated like children with the potential to acquire a state of reason and who were in need of the colonisers' guardianship. Within this categorisation people from African descent were considered "the Other to both" and were placed within the new order of rational beings as the missing link between "the status of the human […] and that of the totally non rational animal species." (36) African people now took the place of the "extreme form of otherness" to the European, rational Man (37). According to Wynter, these structural oppositions based on the logic of racial difference "would be foundational to modernity" ("Unsettling" 266). Humanism and the figure Man claims to give the only and therefore hegemonic answer to the question of what it means to be human. All other possible answers to this question are disregarded due to Man's assumed superiority and universal claim to defining the norms and values of human beings:

> [T]he West, over the last five hundred years, has brought the *whole* human species into its *hegemonic*, now purely secular […] model of being *human*. […] This is a model that *supposedly* preexists — rather than coexists with — all the models of other human societies and their religion/cultures." ("Catastrophe" 21; original emphasis)

Wynter discusses in detail how Man was able to rise as *the* model of being human everyone should strive towards and challenges the view that black people and people of colour are only understood in terms of being the other to Man. Despite the changing reasonings and legitimisations, first within a religious, then a political and finally an economic framework, the ultimate space of otherness remains occupied by black people. While using this historic periodisation, Wynter connects it with

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[9] Wynter refers to Ginés de Sepúlveda as the first one who reasoned within humanist terms in order to show that the indigenous he encountered were "natural slaves" to the Spanish. He justified this reasoning with their lack of "Letters and written monuments to their history" ("Ceremony" 35). Wynter highlights here that the cultural production of texts and literature was used as a marker for civilisation and the state of reason of different human groups. Also, the ritual of sacrificing human beings to their gods seemed to prove their lack of reason. Similar arguments were found to prove the apparent lack of reason of the peoples with African descent, who were homogeneously objectified and considered inferior to European Man (ibid.).

her critique of racism, Man1's general overestimation of reason and secularisation and Man2's representation as a purely biocentric, economic human being. Gilroy's and Jones' works both elaborate on what Wynter critiques here. Gilroy exposes her own experience of displacement within Great Britain and develops responses towards humanism's racial and patriarchal paradigms. Jones focusses on her political activism and fight for particularly black women's rights in the United States and United Kingdom while being confronted with Man's exclusivistic concept of the human.

1.3. Revisiting Race, Class and Gender through Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's Intersectional Approaches

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's works address various forms of discriminations that are structurally embedded within society. They appear to be ahead of their time in using an intersectional approach before it was addressed as such. The term intersectionality has been introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Crenshaw argues that through an intersectional approach it is possible to "address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated." (140) In Patricia Hill Collins' and Sirma Bilge's *Intersectionality*, they similarly acknowledge that the use of "intersectionality as an analytical tool" developed out of the need to challenge the "entirety of discriminations" black women were and are confronted with (3). They state that: "People in the Global South have used intersectionality as an analytical tool, often without naming it as such." (3) Furthermore, Sabine Broeck asserts that it has been a "Black Feminist prerogative, and *not* a White theoretical virgin birth to intervene into the debates of gender from the point of view of the *interlocking systems of oppression* of race, gender, class, and sexuality" (Broeck 213, original emphasis; cf. Boyce-Davies *Left* 10). Intersectionality in this context serves as a way to counter a reading of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work that solely discusses a gendered perspective. The three intellectuals themselves discuss the relation between different forms of oppression in their works and express their critique of humanism from various angles in order to expose racial, social, cultural and patriarchal structures that legitimise the dehumanisation of black people. In this regard, Monica Michlin and Jean-Paul Rocchi argue that analysing oppressive systems within questions of race, class and gender together can "open up a new space […] exploring the crossing of lines, to revise racial, gender, and sexual constructions in texts and discourses, and in the social world alike."[10] (3) The fact that through an intersectional approach structures of oppression can be

[10] They similarly define intersectionality not as a concept, but rather as a "tool; perhaps even a weapon […] used by those of us for whom policies of inequality and discrimination still matter because they are an inescapable condition of our existence." (Michlin and Rocchi 3)

exposed, challenged and ultimately subverted resonates with Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's approaches to their own texts and their overall critique of humanism. They defy categorisations of belonging to a feminist, or post-colonial discourse and rather keep crossing lines between various discourses constantly addressing the question of their own humanness while being confronted with displacement and dehumanisation. Their work and writing question the concepts of intersectional categories themselves and introduce their own understanding of race, class and gender.

The dissolution of gender distinctions through the enslavement and structures of plantation slavery is a recurring theme in Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's writing and important for their historical understanding of and approach to gender (see Spillers 95). Spillers points out that under the circumstances of commodification of the black body and its distinction between the body and the flesh the black subject is "neither female, nor male, as both subjects are taken into 'account' as *quantities*." (106; original emphasis) This means that the female and male black subject are referred to as simply a larger or "smaller physical mass" (ibid.). Here, the female flesh is objectified as a means for reproduction within the system of plantation economy. All three highlight that in order to talk about gender, they have to address issues of race and class as well as their historical context. Sabine Broeck argues that "enslaved African-origin female beings never qualified as women in the transatlantic modern world" (219). For this reason "their non-humanness" did not let them "partake in the ongoing social construction and contestation of gender." (219) This leads to the question of how it is at all possible to approach black female subjects through the category of gender. Michelle V. Rowley stresses that female Caribbean intellectuals are often only approached through an analysis of the category gender. She argues that a reading that solely focusses on gendered oppression does not sufficiently engage with "the complicated political landscape that faces Caribbean feminist activism in the twenty-first century." (12) In order to do that Rowley engages with a critique of humanism "for the purpose of acknowledging what it has made of us so that we can envision a break with that positioning." (3) The break she refers to here is a break with the "liberal humanist subject (that is, unitary, rational, heteronormative, always agentive)" (12). However, gender in this context is not the only category through which this break has to be revisioned by Caribbean feminists. Rather, Rowley refers to Wynter and argues that "gender cannot be *the* code" due to the historical implications that are connected to it (12; original emphasis). Gender in this context serves as one possible "code", one possible perspective through which Caribbean intellectuals can address the overall question of what it means to be human. However, it remains necessary to overcome gender as the only category through which Caribbean feminism is perceived. Although Jones, Gilroy and Wynter are often considered black feminists, they do not

exclusively focus on gender as the category that opposes liberal humanism, but rather see gender as one dimension that shapes their subject position.

A critique of the concept race, as well as its historical development and connection to humanist ideologies, is integral to Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critique of humanism and expression of the human in black, female Caribbean terms. Blackness in this context is understood as a marker of negativity and inferiority. Wynter emphasises that race "is a purely invented construct" and functions as "the answer that the secularizing West would give to the […] question as to the who, and the what we are." ("Unsettling" 264) The system of racial distributions attempts to answer the question of identity. Wynter points out that the term identity is already tainted by the fact that black people structurally occupy a space of otherness. She regards the concept race as the marker for the "ultimate mode of otherness" from which different "subtypes of otherness are generated" such as the lack of being a member of the middle class, being "nonheterosexual as the lack of *heterosexuality*" and the existence of "women as the lack to the normal sex, *the male*" ("1492" 42; original emphasis). To Wynter the concept race precedes other categories such as class, gender and sexuality. She further argues that only through the concept race they can be appropriately addressed. Through the category of race Gilroy, Jones and Wynter can also address how black people are not considered part of humanism's concept of the human. In this regard, their work resonates with the understanding of blackness within an Afro-pessimist discourse which propagates a new understanding of slavery highlighting that it is not a "relation of (forced) labor", but rather a "relation of property" (*Afro-Pessimism* 8). The slave "is objectified in such a way that they are legally made an object (a commodity) to be used and exchanged" and thus a non-human (ibid.). This means that the very being of black people is objectified rather than their ability to offer labour. Therefore, the slave is considered a socially dead person: "The social death of the slave goes to the very level of their *being*, defining their ontology." (ibid.) After the abolition of slavery, the slave, however, did not turn into a free subject, but gave way to the "racialized Black 'subject'" due to the "legal disavowal of ownership" and its reorganisation of black people's suppression through the concept race (ibid.). Although the black subject was no longer considered a slave "the same formative relation of structural violence that maintained slavery remained", but now translated into everyday anti-black violence and structural displacement through segregation policies (ibid.). These forms of structural racism express the "equation that Black equals socially dead" (8-9). Weheliye's approach to race and racialisation elaborates on how blackness is made to be synonymous with the status of a non-human and is structurally embedded within modern society. Race and racialisation, he argues, appear to be "a conglomerate of sociopolitical relations that discipline humanity into full

humans, not-quite-humans, and nonhumans" (Weheliye 3). Blackness "designates a changing system of unequal power structures that apportion and delimit which humans can lay claim to full human status and which humans cannot." (ibid.) He further states that "race and racism shape the modern idea of the human" (4).[11] Weheliye argues here that the inferiority of blackness structures the framework of modern society and through this also the conception of what it means to be human within western societies. He exposes that supposedly *post*-racist, *post*-modern or *post*-colonial societies in fact continue to instate a divide between cultures based on skin colour.

The category class is of particular importance for Claudia Jones' work and her Marxist approach. Jones' own experiences as a black woman with a working-class background led her to become a member of the "Young Communist League" discovering Marxism and Leninism as the only viable ways of confronting Jim Crow policies, segregation and the overall racial structures she faced in her everyday life (see "[Black] women" 1953, 9). Frank Wilderson highlights the potential of a Marxist approach and states that "I think the study of Marxism helped me get into thinking about relations of power, which I think is more important than simply thinking about the way power performs." (Wilderson *Afro-Pessimism* 16) While Jones addresses the inequalities that structure western societies through a Marxist approach, she also introduces her own black feminist perspective in order to address western power relations and black people's oppression. Boyce-Davies asserts that Jones' work "brought together theoretically the intersections of race, class, gender and anti-imperialism." (*Left* 30)[12] Marxism offers her the methodological tools in order to address the historical displacement of black people within western societies (*Left* 220). Jones advances Marxism as a political ideology and addresses black people's oppression as being historically manifested through colonialism and racism. Marxism offers Jones the opportunity to critique the anti-black system of colonialism and imperialism through the category class. Yet, she adds that "[w]hat unites the *all-class* struggle of the West Indian people is opposition to foreign imperialism." (Jones "Imperialism" 163) By extending Marxism here, she exposes how it is in itself embedded within western structures of systemic racism by omitting a black perspective on the issue of class and critique of capitalism. Within this context, Jones' critique is not only an important historic document but also an epistemic intervention within the structural dehumanisation of black people in the Caribbean. Jones' work resonates with Wynter's approach to systemic racism and critique of Marxism, who states: "I was a Marxist because Marxism gave you a key which said

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[11] As a theoretical backdrop, Weheliye is referring to Hortense Spillers and Sylvia Wynter (see 4ff and 38ff).

[12] For further information on Jones' impact on Marxism/Leninism and Jones' "Socialist Feminist Practice" see Carole Boyce-Davies' *Left of Karl Marx*, p.56ff.

look, you can understand the reality of which you're a part." ("Re-Enchantment" 142) Marxism offers a first entry into a critique of humanist ideologies, as it exposes how society's "superstructure was not automatically determined by the mode of production but was *constructed*, so that you can *reconstruct* it" (141; original emphasis). It shows that class structures can be in fact undermined and challenged and are not universally given, which in turn enables Wynter to also critique racial structures and the conception of the human within humanism.[13] Wynter's use of Marxism resonates with Jones' approach when she states that it was "not a matter of negating the Marxism paradigm but of realizing that it was one aspect of something that was larger." (142) Marxism is part of the larger Eurocentric model of being through which the human cannot be re-defined, but within a historical framework it has offered Jones and Wynter the first entry into a discourse that challenges the human and humanism.

1.4. The Structure of This Study

The following investigation of a critique of humanism and rethinking of the human in Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work is divided into four main parts. The second chapter, "Anglophone Caribbean Critiques of Humanism in the Non-Fictional Works of Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones and Sylvia Wynter" delineates the three different approaches of the intellectuals focussing on Wynter's philosophical critique of humanism, Jones' political and intersectional approach and Gilroy's biographical conflict with humanism and its concept of Man. The subchapter on Wynter focusses on how a critique of humanism is implemented within Caribbean literature and is an intervention within the discourse on the human. Dedicated to Jones' essays, the following subchapter analyses her intersectional critique of capitalism and racism focussing on the role of black women. The subchapter on Gilroy elaborates on her definition of existence and how she revisits her own past in the Caribbean and her experience of migration in order to formulate a critique of humanism. The last subchapter of this chapter revisits humanism from these three distinct perspectives and critically engages with the method of close reading. In order to address the historical connection between close reading and humanist discourse, the subchapter also introduces Afro-pessimist and black feminist approaches to raise critical awareness about this method.

The following three chapters analyse a range of literary texts written by Gilroy, Jones and Wynter and each chapter is introduced by a short theoretical classification of the concepts discussed there. Chapter three focusses on how the three intellectuals express the relevance for a critique of

[13] For further insight of an analysis of Wynter's approach to Marxism read Boyce Davies "*Maskarade*", p. 212ff.

humanism in their work addressing the impact of race, systemic racism, dehumanisation and anti-black violence within conceptualisations of the human. Their literary work emphasises why it is necessary to revisit humanism from a black, female Caribbean perspective. Chapter 3.1. examines how systemic forms of violence and racism disrupt familial bonds and relationships. It analyses representations of violence on the slave plantations in the Caribbean in Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, addresses sexual violence in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and the brutal practice of lynching in the south of the United States in the 1950s in Jones' "Lament for Emmett Till". Chapter 3.2. addresses different perspective on the forced and free migration of black subjects through Jones' and Gilroy's literary and autobiographical work. Both discuss how transnational racism shapes their own experience of migration. Jones addresses her deportation to London in her autobiographical essay "I was deported because…" and the impact of anti-blackness on her life in "Autobiographical History" and Gilroy discusses how structural racism permeates British society.

Chapter four builds the foundation for the analysis of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's joint critique of humanism and highlights the role of liminality in their writing. It analyses Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work as an epistemic intervention into a discourse of history. Tracing the beginnings of colonialism, the three intellectuals offer a rewriting of history and combine it with their critique of humanism. Chapter 4.1. discusses the role of non-human entities as witnesses to historic events and agents within the narration of history. This is followed by a discussion of liminal characters within Gilroy's and Wynter's novels and their distinct and unique perspectives on historic events addressing the very beginnings of colonialism up until the experiences of black Caribbean migrants in London. Lastly, 4.3. emphasises the role of resistance within history focussing on the role of mutiny, Maroons and political activism.

The last analysis chapter elaborates on how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter express and imagine their own approaches to the concept of the human. They re-invent the human through aspects of spirituality, mythology and folklore showing how their work transcends colonial and racial binaries. Chapter 5.1. puts its focus on visions of the future in Gilroy's and Jones' essays and autobiographical texts emphasising how the boundaries between their fictional and non-fictional texts blur. The following sub-chapter engages with African folklore as an expression of an alternative worldview and concept of the human and examines how it is interwoven within Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* and Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron*. Finally, 5.3. discusses the role of rhythm, dance and masks and alternative forms of justice expressed by black female characters in order to express a concept of the human that challenges humanist norms and values. Finally, the conclusion not only reconnects the results and finding in each analysis chapter, but also provides an outlook into

transnational critiques and perspectives on humanism and the concept of the human by black female women including writers from the hispanophone and francophone Caribbean and from Africa.

2. Anglophone Caribbean Critiques of Humanism in the Non-Fictional Works of Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones and Sylvia Wynter

A pluralistic reading of Beryl Gilroy's, Claudia Jones' and Sylvia Wynter's critiques of a western, bourgeois humanism elaborates on how these three intellectuals reassess the concept of the human. They offer three diverse approaches in their critiques of the heterosexual, capitalist, bourgeois, Anglo-Saxon concept of the "human" and its assumed universal status. An examination of their critique of humanism — through Wynter's philosophical essays, Jones' political approach and Gilroy's biographical conflict with the concept — provides an insight into their assertion of black female humanness. Within this framework their essays discuss various sub-concepts such as dehumanisation, otherness and non-being, (transnational) racism, emotion and orality.

Looking at Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's essay writing, the following chapter analyses each intellectual's individual critique of humanism. Wynter focusses on re-thinking humanism as a concept and on its formations and development throughout history. Jones, who follows an intersectional Marxist approach, exposes black women's "super-exploitation" (Jones "Neglect" 75); and Gilroy offers a discussion of her personal conflict with humanism as a black Caribbean migrant in London. Each of their approaches offers contextual and theoretical frames for the analyses in chapters three, four and five, as Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's non-fictional works correspond and relate to their fictional ones.

What the three intellectuals have in common is their positionality as black, female, Caribbean writers. All three highlight the potential of their position outside of mainstream western academic and political discourses while at the same time offering what McKittrick calls a critical reading of black people's "[i]mposed placelessness" which went hand in hand with a "negation of black humanity" ("Rebellion/Invention/Groove" 82). Within their critiques of humanism they address black people's "geographic removal from the continent of Africa, geographic estrangement on arrival in the New World, and plantation geographies" and how these processes ensured black people's objectification and therefore immobilisation within colonial contexts (McKittrick *Demonic* 82). McKittrick adds that these structures of rendering black people immobile and as non-humans, simultaneously "humanized white colonial geographies as productive sites of settlement, belonging, and capital accumulation." (82) "[T]raditional geography", in McKittrick's terms, is thought from a "white, patriarchal, Eurocentric, heterosexual, classed" point of view and is interlinked with this negation of black humanness (*Demonic* xiii). On the one hand, McKittrick exposes how humanist ideologies are embedded within the geographical structures Gilroy, Jones and Wynter encounter and confront in the Caribbean. On the other hand, she emphasises that "[p]laceless and silent black women, if legitimately posited in the world (placed, unsilenced), call into question our present

geographical organization." (133) Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critiques of humanism take up McKittrick's critique of geographical representations as they challenge, through three different approaches, their displacement as black, female, colonial subjects.

In the intellectuals' work, black female displacement is re-interpreted as a potential to confront and subvert humanism's concept of the human while developing distinct and unique literary approaches in order to express their conceptualisations of the human. In this context, marginality is not simply reduced to a form of suppression when producing literature, but rather seen as an opportunity to move beyond westernised standards of writing and stereotypical representations of black women. Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work here reveals a strong link to M. NourbeSe Philip, who examines the role of black female poets' displacement and its potential for their creative writing process.[14] She argues that writing "[t]rue poetry […] depends very much upon such a rooting in place, despite the forces of displacement and alienation" (58). Therefore, she deems it necessary for black, female poets to strive and work towards a place — may it be "psychic, psychological, spiritual, economic, geographical, cultural or historical — that is theirs by rightful belonging." (58) Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work reflects the struggle for reaching a poet's place of belonging. Their texts are characterised by expressions of tensions, conflicts and forms of resistance, which contribute to each individual intellectual's literary creativity. NourbeSe Philip adds: "The displacements of which I speak lead often […] to a disjunction in the psyche which can be […] a source of intense creativity: displacement leads to marginality;" (ibid.). Through a re-assessment of marginality as a source of creativity, black female writers can reach an "operative distance" through which they can challenge and resist "mainstream society" (ibid.). Through their operative distance, Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work is a form of knowledge production that contributes to an anglophone Caribbean discourse, expressing their critique of humanism and propagating their own conception of what it means to be human as a black, Caribbean woman. Their own experiences with displacement are woven into their work and shape their critiques of humanism as well as their approaches. Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative process of writing constantly addresses their displaced status — "triply displaced through race, gender and language, and now quadruply through place" (59) — through an intersectional rewriting of black women's history, an engagement with memory as well as a processing of the experience of loss.

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[14] NourbeSe Philip defines place, in contrast to displacement, as "[t]hat certain location in time and space where historical, social, cultural and geographical forces coalesce and/or collide to produce the individual" (57). The clash of various parameters in space and time quite openly refers to colonisation and the structures though which colonial subjects evolved. Displacement, in this context, refers to the process of being displaced "from homeland, language, culture or race; from the means of production or the product of one's labour; from one's truths or wisdoms; from a belief in one's self and one's potential; from all to which one is truly entitled" (58).

The first sub-chapter is dedicated to Wynter's theoretical essays and her understanding of humanism. Wynter challenges humanism and questions what it means to be human from a highly philosophical angle. Her essays are connected by her overall project of a "revised humanism" (Scott 121). Central to her critique is the "Man vs. Human struggle", in which she argues that Man "overrepresents itself as if it were the human" ("Unsettling" 260). Man, as Wynter understands it, functions as a substitute for the term human. She characterises Man as based upon a singularly white male Anglo-American and European view that cannot and definitively does not include all human beings. In highlighting this distinction between human and Man, Wynter reveals a struggle about issues of, among others, race, class, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. Within this context, she challenges humanism's assumed universal conception of the human by introducing "new objects of knowledge" which can only exist outside the western-dominated conception of Man and its production of knowledge (*Discourse* 207).

Wynter's essays reflect upon the emergence and development of humanism and rewrite Man's history from a black female Caribbean perspective. She examines the reasons and catalysts behind the Man/human binary and uncovers how the concept Man was able to appoint itself as the universal ideal of a human being. Wynter starts in Europe and examines how the rise of humanism is connected to the discovery of the Americas, Europe's colonial expansion and the birth of the concept Man. She draws a historical trajectory and differentiates between two different versions of Man: Man1, which she defines as a political, not completely secular humanist subject invented during the movement of Renaissance humanism, and Man2, the bourgeois, liberal, completely secular, economic and biocentric subject developed through liberal humanism (see "Unsettling" 266 and "Catastrophe" 10). She argues that Man2 is still the functioning structuring principle of what it means to be human in modern society today. Anthony Bogues summarises Wynter's project thus:

> Wynter is not concerned with suggesting new definitions nor any theory of humanism. Her two-fold project is in another direction. In the first instance she wants to demonstrate how humanism was brought into being as an example of epistemic break. In the second place, she wants to show how critical intellectuals should function in order to facilitate an epistemic break in the present." (324)

Wynter's second aspect of her overall project subsumes her own as well as Gilroy's and Jones' works under the umbrella of black Caribbean intellectuals' means to facilitate an "epistemic break". Her essays discuss how this rupture is made possible particularly by literary works. In this context, Bogues stresses that Wynter "does not wish to rescue humanism but rather wants to bring about new concepts of ourselves." (Bogues 324) Wynter's concept of the human as a hybrid being and its different genres of human beings rather offers an alternative to humanism's definition of the Human, exposing it as only one possible answer to the question of what it means to be human. She particularly highlights the potential of Caribbean literature as a "mode of revolt" that challenges

Man's conception of the human. To achieve this, Wynter uses a concept of being hybridly human, which is a recurring theme not only in her essays, but also in her novel and play (see Wynter "Catastrophe" 16).

The analysis of Jones' essays looks at how she reveals a structurally embedded dehumanisation of black people in western societies by applying a unique intersectional, Marxist approach to the question of what it means to be human. Jones' work advances Marxism and Leninism through a black female perspective focussing on the role of black women in American society and beyond. Her critique of humanism is closely linked to a critique of capitalism and structural racism in the United States. Her essays challenge the power relations that secure the oppressed status of black people in the United States while denouncing Jim Crow politics and segregation laws. Interlinking a critique of capitalism and racism, she draws attention to the special experience of black women of being triply displaced through race, class and gender. Her "super-exploitation" thesis stresses that black women were displaced and silenced as the ultimate other to society's ideal human being. Confronting her own displacement and dehumanisation, she constantly emphasises the importance of raising her own voice and subject position. Through an intersectional approach, Jones approaches the status of black women in her essays, which date back to the late 1940s. She draws attention to the role of capitalism in the oppression of black women. Within this context, the sub-chapter on Jones especially discusses her own re-conceptualisation of the human, her take on feminism and how she advances a Marxist approach.

Gilroy's essays can often be considered autobiographical, as they keep referring to her own work as a teacher and status as a black female Caribbean migrant. Her personal observations and experiences as a teacher, mother and intellectual expose how anti-blackness is structurally embedded in British society. Apart from discussing the impact of racism on her own life and work, Gilroy also emphasises the importance of remembering colonial history in order to claim her own subjectivity. She offers her own approach to what it means to be human by addressing the importance of acknowledging African culture and themes such as orality and emotion. What is more, Gilroy's essays uniquely provide her own assessment of her creative work in which she comments on the role of literary themes and character constellations.

2.1. Sylvia Wynter's Philosophical Approach to Humanism

> So unless we move out of the liberal mono humanist mindset, it's very difficult to see where we've been, where we're going. Once the Earth had been proved to move, medieval Latin-Christian Europe's then hegemonic theologically absolute worldview had begun to come to an end. (Wynter "Catastrophe" 14)

Wynter proposes that it is possible to cause a similar break as the Renaissance humanists have done before in the context of the Copernican revolution, changing from a theological based worldview into a "humanist mindset" (ibid.). The change within the knowledge system caused by Man is proof to Wynter that such a rupture is indeed possible, as she argues: "our own now purely secular and purely biocentric order of knowledge can also cease to exist" (16). Key to this change are Caribbean intellectuals, who develop new conceptions of the human within their work and promote to overcome humanism's knowledge system and its overrepresented conception of the human: "The *Studia* must be reinvented as a higher order of human knowledge, able to provide an 'outer view' which takes the human rather than any one of its variations as Subject" ("Ceremony" 56). Wynter highlights the unique positionality of black Caribbean intellectuals with her concept of an "outer view" similar to NourbeSe Philip's "operative distance" (58). Both emphasise here that through their assumed marginality, Caribbean intellectuals challenge Man's universal claim to defining the human (see "Ceremony" 56). Wynter further asserts that as "external observer, at once inside/ outside the figural domain of our order", Caribbean intellectuals' texts are always already implicit critiques of humanism and humanist ideologies (ibid.).

Caribbean literature takes on a vital role in demanding a rethinking of the current order of being. In her essays, Wynter discusses literary themes as interventions into the dehumanisation of black people and their constant exposure to violence and racism. Within this context, Wynter particularly stresses how Caribbean literature takes part in the reconceptualisation of Man. Katherine McKittrick's asserts: "creative narratives […] simultaneously narrate and disrupt normative conceptualizations of humanism." ("Rebellion/Invention/Groove" 80). The potential of Wynter's creative work, as well as Gilroy's and Jones', is that they redefine the conception of the human through their poems, novels, dramas, essays and autobiographical texts. They imagine forms of being human outside of Man's social, political and cultural structures and hierarchies, while at the same time challenging Man's implicit binaries and processes of othering. Wynter's essays offer approaches to Caribbean literature which subvert and challenge Man's genre-specific conception of the human as a universally given structure. She elaborates on how Caribbean literature offers an access to diverse human genres and specific Caribbean conceptions of what it means to be human. An examination of three essays ("Beyond the Word of Man" (1989), "1492: A New World View" (1995) and "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?" (2015)[15]) from different points in

[15] For full titles, please see the bibliography; the last essay "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?" is in fact a dialogic text between McKittrick and Sylvia Wynter. Their conversations began in 2007 and offer an insight into Wynter's thoughts and ideas. Through the form of the dialogue McKittrick gives a voice to Wynter herself, which she then frames with comments and explanations.

time highlights two main aspects: Firstly, the discussion of Wynter's most prominent concepts — the human as a hybrid being, bios/mythoi, "*propter nos*" and the "Word of Man" — shows how Wynter critiques humanism and challenges its mindset. Secondly, the essays examine her approach to and understanding of Caribbean literature as "a new mode of revolt" ("Beyond" 638). Wynter characterises this revolt as a movement against the "present mode of 'conventional reason' and therefore of the order of discourse and of its Word of Man"[16] led by Caribbean intellectuals such as, among others, Edouard Glissant (ibid.).[17] She traces a literary uprising against the humanist mindset and its understanding of the human within Caribbean intellectual thought and Caribbean literature. In this context, Wynter shows how a critique of humanism and reinvention of the concept of the human is possible through Caribbean literature.

Literary themes are the means to express a Caribbean mode of revolt and offer to challenge and subvert humanist ideologies as well as countering universal claims of Man's understanding of being human. Wynter elaborates on Edouard Glissant's use of literary themes in his creative work in order to explain how literary themes are in general able to take on such a prominent role in the rewriting of the human. Glissant's argument for reviving a distinctive Caribbean history and cultural tradition makes his work exemplary for what Wynter understands as a Caribbean mode of revolt; one that challenges the Word of Man and its conception of being human.[18] Wynter establishes "major themes of Glissant's works as performative acts of countermeaning" (639). The potential of literary themes as creative interventions into a discourse on the human connects Wynter's own creative work, as well as Gilroy's and Jones', with Glissant's themes and the overall mode of revolt Wynter traces within the writings of Caribbean intellectuals. Literature in this context connects Caribbean intellectuals, emphasising their joint challenge of humanism and the Word of Man. Wynter identifies three major literary themes, which run through Glissant's and in extensions Wynter's, Gilroy's and Jones' work: "the theme of an Antillean history", "psychic disorder and cultural

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[16] The concept "The Word of Man" describes the humanist order of knowledge that replaced the theocentric order of knowledge ("the Word of the Christian"), enabling the emergence of Man1 and later its reinvention into Man2: "A shift had therefore been effected from the Word of the Christian to that of rational-nature Man." (641)

[17] She also mentions Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire and George Lamming ("Beyond" 639).

[18] In Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*, the concept "creolization" sums up the idea of Relation, because "the reality of archipelagos in the Caribbean or the Pacific provides natural illustration of the thought of Relation." (34) The cluster of islands mirrors the cluster of different cultures in the Caribbean and the process of creolization, then is contrasted by *métissage*. Where *métissage* stands for an "encounter, a shock" triggered by a clash of cultures, creolization depicts the process of creating a diverse blend of cultures, a kind of "limitless *métissage*" with "unforeseeable consequences" (34; original emphasis). Creolization never ends and always creates something new and unexpected, triggered by the forced clash of cultures during colonialism.

malaise" and the "anti-Universal, the theme to the claim to specificity" ("Word of Man" 639). The first of the themes refers to the writing of a distinct Caribbean history. History refers, in Glissant's work, to "an Antillean history which […] must now be recovered in its fullness in order to reorient our behaviours in the present." (639) Wynter positions Glissant's work as part of a larger project of rewriting the history of the Caribbean while also empowering a Caribbean tradition that contrasts colonial models of history, culture and society. Encarnación Gutiérrez-Rodríguez argues in this context that "'Antilleanity' denotes resistance to French imperialism, and goes beyond mere 'opposition.'" (83) Overall, the theme of rewriting history challenges western historic accounts, taking on a unique Caribbean perspective on historic events. It is a central element of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work and is an expression of overcoming the second theme Wynter mentions: cultural disorder and malaise. To embed a distinct Caribbean history within Caribbean literature means to counter the "nihilated […] sense of identity of the population groups of the Antilles" who are oppressed by "the universal Word of Man" (Wynter 639). The recovery of a distinct Caribbean history challenges black people's general displacement within the humanist Word of Man. The writing of history reconnects black Caribbean subjects with their ancestors and counters the severing of cultural, social and familial ties experienced within processes of colonisation. The last literary theme Wynter discusses connects the former two, showing how all three intersect and cannot be interpreted separately. The theme of the anti-universal — "the central counter theme" of Glissant's work (ibid.) — challenges and subverts Man's claim to universality (639). The theme addresses not only the special positionality of Caribbean intellectuals as external observers but also Caribbean intellectuals' emphasis on their uniquely Caribbean perspective which ultimately demands a reinvention of the human. By highlighting the importance of a Caribbean perspective on the world, a humanist world view is put into place as only one possibility — one "specificity" among many that has spread its universal claims through colonial and racial modes of suppression (639).

Wynter's novel *The Hills of Hebron* (1962) and play *Maskarade* (1970) serve as cases in point in that they formulate a critique of humanism established by literary themes and a Caribbean reinterpretation of the human. Both works were published before the essays discussed in this chapter and anticipate Wynter's concepts. Long before Wynter's highly complex and philosophical discussion of humanism and Man, her novel and play challenge a humanist order of being. A discussion of Wynter's understanding of the human in terms of different genres of human beings serves as a backdrop for the analysis of *The Hills of Hebron* and *Maskarade*, which both redefine what it means to be human. What is more, it enables to highlight the dialectic of her fictional and

non-fictional work in the analyses chapters. The term "genre" in this context, highlights that there are different possibilities of understanding what it means to be human — various "genres of being human" (Wynter and McKittrick "Catastrophe" 31; Wynter "Unsettling" 269). It also stresses that Man only ever represents one possible understanding of the human and has no valid claims to being a universal representation of the concept of the human (see Walcott 190-191). Wynter understands being human as a combination of various genres such as biological aspects, language and — referring to religion and culture — the ability of "mythmaking" (see Wynter "Catastrophe 26).Walcott further specifies between genres and sub-genres of the human. He argues that particularly "subgenres of humanness — in particular nonwhite, queer, and feminine modes of humanness" are confronted with the idealisation of Man as the only genre of the human (ibid. 191). What Wynter does here is to re-evaluate Man's claim to universality, challenging its understanding of the human in its singular form of Man as a "purely organic species" (Catastrophe 26). She traces the phenomenon of Man's "overrepresentation" in her various theoretical essays while constantly challenging humanism's conception of the human ("Unsettling" 260).

In her essay "1492: A New World View", Wynter anticipates her understanding of different genres of the human by redefining the what she calls *propter nos* of western society. The *propter nos* represents the current western system of knowledge and being that presupposes a conception of the human and its non-human counterparts (see "1492" 47). Within such an ideology, Man is defined as a "*purely biocentric* version of humanness" ("Catastrophe" 16). Wynter envisions a "new poetics of the *propter nos*"[19]; one that overcomes a biocentric version of the human and moves beyond humanist ideology ("1492" 47; original emphasis). Her choice of words already links her endeavour with Caribbean literature. The use of the term poetics, as well as her use of the term genre as highlighted above, expresses her proposal to move "into a 'realm beyond reason'" and therefore closer to her concept of the human as a species made up of different genres (40). Wynter's new definition of the *proper nos* as a form of poetic expression challenges the static and binary understanding of the human within humanist thought through the use of literary terms. While Man adheres to colonial binary structures in order to secure and legitimise its superiority, Wynter's new concept revisits colonial hierarchies and wants to replace Man's binary logics and dependence on processes of othering (see "Unsettling" 268). Within this context, "such a poetics […] will have to take as its referent subject […] that of the *concrete individual* human subject" rather than "the

[19] Wynter defines the *propter nos* in this context as the "generalized poetics […] of the intellectual revolution of humanism" (46) and its "overall system of symbolic representation and mode of subjective understanding" (47).

bourgeois mode of the subject and its *conception* of the individual" (47; original emphasis). Wynter reveals a discrepancy between each individual human being and their own understanding of what it means to be human and humanism's imposed conception of the individual as Man. Wynter clarifies that her new poetics of the *propter nos* needs to revisit the social structures and forms of oppression that keep a bourgeois conception of the human in place. Therefore, she highlights how human beings are confronted with individual forms of oppression and more importantly, how these forms of oppression shape each individual's concept of the human. Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative works addresses issues of race, class, gender, language, sexuality and many more in order to shape their own conceptions of what it means to be human. Wynter's essay, in this context offers the theoretical framework to introduce social circumstances as a parameter for defining what it means to be human. Hereby, Wynter's rewriting of the *propter nos* contrasts Man's ideology of understanding human beings as purely biocentric. She challenges the idea of individuality and identity and looks at the intersections between social, cultural and political processes that shape and form human beings (see ibid.).

Through Wynter's concept of having various genres of the human, as well as her critique of Man's *propter nos*, she develops her own reinvention of the human as a "hybrid being", offering a black female Caribbean conception of the human (Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). Characteristic of Wynter's hybrid model of the human is the portrayal of humans as being "both *bios* and *mythoi*" (ibid.; original emphasis), which means that human beings are not singularly biological beings as humanism propagates but that they are a "biological-storytelling species" (McKittrick, O'Shaughnessy and Witaszek "Rhythm" 867). For this reason, Wynter calls her concept of being hybridly human "*homo narrans*" ("Catastrophe" 25). By placing the ability of creative expressions such as storytelling as one of the foundations of humanness in itself, Wynter not only acknowledges the importance of culture but argues that it is a central element of defining what it means to be human. She extends humanism's understanding of Man as purely biocentric with the ability of humans to creatively express themselves may that be in the form of literature, cultural expressions such as dance, song or rhythm, folklore, or drawings. Hereby, she highlights the importance of Caribbean literature as a means to reinvent a concept of the human as literature in itself is foundational to the expression of humanness.

Key to Wynter's concept of hybrid humans is to trace the very beginnings of human life and cultural expression back to Africa, countering humanism's claim that the birth of civilisation was in Europe. The discovery of "a 77,000-year-old piece of ochre, on which there is 'etched a geometric design'" in the Blombos Cave in South Africa is evidence for one of the earliest expressions of

storytelling and communication (Gugliotta qtd. in Wynter "Catastrophe" 66). To Wynter this discovery points towards a hybrid form of existence as it proves that cultural expressions have been part of the development and origin of human beings.[20] Wynter proves her theory by using cultural expressions as a marker for the conception of being human, countering humanism's universal claim of providing the only concept of being human. Tracing a concept of the human out of Africa, Wynter also disrupts a humanist hierarchy of humans, represented by Man, and non-humans represented by black people with an African origin.

A view on humans as hybrid beings with various genres allows her to challenge the humanist mindset. Wynter's concept challenges Man as a superior form of existence, dissolving the focus on one specific concept of the human by subverting humanist binaries as well as colonial hierarchies. By using Wynter's focus on "literary and cultural heritage", it is possible to subvert a western emphasis on science and rationality (Wynter "Disenchanting" 242). Wynter proposes to value the humanities as a driving force for triggering another rupture that can replace Man as the universal conception of the human. Caribbean literature in this context represents "human life as a hybridly organic […] level of existence" and can overcome Man's system of being (239).

2.2. Claudia Jones' Political and Intersectional Critique of Humanism

Claudia Jones critiques humanism by challenging processes of othering instated by the American and British ruling class. She connects a Marxist approach with a critique of structural racism and offers a radical, black view on what it means to be human as a black, working-class woman. The capitalist system Jones protests against is based on bourgeois, liberal humanist ideologies. Although she does not address humanism as a concept as such, she still challenges its most basic assumptions and binary system on which it was developed. She exposes how American society is structured by this humanist mindset and detects how society is divided into full, lesser and non humans who are marked through certain discriminating aspects such as gender, race, class, religion and sexuality. An analysis of Jones essays contextualises her poetry discussed in the analyses chapters. While her poetry focusses on subverting a humanist conception of the human creatively, her essays address

[20] Anthony Bogues comments on the importance of the discovery of the Blombos Cave. He discusses how Wynter traces "the emergence of the human in Africa" while explaining what Wynter means by "autopoietic" (Bogues 318): "Using cave drawings from the Southern Africa region, Wynter argues that these drawings converge with a human phase that she calls, 'autohominisation'. For Wynter these drawings not only demonstrated the humanness of African people but illuminated human essence as one that was 'uniquely hybrid'. The importance of this shift in Wynter's thought is that it allows her to deploy a concept of the human in which human life is not purely organic and biological but one in which the word/logos becomes she says the 'directive sign of a specifically human code that — in my own — terms, of the governing code of symbolic life and death specific to each culture'." (Wynter qdt. in Bogues 318-319)

black people's oppression within western society from her political, activist approach. As in Wynter's case, Jones' fictional and non-fictional work has a dialogic character, offering an avantgarde intersectional and transnational perspective on the history of colonialism. Within this context, the boundaries between Jones' voice as a political activist and intellectual and the voice she expresses through her lyrical personas often blur and coalesce, demanding for a discussion of her essays as well as her poetry.

Jones' essays particularly challenge the capitalist system and its structures of power, exposing how the capitalist system evolved through and is intertwined with colonialism. In this regard, her essays, are part of what Wynter calls a Caribbean mode of revolt, particularly including a rewriting of history from a black female Caribbean perspective. Formulating her own black Caribbean perspective on colonial history, Jones essays strongly convey an intersectional, transnational and Marxist critique of the western conception of the human (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 3). Within this context, Jones shows how racism and capitalism are interconnected and subsumed under a humanist mindset while also working against processes of dehumanisation of black people with a particular emphasis on the displacement of black women as the ultimate other in American society. Her work resonates with NourbeSe Philip's connection between placelessness and creativity, as Jones work was largely written during her exile in London, as well as while being imprisoned for her political convictions. Jones' biography makes her irrevocably into an "external observer" (Wynter "Ceremony" 56) with an "operative distance" (NourbeSe Philip 58) who not only exposes the "superexploitative condition" black women have to face in almost all circumstances of their lives, but actively resists them (Boyce-Davies *Left* 3). Three texts, the essays "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!" (1949) and "The Caribbean Community in Britain" (1964) as well as her statement "…[Black] women can think and speak and write!"[21] in front of judge Edward J. Dimock in 1953 shed light on how her political activism and critique of humanism shaped her advocacy for the equality of black people.

As early as 1949, Jones offers an intersectional critique of black women's displacement within American society, exposing how structural racism secures black women's status as non-humans. Although, she does not name humanism as such, she critiques its binary system and racial hierarchy that places black women at the bottom of the social stratum, revealing their "super-exploitation" "Neglect" 75): "Negro women – as workers, as Negroes, and as women – are the most oppressed stratum of the whole population." (ibid.) Although highlighting the special oppression of black

[21] Jones gave the statement before she was sentenced for one year and a day to prison and a 200 Dollar fine under the Smith Act (see Boyce-Davies *Beyond* xiv).

women due to their gender, Jones goes beyond a feminist critique (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 55). A combined reading of issues of class, race and gender can elucidate how different forms of suppression intersect and how they create a network in order to secure black women's displacement. By challenging these structures of oppression, Jones speaks from the very position of the displaced black female subject, underlining NourbeSe Philip's argument how this position can be re-interpreted as a creative potential to confront colonial and racial power relations. By exposing black women's status, Jones simultaneously challenges her own displacement. Jones intersectional approach already anticipates a black feminist critique of the category gender (see Rowley's "Gender and Humanism"; cf. Broeck's "Black Feminist Desire"). Within this context, Jones' essays has a pioneering function and "is pivotal for the history of black feminist theoretics" (Boyce-Davies *Left* 37).[22]

Revisiting colonial and racial representations of black women, Jones not only traces the history of black women in America, but critiques how imperial and bourgeois ideologies secured their displacement. Here, she elaborates on colonial binaries, particularly that of the white, capitalist bourgeois male and his natural other. In drawing this distinction, Jones' critique resonates with Wynter's concept of Man and its hegemonic claims to defining what it means to be human:

> She is the victim of the white chauvinist stereotype as to where her place should be. […] the Negro woman is not pictured in her real role as breadwinner, mother, and protector of the family, but as a traditional 'mammy' […] This traditional stereotype of the Negro slave mother […] must be combatted and rejected as a device of the imperialists to perpetuate the white chauvinist ideology that Negro women are 'backward,' 'inferior,' and the 'natural slaves' of others. ("Neglect" 77)

Jones exposes colonial binaries that are still intact and continue to structure American society. The stereotypical representations of black women are characterised by processes of dehumanisation, as the picture of a "mammy" emphasises. Jones opposes two conception of the human here. On the one hand, there is the white, bourgeois and imperial interpretation of black women as uncivilised non-humans which contrast Man's own conception of the human. On the other, there is Jones' understanding of black women as human beings whom she characterises as strong, successful, protective of their families and with a resistant attitude. Jones goes back to the very beginnings of black women's displacement and rewrites their status as victims and enslaved objects. Her critique dissolves the classic colonial binaries and also exposes how the western powers and their humanist

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[22] For Boyce-Davies analysis of "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!", please see p. 37ff. There she focusses on Jones' analysis of the status of black women, reading her contribution as "one of the earliest available black socialist feminist assertions." (*Left* 39)

ideologies used the oppression of black women in order to secure their understanding of the human. What Jones calls the "white, chauvinist ideology" that throughout history oppressed and displaced black women as non-humans appears to almost be synonymous with what Wynter identifies as Man's overrepresentation as the human and its hierarchy of humans, lesser and non-humans (see "Unsettling" 260).

In Jones' statement in the court room, she similarly traces different conception of the human in order to reveal that the American justice system is in fact tainted by social, political, legal and racial inequality expressed by segregation policies, Jim Crow and the prosecution of Communists during the McCarthy era. Her speech reverses power relations as her interpretations and understandings of the systemic injustice within the justice system exemplifies. She declares what the judge and prosecutor which both represent the American state do not and possibly cannot address: Jones reveals that the underlying conception of the human within American society, as provided by the white bourgeois ruling class, goes hand in hand with the dehumanisation of the political, racial other represented by Jones herself:

> Hence, for me to accept the verdict of guilty would only mean that I considered myself less than worthy of the dignity of truth, which I cherish as a Communist and as a human being and also unsuitable to the utter contempt with which I hold such sordid performances. ("[Black] Women" 7)

Jones highlights that the acceptance of her guilt opposes her understanding of justice and humanness. She expose the trial to be a farce driven by structural discrimination. Her resistance against the verdict communicates her resistance against her displacement as a non-human. Refusing her status within American society, she shows that it is possible to subvert Man's conception of the human which is represented by the judicial system of the United States government here. Through her speech, Jones therefore not only exposes the oppressive structures against marginalised groups such as black people and Communists, but also openly propagates her own definition of being human. Hereby, she advances a Marxist critique of American society and addresses the foundations of black people's oppression. Jones further underlines her line of argumentation by stressing black women's agency (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 67): "You dare not, gentlemen of the prosecution, assert that Negro women can think and speak and write!" ("[Black] Women" 8). Jones' statement gives a voice to black women, countering their displacement and acknowledges them as human beings rather than Man's others. Under the cover of democracy, Jones reveals a system of inequality. Jones exposes her trial as a means to silence her critique of racial and patriarchal discrimination. Being

accused for her membership in the Communist Party tries to mask what she is actually tried for, namely for opposing the racist structures of American society and black people's dehumanisation.

Jones revisits her critique of humanism after being deported to London in her 1964 essay addressing the Black Caribbean Community.[23] She puts emphasis on a transnational reading of her conception of the human, connecting a critique of the rise of capitalism and its complicity in the colonial expansion and commodification of black people (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 56):

> All the resources of official propaganda and education, the superstructure of British imperialism, were permeated with projecting the oppressed colonial peoples as 'lesser breeds,' as 'inferior coloured peoples,' 'natives,' 'savages' and the like — in short, the 'white man's burden.' These rationalizations all served to build a justification for wholesale exploitation, extermination and looting of the islands by British imperialism. The great wealth of present-day British monopoly-capital was built on the robbery of coloured peoples by such firms as Unilever and the East Africa Company to Tate and Lyle and Booker Brothers in the Caribbean. ("Caribbean Community" 173)

Jones' argument recalls her essay on the super-exploitation of black women written in 1949 in that it also exposes how black people are portrayed as the displaced other contrasting Man. The representation of black people as "lesser breeds" or "savages" coincides with humanism's distinction between humans and non-humans. While her earlier essay focussed on the oppression of black women in the United States, here Jones exposes black people's displacement under British imperialism. She extends her critique with a transnational perspective, focussing on British colonial interest and how they are connected with the dehumanisation of black people. As in her two previous essays, the structure of the argument underlines how the West's conception of the human is based on systemic racism that goes back to the beginnings of colonialism. She relates her critique of imperialism with her critique of capitalism, exposing how the historical development that led to globalisation is "coterminous with the era of European exploration conquest and the formation of the capitalist world-market." (Hall 562) Jones intersects the rise of capitalism with colonialism and its imperial ideology and in doing so challenges the humanist ideology and its propagation of black people as "white man's burden" ("Caribbean Community" 173). Revealing that colonial exploitation is connected and integral to the West's capitalist advancement and success, Jones displays how the rise of British companies has been based on the exploitation and oppression of black people. In this context, she rewrites history from a black female Caribbean perspective,

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[23] For Boyce-Davies analysis of "The Caribbean Community in Britain", please read *Left* 168ff. She focusses on Jones contribution to a Black British Caribbean discourse, arguing that "Claudia Jones provides one of the earliest dealings of the historical, political, and sociocultural experiences of the Caribbean diaspora in the United Kingdom." (*Left* 167)

highlighting how systemic racism can be found on a transnational level. What is more, Jones also establishes another link to Wynter's theoretical work, as Wynter similarly argues that the transatlantic slave trade "built the economic infrastructure which is finally determinate of the racism intrinsic to the capitalist system" (Eudell qtd. Wynter's manuscript *Black Metamorphoses* 50). Her argument is also in line with other prominent black intellectuals such as Eric Williams and W.E.B. Du Bois who both argue that the enslavement of African peoples formed the infrastructure and basis for capitalism (see Eudell 50).[24] Jones discusses the question of what it means to be human from a larger historical and economical frame, exposing black people's exploitation and how their dehumanisation builds the basis of modern society. What is more, she constantly challenges the West's conception of the human, not only critiquing humanism and its ideologies but offering her own unique perspective on black people's history and own understanding of what it means to be human. Along those lines, she constantly confronts her own displacement and dehumanisation, emphasising the importance of raising her own voice and highlighting her own subject position.

2.3. Beryl Gilroy's Biographical Conflict With Humanism

Gilroy offers a critique of humanism's conception of the human, as well as exposing a historic trajectory of systemic violence against black people. She offers her own concept of what it means to be a human being, relating the black female experience of displacement to her own life and work and emphasising how it shapes her literary output. Gilroy's fictional and non-fictional work reflects her struggle and survival as a black woman in London who is facing racism and discrimination. She portrays her experience with racism as a migrant, teacher, woman and intellectual and how her confrontation with systemic violence shaped her writing. Gilroy subverts and resists humanist ideologies by implementing similar literary themes as the ones Wynter traces in Glissant's work: She revisits and rewrites Caribbean history, she addresses the emotional conflicts, disruptions and disorder caused by the destruction of cultural and historical links and finally focusses on her own understanding of the human and her concept overcomes Man's assumed universality with an emphasis on her own unique black female Caribbean perspective.

While revisiting her past and childhood in the Caribbean, Gilroy's essays and creative work both express her critique of colonial power relations and racism, which she herself encounters as a migrant in the United Kingdom. Within this context, her essays, similar to Wynter's and Jones',

[24] Williams emphasises "that slavery generated the consequent wealth and political hegemony of the Western World" (Eudell referring to Williams 50) and Du Bois argues that "slavery 'became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but […] of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale.'" (Du Bois qtd. in Eudell 50)

relate to her creative work. They not only conceptualise her understanding of the human, but reflect upon her literary worlds and characters. Offering her own interpretations of her novels, Gilroy's essays draw a direct link to her creative works, focussing on her own intentionality as the author. Here, her biographical experience as a black woman in London forms an integral part of her writing process, often blurring the boundaries of her role as the author and the voice of her characters. It is through her literary work that Gilroy expresses a critique of humanism while at the same time offering a black, female Caribbean response to the question of what it means to be human. In her collection of essays *Leaves in the Wind*, she develops a conception of existence that contrasts humanism's biocentric conception of being human, recalling Wynter's understanding of the human as a hybrid being:

> My conception of existence is both mental and metaphysical because that has been the nature of the historical experience handed down to us. In the end there were only black men and women and the situation facing them. It is their response to this phenomenon that has made us to survive to achieve so much. (*Leaves* 33)

Gilroy's understanding of the human refers to the human mind and its thought process as well as the possibility of philosophical abstractions and the transcendental. It does not focus on physical or biological aspects as humanism's concept of Man does. Rather it transcends the understanding of human beings as purely biocentric. Gilroy connects her concept of existence with the focus on black responses towards displacement and processes of dehumanisation. Hereby, she links her understanding of the human with the impact of social and cultural aspects and how they shape human beings. She traces a discrepancy between representations of black people in western historic accounts as muted and displaced and rather focusses on depicting black men and women not as victims, but as human beings who confront and challenge the colonial and racial structures they are confronted with. In this regard, her work relates both to Wynter's critique of Man's *propter nos* as well as to Jones' resistance against black women's displacement. Gilroy's work adds here that she specifically highlights the coping strategies and mechanisms of black people that led to their survival rather than stressing their oppression. She rewrites representations of black people within history and reinterprets their status as displaced objects within western accounts of history.

Black responses to dehumanisation, according to Gilroy, are part of Caribbean ancestry going back to the enslavement of African people and their African historic heritage. Within this context, Gilroy underlines that her own critique of humanism and structural racism continues a line of black resistance. Her response to racism and displacement invokes a different conception of the human, as she traces her Caribbean heritage and an African conception of humanity:

> What surprises me most is that, in spite of the fact that as a race we lost both the collective conscious and the collective unconscious, with all its symbols, myths, visions and images of the time before racial dispersal, we still contain so much of our atavistic humanity […] but the memory remains. It is this memory which rises out of the content of the past life with the struggle for future liberation. (46-47)

Gilroy particularly stresses the fact that the enslaved African peoples and their ancestors preserved their "atavistic humanity" in spite of their commodification. Atavistic humanity refers to a conception of the human that had existed in Africa and had been created before colonisation. Within a western context atavism is rather associated with a regression towards historically more primitive times, the loss of civilisation and advances and has therefore a negative connotation particularly within the context of humanism. Social Darwinism in particular refers to atavism as a "throwback in the process of evolution" (Cabezas 171) or as "biological throwbacks from an earlier evolutionary stage in human development" (Smart 31). Contrasting humanism, Gilroy values a throwback in time as strength and a way to deal with the memories of the loss of cultural and social links caused by enslavement, the middle passage and plantation slavery. She connects positivity to the concept atavism, contradicting a western understanding of the term. Highlighting the importance of an African culture and heritage, she challenges the western conception of cultural universality that disregards African cultures as primitive. Despite the experience of loss and the scattering of black people, Gilroy focusses on memory as a way to express resistance and establishes a link to an African heritage. By tracing a conception of humanity and the human back to Africa and precolonial times, resonates with Wynter's interpretation of the Blombos Cave in South Africa as one of the earliest findings of cultural artefacts in human history. Gilroy adds here that "Africans had left artefacts behind" and that these objects and drawings "were so overpowering it was believed they 'could not possibly have come out of African mind'" (*Leaves* 13). Again, Gilroy critiques the misrepresentations of black people and their assumed lack of cultural productivity and argues that there have always been cultural products made by black people. She connects the importance of cultural expressions with her conception of the human that she positions outside of the western hemisphere. Again, this raises awareness that creative works rethink and reinterpret what it means to be human. Drawing a transnational and historic link between Caribbean and African colonial history, Gilroy also emphasises their joint access to power through creativity and literary expressions. She positions her own writing within a marginalised discourse, but focusses on the potential of her position. Hereby, Gilroy recalls NourbeSe Philip's re-interpretation of marginality and Caribbean poets' "operative distance" (NourbeSe Philip 58) as well as Wynter's argument that

Caribbean intellectuals as "external observer[s]" (Wynter "Ceremony" 56) offer a distinct and uniquely Caribbean view on the concept of the human:

> I know that we are not a part of the literati. We are marginalised. Caribbean literature is a part of the life of the powerless poor and there are more of those in the world than the powerful rich. […] The time has come, I believe, to affirm this and to offer the literature to those who need to read it. (*Leaves* 60-61)

Literature, to Gilroy, is a source for creativity that is able to address, expose and finally transcend the dichotomy she critiques here. She positions Caribbean literature within the discourse of the "powerless poor" while simultaneously challenging this displacement by adding that it is her literary output that can challenge this very displacement. The distinction between the powerful rich on the one hand and the powerful poor on the other, links back to the humanist hierarchies of dividing the world into humans, lesser- and non-humans. The former represents the western discourse of literature that began with the rise of humanism while the latter refers to literatures written outside the western hemisphere. Gilroy exposes how a hierarchy of being extends itself to literary discourses and emphasises how the humanist ideology keeps literatures, written by humans that are not part of the conceptions of Man, outside of mainstream discourses. At the same time, it is through her unique perspective, being positioned outside of the discourse while at the same time writing herself back into the discourse through her literature, that she is able to challenge the binary structure of the "powerless poor" and "powerful rich". The concept of the "literati", which refers to white, often male, European bourgeois intellectuals who focus on the use of reason is not only synonymous with the term Man, as Wynter defines it, but her criticism of it also correlates with Jones's critique of the western capitalist system and its representatives. While Jones highlights how capitalism and the American legal system is based upon colonial, imperial and humanist ideologies, Gilroy follows a similar critique, emphasising how racism and processes of dehumanisation are integral to a western discourse of literature. In this regard, her work is, similar to Wynter's and Jones', part of a Caribbean "mode of revolt" expressing her own black female conception of the human within her literature (Wynter "Beyond" 638).

Gilroy's essays offer a black, female Caribbean approach to redefining the human outside of humanist terms. At the same time, she also offers her own perspective and interpretation of her literature and highlights how she creatively express her own conception of the human. Gilroy blurs genre boundaries, further emphasising how she positions herself outside of a western discourse of literature. She calls her work "fact-fiction", basing her texts on the experiences she made during her work as a psychologist (*Leaves* 11). Her own perspective as an author and psychologist appears to

be always entangled with that of her characters, blurring the lines between her voice as the author and the voices of her characters, as well as between classic genre boundaries of fiction and non-fiction:

> I fight back like the characters in my books and when I am satisfied that I have said what I wanted to say, that the reader and I would hear the same echoes and share the same emotions, I am content to think that I have drawn a good enough picture of contemporary reality. (ibid.)

Through the creation of her characters, Gilroy implements her understanding of existence, reality and the human within her creative work. Her characters reflect Gilroy's own focus on survival and resistance. She depicts how her literature demands a response from herself and the readers. Her statement brings her work to life, addressing it as a personified entity — one that Gilroy and the readers have to listen and emotionally respond to. The choice of words and images portrays Gilroy's literary work as a performative intervention, as she combines sounds, voices, feelings and pictures with one another. Her literature has a holistic function in that it addresses various levels of human existence. Instead of simply reflecting upon her own work, her interpretation itself moves beyond the genre of the essay and allows for a combination of written, musical and visual elements. Her act of writing defies western standards and transports a different conception of the human one that involves cultural and emotional elements. Here, Gilroy's concept of existence is traceable in her own work as well as Wynter's concept of humans as hybrid beings with an emphasis on their ability of storytelling (see Wynter "Catastrophe" 25). Gilroy's novels engage with her concept of the human with a focus on literary elements such as the role of characters, Gilroy's use of emotions as a literary theme and the role of Caribbean heritage and history expressed by oral story telling.

Gilroy puts particular emphasis on the emotions and the interiors state of mind of her characters. Through emotions she explores her characters' experiences of displacement and dehumanisation while at the same time expressing a different concept of the human, one which goes beyond a biocentric understanding of the human: "In my work I try to capture the essential differences between ourselves and other people. I use emotion to unite people. I try to incorporate a feeling of the poetic into the language I use." (*Leaves* 11) Gilroy highlights that literature uses emotions in order to transcend binary structures of being. She reverses classic colonial binaries and expresses the importance of difference rather than its demarcating function within Man's hierarchy of being. Her work again recalls Wynter's concept of humans as hybrid beings, which also implies that there are different possibilities of understanding what it means to be human (see Wynter and McKittrick "Catastrophe" 31; cf. Wynter "Unsettling" 269). Gilroy directly states here that her work reflects

and cherishes the difference of human beings while at the same time focussing on unifying aspects between different people through the use of emotion: “I snake into the interior of my characters, give their feelings the validity that related to Black experience and weave a tale around those feelings.” (*Leaves* 32) Through her characters’ inner state of mind and emotions, Gilroy addresses their confrontation with dehumanisation, enslavement and the colonial past of the Caribbean. She traces how the humanist concept of the human clashes with her own conception of being, exposing the ruptures, conflicts and inner turmoil which is caused by her constant need to reassure the characters’ humanness. Within this context, her own personal conflict as a black Caribbean migrant in London informs the struggles her characters live through.

While highlighting the effects of dehumanisation, Gilroy also focusses on Caribbean collectivity, orality and story-tellers as a way to subvert structural displacement and racism and express her own understanding of what it means to be human. Through the use of orality, Gilroy acknowledges her Caribbean heritage and culture as a way to challenge colonial and racial representations of black people. Gilroy emphasises the specificity of Caribbean tradition and offers her perspective of a distinct Caribbean history by incorporating oral forms of storytelling: “The grandparents and their ancestors participated in talk, and called it ‘discourse’, which did not mean a treatise on an academic subject. It meant an interchange of views in social setting.” (*Leaves* 14) To focus on a distinct Caribbean discourse revisits Gilroy’s ancestors and their perspective on various topics. Gilroy highlights that despite their status as colonial subjects they have handed down the traditions of oral culture, in contrast to their representation within a western academic discourse. Gilroy further emphasises how her ancestors created their own strategies to talk about their history, social, cultural and religious issues while also expressing their concept of the human, which is characterised by a focus on Caribbean community, the importance of family and the transcendental: “People stipulated ‘Me isn’t you and you isn’t me’, and the talk flowed on as emphatic, didactic, critical discourse, on God, on magic and myth, children, inheritance and work.” (ibid.) Gilroy characterises orality not only as talk and utterances, but as sounds and silences as well as bodily responses to discourse such as “rocking and shaking”. It reflects her holistic approach to literature of combining different sensory elements, emotions, the supernatural, religion and attention to community. The oral discourse also exemplifies how differences among humans does not necessarily lead to binary structures but is accepted as part of community life. The concept of the human expressed here strongly contrasts Man’s focus on reason, science, secularity and economic production. Gilroy stresses that trough her Caribbean origin and heritage, she is able to conceptualise a different understanding and conception of the human.

2.4. Intermediary Conclusion: Humanism Revisited and an Excursion into the Necessity of Reconceptualising Close Reading

Through their philosophical, political and biographical approaches, Wynter, Jones and Gilroy conceptualise their own understanding of the human, highlighting their individual critiques of humanism. Although the three intellectuals write from different backgrounds at different points in time, their main arguments and critiques correlate with one another. All three of them revisit the past of colonisation, tracing how the rise of Man goes hand in hand with the dehumanisation of black people. In this context, their essays challenge black people's displacement within western historic accounts and subvert humanism's conception of the human and its binary power relations and hierarchies. Their work is connected by their rethinking of what it means to be human and how each one of them challenges Man's position as the ideal conception of the human across temporal, spatial and cultural boundaries. Within this context, their essays and creative works form a dialogic link through which Gilroy, Jones and Wynter transcend Westernised standards of writing. Their marginalised positions enable them to outgrow humanism's conception of Man while offering new conceptualisation of the human from their perspectives as black, female, Caribbean intellectuals.

Within the framework of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critiques of Humanism, it is necessary to reflect upon close reading as an approach developed within a European humanist tradition. Reaching far back to antiquity as well as to the exegesis of biblical texts, close reading has its origins within hermeneutics, a method further developed within European humanism (see Hallet 294; see also Love 373). Heather Love adds that close reading as a central methodology within literary studies ensures that "humanist values survive in the field" (373). What is more, close reading was used within literary studies in order to "stabilize and justify the discipline" and thus builds the main foundation for the analysis of literary objects (ibid.). While it is not helpful to demonise close reading per sé, it is necessary to contextualise the approach within a Caribbean literary discourse and Black critique of literary criticism. Particularly because Gilroy, Jones and Wynter express a strong critique of humanism and offer a non-western concept of the human, close reading as a method used for the analysis of their texts, has to be contextualised and put into a critical historical perspective. Within this context, there is a parallel between the methodological of this thesis and Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's approach to challenging humanist ideologies. While the intellectuals do not attempt to replace humanism, nor its concept of Man, they critically engage with its historical development through colonialism and systemic racist tendencies as well as processes of dehumanisation against black people. Recalling Gilroy's critique of the exclusivity of the literati, they challenge Man's assumed superiority rather than denying its existence. A critique of

close reading should do the same in that it traces its beginnings and development within history and reflects upon its involvement in securing a humanist hierarchy within literary discourses. Wynter argues within this context that "[t]he close reading approach enabled me to see what texts *do*!" ("Re-Enchantment" 127). The approach in itself is not problematic, but rather that literary discourses do not reflect upon its complicity in the displacement of black people. Wynter, by openly stating to use close reading offers her own Caribbean interpretation of the method. She adds a performative element by imagining texts as entities that have their own agency. Her statement brings literature to life, going beyond the written word, but focussing on the role of literature as an intervening entity who can indeed express a new concept of the human.

Quite recently, scholars have sparked a debate around the method of close reading, its role within literary studies and have offered various critical reflections upon its historical development and foundation within humanism. Names such a Caroline Levine, Heather Love, Paula L. Moya, Franco Moretti and Joseph North come to mind when discussing critical perspectives on close reading with an emphasis on alternative approaches.[25] Rather than focussing on an overview of the current debate on close reading, a short excursion into Joseph North's critique of the New Critics and their ideological foundation within liberal humanism emphasises why the historical development of the approach is indeed problematic for the analysis of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's literary work. In order to re-visit close reading from a distinct black perspective the rest of the chapter discusses Frank Wilderson's "Social Death and Narrative Aporia in 12 Years a Slave", in which he discusses the role of social death of black people within narratives, Saidiya Hartman's "Venus in Two Acts", which introduces her approach of "critical fabulation" as a way to challenge black representation within western historic accounts and Katherine McKittrick's insights on the possible alternative of a rhythmic reading practice in which, referring to Wynter, representations of rhythm are able to represent a concept of hybrid humans.

The social and cultural background that shapes close reading roots within a liberal humanist tradition with a direct link towards the history of the enslavement of African peoples and plantation slavery. Joseph North argues that what we call modern criticism "was founded, in large part, on the new methodology of 'close reading'" largely referring to literary movements in the United Kingdom and United States (26). North traces the beginnings of close reading within the works of I.A. Richards and William Empson and reveals that both were "Cambridge League-of-Nations

[25] For an in-depth discussion of close reading and literary methodology, please see Levine's *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*, Love's "Close but Not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn", Moretti's *Distant Reading*, Moya's *The Social Imperative: Race, Close Reading, and Contemporary Literary Criticism* and North's *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* for a discussion of close reading.

liberals, internationalist, cosmopolitan, and secularist" whereas "[t]he New Critics were, for the most part, Southern US Christian political and cultural conservatives seeking a return to the 'traditional Southern values' of family, religion, and an agrarian way of life." (26-27) Although both sides reveal different backgrounds, they are similarly rooted within a humanist tradition against which Gilroy, Jones and Wynter position themselves. Williams and Empson belong to an elitist bourgeois class of white male scholars educated in Great Britain, representing what Gilroy calls the "literati" (*Leaves* 60) or what Wynter calls Man, and the American New Critics ideology is based on racial and colonial ideologies and structures within plantation slavery in the South of America which Jones exposes to be still in tact as a form of "semi-slavery" ("Self-Determination" 62). North traces a critique of the humanist ideology behind close reading and highlights that the first attempt to challenge the ideological foundations of close reading and its humanist structures came up within the movements of the 1960s and 1970s (see North 56). Through a "broad critique of a wide range of elitisms, essentialism, and false universalisms" (ibid.), feminist and decolonial discourses began to challenge "hierarchical and elitist elements of the bourgeois order." (84) Gilroy, Jones and Wynter to some extend prefigure, stand in line and also continue these critiques through their fictional and non-fictional work. Close reading, similar to humanism, thus has to be constantly questioned and contextualised within its historic frameworks.

Gilroy, Jones and Wynter all three expose how social structures are based within processes of dehumanisation of black people going back to colonialism and black people's enslavement. Within their literary works, they address these historic and racial structures and represent black people's displacement. Addressing the historic development of close reading within a western, bourgeois setting, the analysis of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work has to ask how such an approach is problematic when analysing black representations within literature. In this context, Wilderson's definition of blackness emphasises the difficulties that the approach of close reading entails. He argues that "Blackness is coterminous with slaveness", meaning that "Blackness *is* social death" ("*Social Death*" 139).[26] While referring to Orlando Patterson, Wilderson draws a connection between social death and the "narrative absence" of blackness (135):

> [I]n social death one is known as a 'genealogical isolate.' In the words of Patterson the slave has no access to his/her inheritance, his/her ancestors or even to his/her 'conscious community of memory.' Social death haunts *meaning* at its meta-level. This is why social death is narrative absence, not a crisis within narrative. (ibid.; original emphasis)

[26] Please see Wilderson's *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* for an analysis on Patterson's definition of slavery and social death (p. 14ff).

If, as Wilderson argues, "slaveness" which is interchangeable with blackness, represents "narrative absence", a close reading of the structures that cause social death appears impossible. Social death is caused by the conception of the human as Man and its racial hierarchy. The memory and experience of social death, as well as black people's narrative absence indeed "haunts" Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's literary work because not only their characters and lyrical personae constantly struggle with and confront processes of dehumanisation but the authors themselves as well. They represent this conflict on a literary level through literary themes and character constellations, but also on a structural level through the writing process itself. The narrative absence of black people undermines their writing within a discourse on literature that displaces the three authors as non-humans. They don't accept this problem and remain within the norms of narratives within a western literary discourse, but subvert the structures that cause social death by conceptualising a new human outside of a humanist framework and thereby also subverting and challenging their narrative absence. Their literary project works twofold here: Firstly, it exposes the humanist, racial structures that cause social death in the first place by addressing and rewriting the history of colonialism and the enslavement of African people. Secondly, by expressing a black, female Caribbean concept of the human through their literature they question social death as a concept and reconnect with their cultural and social ancestry. They imagine a different structure of being within their work, one that does not displace their characters as non-humans, but one that re-interprets the meaning of blackness altogether. Within this context their literary work offers an intervention into the discourse of literature. Their critique of humanism makes it possible to analyse their work and acknowledge, referring to Wynter, what their "texts *do*" ("Re-Enchantment" 127).

In order to re-conceptualise the human, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter address the history of colonialism and enslavement within their literary texts, exposing how historical representations of black people contribute to their displacement and dehumanisation. A reconnection with historic events appears on a meta-level in the from of imagery and also more directly on the level of narration. In this regard Gilroy, Jones and Wynter not only offer a rewriting of colonial history, but also reintegrate black representations within the historic accounts. Their creative works offer strategies to address their past in all its possible shades and fragments and constantly critique western historic accounts as accepted universal truths. Within this context, the three intellectuals regard western, humanist accounts of history as only one possible perspective on history among many. Their rewriting of history resonates with Hartman's approach of challenging black absences within the historic archive. She introduces a method called "critical fabulation" which subverts the displacement of black people within historic accounts ("Venus" 11). "Fabula" in this context refers

to "the basic elements of story, the building blocks of the narrative" (ibid.).[27] With her approach, Hartman wants to override, similar to Gilroy, Jones and Wynter, the assumed universal position of western historical archives. Tavia Nyong'o adds that, while searching for accounts of black people, a western historic archive "leads to more dead ends and diversions" (61). There is no "historical truth" about the representation of black people's experience (ibid.).[28] Hartman's critical fabulation addresses historical accounts and sources as "fictions of history" recalling Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critique of an assumed universality of western historic accounts (Hartman "Venus" 11). Followers of New Historicism show a similar methodological approach in that they view literary sources as historical ones and vice versa. They also highlight how history is produced within literary texts and how literary methods of writing are part of historical sources (see Basseler 230). Albeit the methodological tools are similar, the motivation behind Hartman's critical fabulation and New Historicism and the intended outcomes are generally different. Hartman argues that there are no historical truths that represent black being and that black historic accounts "have never been able to install themselves as history" (13). She scrutinises the concepts history and narrative as elements of a discourse that secures black absence on a narrative and historic level. In contrast, critical fabulation offers an alternative in that it does not attempt to write history, but expresses "what might have happened or might have been said or might have been done." (11) It is a method which

> "can be described as straining against the limits of the archive to write a cultural history of the captive, and, at the same time, enacting the impossibility of representing the lives of the captives precisely through the process of narration." (ibid.)

Hartman's approach recalls the conflict Wilderson addresses and extends it within the context of history. The narrative absence of black peoples is also a historical absence as expressed in missing black perspectives and responses within archives. Hartman's reading of this historic absence within the sources as well as an absence of black authors that produce historic sources reflects the twofold struggle Gilroy, Jones and Wynter are confronted with. Their creative works address their own displacement within western history through a rewriting of history within their own literature. Literary themes, which they position outside of a western ideology address the colonial past and black people's silence within historic accounts. Using literary themes and characters that are

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[27] Referring to Mieke Bal, Hartman further defines what she means by fabula: "A fabula, according to Mieke Bal, is 'a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused and experienced by actors. An event is a transition from one state to another. Actors are agents that perform actions. (They are not necessarily human.) To act is to cause or experience an event.'" (11)

[28] In *Afro-Fabulations: The Queer Drama of Black Life*, Tavia Nyong'o uses Hartman's critical fabulation as an approach to Queer Black Drama.

positioned outside of a humanist ideology, they address a Caribbean past and trace a link back to an African ancestry through folklore, religion and mythology. Hereby, they transport their own conceptions of what it means to be human and also offer black female voices who address history and the black absence within historic accounts.

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work structurally reflects their critiques of humanism as well as their own concepts of the human. Their use of language, the blurring of boundaries between their voices as authors, narrators or lyrical personae, the questioning and reinterpretation of genre boundaries as well as their use of rhythm, music and dance challenge westernised standards of writing. Their work combines the literary with the performative, addressing various levels of human existence which go beyond a biocentric concept of the human as propagated within humanism. Going beyond their individual texts, these three intellectuals are connected by their similar responses to dehumanisation, enacting their resistance and critique within their novels, poems, plays and autobiographical pieces. The rhythmic reading practice developed by Katherine McKittrick, Frances H. O'Shaughnessy and Kendall Witaszek offers a methodology that resonates with Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's approach to literature as it demands a rearrangement of hierarchies within academic discourses. McKittrick, O'Shaughnessy and Witaszek argue that "[r]hythm does not privilege singular ways of being but rather insists, in advance, that collaborative engagement is necessary to who and what we are." (870) Their definition of rhythm embraces Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work as each individual intellectual creates their individual expression of what it means to be human while also emphasising the connectedness between these three intellectuals through their joint critiques of humanism and resistance against dehumanisation: "Rhythmic reading is thinking together, always, even when we do not realize that we are doing such." (871) A rhythmic reading offers an approach to intersect Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work and invites to analyse these three intellectuals in relation to each other. It reveals how they use similar literary themes, and imagery and reads their work intersectionally. The approach emphasises how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work cross temporal and spatial boundaries, conversing with each other and building collaborations through their critiques of humanism.

3. The Impossibility of Being Black: Historic Trajectories of Racism and Systemic Violence as Forms of Dehumanisation

Jones, Gilroy and Wynter argue that slavery did not cease to exist after its abolition, but merely took on new forms and shapes. All three intellectuals highlight the continuance of the enslavement of

black people and conceptualise racism in this context from a political (Jones), biographical (Gilroy) and philosophical angle (Wynter). Spanning a temporal range from 1940s to 2000s, they assess the position of black people as non-humans, showing how their dehumanisation and objectification are still the basis of modern society. The three intellectuals touch upon arguments often much later raised by leading figures of Afro-pessimism. In his seminal *Red, White & Black*, Frank Wilderson addresses the movement of humanism in relation to the impossibility of black being. He argues that "questions of Humanism were elaborated in contradistinction to the human void, to the African qua chattel" (19). A recurring theme in Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work is black people's exposure to violence and its effects on the black body. Saidiya Hartman theorises on how the black body is turned into an object and thus rendered open to violence (see *Subjection* 21). The analysis of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative works in this chapter, with its focus on how they address racism, anti-black violence and dehumanisation, highlights how these three intellectuals resonate with and predate Afro-pessimism. Gilroy, Jones and Wynter argue that the ontology of black people is connected to their positioning as the, what Wynter calls, "naturally dysselected Native/Nigger figure" (Wynter "Catastrophe" 47). Their work draws a historic trajectory of humanism and discusses forms of everyday racism against black people, police brutality and killings as well as systemic forms of oppression embedded within American and British society and their democratic systems. The following extracts from non-fictional essays written by Wynter, Jones and Gilroy show how their work is an epistemic intervention in discourses on racism. A particular emphasis is on Jones' thoughts on black people's exposure to "semi-slavery" (Jones *Beyond* 62) and Gilroy's concept of "subliminal racism" (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 390-391).

> [T]he reasons we began to write in the clash of anticolonial struggle was the desire to challenge the central belief system on which our societies were founded, the belief that the fact of blackness is a fact of inferiority and that of whiteness a fact of superiority. When I reread the novel, I could see that that was exactly what I was then doing. I was grappling with this, with a world in which the fact of blackness *had* non-arbitrarily, and *necessarily*, to be a fact of inferiority. That's what I was grappling with, the refusal, the challenging, the premise. (Wynter "Re-Enchantment" 134; original emphasis)

The extract above refers to Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and her own motivation while writing it.[29] She describes writing the novel as an attempt to deal with anti-black racism and her rejection of a system that considers the skin colour black as a defect. Wynter identifies the correlation between blackness and inferiority and whiteness and superiority as a building block of modern society. Wilderson's understanding of the "Master/Slave relation" offers a link between Wynter's thoughts here and an overall critique of a humanist conception of the human. He argues that the Master/Slave relation differentiates between "exploited and unexploited Humans" on the one side and "Black chattel" on the other (*Red, White and Black* 19). This binary structure, which Wynter equally traces in her understating of whiteness and blackness, denies black people the access to humanism's conception of the human. In this context, Wilderson exposes how "slavery is now the African's access to (or, more correctly, banishment from) ontology." (ibid.) The institution of slavery enabled the West to create their image of the human with the Black enslaved as its non-human counterpart. Wynter and Wilderson both expose how blackness is constituted as the "very antithesis of a Human subject" (see Wilderson *Red, White and Black* 11).

In her essay "On the Right to Self-Determination for the Negro People in the Black Belt (1946)" Claudia Jones similarly exposes how the oppression of black people is systematically embedded within American society through the racist Jim Crow policies. She emphasises that there has in fact never been a post-slavery moment in the United States. Paralleling black people's oppression in the South of America with colonial supremacy, Jones shows how colonial structures are kept in place by American society. Within this system black people live within a status of "semi-slavery" — a term that emphasises the ongoing enslavement of black people in the United States:

> We knew that the semi-slavery of the Southern sharecroppers; the inferior status of the Negro people in industry, North and South; the existence of Jim Crow in the armed forces […] — all can be traced back step by step to the continued existence of an oppressed Negro nation within our borders. ("Self-Determination" 62)

As early as 1946, Jones' critique of the American capitalist system and its dependence on the non-human status of black people stresses how the enslavement of black people continues: "Scarcely less than before the Civil War, is the Black Belt a prison-house of the Negroes; the chains which

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[29] The novel imagines a world in which a black Jamaican community in the 1920s, called the New Believers, attempts to escape their negation through blackness (see 137). The readers, according to Selwyn R. Cudjoe, "enter the era of black power, black pride, and the quest for self-government" (42). The New Believers choose to leave their home Cockpit Centre to find their "Promised Land", which they call Hebron. They are led by the prophet Moses Barton, who is the founder of their congregation. Moses experiences several visions in which he has the revelation that God is black and that he himself is his son. In order to save his community in Hebron and be close to God, Moses crucifies himself to mark the beginning of a new era in their Promised Land. The plot of the novel focusses on Moses' history and that of his predecessors Aloysius Matthew and Obadiah Brown. Janice Lee Liddell argues that the novel's primary concern is the "rites of passage of a Black community in the 1940s from post-slavery oppression and poverty towards physical, psychological and spiritual freedom" (323).

hold them are now the invisible chains of poverty, the legal chains of debt-slavery and when the landlord deems it necessary, the iron shackles of the chain gang." ("Self-Determination" 63) Using colonial language, she stresses how capitalism and slavery are connected and prefigures what Wilderson calls "the ontology of slavery" (*Red, White & Black* 18). Jones' argument also resonates with Wynter's correlation of blackness with inferiority and whiteness with superiority. She makes a statement about how black people are generally considered inferior within an imperial, humanist mindset. Also, she shows that anti-black practices are embedded within a supposedly democratic system. Hereby, she draws a connection between her critique of black people's oppression and her communist approach by emphasising how the position of black people and segregation policies in the United States compromise the communist fight for the rights of the worker. She detects that the supposed inferiority of black people structures and upholds a system that also oppresses the white workers, arguing that "the ideology of 'white supremacy'" threatens "the unity of the labour-democratic coalition and of the working class itself." ("Self-Determination" 62). Jones uses Marxism to her advantage, demanding a joint coalition between white workers and black people. Only through the fight against white supremacy — meaning the fight against black people's dehumanisation and systemic oppression — is it possible to achieve what the Communists fight for, namely a change of the system itself. Within this context, Wilderson asserts that communism fails to define the distinction and different form of oppression of workers and black people, as he explains: a worker "'acts as a free agent' and so 'learns to control himself, in contrast to the slave, who needs a master.'" (Marx qtd. in *Red, White & Black* 13) Like Wilderson, Jones emphasises that the worker is exposed to a different form of oppression than black people who confront "semi-slavery". They are still considered human beings, rather than black people, who are considered slaves, or as Wilderson emphasises: "If workers can buy a loaf of bread, they can also buy a slave." (13) As early as 1946, Jones advances her communist approach in order to challenge black people's dehumanisation, while also predating and contributing to the discourse on Afro-pessimism.

Beryl Gilroy similarly draws a link between racism and dehumanisation, focussing on the negations black people have to face in their everyday lives. She traces the beginnings of racism, writing:

> From the first meeting between Black and white, Blacks were invalidated because of their colour and the concept of race/ethnocentricism was invented. As a result, it is thought that Black is to white as good is to bad as clean is to dirty as angels are to devils, as Europe is to Africa. […] As explorers, missionaries, travellers, and truth-gatherers, Europeans created attitudes and evidence that distorted reality and invented stereotypes by setting and resetting the angle of vision. (*Leaves* 78-79)

Gilroy offers a critique of the concept racism here. Arguing that western imperialism and white supremacy led to the emergence of the black other, she shows how historical accounts create the

dichotomies that structure modern society. In extension, she offers a critique of the invention of Man and humanist ideology, emphasising that race is an artificial construct instated by European colonial forces and their supposedly superior status. She portrays the historical encounter between Europeans and people from Africa and the Caribbean as a "distorted reality" in order to point out that black people's position as inferior human beings is not a given fact but was artificially constructed to secure hegemonic claims: "we live each day in the trap of the skin colour to which derogatory signifiers have been historically attached." (*Leaves* 188) Gilroy calls the racism she herself encounters and that was developed through constant misrepresentations of black people "subliminal racism": "It is not conscious, although there are some who are consciously racist." (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 382):

> they knew everything about that man, but they knew very little about my work. I said, 'Why did you do this?' And they said, 'Well, we did not have time to study your work,' and that is what I call subliminal racism. It is there but they would not acknowledge it, because it is not so important" (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 390-391)

During her university career — she gained her doctorate in counselling psychology — Gilroy personally encounters what she calls "subliminal racism": a process, which is often not acknowledged as racism, but implies that black people's work is not fully recognised in a system based on humanist assumptions of white superiority, such as western academia and its discourses. Through her writing, Gilroy explores the kind of negations she confronts as a black, female Caribbean migrant in London. Her work deals with the absence of black representations within historical accounts and draws a detailed picture of the lives of black people from the beginnings of their enslavement up to her own experience as a first-generation migrant in London. In this context, she challenges the silencing of black women and focusses on forms of resistance even in their most oppressed state as objects to the white colonisers, when she emphasises: "Black women had written about their lives all through the years that their bodies served others." (*Leaves* 209) Gilroy puts herself in line with other black women. She draws a trajectory of women through history that have produced and will continue to produce writing even if those women have not been received by a wider audience.

The following two chapters elaborate on how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work addresses different forms of racial and sexual violence against black people as well as challenging black peoples' dehumanisation and displacement. Focussing not only on the actual act of violence but also on its aftermath, their work shows how these disruptions repeat themselves throughout history. Within this context, all three intellectuals address the concepts blackness, otherness, non-being and racism within the overall framework of humanism. Confronting a racial, patriarchal system that has its beginnings in colonialism, Gilroy's, Jones's and Wynter's creative works

challenge humanist ideologies and violence against black people. All three intellectuals trace the continuity of systemic violence beginning with the enslavement of African people and plantation slavery up until their own experiences as black, female, colonial subjects. They expose different forms of racism and its manifestations at various times in history and examine how blackness and negativity correlate within a humanist conception of the human. Through an intersection of the discussion of racism within a wider social and cultural framework, the three intellectuals expose the systematic oppression of black people while searching for strategies to fight against it.

Next to Wynter's novel *The Hills of Hebron*, Gilroy's novel *Boy Sandwich* and Jones' poem "Lament for Emmet Till (1955), this chapter focusses on autobiographical writings including Gilroy's *Black Teacher* and Jones' letter "Autobiographical History" and "I Was Deported Because…". While 3.1 analyses the beginnings of black people's dehumanisation and violence against black people, 3.2 sheds light on how racism manifests itself in western societies long after the abolition of slavery, focussing on Gilroy's personal experience with racism as a first-generation migrant in London and her work as a teacher and Jones' deportation experience. These different forms of genres and insights into black women's confrontations with racism, show how a trajectory of racism permeates modern society. Furthermore, they show how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's theoretical and activist thoughts respond to and are connected to their fictional and auto-biographical texts.

3.1. The Plantation System and Beyond: Disruptions of Familial Bonds through Sexual and Racial Violence in Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron*, and Jones' "Lament for Emmet Till (1955)"

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative work discussed in this chapter sheds light on the beginnings of black people's dehumanisation and violence against black people. Hereby, the novels and poem emphasise why a rethinking of the human is necessary as the constant exposure to racial violence and black people's displacement is secured by humanist ideologies. The three intellectuals engage with different representations of systemic violence beginning with the enslavement of African people and plantation slavery, highlighting how these racial structures manifest themselves throughout generations and continue to disrupt familial bonds and relationships. Within this context, each one of them focusses on different manifestations of black people's displacement and exposure to anti-black violence. Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* is infused with brutality, violence and loss. The novel shows how violence is systematised in order to subdue other people, showing how their displacement is symptomatic for their non-human status. Firstly, the analysis focusses on Inkle's enslavement and torture among the Carib people, secondly on his own cruel actions as a plantation

owner and thirdly on his attempted rape of Alice, his former betrothed. The novel *The Hills of Hebron*, calls out sexual violence mainly against black women and recurs to the theme of losing mothers and daughters. Wynter portrays here how systemic violence corrupts her characters and lets them lash out against close friends and family, revealing how the aftermath of enslavement and colonisation influences their present. Lastly, Jones' poem "Lament for Emmet Till (1955)" denounces Till's murder and racial structures within the United States, calling out for activism against lynchings of black people in America.

Beryl Gilroy exemplifies how white supremacist ideologies, open violence against black people and racism are deeply embedded within British 18th century society. Her main character and first-person narrator Thomas Inkle grows up as the son of an English merchant in antiquities whose wealth is partly funded by Inkle's great-grandfather's colonial exploitation and acquisition of lands and slave plantation in Barbados (see *Inkle and Yarico* 9). In this sense, right at the beginning of the novel, Gilroy exposes Inkle's family's complicity with colonialism and how their wealth is linked to the commodification and exploitation of black people. Inkle represents the ideal of the figure Man. He is white, heterosexual with a bourgeois upbringing, colonial fortune and betrothed to an English girl named Alice Sawyer. His own sense of superiority and privilege is framed by his family's background and colonial ambitions. This is further intensified by his departure to the Caribbean where he ought to take on the role as planation owner and manager of his family's interests in Barbados, securing the family's investments. Already, Inkle's understanding of himself is framed within the colonial binary of being human in the western sense of Man in contrast to his non-human others represented by the enslaved on the plantation. The motivation behind his journey is grounded in his father's fear that the "slaves, although housed and fed, had failed to work conscientiously." (ibid.). However, Inkle's journey takes an unexpected turn by his shipwreck and encounter with Yarico, a Caribbean indigenous woman he falls in love with. The novel in detail engages with their encounter as well as Inkle's betrayal of Yarico, whom he sells into slavery after being discovered by a European ship that takes him to his plantation on Barbados. What is more, Gilroy through their encounter, depicts how Inkle's conception of his own humanness — his understanding of himself as Man — is challenged by a black female Caribbean woman, whom he considers not to be human at all.

The story of Inkle and Yarico is based on accounts of the 17th and 18th century dating back to Richards Ligon's *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* and Richard Steele's version of Ligon's account published in 1711 in the *Spectator* and later being made into a comic opera with

the same title *Inkle and Yarico* from 1787 (see O'Quinn 389).[30] Gilroy states that Inkle and Yarico's life together "is symbolic of a colonial encounter in which there is a shift in the balance of power." (Gilroy *Leaves* 81-82) She further asserts that Inkle experiences that his "superior knowledge of the white man carrying the civilisation of centuries, fails him when as survivor of a shipwreck, he is emotionally disabled and disoriented to the point that his cultural heritage is undermined." (*Leaves* 81-82) Inkle is confronted with a disconnection of his cultural roots and his family as well as being uncertain of his own survival. He encounters a different conception of the human among Yarico's people that contradicts his own sense of being resulting in an interior struggle and conflict, leading towards even more disruptions of familial bonds. This is particularly noticeable in Inkle's relationships with Alice and Yarico. After his rescue by Yarico, a disruption of familial bonds is represented by the reversal of classic colonial power relations of coloniser and colonised, which Inkle experiences with Yarico and her people. Inkle is caught between his love for Yarico and his yearning for Alice. Both female characters represent two different sets of norms and values and in the end of the novel both relationships with Inkle are brutally destroyed by his own enactment of racial and sexual violence. Inkle's betrothed Alice "white-skinned and golden-haired […] dressed in the finest and softest of silks" represents the symbol of the western ideal of femininity and then there is Yarico, who represents the other to Alice, or as Inkle describes: "She was pure instinct, for to survive in her world, to be at one with Nature's rhythms and to heed its customs, there was no place for thought and reason." (20) Inkle is caught between these two love relationships that also represent the two conceptions of humanness he encounters. The descriptions of these two women from different cultural and social backgrounds heighten Inkle's conflict between his own conception of Man and his status as a successful and superior planation owner on the one hand, and his experience of complete dependence on Yarico and her people on the other. The disruption of his sense of being causes Inkle to deeply struggle with his reintegration into British society in Barbados. Gilroy traces this conflict in the novel and thereby highlights how racial and colonial ideologies corrupt Inkle's understanding of being human.

Inkle's first-person narration offers insight into his mindset and emotions, beginning with his journey to the Caribbean and ending with his return to Great Britain as an anti-abolitionist. Through his perspective, Gilroy represent the colonial encounter and offers a new view on the experience of enslavement. Gilroy deliberately places Inkle in the same position as black enslaved people, from whose exploitation and enslavement his family has profited. By reversing the colonial binaries,

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[30] While this chapter highlights the contrasting representations of femininity, chapter 4.2. elaborates on Gilroy's novel as a form of rewriting of Ligon's and Steele's version of the encounter between Inkle and Yarico, concentrating on the role of narrative perspective.

making Inkle Yarico's slave, Gilroy turns him from being human within the western, humanist conception of the human into a non-human within Yarico's people:

> He is like a slave, in exactly the same way as the Caribbean slave ... and that is the whole point of that book—and nobody has made it so far. Nobody has seen that this man is living the comparative life of a slave, if you trace his life among the Indians ... he is a slave. (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 393)

Inkle's experience of social death, Gilroy claims, is one of the main elements of the book. The severing of Inkle's cultural and social roots emphasises that slavery goes beyond forcing someone to work (see Wilderson "Master/Slave Relation" 18). Social death implies a multilayered inner conflict which Inkle confronts during his journey with himself and his environment. Inkle is forced to share the experience of black enslaved people, his body, being exposed to different forms of violence and living within "a state of structural or open vulnerability." (ibid.) Inkle's experience as a shipwreck and his loss of familial ties and culture culminates in an intense form of hatred against black people: "He is [so] transformed by his experience with black people [that] he doesn't even know himself. His identity is zilch, gone. It took me years to write that book because I wanted to write him." (394) Through emotions —as a theme that unites her characters and frames their stories — and insights into her characters' minds, Inkle's experience lays bare how social death changes and corrupts Inkle's life. Hereby, Gilroy implement a critique of black people's dehumanisation and how they are embedded within the British society Inkle comes from. Within this context, Inkle himself comments on his dehumanised and oppressed status among the indigenous people he lives with, lamenting his degraded status within Yarico's community:

> So there I was, a useless man in the midst of savages who thought me a candidate for an institution for the lunatic (*Inkle and Yarico* 27)
>
> I was treated either as a child or as an idiot who could not be taught to hunt. (28)
>
> In fact, I was an object that Yarico had found and as long as she valued me I was safe — safe from Paiuda, the shaman, and Paiu, his son and heir. (30)

All three extracts fittingly show how Gilroy uses western prejudices against black people and turns them against Inkle. Through Inkle's perspective, Gilroy embeds the same stereotypical representations used by the West to portray the non-human status of black people, but here with regard to Inkle's lack of knowledge of Yarico's way of life. Inkle's understanding and conception of civilisation does not help him while being confronted with the indigenous conception of the human among Yarico's people and their religious values as well as understanding of manhood. His inability to hunt and exposure to Paidua's authority marks him as an outsider to Yarico's community. Gilroy introduces here the conception of what she calls "atavistic humanity", depicting a conception of the

human that existed before western influences and humanist ideologies (*Leaves* 46). As Inkle's western conception of the human, it is an exclusivist approach that defines Inkle's non-human status through his lack of certain abilities. He experiences a complete reversal of colonial binaries and has to get used to different power relations. He is not only confronted with his dehumanisation — "I was an object", — but belongs to a black woman who in turn represents the ultimate other to his social norms and values.

The representation of Yarico as an empowered woman who is in charge of Inkle strongly contrasts Yarico's portrayal in George Colman's comic opera *Inkle and Yarico*. The opera focusses on the love relation between Inkle and Yarico, rather than their power relation. Their relationship is framed by "contemporary constructions of femininity and heterosexuality" so that "Yarico's racial otherness is subsumed in the constitution of gender normativity." (O'Quinn 391) Although Yarico appears as a desirable black woman, it is her "sexual objectification" and "fetishization" as a racialised enslaved woman that characterises her femininity (394). Yarico's displacement is enacted on different levels. On the level of the performance, she is disempowered and silenced by the focus on her expression of emotional outbreak and devastation after Inkle rejects her and sells her into slavery (see ibid.). Structurally, the black female body is further displaced by the use of blackface, which prevents the white audience and actors from "[i]nterracial contact" (405). The actual absence of a black female presence heightens how Gilroy's representation of Yarico fills an important gendered gap and strongly resonates with Wynter's critique of the missing representation of black women in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Wynter elaborates on "the most significant absence of all, that of Caliban's Woman, of Caliban's physiognomically complementary mate." ("Beyond Miranda's Meaning" 360). The absence of black women within the play, according to Wynter "functions to ontologically negate their progeny/population group […] now displaced empirically and metaphysically reduced […] to a 'native' savage Human Other status" (362). Gilroy, in choosing to represent Yarico as an empowered black woman challenges black women's displacement as fetishised objects and their absence in literature. In fact, it is the image of the ideal woman represented by Alice that is absent in Inkle's encounter with Yarico. Alice's absence and Inkle's infatuation with Yarico which culminates in his fear of her is symptomatic for the novel and challenges western literary misrepresentations of black women as well as their general absence within a literary discourse.

In Gilroy's version of *Inkle and Yarico*, Yarico is the agent and Inkle is at her disposal physically and mentally further emphasising the reversal of colonial power relations. Within this context, Inkle

turns into what Hartman calls a fungible object[31] — "an abstract and empty vessel vulnerable to the projection of others' feelings, ideas, desires, and values" (*Subjection* 21). Inkle is also robbed of his gendered identity as he is not considered a man within the tribal structures. His status is aligned with that of a child, or a mad-man, again turning western stereotypical representations on their head. In the process of losing his culture he also experiences the process of othering. Hereby, Gilroy emphasises his slave-like status: "[H]e is in effect, Genital Man, like the incarcerated stud slaves of the plantation." (*Leaves* 82) Inkle experiences torture and pain and "lived a parallel life of the slaves on a plantation" (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 393). This is particularly highlighted by the initiation rite Inkle has to go through in order to redeem his manhood in the eyes of Paiuda, the tribes's shaman, and the Chief of the tribe, Tomo. He has to lie in a pit filled with ants after which he is cast out into the forest where he has to survive for six nights before he may return. Gilroy states "I mean when he had to become a man and they lay him in the ants' nest, it [is] torture like they torture the slaves." (ibid.). Hartman asserts that open violence against enslaved "destroys the integral relation of body and belief" (*Subjection* 38-39) and Wilderson asserts that it "turns a body into flesh, ripped apart literally and imaginatively, destroys the possibility of ontology" (*Red, White and Black* 38).[32] The physical violence Inkle experiences marks his body as the body of a slave and shows how violence and torture is interrelated with the status of the enslaved. Inkle's exposure to violence and experience of social death results within his conflicted sense of being: On the one hand he still views himself as a superior English Man abducted by what he calls "grotesque creatures" (58), while at the same time being completely dependent on Yarico and Paiuda and has to assert their sense of atavistic humanity by following the initiation ritual.

After being rescued by an English ship, Inkle travels to his original destination in Barbados and the plantation that belongs to his family. Re-entering colonial society he is once again reinstated as a superior Englishman and the colonial power relations attached to it. Throughout the rest of novel, Inkle uses severe violence in order to re-establishes his own understanding of his subjectivity and humanness. In this context, Gilroy's account of plantation cruelty exposes the relation between anti-black violence and the objectification of black people in order to secure a western concept of the human. Within this context, the novel's display of cruelty against black people recalls Wilderson: "Violence against the slave sustains a kind of psychic stability for all others who are not slaves." (Wilderson "Master/Slave Relation" 19) As Inkle's status is reversed back from being

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[31] Hartman defines the fungibility of slaves as "the joy made possible by virtue of replaceability and interchangeability endemic to the community—and by the extensive capacities of property—that is, the augmentation of the master subject though his embodiment in external objects and persons." (*Subjection* 21)

[32] For further insight on the distinction between the black body and flesh please see Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, pp. 115-116 and Spillers "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe", pp. 94-95.

Yarico's object into humanist Man, he turns into a brutal and cruel plantation owner and anti-abolitionist, exposing how structures of dehumanisation and social death of black people is needed for establishing and reassuring Inkle's subjectivity. Trying to compensate for his own experience of social death, his hatred against Yarico's people turns into extreme cruelty in order to reclaim his former status:

> My chief overseer ruled with a firm hand and I followed his example. Slaves were mercilessly punished for any insubordination and so the estate was immaculate. Everybody worked hard — men, women and children, the women fusing fertility with maternity to extend our stock. (103-104)

Gilroy's portrayal of brutality on Inkle's plantation is graphic, brutal and harrowingly matter-of-fact, emphasising the fungible status of the enslaved (see Hartman *Subjection* 21). Inkle's description of violence emphasises how black people are commodified within the planation system and how they are exposed to various forms of structural racism. He positions his slaves as ultimate others to his social norms and values, again reversing the positions of humans and non-humans. The fact that Inkle copies his overseer's treatment of the enslaved shows how anti-black violence is a structural element of colonial society. By normalising these violent acts, Inkle tries to override his own emotions of despair he experienced during his captivity among Yarico's people. Thus, he reclaims his human status at the cost of black people's dehumanisation. Part of these dehumanising processes are that gender and age make no difference to Inkle when regarding his work force — "Everybody worked hard — men, women and children". Even the act of sexual violence against black women is reduced to a form of reproduction: "women fusing fertility with maternity to extend our stock". Referring to the loss of gender distinction within plantation slavery, Spillers highlights that the female flesh is objectified and that black women serve only as a means for reproduction (see Spillers 106). Black people's commodification renders them as "neither female, nor male, as both subjects are taken into 'account' as *quantities*." (ibid.) Through Inkle's perspective, Gilroy emphasises the dissolution of gender distinctions through the enslavement and structures of plantation slavery as well as its focus on capital accumulation. On a meta-level, Gilroy emphasises why gender cannot be the only category through which to read and approach her work, as black enslaved women were not considered women with gendered differences. Rather they were excluded from the construction of gender altogether apart from an emphasis on their reproductive abilities. In this regard, Gilroy shows why it is necessary to address and critique the category gender through its historical context. Gilroy argues that Inkle's anger is embodied in his brutality against his own slaves: "Unable to express his interior rage, he acts with cold and resolute brutality towards his

slaves. They have all become the Caribs who caused him so much pain." (*Leaves* 81) In the role of the plantation owner, Inkle does not consider his black enslaved as individuals but rather as his tormentors, emphasising how the life among Yarico's people still influences his emotions: "Plantation policy was to discard the aged and replenish with young; and it mattered not to me what the overseer did with those slaves who were worth nothing to us." (*Inkle and Yarico* 104) His over-emphasis of his lack of compassion and conscience attempts to emotionally detach himself from his experience of displacement and social death. The use of technical verbs such as "discard" and "replenish", which both are generally used for describing stocks or supplies, intensifies the objectification of black people and detaches any emotions to their life and death. They also add a financial and economic element in that their value is interrelated with their work force. Inkle, due to his handling of his planation, gains at least what he desires: the respect of the planter class on the island: "My position now encouraged others to see me as rich and respectable rather than as having been tainted by my sojourn among the cannibals, which the Caribs truly thought to be." (ibid.) Inkle seems desperate to fit into his new role and once again draws a binary between the civilised and uncivilised. He appears to have finally found his way back into colonial society, re-gaining the respect of the people that surround him. Still, he cannot escape his experience with Yarico, as the impending arrival of the abolitionist movement in the Caribbean emphasises.

After Inkle's arrival on the plantation, the rest of the novel stresses how the inherent corruptness of this colonial and racial system is revealed through Inkle's mental breakdown. His cruel actions against his enslaved and his sexual assault on Alice, whom he is reunited with, expose the deformity of a system that legitimises anti-black violence and the dehumanisation of black people. The arrival of the abolitionists escalates Inkle's inner conflict of wanting to secure his social standing, as they threaten his newly instated personhood and subject position as the successful planter and business man. Simultaneously, they also mark the moment in which Inkle reunites with Alice and has to learn that she is married to Dr. John Clarkson. Both are leading figures in the abolitionist movement in Barbados. Alice and Dr. Clarkson propagate the abolition of slavery, which to Inkle carries the danger of losing his newly instated subject position as a member of the ruling class. Inkle's reunion with Alice, rather than giving him stability and a re-connection with his family, further triggers Inkle's insecure status. This results in his increasing brutality against black enslaved people in order to assert his own humanness:

> One of the first I ordered to be caged was the son of my most faithful slave […] He approached me regarding the harshness of my actions. […] I bade him hold his tongue and when he did not I ordered the boy to be removed and arranged for him to be hanged for his

> father's temerity. The boy stood on a cart, the noose around his neck, and I with my own hands urged the horse to walk away to leave the boy hanging. (139-140)

Inkle's response to the overseer's violence is more violence. By disregarding the slave's plea, Inkle emphasises his non-human status. The contrast created here, depicts how Inkle loses his own humanness by forcefully imposing a non-human status on his enslaved. His actions reveal how the system itself is tainted by inhumanness and barbarity. Kathleen Wilson argues that within the system of enslavement "the ostentatious cruelty of slave punishment above all sought to maintain the gulf between slave and free" (52). However, it is not only the differentiation between being free or enslaved but rather a question of being human or being considered a lesser being, a non-human. However, Inkle's display of violence accentuates the paradox that through extreme forms of cruelty Inkle's increases his own inhumanness and instability rather than consolidating his status as a human. Therefore, the enactment of violence against his slaves does not lead to dissolving his inner conflict between his status of being among Yarico's people and among the colonial planter class. Wilderson argues, in this context, that "[v]iolence against the slave sustains a kind of psychic stability for all others who are not slaves." ("Master/Slave Relation" 19). However, after Inkle's experience of having been enslaved his enactment of violence does not grant him the stability he needs, but rather points him towards the inhumane actions and corruptness of a humanist system and its conception of the human. Rather, the violence he enacts takes him back to his own exposure to violence, as his mental breakdown after trying to rape Alice highlights.

Violence unsuccessfully suppresses Inkle's memory of having been enslaved by Yarico and her people. The act of sexual violence against Alice appears to even trigger his memory of enslavement. After he witnesses Alice's husband talk to his slaves on his planation, he forces Alice inside his house and attempts to rape her. Even in this moment of sexual abusing Alice, Inkle is caught within the memory of his enslavement, rather than feeling empowered. His enactment of power over Alice does not override his experience of loss and displacement and triggers memories of his captivity:

> I concentrated on Alice — prim, proper, dressed in clothes as if in armour. What was she hiding? I had roamed around the forest dressed in paint for seven long years. I plunged my hand into the neck of her dress and ripped it away from her. I was conscious only of the angry rip and tear of fabric. I was shredding her clothes as we ripped the leaves off the forest trees. She screamed. (*Inkle and Yarico* 149)

There is a clash of cultures here, highlighted in the clothes worn by Alice, who is "prim, proper, dressed in clothes as if in armour", whereas Inkle himself had only been "dressed in paint for seven long years". It appears that clothes serve as a marker for what Inkle considers civilised and appropriate, creating a tension between his own image of himself as a man dressed without European clothes and Alice and her "armour". The imagery of Alice as the beautiful fair-skinned girl dressed in silk that so strongly contrasts Inkle's portrayal of Yarico is turned into a symbol for

the loss and grief he has experienced by losing his familial relations and cultural bonds during captivity. Rather than fulfilling the rational ideal of Man, his emotions of self-hatred overwhelm Inkle and recall his first remark about Yarico: "there was no place for thought and reason." (20) His lack of reason in the moment of the assault and is inability to think clearly is underlined by his violent destruction of Alice's clothes. Again the choice of verbs, such as "shredding" and "ripped" adds an almost animalistic character to Inkle's actions, reflecting what he understands and despises as uncivilised characteristics. The different form of clothes represents Inkle's inner conflict between being a plantation owner, a white man in power over his enslaved people, and his own experience as a slave among the Carib people. The fact that this experience indeed changes him — that it is at all possible to be changed by his life with Yarico, whom and whose people he considers in fact as non-humans, ruptures Inkle's world view and lets him ultimately question what it means to be human. This rupture of Inkle's perception of his own self and his subjectivity corrupts him and leads him to lash out against his former love. Even after having become a successful plantation owner, relishing in his power over his enslaved and finally also over Alice, he is still caught in his experience as a slave; although he does not acknowledge the change, his thoughts reveal the influence of Yarico and her people. Part of Inkle has been transformed during his seven years with Yarico, which leads to his struggle between two sets of cultures, norms and values — a struggle between two different conceptions of humanness — highlighting the complexity that lies beyond a binary representation of the colonial encounter. Inkle's conflict and his own brutal actions against his enslaved and Alice expose the very inhumanness of his own conception of what it means to be human as an English planter and bourgeois, heterosexual, economically successful subject. This conception is contrasted with Yarico's people's atavistic humanity. The contradictions between the western, bourgeois representation of black people as non-humans and Inkle's own experience with Yarico as an empowered black woman who in fact owns him causes Inkle's breakdown which leads to his enactment of racial and sexual violence. Admitting to the possibility of having changed would destroy and overthrow the world-view Inkle has grown up with and lives in, as he would have to finally acknowledge black people's humanness in order to accept his change. His experience as a slave to Yarico and the rupture his captivity still causes after his re-integration into colonial society both emphasise how Inkle's understanding of himself is shattered. In fact his whole sense of being is challenged as the enactment of anti-black violence fails to secure his stability as a subject.

Wynter's novel *The Hills of Hebron* traces how systemic racism and anti-black violence secures a constant displacement of black people as the ultimate other and non-humans within a society built upon the ideology of humanism. Particularly, the female characters in her novel look back at a trajectory of systemic violence that roots in the very beginnings of colonialism and the enslavement of African peoples. Throughout generations, women in the novel experience the disruption of

families and familial relationships caused by the overall dehumanisation of black people. Systemic violence is made explicit through the loss and absence of mothers and loss or death of children as well as sexual violence and violence among family members. The concept of black people as the ultimate other — and the prevailing awareness of the existence of such a concept — corrupt black communities. The novel shows that there is a constant tension between the self-perception of the characters and their status as non-humans within society. Through destructions of families and her characters' self-destructive tendencies, Wynter emphasises how this incongruence within subject formations affects black people.

The Hills of Hebron imagines a world in which a black Jamaican community, called the New Believers, attempts to escape their negation through blackness (see Wynter "Re-Enchantment" 137). It is set around a time in which Jamaica was still a British colony and introduces themes such as "black power, black pride, and the quest for self-government" (Cudjoe 42). The New Believers choose to leave their home Cockpit Centre to find their "Promised Land", which they call Hebron. They are led by the prophet Moses Barton, who is the founder of their congregation. Moses experiences several visions in which he has the revelation that God is black and that he himself is his son. In order to save his community in Hebron and be close to God, Moses crucifies himself to mark the beginning of a new era in their Promised Land. The plot of the novel focusses on Moses' history and that of his predecessors Aloysius Matthew and Obadiah Brown.

The story line of Martha, her daughter Gloria and her granddaughter Rose reveals how systemic, and particularly sexual violence transcends generations, as all three women experience sexual violence and the loss of family members. Through portraying anti-black violence across a large temporal frame, Wynter emphasises how systemic forms of racism prevail and structure society. Thereby, she highlight that the humanist conception of Man is still being legitimised and normalises the dehumanisation of black people which accordingly permeates cultural norms and values. Martha is trapped in an unhappy marriage with a sexually abusive husband; Gloria is raped by the white Reverend Brooke, for whom she works and the child out of this union is Rose, who is raped herself by Isaac, Miss Gatha's son, her childhood friend. Gloria dies during childbirth and Martha dies soon after her daughter's passing. Both mother-daughter relationships are disrupted as Martha loses her daughter and Gloria is robbed of having a relationship with Rose. All three women appear only at the margins of the novel, but play a central role in the founding of Hebron (see Harrison 157). Across generations, they stand emblematic for victims of systemic sexual and racial violence. In their stories history repeats itself exemplified by the exposure to sexual assault and death. This

circularity within their lives stresses how systemic violence is perpetuated as a permanent structural marker of their lives and the still colonial society they live in.

The systematic exploitation of the female body secures colonial hierarchies, adding to Martha's, Gloria's and Rose's seemingly marginalised positions within the novel. In order to subvert the women's displacement, however, the novel uses literary imagery that expresses resistance to portray all three women as well as highlighting their overall importance for the founding of Hebron. Hereby, *The Hills of Hebron* undercuts a general displacement of black women as silenced victims of sexual assaults. Their story is introduced by Rose who is the wife of the current elder Obadiah. After getting married, Obadiah gave a vow of chastity as an offering in order to prevent the community from being destroyed by a hurricane. However, during one of their assemblies Miss Gatha, Moses' widow, reveals that Rose is pregnant, because she wants to claim the eldership for her only son Isaac. The community of Hebron suffers from a drought and Miss Gatha interprets it as a punishment by God. Later in the novel it is revealed that Obadiah did not break his vow, but that Rose was raped by Isaac. Being ignorant of the rape, Miss Gatha uses Rose's violated body in order to secure her son's power. The experience of sexual violence links Rose to the story of her mother. Gloria, herself was raped in Cockpit Center by the white Reverend Brooke, for whom she worked. Moses covers up the story and takes Gloria and her mother Martha with him to Hebron to avoid embarrassing the Englishman. In return, Moses requests a document which grants him the right to settle on the land he calls Hebron, which in itself is of symbolic nature only and legally useless (see Barnes 46). Natasha Barnes argues that "[r]ape is the means by which the prophet asserts his stature as a leader" (44-45) and further states that the founding of Hebron "depends on the very same methods of hierarchy and subjugation as the colonial institutions" (46). Moses uses Gloria's violated body to secure his claims to the land (see Harrison 164; cf. Baker Josephs 63). In both cases power struggles rely on racial and gendered bias. Highlighting sexual and racial violence against women, *The Hills of Hebron* shows how Rose's and Gloria's bodies are doubly displaced by their rapists and by the community members, who use them in order to secure their goals. As punishment for breaking the vow of chastity, Rose is excluded from the congregation and has to leave Hebron. She flees into the hut where her mother gave birth and where she will give birth in the end. In Gloria's and Rose's story, history repeats itself, but with a different outcome. Gloria dies and her death builds the grounds for Hebron's society. Rose turns into a symbol for life which stands in contrast to the drought and dying land and gives hope to the community members (see Baker Joseph 63). Despite the marginality as characters, Rose and Gloria involuntarily are the backing for Hebron society.

Martha, Gloria and Rose appear to have a dual role within the structure of the novel. While their exposure to violence exemplifies how black people's dehumanisation is structurally embedded within society, their importance to the founding of Hebron as a community advances their role as mere victims. This is underlines by the use of the imagery of flowers associates with all three women. In the moment of her death, Martha's life is compared with that of a dandelion: "the woman […] had sprung up like a dandelion to be plucked by an ageing Chinese shopkeeper whose body had need for young limbs to comfort him" (*Hebron* 212) A dandelion is a wild flower and can literally grow anywhere and under various circumstances. The fact that Martha is compared to a wild flower contrasts the circumstances of her upbringing within a racial and colonial system. Within this context, the flower symbolises life, beauty and love which is contrasted by the act of severing the flower's roots and ultimately its necessary nutrition. The imagery highlights the importance of Martha's life and contrasts her husband's misconduct against her, already anticipating the sexual violence. Chin-Quee's motivation for marriage appears to be of a sexual nature only, which is further underlined by a portrayal of their married life in which Martha is depicted as her husband's servant:

> Martha herself going about, complying with the orders, her movements slow, her limbs heavy, her lips set in a mutinous line against the heavy-lidded eyes that held her in subjection, her body ready to rebel against him (189)

Her marriage is not a loving one but characterised as work. Martha follows her husband's orders, but resists through her bodily response as emphasised by her slow movements. The imagery of heaviness and inactivity contrasts Chin Quee's orders and expected laboriousness of his wife. Martha's resistance is further intensified by the choice of words such as "mutinous" and "to rebel" which imply that she is indeed ready to resist her husband's demands. Within this context, the portrayal of Martha's body reveals her impeding resistance. She is not characterised as a mere victim, but her reaction towards her suppression reveals a complicated multilayered process, actively challenging black people's non-human status. On the one hand, Martha's husband is unsuccessful in subduing his wife, who physically challenges him and his orders. At the same time, Martha has to constantly confront her own displacement, causing these contrasting and disruptive elements in her movement and appearance. This is intensified by his sexual abuse of her: "the driving mechanical persistence with which, night after night, her 'husband' crushed her flesh, seeking to stir the weight of her spirit" (ibid.). Putting the term husband in quotation marks as well as describing the marital act as a form of suppression, Wynter shows how Quin Chee attempts to oppress his wife. In this context, he uses sexual intercourse as a means to exercise his power over

her. Martha's body however recalls her resistance in the form of seclusion expressed by the "weight of her spirit". Her denial of movement and apparent complete surrender actually increases Quin Chee's fear of her resistance.

The parallel structure of mother and daughter is underlined by the imagery of flowers, as well as by the comparison of flowers with Martha's and Gloria's upbringing. The symbol of the flower in relations to Gloria is used as a contrast to her parents' relationship: "in this atmosphere of tension and dumb hatred, arrogant contempt and slavish resentment, the young girl Gloria thrived like a wild flower blooming on a pile of dung." (189) The simile "like a wild flower" connotes positive meanings to her upbringing, which is contrasted with the negative surroundings of her childhood. The use of simile and contrast together as structural elements stress the disruptive circumstances under which both women grow up and live in. The "pile of dung" represents not only the distraught relationship of her parents, but also recalls the colonial, patriarchal system under which both mother and daughter suffer. The imagery of the dung nurtures the flower to some extent and shows how beauty and life prevail against all odds. Gloria, as well as her mother before her, is associated with a wild flower, underlining their continued resistance. This complex imagery of the flower that connects both female characters' upbringing and response to their environment metaphorically underlines black female resistance on a larger scale, subverting the portrayal of black women as victims of a racist and patriarchal society. What is more, it recalls Wynter's argument that black women's external observer perspective enables them to challenge and question humanism's concept of the human and systemic enactment of anti-black violence (see Wynter "Ceremony" 56). Flowers and their representation of beauty also recalls how marginality and displacement can be redefined as a source of creativity and resistance (see NourbeSe Philip 58). Although Martha and Gloria appear only at the margins and never with direct speech, they level Rose's story line. The use of flowers stresses a connection between all three characters, which is most prominently expressed by Rose's name, who recalls the flowers used to portray her mother and grandmother. Her name appears to continue the subconscious expression of resistance and reconnects herself with her mother and grandmother. Often, Rose is associated directly with the natural realm, particularly in emotional situation as her confrontation with the congregation and Obadiah who has just realised that she is pregnant: "Her black hair, coarse and alive, had come loose, and she felt it around her like the tangled wilderness above her hut. It was as though she were shut away there now in the dense undergrowth." (*Hebron* 32) Rose's hair is depicted as a living entity that shields her from her threatening surroundings. The image of the wilderness associates Rose with nature that is uncultivated and recalls her mother's and grandmother comparison with wild flowers. The

undergrowth creates the image of something that is hidden away and secret, yet it also hints at the fact that Rose indeed hides the real reason why she is pregnant. What is more, the image of the wild plants offers Rose protection from the wrath of her husband and the community. The description of her hair being tangled further emphasises her ambivalent situation. Not only are various persons affected by Isaac's action, but her emotional state is also highly mixed. In this context, the natural realm opens up an alternative way of communicating emotions as well as a sense of continuity between the three women. Nature opens up a way for Rose to escape her situation and humiliation through the exclusion from her community, while also emotionally addressing her response to the sexual assault. This is further underlined in the moment Gatha confronts Rose: "Her eyes were fixed on the grey sky which spread out over Hebron waiting to be despoiled by the sun." (10) The sky foreshadows the events of which the congregation is at this point oblivious. The choice of words as "despoiled" connotes acts of violence and of stripping someone of things or more figuratively of a place or a sense of belonging. Rose loses both — her place within the community and her virginity.

The portrayal of Gloria's and Rose's scenes of rape comments on colonial power relations and different conceptions of the human. Rape in this context is used by the male characters in order to subdue black women and functions as self-affirmation of power and being but also reveals the corruption of processes of dehumanisation within a humanist mindset (see Barnes 45). While Gloria's assault by the white Reverend represents the classic colonial binary of power relations, Rose is raped by her childhood friend Isaac, who attempts to use the same mechanisms of oppression as the Reverend, but in the end fails to assert his subjectivity. On a structural level, the narrator uses similar imagery to portray both scenes of rape and particular the use of natural elements is noticeable. The scene of Gloria's rape is framed by two female members of the congregation listening to a children's ring game. It is their oral account through which the narrator relates to Gloria's rape:

> The two women sat on the doorstep, talking. A horned moon peered at them from behind a lignum vitae tree. Out in the lane some children lifted the tune of a waltz as they played a ring game, *Jane and Louisa will soon come home*" (*Hebron* 187).

The natural imagery foreshadows the scene of the rape. The lignum vitae tree is native to Central America and the flower of the tree is the national flower of Jamaica. During colonialism it was an export product to Europe due to the wood's extreme hardness and toughness (see Ostapkowicz et al.). The characteristic of the hardness of the wood as well as the "horned moon" and the act of "peering" implicates already sexual connotations, foreshadowing the rape. The ring game "Jane and Louisa" heightens the loss of childhood and innocence Gloria experiences. The assault leads to her

pregnancy and eventual death. Structurally the sexual assault is framed by Caribbean nature, the image of the moon and the women's oral narration.[33] Both scenes are framed by imagery of darkness and secrecy. The moon connects the women with the natural element of water, as it is in control over the tides, the tree adds an element of the earth and the oral narration relates to an indigenous form of story telling. All these elements contrast the impending display of classic colonial binaries of having a black woman raped by her white male superior. The literary elements undercut this assumed straightforward depiction of colonial and patriarchal hierarchies. The scene of the actual rape picks up the contrasting imagery of darkness and light: "In the bedroom with its mahogany panelled walls, the drawn curtains enclosed a silence into which the cackling of hens out in the yard […] penetrated like distant echoes." (*Hebron* 189) The imagery of the hens recalls the talk of the female congregation members about the rape, relating the actual scene of the assault with the oral story of the two women. The scene itself is infused by contrasts such as darkness and light. The curtains keep out the sun and the noises of the animals are only distant echoes. The sounds of the animals recall the gossip of the women and the term "penetrating" again foreshadows the abuse. Gloria herself remains silent during her ordeal and is depicted through the Reverend on which the narrator focalises: "Her body was like a blaze of sunlight in the dark room." (190) The sexual assault reflects the classic colonial power relations — the white coloniser who rapes a young black servant, recalling sexual assaults on plantations and emphasising a historic trajectory of systemic violence against black women. This is underlined by the reverends emotions: "And her docility filled him with a sense of power and of mastery that he had never before experienced." (ibid.) The act of displacing the female body empowers the Reverend and secures his manhood and superiority. However, his sense of power is undercut by the natural imagery. Gloria represents the light and contrasts the darkness that surrounds her, subverting the classic binary of associating blackness with darkness and whiteness with light. On numerous levels, the narrator keeps undermining the apparent display of colonial dichotomies as well as the white Man's superiority. The focus lies on the natural surroundings rather than on the actual rape.

The displacement of black women through the act of sexual violence is further challenged by the natural imagery that accompanies Rose's exposure to sexual violence. What is more, the imagery underlines the disruptions caused by the humanist ideology that dehumanises black people. Rose's rapist Isaac confronts his own displacement as a black subject within colonial society and tries to

[33] The role of the moon as a symbol that transcends a western concept of the human will be in detail discussed in chapter 5.2. in relation to the appearance of spirits.

secure his manhood through the act of his sexual assault.[34] However, unlike the Reverend he does not secure his manhood within legitimised and normalised terms, but rather has to confront his own deformed actions that he cannot justify within the reasoning of a humanist system which in fact displaces Isaac as a non-human. At the same time the natural imagery structurally reflects Rose's agency, challenging her portrayal as the victim and continuing the theme of resistance. The scene of her rape is told from different perspectives in the novel, but it is Rose herself who tells her husband Obadiah what has happened:[35] "Speaking quietly, she told him how she had been raped. He heard her voice echoing inside his head, until it became the rushing of a hurricane wind." (76). It is the first and last time in the novel that one of the female characters confides in someone else about their experience of violence. Although it is not in direct speech, Rose's voice is compared with the strength of a natural force. The image of the hurricane empowers Rose: It is a force of nature that represents destruction, unpredictability and uncontrollability, strongly contrasting Rose's displacement as a victim of rape. At the same time Obadiah's head is only filled by the echos of Rose's voice. This silences him and moreover portrays him as powerless when confronted with the impact of her confession. The actual scene of the assault recalls the same imagery but this time it is Rose who experiences that her voice is overpowered by natural forces: "She called out to him again and again but her voice was drowned in the sound of the sea that thundered inside his head." (271) Isaac appear empowered as his betrayal and assault is compared with the force of a storm, similarly relating to the imagery of destruction. The imagery of drowning contrasts Rose's aforementioned empowered voice and emphasises the effect of systemic violence and the following disruption of Rose's and Isaac's familial relationship. Isaac attempts to act powerfully and wants to assert his own self, his own being, through forcefully taking Rose. However, after the assault the power relations appear to shift again, highlighting that there is no classic colonial binary like the one represented by the Reverend and Gloria that structures and legitimises the violence: "He wanted to stand up and call out his name to her, to reassure himself as to who he was. For, impersonal like the sea, she had taken him, then left him a castaway, without purpose, without being." (ibid.) Isaac has no voice, no agency here and addresses his confrontation with dehumanisation that he tries to overcome by enacting bodily power over Rose. In fact, the narrator underlines Isaac's passivity by reversing the binary of culprit and victim here, as the choice of words — "she had taken him" and "left him a

[34] Isaac's liminal position as a character and conflict with his own sense of being human is in detail discussed in chapter 4.2.

[35] The focus here lies on the character Rose and her response to sexual violence. The actual scene of the rape is told through Isaac's focalisation and is analysed in context with the role of Isaac as a liminal character in chapter 4.2.

castaway" — emphasises. The simile between Rose and the sea underlines how she is turned into the agent who takes away Isaac's humanness and sense of being. Isaac's reaction after assaulting Rose strongly contrasts the Reverend's who indeed further secures his position and power by raping Gloria. Isaac attempts to use the same strategies of systemic violence but fails in the end as the very structures that he tries to use in order to assert his humanness as a black subject simultaneously dehumanise himself. The imagery of natural forces underlines that the power relations between Isaac and Rose are not as straightforward as they seem. They reflect the constant struggle between Rose's and Isaac's need to claim their humanness within a system that structurally displaces them and whose self-image does not fit with their appointed roles as the ultimate other to society. This incongruence leads to the continued destruction of familial bonds as Martha, Gloria and Rose have to experience. At the same time all three women are not characterised as mere victims but the contrasts, disruptions and tensions highlight the complexity of each character.

The natural realm reflects the experience of systemic violence, Martha, Gloria and Rose are confronted with. Nature in this context also comments on the women's response to their sexual assaults while at the same time expressing resistance vís-a-vís a humanist system that systematically displaces black women. Moreover, the imagery of flora and fauna structurally undercuts the novel and opens up a meta-level to the plot of Hebron, its community and the role of black women in order to generally critique the colonial and racial structures of Caribbean society. The moment in which Obadiah confronts his wife with Gatha's accusations, the natural surroundings judge the congregation through the imagery of fighting cocks:

> Below, Hebron was a vast bowl flooded with light […] In the centre, two giant fighting cocks faced each other. Their blood-red crests were reflected in their fierce eyes. They circled each other, their crops sweeping up flurries of dust. Then they sprang at each other, tearing away tufts of black feathers, gleaming strips of flesh. Drops of blood beaded the ground, changed into grains of corn; and the houses, the trees, the church, the animals, the people, were all fat clucking hens who pecked at the corn, swallowing rapidly, their eyes incurious. (24)

This extract emphasises the disruption within the community but also beyond that the disruptions caused by systemic violence within Jamaican society and history. The tale of the cocks implements elements of a fable, using animals as symbols to narrate a moral story about greed and the destructive forces of violence. The gory description of two fighting cocks stresses the conflict in the community.[36] The confrontation between Rose and Obadiah is doubly removed from the sight of the

[36] Note also the ironic reference to *Cockpit* Center, the place the community had tried to escape from initially, which mirrors the argument of the vicious cycle of systemic violence.

actual argument through the spatial distance and the use of animals, which embody the tense, deathly atmosphere. This is further underlined through words like "fighting," "blood-red," "fierce" and "tearing away". The cock fight sheds light on the human relationships and conflicts within the whole community. Where the cock fight was firstly observed through Obadiah, the narrator appears now more distant than before. The narrator not only observes the blood and how it soaks the ground, but comments on the community of Hebron. Everything in Hebron is turned into "fat clucking hens" who revel in the blood that turns into corn. The imagery of the hens also relate back to the women who gossiped about Gloria's pregnancy, underlining the circular element within the novel that connects community members with the natural realm. As there is no clear temporal framework, the present situation in which Obadiah confronts his wife mingles with a glance into the past and the future. The boundaries of time and space blur and with it the perception of reality. The narrator is almost in a dream-like state in which people, plants and houses transform into hens. The scene recalls Gloria's rape and role in securing the land on which the community of Hebron was founded. Metaphorically speaking, Gloria's blood secures the grounds on which the people of Hebron, the animals, the church, the houses — the "hens" — can flourish. Gloria's death through childbirth builds the soil for their community and secures Hebron's existence.

Claudia Jones' poem "Lament for Emmet Till (1955)" addresses the brutal practice of lynching as an expression of systemic violence as well as structural racism within the U.S legal system (see Boyce-Davies *Beyond* 185). Emmett Till's brutal lynching and acquittal of his murderers inspired a whole range of literary responses in the years following his murder and trial.[37] Jones' poem is one of the earliest black female responses to Till's murder as it was written during her imprisonment at Alderson after being convicted for her membership in the Communist Party (see Boyce-Davies *Beyond* xv and 229). The fact that Jones' poem is not part of the larger literary debate about Emmett Till highlights how Jones has been disregarded and forgotten as an important contributor to African American literature. In fact, the earliest poems about Emmett Till are considered to be Langston Hughes' "Mississippi — 1955" (see Metress "Mississippi — 1955" 141) and Kramer and Appleton's "Blues for Emmett Till" also from 1955 (see Kolin 455). In Christopher Metress' studies on Emmett Till[38], as well as Kolin's essay, Jones' poem is neither mentioned nor referred to, although Metress does list a line of authors, also including black female writers, who dedicate their

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[37] For a close analysis of Emmett Till's murder and trial as well as aftermath for black Americans please see Myisha Priest's "'The Nightmare Is Not Cured': Emmett Till and American Healing", Onwuachi-Willig's "The Trauma of the Routine: Lessons on Cultural Trauma from the Emmett Till Verdict" and Marks' "Mourning Emmett: 'One Long Expansive Moment'".

[38] *The Lynching of Emmett Till: A Documentary Narrative* and "'No Justice, No Peace': The Figure of Emmett Till in African American Literature"

work to Till's murder, including "Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, James Baldwin, Anne Moody, Eldridge Cleaver, Toni Morrisson, Audre Lorde, John Edgar Wideman, Bebe Moore Anthony Walton, and Michael Eric Dyson" ("No Justice, No Peace" 89). Among these there are Anne Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi* and Gwendolyn Brooks' poem "Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi"[39] from 1960 which are considered the earliest black female literary responses to Till's murder (see Metress "No Justice, No Peace" 89-90). Yet, both were produced after Jones' poem. To counter this absence and to highlight its activist message and critique of the American juridical system, the poem is quoted in its entirety here, as it offers a unique view on the disruption caused by Till's murder within his own family and beyond that within the Black American community:

> Cry lynch- murder!
> — Sear the land
> Raise fists — in more than anger bands!
>
> Mother, mother — you who bore
> Son from womb of sorrow know
> White washed justice sure will reap
> More than it can ever sow…
>
> Uncle, uncle who stood
> Firm-hand-in jim crow dock of wood
> Facing lynchers eye for eye
> Meeting sadism of parading child
>
> People, people, you who swore
> Vengeance for this brutal hour
> Make your unity soar above strife
> To swiftly avenge Young Emmet Till's life! ("Lament" 192)

Jones poem is not only an expression of sorrow as the title might suggest. While portraying the mother's sorrow about the loss of her son, the poem transcends a form of lament. Rather, the lyrical persona also demands action and expresses her anger and frustration against anti-black racism and the injustices of the American judicial system. In this context, the lyrical persona takes on the voice of justice, exposing the incapability and inherent injustice against black people within the American judicial system that did not bring action against Till's murderers who in the end were acquitted.

The first and the last stanza of the poem focus on the lyrical persona's powerful and active call for a joint resistance against lynching (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 124). The outcry against lynching,

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[39] For reading purposes the title is shortened in the text. The whole title is: "Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi. Meanwhile, A Mississippi Mother Burns Bacon".

condemning anti-black brutality, evokes the Civil Rights movement and, by demanding to "Raise fists", specifically brings the Black Panther movement to mind which was founded in 1966, over ten years after Jones' wrote the poem. The raised fists of black people are almost synonymous with the Black Panther Party and its original mission of self-defence (see Tyner 108). One aspect of self-defence, the Black Panther Party instated was "the police-alert patrol", in order to "counter the perceived police brutality that existed in the black communities of Oakland." (111) The Black Panther Party ideologically speaks to Jones' political activism as a member of the Communist Party and strongly correlates with her poem. Having been written over ten years before the Black Panther Party was founded, Jones already stresses the need for a black system of justice. Jones' poem challenges systemic violence here from a political and black female perspective. The lyrical persona stylises Till as a disruptive figure whose death challenges the status quo of American society. This form of disruption is underlined by the first stanza's staccato-like rhythm emphasised by the dashes, exclamation marks and fragmentary sentence structures, as well as the missing rhyme scheme. The addressee of the poem is depicted in more detail in the last stanza which again focusses on a collective form of resistance: "People, people, you who swore / Vengeance for this brutal hour" ("Lament" 192). The following two lines stress the resistance's power by the exclamation mark at the end of the stanza and the choice of words that expresses action and agency: "Make your unity soar above strife / To swiftly avenge Young Emmet Till's life!" (ibid.). The first and last stanza combined show how the lyrical persona is not captured by the expression of loss and grief but rather focusses on resistance and taking action against those who murdered Till. In this context, Boyce-Davies emphasises that "Jones wants her readers to resist lynching and racial oppression, to organise and resist and not be passive victims of racist terror." (*Left* 124) Jones' call for political activism underlines the need to challenge systemic violence and the importance for a collective call for vengeance and ultimately justice in order to "deter the kind of racist terrorism that Till's murder represented." (ibid.) Hereby, the lyrical persona denounces violence against black people but not from the perspective of a passive victim but from a perspective that holds power and is driven by vengeance and resistance. Both the first and last stanza acknowledge Emmett's death was not meaningless but that the injustice he suffered sparked actions against lynching and oppressions of black people such as the Civil Rights Movement (see Onwuachi-Willig 346).

While the first and last stanza highlight the uniting force of resistance, the second and third stanza focus on resistance within familial structures. Both stanzas underline the disruption caused by Emmett Till's murder and the loss his mother and uncle have to endure while at the same time focussing on a critique of the American judicial system. Till's mother and uncle take on an

important role in exposing injustice and turning pain and grief into action. The poem does not depict them as mere mourners but emphasises their role in fighting for justice, representing how both confront Till's lynching as a result of racial violence in the United States (see Mark 134 and Onwuachi-Willig 344). Addressing Till's mother, the lyrical persona shifts from her call for vengeance to focussing on the pain of loss: "Mother, mother — you who bore / Son from womb of sorrow know / White washed justice will reap / More than it can ever sow…" ("Lament" 192). The stanza highlights the loss of a child but also a trajectory of violence that is already there as the metaphor "womb of sorrow" emphasises. The image of the womb recalls post- and decolonial discourses in which the womb is often associated with the process of enslavement and plantation slavery. Glissant's depiction of slave ships as "a womb abyss" and as being "pregnant with as many dead as living" comes to mind (6), as well as Grace Nichols' poem "One Continent/To Another" and her imagery of the "Child of the middle passage womb" (6) and also NourbeSe Philip who refers to "thespace / within the womb the space" (94). While Glissant's personification of the boat as a pregnant "womb" has to be questioned as a form of alienating the female body from the role of the mother, linking it to processes of enslavement, Nichols' and NourbeSe Philip's accounts highlight the systemic violence black women are confronted with. Nichols stresses the arrival in the new world through the metaphor of giving birth, commenting on the painful and devastating experience on the middle passage, but highlighting the life ahead of the lyrical persona. NourbeSe Philip comments on the displacement of black women within the plantation structures and how black women's pregnancies were dehumanised as a means of reproduction, denouncing forms of sexual violence. In this context, Jones' poem is part of a larger intellectual discussion of the black female body, its structural displacement, but also of its powers of resistance against colonial oppression. Her use of punctuation in the last line and the enjambments underline the continued forms of violence Glissant, Nichols, NourbeSe Philip and Jones denounce and simultaneously demands justice which the legal system in the United States denies black people. This struggle is further intensified by the rhyme scheme which is also characterised by disruptions as the rhyme "know/ sow" on the one hand and the missing rhyme of "bore" and "reap", as well as the use of the dash emphasises. The confrontation of rhythmic and disruptive elements causes a tense atmosphere and underlines the continued struggle to fight for black peoples' rights, confronting constant forms of dehumanisation or violence and recalling Wilderson's argument that blackness is still synonymous with slaveness and social death (see "*Social Death*" 139). What is more, it exemplifies what Jones herself calls the status of "semi-slavery" which, according to her, predominantly exists in the Southern States of America, exposing the ongoing structural enslavement of black people ("Self-

Determination" 62). The displacement of black people as the ultimate other to Man is further elaborated in the third stanza which deals with the representation of Till's uncle and his resistance within court: "Facing lynchers eye for eye / Meeting sadism of parading child" ("Lament" 192). Till's uncle is confronted with his own dehumanised status within the court room, recalling Jones' speech during her trial and her exposure of the inequality of the United States legal system and its racial structures. The opposition of the lynchers and Till's uncle however reveals the inhuman racial structures that ensure and legitimise Man's superiority. Similar to Gilroy's characterisation of Inkle's dehumanised actions against Alice, Jones reveals how the humanist system corrupts and alienates human beings. Gilroy's portrayal of violence inflicted upon Inkle as well as anti-black violence against his enslaved, Wynter's focus on sexual violence in *The Hills of Hebron* and Jones' critique of the United States' legal system as well as denouncing lynching as a form to systematically ensure racial structures all emphasise how anti-black racism and structural violence transcends generations of black people. The three works show how systemic violence is a permanent element of black people's lives, beginning with the enslavement of black peoples and plantation slavery, throughout the colonial history of the Caribbean and continued fight for equality of black people's rights in the United States. Gilroy, Jones and Wynter highlight different aspects of anti-blackness and how they still structure modern society. Hereby, they underline and legitimise their project of expressing a concept of the human that outgrows the displacement of black people and the binary between humans and non-humans.

3.2. Transnational Racism as Part of the Migration Experience in Jones' "I Was Deported Because…" and "Autobiographical History" and in Gilroy's *Black Teacher* and *Boy Sandwich*

The role of migration adds a transnational element to the effect of systemic violence and connects particularly Jones' experience of deportation with Gilroy's migration to Great Britain. Both women arrived in London in the 1950s (Jones in 1955 and Gilroy in 1951) and both highlight the ongoing legacies of slavery, such as the conception of the inferiority of blackness, the social and economic inequalities as well as open violence against black people. They emphasise how black people are still confronted with racism and discrimination long after slavery has been abolished and resonate here with Wynter's and Wilderson's work who both critique how humanist ideology denies black people access to the dominant western conception of the human. Apart from Gilroy's novel *Boy Sandwich*, this chapter mainly focusses on Gilroy's and Jones' autobiographical writings and how both intellectuals trace what Gilroy calls "subliminal racism" (Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 390-391) and Jones' "semi-slavery" (Jones *Beyond* 62). They shed light on how racism manifests itself in

western societies long after the abolition of slavery, focussing on Gilroy's personal experience with racism as a first-generation migrant in London and her work as a teacher and Jones' deportation experience. Hereby, they delineate and contextualise Wilderson's argument how the Master/Slave relation still manifests itself in western society, dividing people into "Black chattel" and "exploited and unexploited Humans" (*Red, White and Black* 19). Within this context, their work offers a voice to black female subjects within the discourse of transnational racism, drawing a connection between the experience of racism in the Caribbean, the United States and United Kingdom. There are various parallels between Jones' experience with Jim Crow policies and Gilroy's experience as a black Caribbean migrant in London, even though Gilroy's autobiography *Black Teacher* (1976) and novel *Boy Sandwich* (1989) were published over twenty years after Jones' texts. Their texts show how transnational racism against black people secures their structural dehumanisation. What is more, both highlight the special role of black women within this discourse, offering a vital contribution to black women's perspectives on racial history. Still, they choose very different approaches in order to deal with black people's dehumanisation. Jones avant-garde intersectional approach integrates her family's experience of migration and racism within the overall anti-black structures that permeate American society with a clear focus on her political perspective of black people's oppression. Gilroy examines stereotypical representations of black people she is confronted with as a student and migrant in London. She interweaves her own experience with racism and discrimination into her novel, tracing the life of Tyrone Grainger, who is a third-generation migrant who confronts open violence and has to deal with the fungible status of black people in modern British society (see Hartman *Subjection* 21).

Jones' own experience with racism and her family history shapes her intellectual work and activism. She recapitulates forms of racism she encountered in the United States in an interview with George Bowrin in 1956 titled "I Was Deported Because…" and in "Autobiographical History"[40] which is a letter addressed to a Comrade Foster, focussing on her childhood in America and hardships of black people suffering under Jim Crow laws (see *Beyond* 3). Through her personal background, Jones exposes and confronts black people's dehumanisation in the United States from an intersectional perspective, commenting on the role of race, class and gender within the context of Caribbean migrants in the United States. She connects her own experience of racism with the intersection of various forms of oppression particularly black women are confronted with. Jones

[40] According to Boyce-Davies Jones's "Autobiographical History" written in 1955, is the "best autobiographical summary of her life and would have provided the skeleton for any subsequent autobiographical narrative" (*Beyond* 4).

emphasises how she herself "experienced the indignity of second-class citizenship in the US", generally highlighting how black people are not considered part of the overall conception of the human ("Deported" 17). Jones classifies her family's disappointment and unfulfilled wishes to improve their living conditions after migrating from Trinidad and Tobago within the overall struggle of facing racial and social displacement: "[W]hat we found instead in the US was not only economic poverty for the working-class, but the special brand of American racism — Jim Crow." (ibid.) An intersectional analysis of issues of race and class exposes how Jones and her family have constantly been confronted with different categories of oppression; an experience which serves as an example for a whole generation of black Caribbean migrants. Within this context, she points out that black people's oppression goes beyond class struggles and the exploitation as workers, already emphasising how she herself advances a Marxist approach though her intersectional critique of black people's dehumanisation in order to address how anti-blackness structures American society. This interrelation is underlined by Jones' loss of her mother, who "had died […] of spinal meningitis suddenly at her machine in a garment shop." ("Autobiographical History" 11) Within her Marxist argument, she integrates the concept of gender through her own experience of familial rupture. She highlights here that black women's oppression is a multilayered, complex struggle that cannot only be addressed through one category of oppression. She particularly highlights the role of race as the category that has to be addressed in order to fight for the rights of black people, workers and women alike, as her choice of words "the special brand of American racism" underlines. However, it is the combined oppression of race, class and gender that black women have to face, which points towards Jones' unique perspective on their displacement. She argues that far from being victims of a society that disregards them as human beings, black women are the key to achieving equality:

> There is no question but that West Indian women represent an indispensable ally in the fight for colonial freedom, because women are triply exploited in the colonies, as women, as mothers and as colonials, subjected to indignities and great suffering because of the status of their countries. (18)

Jones argues that because of their exploited status, black women are an asset for political activism against racism. Compared with Wynter's and Gilroy's novels discussed in chapter 3.1., which both address black female resistance on a meta-level, Jones' perspective is much more openly involved in actively expressing resistance. West Indian Women's perspectives and responses on structural racism, according to Jones, show how issues of class, gender and race intersect and need to be addressed and challenged. Such a black Caribbean perspective represents black women as

empowered agents, while still exposing the racial structures they are confronted with. Jones also challenges the marginalisation of black women's works within a larger debate on racism and on movements of independence in the Caribbean. This also implicitly addresses her own response as an asset to anti-colonial movements.

Apart from addressing her family history and personal experiences, Jones autobiographical texts emphasise how black people's oppression was constructed over centuries and how racism and anti-black thought have been internalised and systematically become part of modern society in the United States. Jones' critique of capitalism is in essence a critique of the overall conception of the human within a humanist mind-set, as her exposure to systemic violence and racism highlights. While following her communist premises and acknowledging that white workers were being oppressed as well, Jones particularly exposes the special form of racism against black people in the United States. She reveals the systemic violence within humanist structures of being against workers by marking the strong difference between workers as "exploited humans" and blacks who are denied even this human status (Wilderson *Red, White and Black* 19):

> I didn't know that they [Jim Crow policies] were part of a conscious plan designed to perpetuate the national oppression of the Negro people in the US of which these incidents were reflections of the badge of inferiority perpetrated on the Negro people in the North, with the more hideous features of lynching, poll taxes, crop lien laws and economic strangulation devolving on the Negro people in the heartland of their oppression in the black belt of the South. ("Autobiographical History" 12)

Jones shows how the overall system of capitalism rests upon the "national oppression" of black people. What is more, she argues that their oppression is deliberately kept in place in order to secure capital accumulation. Blackness, in this context, serves as a marker of negativity and an inferior position within society, highlighting the difference between the injustices faced by white and black workers. Jones also connects the planation economy with the capitalist system she confronts now, as she speaks of the "heartland of their oppression" in the South of America. She draws a historic link between black people's status as former enslaved and their role within plantation slavery as well as their status as workers. She traces and critiques humanist ideologies and their equation of blackness and inferiority. What is more, Jones concentrates on exposing how the "Master/Slave relation" is actively integrated within American society (Wilderson *Red, White and Black* 19). Revealing that the human/non-human binary is indeed constructed by the capitalist elite, she also shows that it can be actively resisted and challenged. An example for the constructedness of race relations is her own personal confrontation with a biologically informed racism she encounters when she donates blood for another woman: This caused "quite a stir in the hospital on the question of 'black blood' and

'white blood'." ("Autobiographical History" 13) Jones witnesses how white patients were not only discriminating against her because of her presence and donation in the hospital but were constantly wondering if the woman to whom Jones donated her blood "would turn 'black'" (ibid.). Jones' experience in the hospital shows how a biologically based racism permeates American society and also recalls the American one-drop rule to mark blackness. The one-drop rule can be traced back to the 17th and 18th century in the context of determining blackness and confronting fears of miscegenation under colonial rule. During the Jim Crow era the one-drop rule gets officially instated as law in order to keep segregation policies in place (see Khanna 98).[41] Here, white officials instate a law that should keep black people within their oppressed status. Jones' experience with such a biologically informed racism exposes how the racial structures of plantation slavery did not only cease to exist after its abolition, but are in itself invented constructs.

Similar to Jones, Gilroy's autobiography *Black Teacher* recounts numerous instances in which Gilroy is confronted with anti-blackness and western representations of black people as inferior and backward. Gilroy shows how the racial discrimination she faces as a first generation migrant from the Caribbean in the 1950s interferes with her social life and her work as a teacher. In her novel *Boy Sandwich*, Gilroy's characters are confronted with different forms of racism and violence. Here, the first person narrator Tyrone Grainger, whose grandparents have migrated to London, experiences racism and violence as a black young man. He revisits his family's past, highlighting how anti-black violence runs through his family's history. Both of her works are an intervention into "the transnational histories of Jim Crow and racial politics in postwar Britain" (Perry 158). Gilroy's autobiography and novel disrupts Britain's representation of Commonwealth ideals and a British discourse on race, as she exposes racism as a constituent part of British society while confronting "antiracist ideals tethered to notions of what it meant to be British" (ibid.). Rather than following the general acceptance of an apparently diverse and anti-racist image of Great Britain and its Commonwealth nations, Gilroy exposes the racial bias and stereotypes of black people Great Britain was built upon (see 160-161). Within this context, Gilroy, as Jones before her, also puts particularly emphasis on the role of black women. However, contrasting Jones' political and activist call for black female resistance, Gilroy focusses on her personal and emotional motivation for writing literature in order to address black female displacement:[42]

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[41] For an in-depth analysis of the historical context of the one-drop rule please read Khanna's "If You're Half Black, You're Just Black: Reflected Appraisals and the Persistence of the One-Drop Rule", p. 98ff.

[42] For a detailed analysis of the "histories of postwar race politics in Britain", see Kennetta Hammond Perry's "'Little Rock' in Britain: Jim Crow's Transatlantic Topographies", 159ff.

> My autobiography resulted from a fit of pique. […] I decided to set the record straight. There had been Ted Braithwaites' *To Sir with Love* and Don Hinds' *Journey to an Illusion* but the woman's experience had never been stated. As I wrote, my anger mounted when I recalled the experiences of my contemporaries. (*Leaves* 9)

Referring to her autobiography *Black Teacher* (1976), Gilroy highlights the importance of her own voice as a black woman writer. Her autobiography fills a gendered gap and voices a black, female, Caribbean experience of migration, the exposure to racism and how to deal with displacement and dehumanisation. The quote above emphasises how Gilroy claims her own voice as a force of expressing anger and resistance against her silenced and marginalised position. She also emphasises the gendered gap within a Caribbean discourse on migration and race, drawing attention to the male authorship of the sources available to her. *Black Teacher* reconnects Gilroy's motivation for writing with her experience as a migrant and discusses the influence of racism and of the socially and historically constructed misrepresentations of black women. She argues: "Foreigners were sojourners, visibly and pathologically different. If we had even the most basic of rights no one mentioned it to us." (*Leaves* 4) Gilroy underlines how her skin colour is used as a marker of difference and recalls Jones's critique of black women as "second-class" citizens in the United States ("Deported" 17). This parallel exemplifies how both intellectuals challenge similar systems of displacement. Their critique highlights that systemic racism does indeed function on a transnational level, as blackness in bother accounts is paralleled with difference and negativity. Gilroy points out that black people are displaced as the ultimate Other in British society and are structurally dehumanised, although in fact these migrants were British citizens on paper.[43] Stereotypes that parallel blackness with inferiority have survived colonialism and confront black people upon their arrival in Great Britain with stereotypical representations of blackness and racial discrimination. Again, Gilroy's observations strongly resonate with the arguments made by Wynter and Jones: they all expose how blackness is associated with inferiority and how black people are excluded by the West's conception of humanness. Gilroy experienced upon her arrival that her whole self and being was being questioned by white, British norms and ideals: "You foreigners must look and learn from us." (*Leaves* 3). The conception of the human she encountered in London

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[43] Caribbean people migrating to Great Britain were colonial citizens, as countries such as Guyana, Trinidad or Jamaica were not yet independent when Gilroy migrated to London. Boyce-Davies highlights: "Caribbean nationals had British passports and were technically British citizens." (*Left* 145) This can be traced back to the British Nationality Act (1948), which states that "not only did Caribbean migrants retain a long-held imperial right to migrate to the British Isles, but they also acquired the legal and political status of 'citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies.' As a category of British citizenship that was shared by both British subject in the metropole and colonies with no legal distinction" (Perry 166).

does not represent her own conception of being. Within a racist, colonial system black people, according to Gilroy, "are two people: the facade and the real person who must exist in society." (4) Gilroy elaborates on this conflict in her autobiography. She confronts the struggle between her own conception as a human being and representation as a non-human within western society. Gilroy highlights here that her non-human status is in fact a "facade", a constructed form of oppression and dehumanisation to further marginalise and displace black people.

During her career as a teacher, Gilroy struggles with the clash of the western conceptions of the human as Man which structurally displaces her and her own conception of being. Gilroy is constantly confronted with her own skin colour as a marker of negativity and inferiority and has to assert her own humanness again and again. While concentrating on her own resistance against systemic racism, Gilroy also emphasises how a western humanist system of being disrupts her life. Discussions between herself and her colleagues shed light on cultural stereotypes and emphasise how antiracism within British society remains but an ideal:

> This is our country. How would you like it if foreign people came along with smells, bells, mosques and clothes and swamped your tradition? […]
> 'So what do you want?' I asked. 'Separate Schools for these children? And as for *my* tradition, I haven't got one. Your ancestors saw to that. Anyway, you live in a friendly enough way with other people—Jews, French, Irish—why not with us?'
> 'They're white,' said Anna. 'That makes all the difference."
> (*Black Teacher* 149; original emphasis)

Gilroy's white colleague does not see the Commonwealth as a conglomerate of joint nations but stresses that there is a hierarchy attached to cultural groups, recalling the racial hierarchy during colonisation. Encountering a hierarchy of humans to which she herself is the assumed ultimate other and non-human, her memory of these instances exposes the underlying racist structures of the British educational system and beyond that of British society. Next to exposing her colleague's racism, Gilroy also emphasises her own critique of cultural imperialism and the misrepresentation of black people within history. She draws a link here between the British hegemonial claims to the Caribbean and the hierarchies attached to the Commonwealth nations. At the same time, Gilroy does not remain silent, nor does she appear as a victim. Her response openly expresses her critique in front of her colleague, directly confronting the teacher with her racist and biased attitudes towards black people. Gilroy's encounter revisits the clash of cultures caused by colonisation and its aftermath. Her argument resonates with her understanding of the concept race that she exposes as the major structural element that underlies the stereotypes and discriminations against black people:

> 'Colour prejudice' […] has many faces and in some people it is tucked away in a place of impenetrable darkness, emerging only to glow with irrational hate at the prospect of an

> encounter with someone different in creed, class and especially race. […] This terror is a specialism of the ethnocentric mind which matures in a gnarled and distorted way. (*Leaves* 4-5)

The quote above highlights how Gilroy's choice of words reverses the colonial binaries that still structure British society. She challenges the term "colour prejudice" which in itself connotes more positive meanings compared to what is actually at debate here, namely open racism and dehumanisation against black people. She critiques how a British discussion on race disguises systemic racism and violence through the use of language. What is more, Gilroy uses terms that usually portray black stereotypical representations such as "darkness", "gnarled" and "distorted". Instead of blackness, she equates ethnocentrism with abnormality, subverting classic colonial binaries. Moreover, Gilroy examines how stereotypes function on an intersectional level and are related to the power relations within British society that appear to be deeply embedded within a colonial, binary thinking. Within this context, the ethnocentric mind represents a humanist world-view that disregards other world views and conceptions of what it means to be human. Gilroy's collections of essays *Leaves in the Wind* and *Black Teacher* build a dialogue here, as her personal experiences clearly inform her discussion and critique of racism. The teacher whom she argues with represents the ethnocentric mind and exemplifies how the fear of difference causes her racist attitude towards Gilroy and in extension black people in general.

There are numerous instances in which the western, racist mindset of her colleagues and pupils disrupts Gilroy's life as a teacher. She highlights how it in fact structures every aspect of society and is part of the socialisation process she encounters as a teacher. Another confrontation with a school help, called Mrs. Benn, in Gilroy's first employment as a teacher further highlight how she is confronted with anti-black racism and stereotypes: "Black people, real black people, mark you — not brown like you — make me scared. I touch me crucifix before I pass'em.'" (*Black Teacher* 49) Mrs. Benn emphasises the hierarchy of otherness, implying that the darker the skin the lower the position within society. Gilroy's response shows how she rejects the concept of blackness that permeates British society: "How I hated that word 'black' and the emotions, concepts and associations it aroused!" (50) The decision to put the word black in quotations marks stresses how the term is being coined by British society in this situation. Gilroy cannot identify with blackness and its correlation with negativity, recalling how blackness is historically linked to social death and non-being. Another colleague, Mrs. Burleigh, emphasises the different status Gilroy has within the school. She constantly assaults Gilroy and asks her to use the lavatory at the nearby tube station instead of the one at the school, as well as making her bring her own tea cup and eating alone: "I

went into exile. I ate, splendidly isolated, in the classroom." (74) Burleigh is also afraid that Gilroy might be contagious: "As far as she was concerned I was a carrier of fearful tropical diseases." (52) These racist encounters are summarised by Burleigh's question: "You're not one of *us*, are you?" (53; original emphasis) Burleigh's conception of what it means to be human does not include Gilroy and her question exposes her racist attitude towards her. Gilroy's responds: "I'm not English and I'm not Catholic but I'm a cracking good teacher. And that's what it's all about." (ibid.) Gilroy confronts her colleague in that she does not address her own skin colour but rather defines herself through her profession. Again her response expresses resistance and shows her quick-wittedness when directly confronted with racism. Hereby, she confronts her colleague with her open racism and also escapes the negativity attached to blackness. Rather, Gilroy focusses on her role as a teacher, defining herself through her education and work and not through the dominant conception of blackness.

The fact that blackness is understood as a marker of inferiority also appears in Gilroy's contact with her pupils. Gilroy mentions that her pupils often implied that she were living in a tree and eating people (see *Leaves* 10). There were no representations of black people the children had been confronted with except colonial stereotypes of black people as barbarous and uncivilised. Gilroy further notes that: "What these children were saying was what Thomas Tyron the vegetarian and mystic said about us in 1680 and what Edward Long also said in 1772 namely that we are 'eternal savages'." (ibid.) These stereotypes run through history and through each generation so that the image of the "eternal savages" survives and is re-enacted and internalised by Gilroy's pupils. Gilroy traces a historical trajectory here in which the experience of black people is solely presented through British colonial accounts. The image of "eternal savages" that survived up until the 1950s when Gilroy migrated to London plainly shows how black people were not considered human beings. In another situation, when she tries to help one of her pupils deal with a wasp that had landed on the girl's neck, the pupil conveys a similar form of racism as Mrs. Burleigh did: "Don't ever touch me. Keep your hands off me!" (*Black Teacher* 63). The pupil's reaction of terror and rejection at the slightest touch or help by Gilroy triggers a form of colour consciousness in herself:

> When we got back to our classrooms I began looking at my hands, almost as if I were seeing them for the first time. […] I took this new consciousness with me. At every introduction a handshake became a challenge. I dared not dance although I loved to dance in case some partner by look or gesture should reject my hands. (ibid.)

Gilroy's changed self-awareness highlights the status of black people as being socially dead within a society that is based on humanist ideals. The "new consciousness" implies the knowledge of not

being part of the conception of the human being but rather representing its other. For this reason, basic acts such a handshake and a dance turn into a challenge. Gilroy reveals how "existing" as a black woman in British society is a constant struggle, thus stressing the impact of a racial hierarchy. Being black is a marker for a defect, as Gilroy points out by revisiting a conversation with a woman whose face is disfigured due to a fire during the war: "'Your colour's like my face,' she said. 'We've both got physical defects.'" (115) Blackness is compared to a physical disfigurement and emphasises how racism is also biologically informed which resonates with Jones' experience of donating her blood. Gilroy traces the ideologies of anti-black racism and how they form an integral part of British society. Being confronted with her own black skin as comparable to burned skin, also recalls Jones' "super-exploitation" of black women and their triply exploited status, as well as Wynter's thesis that black people form the ultimate other and symbolic death to Man and its conception of the human. Her novel, *Boy Sandwich,* relates to this experience and illustrates another aspect of anti-black racism, namely how open violence against black people is part of British society. It illustrates how "a grammar of suffering" is implemented in the life of the main character Tyrone Grainger and his family and friends (Wilderson *Red, White & Black* 11). Tyrone's conversations with his grandparents and his encounters with violence against black people exemplify how black people are displaced as "anti-Human[s]" (ibid.).

The confrontation with open violence underlines how Tyrone's life and environment is based on the social death of black people. Numerous instances in the novel emphasise how anti-black violence is part of British society, as racist mobs, the murder of Tyrone's brother and an attack on a black music club highlight. As Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* beforehand has shown within the context of planation slavery, *Boy Sandwich* similarly deals with brutality and loss and how violence is embedded as a form of securing black people's displacement. The opening of the novel is a case in point here. A violent mob confronts Tyrone, his parents and his grandparents, who are leaving their home in order to move into a house for elderly people:

> Clutching their Union Jacks, they thumped their chests as they chanted, 'Nigs out!' 'Schwartzers out!' We stopped close to the front door. The racists booed and held their flags high. My grandparents, dressed and waiting, had heard it all before. Those days would never return but they would always live in memory." (*Boy Sandwich* 2)

The confrontation with a racist mob introduces all three generations of characters, highlighting that almost over fifty years after migrating to Great Britain, Tyrone and his family are still confronted with open anti-black tendencies. The police's response emphasises how anti-black violence is a structural phenomenon: "You may not like what they're saying but free speech is what we British

are all about" (2) This statement is not only tainted by ridicule but exposes the open vulnerability of black bodies within a system that displaces them as non-humans: "'Don't touch him! yelled my mother. 'He's not a person in your world! Get off him!'" (3) Tyrone's mother draws a clear distinction between two worlds here, a world that distinguishes between humans and non-humans and a world to which the family and their own conception of the human belongs. This also stresses that there is not one universal claim to the conception of the human. Rather, Tyrone's mother exposes the racist's "ethnocentric mind" and its inhuman and abnormal behaviours and attitude towards black people (Gilroy *Leaves* 5). The mob that confronts Tyrone and his family exemplifies the "terror" that processes of dehumanisation inflict upon black people (see ibid.). Tyrone's mother's conception of her world also includes her own understanding of what it means to be human, which challenges a British and racist concept of the human. The ensuing outbreak of violence further shows how Tyrone's family is oppressed and humiliated: "before we could drive off a small group of militants encircled us, banging on the roof and rocking the car. Grandpa wet himself. My dad began to wheeze." (3) The short sentence structure emphasises the effects of racial violence, namely fear and anxiety, expressed through the bodily responses of Tyrone's grandfather and father. Concentrating on their reactions, Tyrone highlights how dehumanisation is part of their lives. Their responses underline the impact of racist assaults and how this experience results in a violation of their bodies. In this situation Tyrone reconnects his grandparents to their humanness, interpreting their fear and anxiety as a musical element: "My grandparents were softly crying — it was as if they were singing a very sad song about their fears and and the noises that now echoed in their heads." (ibid.) Comparing their crying with a song, Gilroy turns their grief and fear into a poetic element, turning the attention away from the violence towards their emotions. Tyrone's family inside the car represents creativity and emotion, which is contrasted with the drastic and aggressive form of violence happening outside. This stark contrast highlights the non-human attributes of the mob outside, like their blind rage and rabid actions, recalling animalistic characteristics rather than human ones: "Everything will be OK. Racists hunt in packs — like wolves." (ibid.) Tyrone's comment further underlines the western humanist conception of the human as Man and its non-human counterparts is reversed and subverted. The enactment of racial violence proves the abnormality Gilroy reveals in anti-blackness. Simon Grainger later in the novel comments on the status of black people as non-humans: "To dem we is worms, creatures feedin' on rubbish dey do not want. Dey do not want de rubbish and dey do not want dem who need it to get it.' (20) The comparison of black people with worms shows how he is aware of the different conceptions of the human within British society, realising that he himself is at the bottom of a

hierarchy of humanness. Tyrone's comment again creates a contrast between the displacement of black people and how he himself experiences his grandfather: "He had his own diction, his own imagery and words flowed from him like water." (ibid.) While in the earlier scene Tyrone compares his grandparents' tears to a song, here it is aquatic imagery that accentuates his grandfather's language. He underlines his grandfather's creativity and ability to put emotions into words, stressing his grandfather's humanness in the face of his own description of black people as lowly creatures. Tyrone portrays his speech as a way to counter dehumanising structures and to escape a system that constantly displaces both characters. The aquatic imagery underlines his grandfather's resistance against a western understanding of the human, as it represents the fluidity and changeability of water, contrasting the static and binary representation of humans and non-humans.

Throughout the novel Tyrone encounters numerous instances in which black people are confronted with being displaced as the ultimate other and emphasises how blackness is linked with non-being as a systemic aspect of British society. Tyrone investigates how processes of dehumanisation are embedded within the society he lives in. Two experiences that affect his life are the death of his brother Goldberg in an open street and the trauma of his girlfriend Adijah, who experiences a bomb attack on the music club she works in at the time. In both situations Tyrone is confronted with open violence against black people:

> He walked dancingly down the street to some silent, intricate tunes inside his head. People noticed him and called out to him. That fatal day he went out to buy the *New Musical Express*. It was a Friday morning. He did not return. A brick was thrown at him from a speeding truck. It was a large brick. It struck him on the head. No one saw who threw the brick. (36)

Like in Tyrone's portrayal of his grandparents, his brother's appearance and movement are connected with creativity through musical imagery. His characterisation as a fun-loving, creative person strongly contrasts the violent and brutal murder. Tyrone draws a distinction between life as embodied by his brother and death embodied by the unknown murderer. The passage of his murder is reduced to the most basic information, as the staccato-like description and short, parallel sentence structures emphasise, further contrasting Tyrone's description of his brother. The otherwise emotionally charged language Gilroy uses is drastically changed here, particularly when comparing the quote to Tyrone's portrayal of his grandparents' reactions to racism. The actual scene of the murder stands out because of the neutrality of the language. Tyrone does not ponder on who the person might have been or why Goldberg was killed. The matter-of-factness of his death is not merely a coping strategy to deal with loss, but also reveals how Goldberg is in fact what Hartman calls a fungible object — "an object made available" (*Subjection* 38). There are no words that

adequately describe Tyrone's feelings, recalling Wilderson's understanding of blackness in terms of "narrative absence" ("*Social Death*" 135). Tyrone's neutral tone transports his emotional response onto a meta-level that, to use Wilderson's term, "haunts" the text and its "*meaning*" (ibid.). Challenging Inkle's white perspective and portrayal of violence against black people, Gilroy chooses Tyrone's black perspective in order to relate to the experience of anti-black violence. The fact that she does not engages with Tyrone's emotional response to his brother's death only highlights that it is in fact impossible to represent a "historical truth" in terms of black people's exposure to systemic violence and their status as non-humans (Nyong'o 61). Next to his brother's murder, it is his girlfriend's experience of anti-black violence that lets Tyrone question the social structures he lives in. Tyrone's girlfriend Adijah works as a DJ in a club with her brother, when there is an attack and explosion. Again, the character who is under attack is associated with music as a creative way of expressing oneself, which counters the brutality and violence that fills their lives as black people in London: "Some were burnt alive, others choked to death by deadly smoke from furnishings when the bomb thrown into the house exploded in a fury of destruction." (*Boy Sandwich* 77) Tyrone's description of the acts of violence emphasises the sheer brutality he witnesses and leaves him disenchanted, questioning the make-up of the land he lives in:

> I ask myself again and again, why, nearly forty years after the coming of my grandparents to this land that was the source of their beliefs about life and civilised living, people burn others, deny others' capacity to feel and applaud their terror and their death. (76)

Exposing how anti-black violence spans generations, he further criticises humanism's universal claim to the conception of the human. Tyrone highlights the ongoing forms of dehumanisation against his family, his friends and, more generally, against black people in Britain. This reveals how deeply black people's dehumanisation is embedded in western civilisations. In this sense, racism, as a concept that evolved within a humanist mindset, transcends temporal and geographical boundaries. Gilroy and Jones both emphasise the structural nature of racism, from which they conclude why it is necessary to challenge and counter black people's representations within their autobiographical and fictional accounts. The generational trajectory of violence chapter 3.1. and 3.2. elaborate on already shows why it is necessary to revisit a history and historical accounts that are based on the dehumanisation of black people. Their representations of open racism and processes of dehumanisation legitimises and explains the relevance of critiquing and challenging humanism's conception of the human from their black female Caribbean perspectives. Their links to recent discourses on race such as Afro-pessimism further highlights that their critique continues to be of central importance to keep addressing the unequal humanism structures of western societies.

4. Writing History: Counter Narratives to Humanist Historic Accounts in Beryl Gilroy's, Claudia Jones' and Sylvia Wynter's Works

The creative works of Gilroy, Jones and Wynter span a wide range of historic events of almost over 500 years. They address the history of the enslavement of African peoples, the history of the middle passage and plantation slavery in the Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora and migration experience in the United Stated and United Kingdom. Their work offers a historical critique of colonialism and imperialism in which Gilroy, Jones and Wynter focus on movements of resistance, as for example Maroon settlements in Jamaica, or political activism in the United States and United Kingdom. All three intellectuals contradict a western historic account of colonialism and its history and interconnections with humanism by using alternative methods and strategies to narrate history. Frequently inanimate objects and natural forces appear as agents who witness and recall historic events, the appearance of liminal characters offer a unique insight into a distinct Caribbean history, reflecting upon a position as "external observers" (see Wynter "Ceremony" 56) and the use of oral story telling combines a Caribbean and African tradition of reproducing history. What is more, the narrative and poetic perspectives in Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work often blur boundaries between the voice of the authors and their characters and lyrical personae. Redefining and advancing literary standards of writing, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter narrate history from a black, female perspective. Their work in this context is an expression of resistance and epistemic intervention in itself.

Each intellectual offers a different critique of the writing of history within a western, humanist framework. on their individual rewritings of history and highlight how it is possible to use their marginalised positions in order to rewrite themselves inside history itself. Claudia Jones' approach to the concept history focusses on a reintegrating the role of political activism and resistance beginning with slavery rebellions:

> The task remains to enhance the knowledge of the true history: of the Morant Bay anti-slavery rebellion, the glorious Maroons, the early anti-colonial struggles of Captain Cipriani, or of Critchlows trade unionism or of the significance of the movement towards closer West Indian federation ("Caribbean" 180)

Jones offers room for marginalised historical accounts that disrupt the classic western historic narration of colonialism. She focusses on active forms of resistance within colonialism and struggles for Caribbean independence. Her concept of a "true history" refers to the blank spots within colonial history that omit black people's responses to colonial oppression. Her work extents historic accounts and disrupts historic narratives. Within this context, her approach to history as one

that needs to re-integrate a black perspective that goes beyond processes of dehumanisation and victimisation resonates with Gilroy's and Wynter's critique of history as a concept that is always already informed by humanist and imperialist thought. Wynter argues "[t]he *history* for Man […] narrated and existentially lived as if it were the *history-for* the human itself. So what I am saying here is that up until now, there has been no history of the human." ("Re-Enchantment" 198; original emphasis) And Gilroy asserts "the bias shown against the conquered or the colonised makes 'history' ambiguous, ethnocentric, factitious and imprecise." (*Leaves* 78) Wynter and Gilroy both expose that history has been written by European powers who disregard a distinct Caribbean perspective and are structurally embedded within the ideology of humanism. Wynter asserts that history does only represent Man's perspective, highlighting why it is necessary to combine a redefinition of the human and a rewriting of history within literary works. Gilroy stresses how binary oppositions are integral part of historic accounts, recalling Hartman's critique of history as a concept that is based on structural racism and black people's discrimination (see Hartman "Venus" 12-13). While both offer a critique of western accounts of history, they also follow Jones' approach in enhancing history through their black, Caribbean perspectives, challenging the absence of black representations (see Wilderson "*Social Death*" 135). Key to their rewriting of history is a focus on the power of creative texts and their means of undermining western accounts of history. Wynter argues: "Yet, in the interstices of history, we see, in glimpses, evidences of a powerful and pervasive cultural process which has largely determined the unconscious springs of our being (Wynter "Jonkonnu" 35). Gilroy similarly states "impreciseness, renders history open to creative manipulation by writers. We need to explore the space between writing about people who are seen as 'the other'" (*Leaves* 78). Wynter's term "interstices" and Gilroy's "space between writing" address both the potential of their external perspectives and stress that from within their marginalisation their literature is able to reconstruct and shape historic events by undermining classic notions of historic facts and objective sources. Through a combination of cultural expression and historic account Gilroy, Jones and Wynter are able to narrate a history from a marginalised perspective.

All three intellectuals put an emphasis on how their work is not part of mainstream historical accounts, but rather takes on an external observer's point of view and liminal perspective. An examination of the concept liminality in connection with Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's own position as liminal, colonial subjects frames their approach to history within their literary works. Their essays further conceptualise their definitions of history and emphasise why it is necessary to revisit and rewrite history from a black, Caribbean, female perspective. Their non-conformity to

historical representations of black people and their own liminality as marginalised scholars enable them to critique and challenge humanism, as Wynter highlights:

> My liminality comes from the fact that in my lifetime I was born a colonial subject and I think that in many ways I'll always remain grateful for that because the knowledge it gives you is something you have to arrive at existentially […] in the world I am still liminal because I'm black and a woman – but I'll be very honest with you, far more because I'm black. […] I am therefore part of that liminal group continually questioning." (Wynter qtd. in Bogues 317; original emphasis)

Commenting on her own liminal position — and in extension also Jones' and Gilroy's — Wynter highlights how the status of a colonial subject and liminality are intertwined. Wynter connects her own status as a liminal status with her experience of displacement as a colonial subject in the Caribbean. Wynter expresses thankfulness for her liminality, as she reinterprets it a source for her resistance and creativity, resonating with NourbeSe Philip's reinterpretation of displacement and marginality (see 58). Wynter's liminal position and therefore external observer's status positions her outside of the western conception of the human. By stressing that she is part of a group she focusses on the idea of an intellectual community that survives and resists racial displacement while confronting humanist ideologies. The memory of her past and how it shaped the structures that led to Wynter's liminal status are essential for her understanding of her own subject position. In this regard, Wynter's approach to "liminality" opens up a category for black representation within historic accounts.

The space of liminality is intrinsically linked with the historic Caribbean context beginning with the enslavement of African people and plantation slavery. Smallwood argues that enslaved people experience "a rite of passage" by being forcefully transformed into commodities (Smallwood 60). Through the experience of social death black people enter a stage of liminality. However, by using liminal characters and lyrical personae within their creative works as subjects who reconceptualise and narrate history, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter move beyond a western understanding of liminality in the sense of experiencing social death. Rather, they emphasise through their representations of liminal subjects in their works how black people use their external position and transform them into a source of agency and resistance. In this regard, their use of liminal subjects as agents of change and resistance resonates with Legesse's understanding of liminality, who argues that a liminal subject "generates conscious change by exposing all the injustice inherent in structure" (Legesse qtd. in Maldonado-Torres 190). Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's use of liminality therefore is key to their own resistance against humanist structures and conception of the human. Through their own liminal perspective which correlates with that of their characters' and lyrical personae, they can

implement their own conception of what it means to be human while challenging western historic accounts and humanist representations of Man (see Maldonado-Torres 203). Wynter's novel *The Hills of Hebron* (1962) and her play *Maskarade* (1970) both focus on the history of colonialism from the perspective of "society's expendable *damnés*" (Wynter "Re-Enchantment" 135; original emphasis).[44] The characters who narrate or offer their views on historic events belong to a group of people that are considered part of the underclass of Caribbean society, who are jobless, poor and with a few exceptions illiterate (see Boyce-Davies "*Maskarade*" 219-220). Wynter instrumentalises this marginalised perspective by using the concept of the liminal subject as a substitute for the *damnés,* stressing their external observer status and thus their resistance to the humanist understanding of the human (see Bogues 328). Jones' poetry similarly addresses history from a liminal perspective, often blurring the lines between her own liminal status and that of the voices within her poems. Using non-human agents who bear witness to historical events with an emphasis on colonialism and exile, she also focuses on the lyrical personae and their expressions of political activism and resistance of black Caribbean women throughout history. Gilroy's novels *Inkle and Yarico* and *Boy Sandwich* as well as her autobiography *Black Teacher* span the history of black people in the Caribbean from accounts of the enslavement of African peoples to the black Caribbean diaspora and the migration experience in the United Kingdom. They also integrate Gilroy's own personal experience as a liminal subject as well as her rewriting of history within her creative work.

4.1. Non-Human Agents as Witnesses of Colonial History in Jones' "Paean to the Atlantic", Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and Gilroy's *Boy Sandwich*

Gilroy, Jones and Wynter offer a black female perspective on the history of Caribbean peoples through their fictional work. They reveal European historic accounts as being biased by anti-blackness and grounded in black people's dehumanisation. Interestingly, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter similarly shift the focus towards their natural surroundings and cultural artefacts, which enables their work to challenge humanism's emphasis on putting Man centre stage. The three works discussed in this chapter predominantly narrate history through the use of non-human agents such as natural forces, plants, animals and cultural artefacts. Nature in this context is a living, subjective entity and not a realm which needs to be conquered or subdued. The central role of natural elements and the importance of objects' legacies reject an understanding of the human that centres around the

[44] For further clarification of the term "les damnés" please see Franz Fanon's "The Wretched of the Earth".

individual. Rather, the characters and lyrical persona are depicted as being in tune with their environment. Non-human agents offer an alternative to classic western accounts of history and focus on black people's responses to historic events. By evading humanism's hierarchy of humans and non-humans, non-human agents rewrite colonial history from the perspective of the colonised, grappling with colonialism and its aftermath. These objects and forces open up another possibility of a critique of humanism, as they appear outside of a discourse on history, taking on the perspective of external witnesses. Recalling the positionality of black female intellectuals as "external observers", the use of natural imagery and cultural artefacts underlines how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter not only rewrite history, but also implement their own conceptions of what it means to be human within their work (see Wynter "Ceremony" 56). Their perspectives on history is mingled with their view on the environment of their characters and address quite literally the "interstices of history" (Wynter "Jonkonnu" 35) and the "space between writing" (Gilroy *Leaves* 78) in order to formulate their version of a "true history" (Jones "Caribbean" 180).

The natural realm opens up an alternative approach to writing history as well as subverting a humanist understanding of nature. Nature as an entity is highlighted as going beyond a mere ground for labour in that non-human elements, such as natural forces and natural surroundings, recall historic events and offer an alternative to western accounts of history. In order to explain the importance of nature within a Caribbean context, Wynter explains that "the discovery of the New World" initiated "the conquest of Nature by western Man", linking power relations between coloniser and colonised to the land itself ("Jonkonnu" 35). The use of natural imagery accordingly undermines the colonisers' understanding of Caribbean nature as land that must be invaded and ultimately cultivated for Man's own profits, laying the grounds for the plantation economy, as Wynter underlines: "Nature became land; and land, if it were to be exploited, needed not *men* […] but so many units of labour power. (ibid.; original emphasis) In their work, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter approach the land *as* nature, as an agent in itself, a living entity in tune with their characters and lyrical personae. The predominant role of nature opposes the European process of economically exploiting the land and the enslaved. This is constantly emphasised through personifications of nature and similes through which Jones' "Paean to the Atlantic", Gilroy's B*oy Sandwich* and Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* address the memory of the past such as the enslavement of African people as well as plantation slavery. Memory is conceptually linked with the natural realm here as natural imagery creatively enables a "bridge from the past to the present that redresses the wrongs of history" (Snyder referring to Hartman 43). In this regard, memory offers a way to address the past as a "site of rupture" in which "[t]he recognition of loss is a crucial element in redressing the

breach introduced by slavery." (Hartman *Subjection* 74) Natural forces that are disruptive elements in itself, but also artefacts as objects that come directly from the past, underline how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter rewrite history while at the same time constantly challenging it not only with their character's and lyrical personae's displacement in historic accounts, but also with their very own marginalisation within a western discourse on colonial history.

Jones' poem revisits the experience of migrations through the imagery of the Atlantic ocean and challenges black women's displacement and victimisation within historic accounts. "Paean to the Atlantic" introduces natural forces as ambiguous entities that reflect upon the memory of the past and particularly highlight how ruptures are an integral element to the rewriting of history as well as the imagery of natural entities. Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron*, shifts the focus onto the experience of colonisation, including a reinterpretation of the middle passage and plantation slavery. Through natural imagery, the discovery of hidden cultural artefacts and a communal narration with an emphasis on oral story telling, Wynter narrates history from the perspective of the New Believers, stressing their resistance and survival. Gilroy's novel *Boy Sandwich* focusses on her character Tyrone's rediscovery of family heirlooms as well as natural imagery in order to address their Caribbean past. While Jones and Wynter offer a broader perspective on history, Gilroy concentrates on the individual history of Tyrone's family, tracing connections between the history of colonisation and Caribbean diaspora.

The poem "Paean to the Atlantic"[45] was written on Jones' journey to London in 1955 on board the *Queen Elizabeth* (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 117). In the poem, the Atlantic ocean turns into an agent and witness of historic events. The title sets the tone for the poem and alludes to the classic Greek genre of a "paean" which "is a genre of song to be performed by a chorus, […] the paean often includes praise and invocation of Apollo, and sometimes themes of civic and collective importance." (Barchiesi 113) Rather than praising classical gods and mythology, the poem foremost praises the Atlantic in all its vastness and beauty, emphasising the oceans' positive attributes. The speech situation of the lyrical persona and author Claudia Jones is somewhat ambiguous as the poem is an extension of her "Ship's Log — December 19, 1955" which she wrote during her deportation to London. Jones writes about her experiences *aboard* and herself calls it a "Ship Diary or Log" which she addresses to her father with an endearing preamble.[46] The diary entry ends with

[45] This study uses Boyce-Davies copy of the poem as she prints it in *Left of Karl Marx*. The source she refers to is "Claudia Jones Papers, Claudia Jones Memorial Collection" (see *Left* 119). In *Beyond* the poem has three stanzas, as the first two are not separated after the fourth line (see 195).

[46] Jones writes: "My dear daddy: Remember I promised to send you my Ship's Log so that you may see how we spent our Crossing." (*Beyond* 193)

an introduction to her poem: "(I write my poem to the sea — it burst from me after churning inside all day…) I call it…" (*Beyond* 194) The poem itself is part of Jones' reflection on her own crossing of the Atlantic and for this reason her own voice and that of the speaker of the poem are linked. Here, the lines between Jones' subjectivity and that of the lyrical persona blur. The poem is a creative expression of Jones' experiences and extends her Ship's Log with another insight on the Atlantic ocean, focussing on the movement the ocean undertakes and has witnessed throughout time:

> To watch your ceaseless motion
> Your foam and tideful billows view
> Is but to gleam your beauty
> Of immemorial hue
>
> Oh, restless wide Atlantic
> Path of nations old and new
> Asylum path of peoples
> Bound to social progress true
>
> I stand awe-struck before you
> As swiftly league on league
> You cradle us to lands — accrue
> Of mankind's search for freedom's clue
>
> To understand your motion
> Is to reason why like you
> Millions move towards ascension
> Nurtured by your ancient dew
> (*Left* 119)

The structure of the poem as well as its imagery is characterised by contrasting elements. Recalling historic events and the history of diverse movements across the Atlantic ocean quite literally represents a "site of rupture" (Hartman *Subjection* 74). The Atlantic, being described as a "path of nations old and new" acts as the witness who recalls the ruptures travellers have experienced throughout time; their separations, reunions and foremost journeys (*Left* 119). On the one hand there is the imagery of movements, recalling the waves and flowing motions of the water. In this context, Stam and Shohat argue that particularly in diaspora studies, scholars use "aquatic imagery" in order to establish a "poetics of flows [which] is deployed as a dissolvent of borders and binarisms" (Stam and Shohat 496). On the other hand, the structure of the poem is disrupted by the use of punctuation as well as ambiguous speech situation. Contradictory elements that exist

alongside the aquatic imagery, highlight how the rewriting of history is in fact a process that is characterised by disruptions and conflicts.

The lyrical persona revisits the history of travelling, might that be of voluntary or involuntary nature and bestows agency upon each traveller. The initial positive tone and element of praise introduced by the title gets a new meaning when looking at the ambiguous speech situation and the fact that Jones is being deported. Jones (and in extension her lyrical persona) stresses the possibilities of her journey rather than highlighting the form of displacement she experiences as a black woman. The speech situation of the poem sheds light on how the lyrical persona expresses her subjectivity, addressing the Atlantic Ocean as well as integrating her own journey within the wider scope of history. The lyrical I addresses the ocean in each stanza by either using the name in connection with an exclamation ("Oh, restless wide Atlantic"), or the pronouns "you" and "your". It is noticeable that the first person pronoun "I" appears only once in the middle of the poem at the beginning of the third stanza: "I stand awe-struck before you" (*Left* 119). It returns the focus on the lyrical persona's own subjectivity and voice which structurally takes on a dominant place right in the centre of the poem. Here, the black female voice — representing Jones the author and the lyrical persona — contributes to the narration of historic events as a witness and agent in her own right. Next to the use of "I", the dash in the third line stands out as one of the only instances of punctuation used in the poem. The dash as well as the use of the first person pronoun work against the otherwise flowing rhythm of the poem which is underlined by the enjambments after each line. Disruptive and flowing elements create a certain tension for the otherwise positive tone of praise for the Atlantic. The lyrical persona relates her own experience to that of people who have crossed the ocean before her. She counts herself as one of them by addressing the ocean and using the plural pronoun "us". The continuous alternation of contrasting elements is further underlined by the imagery that depicts the ocean. By using the term "cradle" the ocean is personified in the motherly motion of rocking a child to sleep. The line "You cradle us to lands" depicts the crossing and journey as peaceful, highlighting the ocean as an agent who protects the travellers from harm. Yet again, this atmosphere is disrupted by the following line and further underlines the structural importance of the dash as a disruptive figure: "— accrue / Of mankind's search for freedom's clue" (ibid.). The dash puts an emphasis on the word "lands" as well as the following description of how the lands came into existence. Key here is "mankind's search for freedom's clue", which serves as the motivation for travelling in the first place. The ocean is related to the ideal of freedom that people hope to find. Mankind addresses all people here, deliberately omitting possible social, or racial hierarchies.

The representation of the ocean draws up images of the migrations of people it has witnessed throughout the centuries, as well as foreshadowing future transnational crossings. By addressing the Atlantic's past and not explicitly including the journey and aftermath of the middle passage emphasises the lyrical persona's will to grow out of the image of black female displacement and victimisation. This is reflected by the ocean which is in constant motion, emphasising change and possibilities. The movement across the ocean is not specified in that it reveals a specific direction. This emphasises that the journey across is not linear or one-dimensional but rather characterises movement as a form of circulation between the continents the Atlantic borders. Boyce Davies refers to the Atlantic in this context as "a vast space of possibility that has served as a conduit of numerous peoples, of all types, in both directions." (Boyce-Davies *Left* 119) She reveals that Jones does not address issues of race, class, gender or ethnicity, but highlights her own political and personal conviction about the equality of all people. The lyrical persona relates to Jones' political activism here as she emphasises the image of unity among people who travel in various directions, highlighting one common motivation — their search for freedom. Although Jones is being deported, she emphasises positive attributes connected to her journey and classifies her experiences along many other journeys black women have taken before her and will take in the years to come (see 118). Hereby, Jones challenges her own displacement as a black Caribbean woman and creatively redefines her position as a deportee as well as activist and intellectual (see 120). Her poem is in this sense a literary intervention, offering a critical black female response to what came to be known as the formations within the Black Atlantic. Jones does not emphasise a shared historical and contemporary experience of black women's oppression, which always includes a discussion of racial or social conflicts. Nor does she focus on shared pain, or a "common experience of powerlessness" (Gilroy *Union Jack* 158). Rather, she moves beyond representations of victimisation, stressing her own performative power as a black woman who is being forcefully displaced due to her political conviction. Like Beryl Gilroy and Sylvia Wynter, Jones offers a historic alternative of how she defines what it means to be human, revolving around the imagery of change and possibilities while never disregarding the conflicts and struggles connected to the expression of an alternative history.

The motif of remembering and rewriting history repeatedly occurs in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and is reflected through the imagery of nature, inanimate objects and predominantly the novel's communal narrator. While Jones' poem positions the imagery of the Atlantic centre stage to address the past of the Atlantic Ocean by creatively engaging with the Atlantic as a metaphor for movement and possibilities, the novel removes non-human agents to a meta-level, to comment on

Jamaica's colonial history. By doing so, Wynter creates a similar effect as Jones, but *The Hills of Hebron*'s narrative composition such as plot, character constellations and the narrated world removes, undermines and implements within the novel a rewriting of history through the use of natural imagery, objects and the theme of orality. Orality in this context represents a Caribbean alternative to the narration of history. The communal narrator represents all the people living in Hebron, offering a collective from of memory. Wynter's novel relates to Gilroy's understanding of orality here in that it opens up an alternative way to express a specific Caribbean tradition and therefore distinct Caribbean history (see Gilroy *Leaves* 14). Hebron, as a Caribbean community that confronts their past, negates their displacement within western accounts of history.

The narrator predominately uses colonial imagery to describe the natural surroundings, creating a tense atmosphere. The portrayal of Caribbean nature intensifies the aftermath of colonisation and almost appears haunted by the memory of enslavement and plantation slavery:

> Up on the further reaches of the hills, the great trees allowed their branches to be raped, and hoarded life in their roots, their trunks. Beneath them the exposed coffee plants, the cocoa trees that had once drooped golden pods like rich gifts, perished. The New Believers looked out on a skeleton world, etched in muted browns and beaten down, subdued, under the conqueror sun. (40)

Words like "raped," "beaten down," "subdued" and "conqueror sun" invoke the history of plantation slavery. The description of cocoa and coffee plants adds to this impression, as they were some of the predominant products cultivated on plantations. The sun is associated with death as the force which brings destruction to the land. The narrator compares the destruction caused by the drought, under which the New Believers suffer, with the destruction caused by colonisation. The natural surroundings, described as a "skeleton world" embody the violence and degrading conditions the enslaved had to endure. Nature recalls historic events in order to address the colonial history and process this traumatic past. At the same time the natural imagery removes this past from the current situation in Hebron. Although it is invoked by the language it appears to not affect the New Believers directly and rather lingers in the background of their memories. By removing colonial history onto the level of imagery, the novel highlights a form of narrating history that focusses on creative expressions rather than facts or sources. Creativity appears to be the key here in order to escape a western approach to the writing of history and opens up the possibility to challenge black people's absence and silenced voices from historic accounts (see Hartman 11). Also, by implementing history within the imagery of the novel, Wynter resonates with Wilderson's argument that "[s]ocial death haunts *meaning* at its meta-level ("*Social Death*" 135). In Wynter's novel it quite literally haunts the environment of the characters, resurfacing again and again, thus

challenging black people's "narrative absence" within western accounts of history (ibid.). Nature, in this context goes beyond representing classic colonial binaries, as the quote highlights. While the personification of tress which are raped and the sun personified as a "conqueror" draws up the imagery of the coloniser and the colonised, the natural environment goes beyond this straight forward distinction. Although it appears that the trees and plants are dying, they are still associated with life, as stressed by the choice of words like "hoarded life" and the simile "drooped golden pods like rich gifts" (*Hebron* 40). The life depicted here focusses on the past and expresses that even under dire condition such as planation slavery black people have been in fact alive. Natural imagery not only challenges the humanist understanding that "Blackness *is* social death" (Wilderson "*Social Death*" 139), but also implements the general theme of rewriting history within Wynter's novel (see Wynter "Word of Man" 639).

Apart from the natural imagery, it is the communal narrator who connects the New Believers with their environment and their shared past. In this regard, Kelly Barker Josephs emphasises that the changing narrative perspective between the third person narrator that focalises on individual characters and the community as a whole "reflect[s] a seamless connection between the individual and the community." (46) This collective voice alternating with different singular perspectives recalls the theme of orality and its focus on collectivity.[47] This plural perspective as a form to narrate history counters historic accounts written by individual authors or historians. The communal narration implements a strong sense of community inside Wynter's novel as well as a reconnection to cultural heritage through cultural artefacts. All three aspects — the natural environment, cultural artefacts from the past and the communal narration — combined challenge an assumed loss of cultural heritage caused by the forced dispersal of black people including the middle passage and plantation slavery as well as colonial influences and the community's displacement within historic accounts. Revisiting and most importantly rewriting the historic memory of the middle passage with a focus on black people's resistance, Wynter asserts black people's humanness as well as challenging their absence from historic accounts. Her focus strongly differs from Jones' portrayal of the Atlantic ocean as a space that offers new possibilities and change for the travellers that cross it. However, what both intellectual share is their black female response to the assumed lack of agency and silencing of black people who have crossed the ocean. Both counter black people's

[47] Josephs also argues that the communal narrator can be one of the remains of the original version of *The Hills of Hebron*, which was a play (see 46). It reminds the reader of a dramatic chorus, in which a collective voice comments on themes and actions in a play and gives background information, often including musical elements as well.

representations as victims and rather highlight their responses towards processes of displacement and dehumanisation.

The communal narrator gives insight into the consciousness of the community, while also reconnecting the New Believers with the natural surroundings lost during the middle passage. As the narrative voice goes back in time, recalling the memory of the New Believers' ancestors, it also reinterprets the experience of enslavement and social death, rejecting the non-human status of the New Believers within a colonial context. Rather the emphasis lies on the communities ongoing survival and resistance:

> The instinct for survival was as strong in them as in their slave ancestors. Some weight of memory in their blood carried the ghosts of dark millions who had perished, coffined in the holds of ships, so that some could live to breed more slaves; and they, after their freedom had been won, survived the rootless years. They survived the loss of gods and devils that were their own, of familiar trees and hills and huts and spears and cooking pots, of their own land in which to see some image of themselves. And their descendants the New Believers, survived the exodus from Cockpit Centre, the passage through the wilderness and up to the hills of Hebron, where Prophet Moses had promised them those things that had been lost in their trespass across the seas, across the centuries." (*Hebron* 52)

Beginning with the middle passage and the journey on the slave ships, the narrator proceeds with the diasporic experience in the Caribbean and finally remembers the migration to Hebron. The excessive use of plural pronouns like "they," "them" and "their" emphasise this collective memory. Furthermore, the narrator underlines that the preceding generations and New Believers share the same past which is stressed by the simile in the first sentence: "The instinct for survival was *as* strong in them *as* in their slave ancestors." The simile contradicts general representations of victimisation and focusses instead on their ancestors' strength and survival skills. In remembering the past the narrator gives a voice to the community of Hebron as well as to their ancestors. In addition, by drawing a connection to their "slave ancestors," which includes African people as well as indigenous people from the Caribbean, the communal narrator establishes an ancestral home in the face of forced uprooting. This link is further intensified through the memory of the middle passage. In a flashback the narrator recalls the slave ship and its passage across the Atlantic ocean. Words such as "ghosts of dark millions," "perished," and "coffined" emphasise the horrid conditions and address different forms of violence the enslaved had to endure. Metaphorically the terms all refer to death, or a death-like state. The image of the living-dead is particularly noteworthy through the terms "ghosts" and "coffined" and portrays the slave ship as synonymous with death. Smallwood calls it a "deadly place" and refers to how this is linguistically visible in African languages: "Slave ships were called *tumbeiros* in the eighteenth-century Angolan trade […] a term

historians have translated as ‘floating tombs’ or ‘undertakers’” (137). Olaudah Equiano also describes slave ships as a “hollow place” (Equiano qtd. in Smallwood 123). The enslaved’s oppression and death-like state is further underlined by their status as commodities within plantation slavery. The animalistic description of the survivors who “live to breed more slaves” underlines that the enslaved are considered produce which has to secure the economy of the slave planation. Yet, the emphasis on survival and freedom directly afterwards — “and they, after their freedom had been won, survived the rootless years” (*Hebron* 52) — contradicts the process of commodification and complete lack of agency of the enslaved. Interestingly, both sentences are connected through a semicolon which connects both statements with one another, rather than using a more definite full stop. This suggests that there is a continued memory of the past that runs through the past generation of the New Believers. Their ancestors keep remembering the middle passage as well as their fight for survival and freedom, passing down the experience onto the next generations. Also, the fact that the community of former enslaved and their descendants survived even without roots, underlines forms of resistance, their ongoing drive for liberation and independence within Caribbean communities. Most importantly, the focus on survival questions the absoluteness of the experience of social death. This correlates with Wynter’s statement about power and resistance even within plantation economies: “If they could have so stoically come across that middle passage, come to build a new world […] then there is nothing I can’t do.” (“Re-Enchantment” 148) The New Believers, as well as Wynter, draw power from their past and focus on the process of challenging colonial mechanism of displacement within planation slavery. The survival of the New Believer’s ancestors is further underlined by the emphasis on the importance of cultural artefacts and nature: “[t]hey survived the loss of gods and devils that were their own, of familiar trees and hills and huts and spears and cooking pots, of their own land in which to see some image of themselves.” (*Hebron* 52) The polysyndeton adds a certain sense of continuity and rhythm to the text. Despite all losses and grievances the survivors retain their agency and secure their survival. The ending of the sentence — “of their own land in which to see some image of themselves” — recalls the use of nature in the novel and how natural elements recall the past and reflect the communities’ experience, feelings and conflicts. It appears that the New Believers reconstruct this link with nature through their memory of the ancestry. This survival is then paralleled with the New Believer’s “exodus from Cockpit Centre.” The New Believer’s draw hope from their ancestors who, against all odds, survived. Their leader Moses promises them that their community will recover everything “that had been lost in their trespass across the seas, across the centuries.” (ibid.) The image of the sea inevitably recalls the middle passage. In connection with the

word “trespass” the crossing of the ocean is described as something forbidden and undesired. Within West African societies, according to Smallwood, the sea was seen as an “unknown element” equipped with “dangerous supernatural powers”. Being “controlled by powerful deities” the sea was considered to be a “sacred sites of supernatural power” (129). The sea, thus, had different functions; it supported West African societies with food but also had the power to destroy them if they fell from favour. In the extract here, the conception of the sea as a god-like unknowable space becomes apparent. The trespass is not only considered a physical crossing of boundaries and forbidden entry, but also a moral trespass — a violation of ethics. This trespass also extends across centuries, as if the experience of the middle passage leaks into the presence and future of Hebron’s community. Moses’ promise implies that Hebron’s community still suffers from the consequences which originated from the crossing of the ocean. The time frame “across centuries” shows that this undesired memory still lurks in their mind. This trespass across time alludes to the act of remembering as something forbidden, yet also as a subversive act in itself. Within the context of plantation slavery a reconnection with cultural memory was systematically prevented through the representations of black enslaved as commodities (see Smallwood 182-183). What the communal narrator shows here is that even within this context of their epidemic forms of displacement black people across generations in the Caribbean have been addressing their past and continue to do so.

The appearance of a cultural artefact in Hebron underlines how the narrator reconnects the community of the New Believers with their colonial past. A member of the community discovers a “Spanish jar”, which “was large and pear-shaped and made of clay” (*Hebron* 54). The object not only tells a story of enslavement and violence, but also of resistance and survival. What is more, the jar is evidence for cultural expression within black Caribbean communities and recalls Wynter’s conception of the human as a hybrid being that is defined by the development of cultural expression and communication (see Wynter “Catastrophe” 66). The jar, similar to the discovery of the Blombos Cave in South Africa is evidence for black people’s expression of their own conceptions of the human. Through the importance of the object as a means to express a critique of western accounts of history and their humanist understanding of the human, Wynter already begins to frame her later developed concept of hybrid humans. Hereby, the jar introduces a meta-commentary of the narrator on the role of the New Believers within historic accounts, connecting a rewriting of history through the artefact with a strong critique of black people’s absences and silence within history:

> But apart from Miss Gatha, none of them thought of how or when the jar had come to be abandoned, whether it had not been the booty of an escaping slave who had fled to the forests and hills, and had perished there from sword or gunfire, from the sharp teeth of pursuing dogs trained to hunt him down; or perhaps the fugitive had lived to found a land

> for them to do so, had drifted back to the plains, leaving the jar behind them. Perhaps his descendants had even made the jar themselves according to the pattern which had been preserved and handed down. (*Hebron* 54)

The jar links the New Believers with history. Gatha establishes this link by thinking about possible origins of the jar. The jar represents actions of resistance but is also a reminder of violence against escaped enslaved. It also symbolises a possible line of ancestry and culture which now reappears in form of a relic and cultural object. The making of the jar resembles an act of defiance against plantation slavery, contradicting the idea of social death. The jar is a cultural artefact and as such does not fit in the depiction of the enslaved as socially dead people. The narrator revives this form of resistance and rebellion against racial violence through the act of remembering the possibility that the jar belonged to someone who has escaped enslavement, again linking the community in Hebron to the Maroons in Jamaica. Imagining different narratives through Miss Gatha as the focaliser, the narrator underlines how the writing of history is in itself a subjective and creative process. Moreover, Gatha's account undermines the western belief that the writing of history is based on facts and objectivity. The object here relates to the distinction Wynter makes between an "official culture […], and the unofficial and excluded culture" in Jamaica ("Jonkonnu" 35). The jar gives insight into the excluded, black, and in this case also female, perceptive on Caribbean culture and history. Through the cultural artefact, the novel highlights how history and culture are intersected and emphasises that historical accounts are narratives and cultural products. This is further intensified in the next passage in the novel in which the narrator changes focalisers from Miss Gatha' individual black female perspective to the communal narration that frames the New Believer's place within history:

> For the New Believers the jar belonged to a precise past of facts and dates and figures of which they were totally ignorant. And even if they had been able to read, in the history books they would have found themselves only in the blank spaces between the lines, in the dashes, the pauses between commas, semicolons, colons, on the microcosmic shadow world between full stops. Between the interstices of every date on which a deed was done, they haunted the pages, imprisoned in mute anonymity, the done-tos who had made possible the deed. (*Hebron* 54)

First of all, the narrator offers a critique of the writing of history which disregards a black Caribbean account of historic events and therefore the absence of the New Believers' account. Highlighting the writing process as well as textual elements, the narrative voice underlines that history is in fact produced and therefore can also be rewritten. Also, the narrator directly recalls Wynter's and Gilroy's different concepts of history by predominantly stressing the New Believers

in-between space: “between the lines”, “the pauses between”, “the microcosmic shadow world between” and “[b]etween the interstices” (ibid.). The repetition almost directly resonates with Wynter’s term of the “interstices of history” in which she places a “powerful and pervasive cultural process” (Wynter “Jonkonnu” 35), as well as Gilroy’s approach to “explore the space between writing about people who are seen as ‘the other’” (*Leaves* 78). This use of almost the exact same words emphasises how Wynter’s novel anticipates and levels the way towards her more elaborate theoretical essays. Both intellectuals highlight the potential of black people’s marginalised perspective and emphasise how the writing of history is connected with cultural expressions. *The Hills of Hebron* stands exemplary for using fiction as a way to rewrite history. The New Believers’ perspective of history appears within these interstices and manifests itself as a critique of western historic accounts, exposing the absence and displacement of a black Caribbean perspective. Although the New Believers confront their own marginalisation, they are still part of the process of making history. While the words, such as “mute anonymity”, critiques their displacement, the imagery of the spiritual world as in the “microcosmic shadow world” and the fact that the New Believers “haunted the pages” focusses on the involvement within the process of writing history. By recalling the imagery of ghosts who haunt the living, the narrator critiques the absence of black people’s accounts as condemnable and historically incriminating. Strongly contradicting a western approach of writing history as an objective, neutral and rational process, the supernatural imagery shows how the New Believers undercut and subvert black people’s displacement within history, which is further underlined by the ending of the passage: “the done-tos who had made possible the deed.” (*Hebron* 54) Here, the narrator focusses on the New Believer’s part in history and on their action rather than on their victimisation as black colonial subjects. This also renders the story of the jar not merely as an imagined tale by Gatha, but rather as one possible historic account of an object that sheds light on the past of the enslavement and survival of the New Believers’ ancestors. Hereby, the jar represents the continuity of cultural expression in the face of systematic displacements from historic accounts and simultaneously serves as a reminder of Hebron’s past and ancestors. Through the use of a non-human object, the New Believers address their past and narrate their version of history, an alternative history to that of western, European accounts. It serves as actual proof for black people’s cultural production and therefore also asserts their humanness. While the communal narrator recalls the horrors of enslavement and brutality of plantation slavery, the communal voice also contrasts the New Believers’ presumed muteness within historic accounts. This collective form of memory addresses the history of black people in the Caribbean and places the New Believers within a wider scope of historic events.

Similar to Jones' poem and Wynter's novel, Beryl Gilroy's *Boy Sandwich* lets natural elements and inanimate objects take on a predominant role in order to facilitate a reconnection between the characters and their pasts. As if weaving a net through the ages, the first-person narrator Tyrone Grainger connects the stories of his ancestors, grandparents and parents with one another, addressing his family's history of migration from the Caribbean to England and his own journey back to the Caribbean. Within this context, natural imagery function as interlocutors between the main characters and their ancestry, reflecting their thoughts and emotions. Another central element is an old album with photographs that belongs to Tyrone's grandparents, the rediscovery of gold coins and a painting that relates to the family's history. Differing from Jones' and Wynter's approach to narrating historic events, Gilroy puts particular emphasis on personal histories and the importance of the effects of a colonial heritage upon individual characters. She does not refer to colonialism as such, but embeds her characters' personal pasts within the larger framework of their Caribbean and colonial history. The first-person narration not only underlines the feelings and emotions of the main character Tyrone, but also introduces an element of orality though the numerous conversation he has with his grandparents about the past. *Boy Sandwich* exemplifies how Gilroy uses her character's interior lives in order to offer her response to a "Black experience" (*Leaves* 32). Recalling Gilroy's understanding of orality as discourse, the characters in her novel emphasise a Caribbean approach to narrating historic events, thus underlining her holistic approach to literature that undermines binary structures and the humanist conception of Man (see 14).

While Wynter combines colonial and natural imagery to open up another meta-level of historic narration, Gilroy uses her character's interior lives in order to address their shared past and experience of displacement and dehumanisation through their surroundings. Natural imagery reflects Tyrone's emotional state, expressing his struggles and conflicts as well as connecting him with the past:

> That morning stubborn clouds hung low and brought feelings I could only describe as irregular. It seemed as if time itself was being agitated, the echoes of the past colliding with the voices of the present, creating moments that boiled and swirled and pushed. I drove fast, much too fast for that time of day. Speed, I thought was the answer to the turbulence and frustration inside me. (*Boy Sandwich* 1)

The very beginning of the novel introduces Tyrone and how his inner state of thoughts and emotions are reflected by the clouds and wind. The weather, Tyrone's state of mind as well as time, which appears as a personified agent, are characterised by frustration and confusion. Past and present appear to be in constant movement and entanglement and their collision creates tensions and

conflicts. Next to the natural imagery surrounding Tyrone, the choice of words used to describe time also creates associations with the elements water ("boiled") and air ("swirled"). All of the verbs used here are connected to forceful and agitated movement which is again alluded to in Tyrone's speeding. This portrayal of time in relation to nature foreshadows Tyrone's own confrontation with past events and their aftermath. Through this meta-level of meaning, the novel follows his confrontation with his Caribbean heritage, addressing his family's involvement in colonialism. Their history is slowly revealed by certain pictures in his grandparent's album. According to Gilroy, in the album "[a]ll incidents are remembered and coded." (*Leaves* 67) The photographs represent "points of time which combine visual and oral history", adding another level of remembering to the novel and again stressing Gilroy's holistic approach (ibid.). Next to representing one of the keys to Tyrone's family history, the album is also a symbol of resistance and longevity. It introduces each oral tale or flashback through which Tyrone's grandparents recall past events, stressing its structural importance as well: "he had talked to me about ties long since gone and had pointed out friends and family in the album […] It is the most treasured of his possessions." (*Boy Sandwich* 5) His grandfather Simon's account of history represents an oral form of memory and re-establishes a link between Tyrone and his grandfather's Caribbean origin: "Grandpa kept his album all through the war and through the hurricanes which from time to time visited the Island. (14) The album reveals how Tyrone's grandparents survived natural disasters which draws attention to the family's survival. The pictures express a sense of continuity and also circularity and function as creative agents who build the beginning and end to each of the stories Tyrone's grandparents tell him. Overall, the history of Tyrone's family is told through fragments that appears in connection to each picture his grandparents relate to. This form of fragmentation of history is further underlined by the rediscovery of family heirlooms such as gold coins and a painting that triggers Tyrone's grandmother's memory of her grandfather. The way history is narrated in the novel reflects on the way memory works, underlining the importance of the character's personal relations to past events. Through a combination of oral tales, objects and pictures, Tyrone learns that his great-grandfather John Vanette profited from the sale of items from slave plantations and exploitation of an African prince whose origin is not revealed.

Through the rediscovery of gold coins, Tyrone's grandmother Clara relates this family heirloom back to the 17th century and critiques the colonial rule of Jamaica. At the same time Clara's speech as well as Tyrone's response is infused by a Caribbean form of oral narration and imagery that relates to Caribbean folklore even drawing a connection to African folklore as in the imagery of the spider. Clara comments on the origin of the coins and says: "Gold doubloons from de days of

Morgan. Ever hear 'bout Morgan? He a t'ief-man but dey make him Governor of Jamaica. Poor Jamaica." (31) The portrayal of Clara's English accent highlights the orality of her account. She refers to the real historic figure of Sir Henry Morgan, former outlaw, social climber and in the 1670s Governor of Jamaica. Clara opposes and critiques British colonial powers in her statement and their use of "colonial piracy" in order to further their claims to and exploitation of Jamaica (see Galvin 765 and 779). Morgan's approach to propel his career was very much disputable as he relied on "the acquisition of wealth through plunder" (779). Clara's coins spark the memory of Morgan and his ruthlessness. Her statement not only includes a critique of Morgan's plundering but also a critique of the British Empire as the colonial power "that facilitated piracy tolerance when it served the British Crown's needs." (757). The gold coins enable her to talk about Caribbean history from a black female perspective. Tyrone comments on his grandmother's oral narration, asking "Is her memory able to dart out of secret places like a spider lying in wait for prey? (*Boy Sandwich* 31). The comparison with a spider underlines Clara's account with the powerful image of an attacking predator. Her memory, like the spider, is deadly and efficient, underlining the oral narration's strength and power. What is more, the spider also recalls the trickster figure Ananse that appears in West African and Caribbean folklore in the form of a spider (see Vecsey 107). Trickster tales are passed on orally and also highlight African cultural influences in the Caribbean. Ananse is generally characterised as disregarding authorities, social norms and rules. Christopher Vecsey adds that "[t]hrough Ananse's tales, the Akan individual experiences vicarious freedom from the societal boundaries" (118). Through the comparison of Clara's memory and the image of a spider, the novel adds another aspect of undermining western accounts of historic writing by incorporating Caribbean folklore and a link back to an African origin.

The lines between fact and fiction often blur in Tyrone's account particularly when he uncovers the history of John Vanette. In this context, the gold coins and album reappear again and introduce the story of Clara's ancestor which Tyrone in the beginning dismisses as a "fairy tale". Actual family history is associated with a fictive narration, underlining how history is in itself a subjective account. Clara reveals that the gold coins were given to her by her father and Tyrone adds:

> In her saner days she had once said that in a house on the Island an African prince lived long ago. He had been banished there by the British overlords. He was incredibly rich and left money on the Island. I treated it as a fairy tale. (*Boy Sandwich* 87-88)

After remembering his grandmother's story Tyrone searches for the coins in her belongings and accidentally discovers an invaluable piece of art, namely a painting that is called "*The Masks*" by "Jose Gutierrez Solana (1886-1945), a Spanish artist and traveller to the West Indies." (89) After

showing the painting to Simon and Clara Grainger, his grandmother reveals that it was brought into the family's possession by Clara's grandfather. Pointing towards a photograph, she remembers her grandfather: "When I show it to her she points to an old man in the album and says how wicked he was." (88) Relating to her mother's story, Clara's account further highlights the role of passing on family history orally:

> Her mother told her that while his family starved he went around the Island plantations buying and selling objects that took his fancy. He was a great traveller and after his death nobody talked about him except to say he was a no-good money-waster. (ibid.)

The coins and the painting are connected and reveal a part of his grandmother's past, which Clara only reluctantly gives away. Clara reveals her family's involvement in colonialism, as her grandfather profited from objects that belonged to plantations. However, it is Tyrone's uncle who connects the fairy tale Tyrone has heard before about the African prince with the story of his great-grandfather. He reveals that an African prince was indeed deported to the Caribbean "for having revolutionary thoughts and disobeying their edicts" (89). It was Vanette who was in charge of helping the prince to come to terms with his new environment and life, but "[i]nstead he filched all the prince's possessions." (ibid.) In the end, Tyrone sells the painting with the blessing of his grandparents and thus finances the family's journey back to the Caribbean. Vanette's ruthlessness emphasises how the family profited from colonialism and the exploitation of an African prince. This establishes a connection between the Caribbean, Africa and England following the triangular trade and its consequences. Also, the role of Vanette questions the binary assumption of black people as victims and not as culprits. Vanette financially profits from the prince and also facilitates Tyrone's family's journey back to the Caribbean. This repetition within history as well as the appearance of the coins, the painting and pictures in the album add a circular structure to the novel that undermines the fragmented history of Tyrone's ancestors. Structurally, these objects recall the very beginning of the novel in which Tyrone associates time and nature as well as his own feelings with collision and rupture. The discovery of his family's history creates disruptions and reconnects himself with the past and his great-grandfather: "Whatever he was, cut-throat or priest, black or white, his greed or his sense of beauty now reaches across the decades and touches my life." (97) Just like in the opening of the novel, the boundaries between past and present fade away for a moment. The contrasts with which Tyrone imagines Vanette emphasises that the binaries connected to his personality are not important. The resolving of classic dichotomies here puts emphasis on the family's history and heritage. In this regard, Tyrone, as the first person narrator, offers insight into the broader frame of colonial history to which his family's past is linked. Objects appear as markers

and reminders of history weaving a net of oral tales, historic facts and narrative elements that all contribute to narrating history from a black perspective. The emphasis on the natural realm as well as on objects to narrate history offers different perspectives on the writing of history, which contrast black people's displacement within western historic accounts. Non-human agents, hereby, also challenge a humanist perspective on nature as an entity that needs to be subdued and conquered by humanism's emphasis on reason and understanding of civilisation.

4.2. Rewriting History from the Perspective of Liminal Characters: Thomas Inkle in Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, Isaac Barton in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and Tyrone Grainger in Gilroy's *Boy Sandwich*

Through the liminal status of characters in their novels, Gilroy and Wynter challenge not only society's humanist structures but also historic accounts of colonialism. These characters re-narrate historic events with their own versions. Thomas Inkle, Tyrone Grainger and Isaac Barton all find themselves — albeit in different ways — in what Wynter calls an "*imposed* liminal" position ("The Re-Enchantment" 135; original emphasis). They question the given status quo of society in which they have been born and raised. The three characters represent what Legesse defines as the "conceptual antithesis" to social norms and rules. All of them are caught between tensions and contradictions of their own subjectivities and the social realties they are confronted with (see Maldonado-Torres 190). As social outcasts, the three men relate a search for their subject position to their manhood, which at the end all three of them have to prove to themselves, tragically culminating in forced and unforced sexual relationships with women. As "manhood and whiteness were the undisclosed, but always assumed, norms of liberal equality", Inkle, Tyrone and Isaac have to re-negotiate their own understanding of manhood while at the same time experiencing different forms of structural displacement within a humanist system (Hartman "Individuality" 37). Evoking the American myth of the self-made Man, Hartman exposes the arbitrary assumption that manhood within a western context is defined by the male ability to act on their behalf: "The individual prepared to meet the challenges of freedom and ready to make a man of himself was deemed capable of throwing off the vestiges of slavery by his own efforts." (*Subjection* 152) These ideologies of defining manhood, Hartman continues, "were only plausible if a blind eye was turned to the instrumentality of race as a vehicle of subjugation and white oppression" (153).[48] Gilroy and Wynter use Inkle's, Tyrone's and Isaac's liminal positions in order to expose a humanist definition

[48] For an in-depth discussion of manhood in the context of white supremacy and race please read Harman's "The Manhood of the Race" (*Subjection* 152-157 and 162-163).

of manhood, which results in their conflicted positions and ultimately leads to immoral and corrupt actions such as the use of sexual violence. The portrayals of the male characters in particular expose the conflicts that are caused by their confrontations with humanism's conception of the human as Man and its white, heterosexual and *male* ideal. They are bound to fail to adhere to this ideal, but they also fail to transcend colonial and racial binaries instead. At the same time, through their positions in-between different cultural poles, Gilroy's and Wynter's characters confront the loss of social and cultural roots and revisit colonial history.

The analysis of Inkle, Isaac and Tyrone looks at the importance of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's own re-definition of their marginalised positions as a source of creativity and traces a new engagement with their own intellectual liminality. The fact that the three men fail to escape their liminal positions at the end of each novel draws attention to the need to transcend binary distinctions and racial hierarchies. As their stories span a total of 250 years, Gilroy and Wynter stress the continuing conflict with liminality and manhood, which leads to Inkle's, Isaac's and Tyrone's negative associations with their liminal positions. Inkle's tale of shipwreck and life among an indigenous tribe in the Caribbean dates back to the 18th century, Isaac's experiences within the colonial society of Jamaica is set before its independence and Tyrone, as a third-generation migrant in the UK, confronts his Caribbean heritage and family's past in the present. The temporal framework underlines how the abolition of slavery did not override the conflicts and the rupture that arose due to the humanist racial and colonial paradigms that structure societies in the western world and in the Caribbean. The unique narrative perspective in *Inkle and Yarico,* which is told from Inkle's white first-person narration, as well as Inkle's liminal position between Yarico's culture and his own, emphasise how Gilroy challenges historic accounts of colonialism. Her novel historically frames the analysis of Tyrone and Isaac, as Gilroy traces the racial foundations of colonial societies. In *The Hills of Hebron*, Wynter illuminates how Isaac challenges the colonial structures of Jamaican society by addressing the role of racial encounters, colonial education and the role of Isaac's forced liminality even with his community home. Finally, Gilroy traces the impact of the migration experience within Tyrone's life, as he appears to be caught between his own understanding of belonging and his family's Caribbean heritage.

Beryl Gilroy's choice of Thomas Inkle as a first-person narrator goes beyond a classic rewriting of colonial history. Thomas Inkle is a member of the rising British upper-middle class and represents the ideal of manhood connected to humanist Man. His life among Yarico's people, however, is comparable to that of a slave, which leads to transformed colonial binaries of master and slave, coloniser and colonised. It more importantly triggers his central conflict with his own

conception of being human. Gilroy's own voice as the author of *Inkle and Yarico* deliberately takes on the perspective of the white English man and coloniser Inkle. This choice of narrator is an expression of Gilroy's use of cultural appropriation to challenge the silence of black female subjects within historic accounts and classic colonial binaries in general. Her use of "subject appropriation" — which means that Gilroy as "an outsider represents members or aspects of another culture" — and her use of "content appropriation" of the story of Inkle and Yarico — "a writer who retells the legends produced by another culture" — renders her novel as a performative act of resistance and intervention into a post- and decolonial discourse (Young 136). Gilroy appropriates the white voice and disproves that the subaltern cannot speak while expanding on the idea of writing back to the centre (see Spivak 90). Rather she writes herself into the centre itself, exposing how racial dichotomies corrupt Inkle. Gilroy subverts the very techniques of subordination against black people and confronts the reader with a reversed hierarchy through her choice of Inkle as a narrator. Gilroy traces the mechanisms behind Inkle's innate antiblack thinking as a member of the bourgeois upper-middle class in Great Britain. Hereby, Gilroy shows how systemic racism and anti-black violence is manifested within Inkle's belief system and within the conception of the human he grew up with.

The tale of Inkle and Yarico was a popular representation of a romanticised colonial encounter originally referred to in Richards Ligon's *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (1657). Ligon's version served as a source for Richard Steele's version of the same story published in 1711 in the *Spectator* as well as George Colman's supposedly *comic* opera *Inkle and Yarico* (1787). Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* is directly linked to the former version in particular, as Steele's article from the *Spectator* is attached at the very end of her novel, but also acknowledges Coleman's play (see *Inkle and Yarico* 158). The opera was performed successfully throughout the 18th century and focusses on the love story between Inkle and Yarico. O'Quinn highlights in this context that particularly the opera has been the source for "an archive for a history of colonial thought in the period." (389) Relating her own work so prominently to earlier accounts of Inkle and Yarico, Gilroy consciously rewrites these colonial accounts which all represent classic colonial binaries in which Yarico is wholly dependent on Inkle.[49] In the older versions, may that be Ligon's, Steele's or Coleman's, the focus lies mainly on the relationship between Inkle and Yarico and his decision to betray her by selling her into slavery for personal monetary profit, which only confirms classic

[49] The role of Yarico within Gilroy's novel as well as how her representation contrasts Ligon's, Steele's and Colman's version is discussed in chapter 4.3. through an emphasis on black female resistance.

colonial power relations.[50] They do not, however, include Inkle's life among the indigenous people and the problematic implications for his worldview. Instead, all texts insist that Inkle is kept hidden by Yarico until both encounter a ship that rescues him (see O'Quinn 391). This then allows them to avoid the potential conflict of direct contact and to focus on the romanticised seclusion of two lovers, as the earliest version by Ligon highlights:

> but a young man amongst them straggling from the rest, was met by this *Indian* Maid, who upon the first sight fell in love with him, and hid him close from her Countrymen (the *Indians*) in a Cave, and there fed him, till they could safely go down to the shore, where the ship lay at anchor, expecting the return of their friends. (107)

Steele's account puts a similar focus on Inkle's and Yarico's love relationship: "In this tender Correspondence these Lovers lived for several Months, when *Yarico*, instructed by her lover, discovered a Vessel on the coast, to which she made Signals" (*Inkle and Yarico* 160). A closer look at both versions highlights the classic representation of binary colonial power relations. Ligon and Steele highlight Yarico's submissive protectiveness, as if her only motivation was to safely return Inkle to his own people. In Steele's version Inkle even "instructs" Yarico to make contact with his people in order to reunite them. Inkle and Yarico remain one-dimensional characters, representing colonial stereotypes of coloniser and colonised and focussing on aspects of patriarchal romance. Unlike Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, there is no direct encounter between Inkle and Yarico's people and therefore Inkle does not experience enslavement nor social death. In Gilroy's version Yarico's way of life and that of her people influences his perception of the human and results in his conflicted liminal position between two cultures. In rewriting this tale from a black, female perspective, Gilroy offers an alternative account of the colonial past that in itself demands a change of perspective. By dedicating almost half of the novel to Inkle's life with Yarico, Gilroy highlights how this cultural clash results in Inkle's liminal position and conflict with his own subjectivity. Both Inkle and Yarico, each highly complex characters, are changed by their encounter and have to come to terms with social uprooting, violence and death.

Inkle's initial rite of passage, that he was supposed to undertake — his journey to Barbados and initiation as a plantation owner and member of the colonial ruling class — is disrupted by his experience with Yarico. He is forcefully confronted with his own racial stereotypes but in the end fails to address them as such. His inability to change his racial assumptions about black people underlines the structural racism within the humanist conception of being. Through an emphasis on

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[50] Chapter 3.1. examines the role of love and power relations in Coleman's opera as well as in Gilroy's novel. Here, the focus is on the earlier versions written by Ligon and Steele.

Inkle's incapability to transcend racial binaries and his suppression of any possible influences on his personality during his time with Yarico's people's, Gilroy intensely demonstrates the single-mindedness of his humanist thinking and innate racism. After his shipwreck he enters a conflicted rite of passage as he lives through the threefold process of "separation, margin […], and aggregation" (Turner 94). During the phase of separation, Inkle experiences "the detachment of the individual or group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions" (ibid.). He shipwrecks and is cut off from his culture, his family, his whole social structure with its norms and values as well as its conception of the human. In the second phase, the "'liminal' period", he "passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming stage." (ibid.) Inkle lives with Yarico's people, copes with his own degraded status as Yarico's object and his loss of culture. As he loses his status of superiority, which he claims as a birth right, Inkle finds himself in a state of ambiguity between the known and the unknown and encounters different power relations as well as confrontations with his own conception of himself as a human subject (see ibid.). His life among Yarico's people does not resemble anything he has experienced before or will experience after his rescue. Szakolczai emphasises that within this liminal period "[t]he creation of a *tabula rasa* […] was necessary for the passage to adulthood" (Szakolczai 148). Being thrown into a liminal phase, Inkle is confronted with "a situation where almost anything can happen" (ibid.). He has to adapt in order to survive among Yarico's people and life according to the tribes' structures. In order to leave the liminal phase, according to Szakolczai, there is the need for a successful initiation ritual that "must follow a strictly pre-scribed sequence", which is provided and monitored by "the authority of a master of ceremonies, who is practically equivalent to an absolute ruler" during the proceedings of the rite (ibid.). Central to Inkle's life with Yarico, there is such an initiation rite, in which he is supposed to transform from his status as a child into that of a man in the eyes of Paiuda, the tribe's shaman and its chief Tomo. Inkle has to accept Paiuda here as the person who holds the power over his life and initiation and follows the tribe's shaman's ceremony without questioning his actions. In order to be accepted as a man he has to successfully complete his task to be converted into adulthood, which implies being put into an ants' nest and afterwards survive six days and nights alone in the forest. Within the tribal structures, Inkle indeed is successful in becoming a man and is finally allowed to hunt with the other male members of the tribe. He is largely accepted as Yarico's husband and to some extent loses his status as a slave, as chief Tomo emphasises: "Let the stranger found among the sands die, and let a man of our tribe be born." (*Inkle and Yarico* 51) Tomo emphasises the importance of the success of the ritual within the phase of liminality: "success means that the

initiand becomes a new person" (Szakolczai 148). Although Inkle successfully returns from his time in the forest, and apparently fulfils the task in order to leave this status of a liminal subject within the tribal structures, his transformation is not complete and in the end unsuccessful. His initiation is overshadowed by his antiblack behaviours and cultural norms that cannot accept Paiuda's rule over his initiation rite. His socialisation as a British citizen prevents him from accepting his authority and rather wants to survive as an act of resistance against Paiuda who expects him to fail: "I […] thought about how happily the Caribs would disport themselves if I died in my attempt to become a man." (*Inkle and Yarico* 56) His main motivation is challenging Paiuda's authority rather than becoming a member of the tribe. In the end, Inkle has to admit to some changes he goes through during his ordeal that ultimately lead to his conflicted self being caught between his own cultural norms and Yarico's way of life:

> Something had changed in me. I had not become a Carib, but certainly the relationship with my surroundings had deepened. The forest had a voice of its own with its own breath and life and language, which could be understood by those who loved it. (57)

His liminal experience establishes a link between himself and nature. The natural surroundings connect him to the culture of the tribe he lives with and symbolise a break with his humanist upbringing: "I had begun to enjoy the solitude of the forest, the density and shapes of the foliage and the weirdness of thrown shadows." (ibid.) Nature is portrayed as a living entity with a voice, not as an object that needs to be cultivated to which Inkle develops a relationship. His harmonic relationship with nature is contrasted with his return to Yarico's village. Upon his return, in the eyes of the tribe, he is a man now, who is allowed to hunt and take more wives. Inkle comments on his official inclusion into the tribe, anticipating the conflict and rupture of his subject position: "I had truly descended into hell, where grotesque creatures danced and performed mysterious gestures before my eyes. The colours that encompassed the events were truly wonderful." (58) Even after his return he finds himself within a liminal position. This is underlined by his choice of words that juxtapose negative and positive descriptions of his return. Although he views the indigenous people as "grotesque creatures", the colours he sees are "truly wonderful". As a sign for his successful transformation he gets a tattoo — "the mark of a condor" — as is the custom (60). Again, he underlines his inner conflict and in-between status: "It was a painful process, but my English blood sustained me" (ibid.). Here, it becomes clear that Inkle is still convinced of his superiority caused by his "English blood" (see Gilroy *Leaves* 83). He is unable to leave his liminal position, because he is caught in between his humanist mindset that views black people as non-humans and his own status among Yarico's people. To acknowledge his transformation from child to man would entail to

accept that he aligns himself to Yarico's conception of what it means to be human — accepting their relationship truly as husband and wife, not as coloniser and colonised, but also accepting Paiuda as the religious leader of the tribe and Tomo as its chief. Not being able to accept such a shift of power relations and therefore not being able to alter his conception of the human and his racial thinking, he cannot pass into the third "relatively stable state" of "reincorporation" within the tribal structures (Turner 94). Gilroy underlines how Inkle's whole world view is based upon anti-black ideologies that he cannot overcome. She argues that Inkle "maintains his belief in the myth of blood and the negative emotions associated with blackness." (*Leaves* 83) Gilroy's representation of Inkle — the western, bourgeois, heterosexual Man dependant on the binary thinking of blackness equalling inferiority and whiteness superiority — exposes how humanism facilitates racism. After Inkle's rescue and final arrival at his family's plantation, he is unable to accept the possible changes during his captivity. Gilroy highlights this by portraying the conflicts between his conception of himself as a son to a British merchant, his status as a member of Yarico's tribe and his now reinstated position as a planation owner.

After re-entering his own society as planation owner, Inkle still cannot escape his liminal status. Throughout the rest of the novel, Gilroy portrays Inkle's transformation into a cruel and relentless plantation owner and anti-abolitionist that begins with his re-integration into colonial society in Barbados.[51] His captivity reinforces Inkle's anxiety against black people and leads to his increasing anti-black attitudes and open violence against his enslaved. He is again confronted with the expectations of his family as well as the western ideology of white superiority on the one hand, and on the other hand with the experiences during his captivity and link to Yarico whom he takes with him to Barbados. In this context, Gilroy emphasises: "after years of 'suffering' […], the baggage has mutated into resentment, hatred and raging xenophobia. He grudgingly admits to a modicum of relevance of Carib life to his self renewal (*Leaves* 82-83)". Inkle's experience of losing everything he knows — culture, family, language — changes his perception of his former life. This is exemplified in the novel by his unfamiliarity with his own language. He says:

> Now I had my freedom and was made wretched by it. I had been rescued and I could no longer deal with my own language. English words passed over my ears as the Carib language had once done, causing me to forget who I was, and what I was trying to do or say. (*Inkle and Yarico* 80)

His inability to speak English stresses the change in power relations. Inkle expresses his frustration and desperation and is silenced due to his disconnection from his heritage. The conflict he describes

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[51] Inkle's open violence against black people is discussed in chapter 3.1.

touches the very centre of his being and how he defines himself as a human subject. Inkle has experienced a complete reversal of the binaries he has grown up with and which have shaped his personhood. Now he has to confront his former position but also a more complex perspective on power relations with which he cannot cope. He is expected to behave as a member of the colonial class but in fact feels unfamiliar with this new role. Inkle's emotional conflict between both worlds is underlined by the novel's structure. In the very middle of the novel Inkle sells Yarico and their child into slavery. The motivation behind Inkle's betrayal of Yarico is successively integrated into the story and linked to Inkle's inner conflict between his positions before and after captivity. This act of betrayal marks a turning point in his development as a character.

Immediately after his arrival aboard the ship that rescues Inkle, he is confronted with the dominant western humanist conception of the human, which regards Yarico as non-human. Instead of acknowledging their marital status, the captain firstly stresses that the marriage between Inkle and Yarico is in fact non-existent according to western standards of Christianity: "A marriage between a Christian and a heathen is nothing in the eyes of God." (81) Then, after Yarico has given birth to their son, the captain comments on the profit that can be generated by selling Yarico and his son: "'You sired the brat,' he sagely remarked. It would fetch a good price in Virginia. You will need money to get started and fate has provided it. You are a lucky man.'" (82) The captain's remarks cause Inkle to reflect upon the possibility of selling Yarico. On his journey to and after his arrival in Barbados, he wavers between protecting Yarico and his son, or selling both in order to secure his well-being and acquiring the necessary finances to establish a life for himself in the Caribbean and his re-entry into colonial society. His contradictory statements concerning his betrayal of Yarico and his son reflect his inner conflict: "I must henceforward look to my advantage. The love of money is a goal to all but very saintly men." (ibid.) Referring to his son he says: "I didn't name him though, for whatever name he had would be changed when he was sold, and this I had resolved to do." (86) These statements that reveal Inkle's capitalist thinking about financial security are contradicted by his guilty conscience and feelings for Yarico: "Was this the world I longed to return to? At that moment I resolved to protect Yarico. […] She was not a slave, therefore I would not expose her to slavery nor sell my son." (86-87) Inkle's position as a white bourgeois English man and the systemic form of dehumanisation of black people and hegemonic claims to the Caribbean are opposed by his life with Yarico, his belief that she is in fact not a slave, but his wife and the mother to his son. Inkle still stresses Yarico's humanness here, even though his society strongly opposes such thinking. What is more, within this short episode between his rescue and his

betrayal of Yarico, he even begins to question the system of colonialism and the superiority of English people altogether:

> That night, as I lay on deck wondering to what world the sea would finally take me, I recalled my life among the Caribs. Who was I to call them savage or primitive or fierce? Our people were no better. They believed in a Christian God and used this as a justification for depriving the slaves of belief, language and the kind of custom by which Paiuda had kept his people together. (87)

Inkle addresses the corruptness of the colonial system and questions its basis upon racial differences. He exposes arguments based on Christianity and the emergence of humanist Man and does so by recalling his life among Paiuda's tribe. The transition period on the boat is the only time in the novel in which Inkle actually questions the legitimacy of the colonial and racial ideologies that displace black people as ultimate others. This liminal position between his former life and that as a captive is both fragile and powerful. On the one hand, it enables him to critique colonialism and Man and to question his former ideals of the English as a superior power, but on the other hand, he cannot cope with the tensions his outsider status in either community creates. His re-entry into colonial society, then, makes him shockingly aware of the changes he has gone through during his captivity. He has trouble adapting to his former culture and life, which is expressed in his inability to sleep inside a bed and his yearning for the food he has had during his captivity (see 90-91). The meeting and acquaintance with Inkle's later friend Tim Dunbar, a plantation owner himself, who is interested in buying Yarico, further increases Inkle's feeling of not belonging. Again he questions the status quo he encounters in the Caribbean:

> My life among the Black Caribs continued to haunt me and I realised that I had put down invisible roots among them, and had been nourished by the life. […] There I was expected to know nothing for I was no longer of the master race. Here in Barbados I was expected to know all things. Was I not a superior white man and so omnipotent and infallible? In fact, I was lost within myself. (93)

Only after his captivity and life with Yarico, Inkle is conscious of how the English conception of the human as universally superior is in itself problematic. It is his arrival in the Caribbean that triggers him to rethink his position and in turn black people's dehumanisation. Inkle draws a clear distinction between his memory of his life with Yarico and his status as a supposedly superior white English man. The imagery of roots exemplifies the changes he went through, but the overall impression of his captivity remains negative as the term "haunt" stresses. His solution to his ambiguous status and to fully re-integrating into the society of Barbados is to strip Yarico and his son of their humanness and thus turning them into objects of commodification (see Smallwood 6

and 101). The moment of selling them restores the colonial power relation and his binary understanding of humanness. The alternative would be to acknowledge his inner conflict and challenge the structures of his society. Ultimately, he is not able to overcome the racist and patriarchal ideologies he grew up with. Inkle's beginning critique of the humanist system is smothered by his renewed status as a member of the colonial ruling class. However, even after selling Yarico, Inkle cannot fully return to his self image of a successful English bourgeois Man:

> I just could not help thinking about what was regarded as civilisation. I had no real love for the Black Caribs, but out there in the jungle Yarico and I had found a path that we could follow, while here on an island of what was regarded as civilised people, life for us had become divided by an abyss so deep that it had turned to corruption and deceit." (95-96)

It is the last time in the novel that Inkle openly questions the idea of differentiating between civilised and uncivilised peoples and reflects upon his own actions and his betrayal. Inkle emphasises that his life with Yarico was founded outside of colonial binaries and a western ideal of civilisation. The juxtaposition of the jungle and the island represents the two different approaches to life and to understanding oneself. By selling Yarico, Inkle severs the links to his former life as well as to their relationship. This moment also marks the beginning of his complete negation of the change he has gone through while living with Yarico's people, turning his inner conflict and guilty conscience into rage and "confused cultural imperialism" (Gilroy *Leaves* 80). The second half of the novel then portrays his change into a brutal plantation owner who passionately propagates the necessity of slavery and who constantly needs to reassert his own supposedly superior status. His actions against his own slaves overcompensate for the changes he underwent among Yarico's people and his own former loss of power. Inkle fully immerses himself in his new position of power and turns his inner turmoil and fear into resentment and hatred of black people. This change is first triggered by his fear of black people. The skin colour black to Inkle symbolises his former status as a slave and his betrayal of Yarico: "but to me their colour proved an insurmountable barrier, for they reminded me of Yarico wholly or in part and she, like a dark shadow, haunted me." (*Inkle and Yarico* 101) His conflict between life with Yarico and life as a planter is subdued but keeps reappearing up to the very end of the novel. Despite his official position as a plantation owner, he is still caught in his former state as Yarico's object, subdued by her power. Yarico literally haunts his thoughts, reminding him of the liminal status he does not seem to be able to escape: "Sometimes I could not speak even to the servants, so fearful I was of her power" (ibid.). Inkle is unable to meet the expectations of his new status. Although Yarico is in fact enslaved and in the eyes of the colonial power nothing more than a commodified object, she still enacts her power over Inkle, subverting

classical colonial binaries and power relations. His traumatic experience and current predicament — his liminal status and fear of Yarico — is even commented on by the people who surround him: "I began to resent my position as an object of both nods and pity and whispers of sympathy." (ibid.) Inkle struggles with the victimisation and objectification he has experienced. All his efforts to fully reintegrate into his former society ultimately fail, as this continued reversal of power relations emphasises. Inkle remains within his former liminal status and is unable to escape his ambiguous position. His final attempted act of empowerment is the sexual abuse of his former betrothed Alice, who also is a known abolitionist. Yet, within the moment of overwhelming Alice, Inkle also recalls his life among Yarico's people.[52] Particularly Inkle's experience of enslavement catches up with him when he tries using sexual violence to assert his own power: "I wanted you, waited for you, dreamt of you and now what are you doing? Loving savages, as I was forced to do." (149) Inkle revisits his experience of enslavement and once again underlines its impact and the resulting inner conflict. Gilroy strongly challenges the romanticised versions of Inkle and Yarico and focusses on how the experience of social uprooting changes and also how the societal boundaries ultimately break Inkle. While Inkle originally represents the ideal of manhood, the struggles with his personality caused by his enslavement expose the limits of the humanist system and its concept of race, which white manhood is based upon. It recalls Hartman's critique that the concept of manhood within a western context disregards the role of "race as a vehicle of subjugation and white oppression" (*Subjection* 153). Inkle's failure to overcome his experience of enslavement and the social death it entails proves the immorality of his own beliefs and ideologies, which are based on his English upbringing and understanding of civilisation. His liminal status among Yarico's people and later as a plantation owner is a singularly negative experience to him and ultimately renders him passive and subjugated.

Whereas Inkle represents humanist Man, the characters Isaac and Tyrone, who are both black, represent what Wynter understands as the damnés, a group of people that "has been constituted as the ontological other of man" (Wynter qtd. in Bogues 317). In Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and Gilroy's *Boy Sandwich* these two young male characters are confronted with their liminal positions and revisit their pasts. Unlike Inkle, Isaac and Tyrone have been constantly exposed to processes of dehumanisation and their nonconformity to the overall conception of the human. Isaac challenges black people's displacement and misrepresentations in historic accounts and Tyrone confronts his family's migration experience and his own personal involvement with Caribbean heritage. In this context, Wynter revisits the history of pre-independence Jamaica and Gilroy re-negotiates the

[52] The attempted rape and role of Alice and Yarico as sexual objects is analysed in chapter 3.1.

experience of migration in England. Their characters both confront racial prejudice, their position as liminal subjects and are in search for their own concept of home and community. However, rather than finding a sense of belonging, Isaac and Tyrone are further displaced as strangers within their families' communities. Apart from many parallels between the story-lines, the way both characters address history varies considerably. Wynter critiques a colonial education system in the Caribbean and rewrites Jamaica's colonial history through Isaac's own essays, exposing how colonial binaries undercut Caribbean society. Gilroy engages with Tyrone's personal conflict with two cultural poles, that of his family's Caribbean heritage and his own understanding of himself as a Londoner, and his need to renegotiate the black migration experience.

Isaac Barton is the only member of the community of the New Believers who receives a formal education. During his education at "Arawak training college for elementary schoolteachers" he realises that the educational system is part of the European bourgeois ideology, which displaces blackness (*Hebron* 248). During his schooling career he begins to struggle with his own blackness and the humanist system he encounters. He attempts to undermine the education he receives by questioning black people's absences in historic accounts and rewriting them. His liminal status is underlined by two main factors. First of all, he is an outsider to his mother's community in Hebron due to his disability. He is described as an "ugly young man with his staring eyes and dragging foot" (261). He is displaced within the community he grows up in as a social outcast. At the end of the novel, it is revealed that he sexually assaults Rose and steals his mother's money, which was meant to secure Hebron's survival in times of drought. The second element that underlines his liminal status is his position within the boarding school he attends. Isaac realises that he is structurally excluded from the conception of the human he encounters at the school and the western "order of consciousness" he encounters in his studies (Wynter "Catastrophe" 49). His education is an integral part to that order and furthers the systemic subordination of black people and their constant dehumanisation. The college he attends is directly linked to colonial history in the building, which "had once been the home of a wealthy planter" (*Hebron* 248). On a structural level this setting frames Isaac's experiences at school within a larger colonial context. It is almost tragic irony that Isaac tries to expose the dehumanisation of black people in the education system at a place where historically black people have been displaced as objects. Hereby, Wynter reveals how systemic racism and education are linked and how the education system is ideologically limited by its adherence to humanist ideals, which cannot allow Isaac's deviance from its norms and values. Despite their vast differences in character, Isaac's experience resembles that of Inkle, when he

remains in a liminal state and, through his continued displacement, suffers the destruction of all of his social bonds.

During his schooling career Isaac confronts black people's representations in history and literature and attempts to rewrite their misrepresentation, which leads to an inner conflict between his own view of himself and that of society. It is the unexpected realisation that he is black and thus different, which triggers his motivation for challenging the western system of being: "For it was through his reading that Isaac first became shamefully conscious of being black." (*Hebron* 249) Isaac's experience reveals how literature is complicit in reassuring processes of dehumanisation. What is more, he draws a connection to Jamaica's colonial past, addressing his fellow students and their ignorance of the underlying racial structures: "They came from the generations of slaves on whose toiling backs the noble slogans of democracy had been conceived. And they were ready to die defending concepts which could have no meaning for them." (256) Isaac combines a critique of the legacies of the enslavement of black people with a critique of his fellow students' unawareness of their own complicity in their subordination and oppression by colonial forces. Through Isaac as the focaliser, the narrator emphasises how education and knowledge production are part of the dehumanisation of black people. Ironically comparing the "noble slogans of democracy" with the enslavement and exploitation of black people in the Caribbean, the narrator challenges western accounts of history which praise democracy as an achievement of civilisation. It is revealed here that democracy goes hand in hand with the structural dehumanisation of black people. Isaac further highlights how education and literature support the further enslavement of his fellow students, whom he describes as "victims to servitude more absolute than the one imposed by guns, whips, chains, and hunger." (257) The mental imprisonment Isaac traces, to him, is even worse than physical enslavement. Isaac realises that within the current mode of being, colonial education takes an active part in his own displacement. Wynter's character introduces Afro-pessimist arguments and finds out that historically "slavery did not simply give way to freedom" (*Afro-Pessimism* 8). Rather, Isaac emphasises that his fellow students, like himself, "became the racialized Black 'subject'" (ibid.). Wynter focusses on the historical development of anti-black ideologies and how they manifest themselves within history. Through Isaac's awareness of his own displacement and ultimately liminal status, he challenges, what Wynter calls, the "order of discourse and of its Word of Man" ("Word of Man" 641). In an attempt to rewrite history, he critiques colonialism and the Empire within his history papers at his school, which his teachers describe as "alarming, the facts dangerously distorted, the opinions suspect." (*Hebron* 258):

> In his essay on 'The Rise of the British Empire' Isaac had stated that the true greatness of the English lay in their ability to enslave themselves, consciously, in order to enslave others; on their carefully constructed and chauvinistic vision of the past which enabled them to conceive of a civilization which could flower, like an orchid, on the bent backs of subject races. (258-259)

Isaac's essay conveys a strong critique of the British Empire and its understanding of civilisation. He turns colonial arguments against the British Empire, exposing their own enslavement to their racial conception of the human and their subjective accounts of history. Isaac uses classic colonial binaries and turns them around while questioning British supposedly universal ideals of civilisation. Wynter's reversal of colonial binaries here, recalls Inkle's experience of reversed power relations and extends Gilroy's critique trough Isaac's perspective who elaborates on the parallel development of black people's oppression and the Empire's portrayal as superior. What is more, Isaac highlights here that accounts of history are man-made and constructed in order to secure colonial power. Their writing of history is by no means objective, but rather a fictional account that distorts actual events in order to support British interests. The subjugation of peoples ensure their success, not their civilisation or assumed superiority. Isaac strongly recalls Wynter's theoretical essays in that he points out that the colonial encounters and enslavement of African people enabled the West to establish a hierarchy between different human groups according to their apparent access to reason (see "Ceremony" 34). In his essays Isaac shows how, under the disguise of civilisation, black people have been structurally dehumanised in order to ensure colonial power and hegemony. He further challenges western accounts of history by highlighting the importance of abolition and movements of resistance:

> he had insisted that the most important event of the Victorian age was […] the abolition of slavery; that, once the slaves had the freedom to starve they were free to fight; that therefore the Victorian era saw the emergence of the first Jamaican patriots, the mulatto planter, William George Gordon, and the black deacon, Paul Bogle, who led the Morant Bay rebellion of 1865 (*Hebron* 259).

Isaac uses his black Caribbean perspective and re-evaluates the importance of historic events, emphasising that for colonial subjects there were movements of resistance against colonial powers. Hereby, he contradicts the dominance of European powers in the Caribbean as well as their historic accounts that systematically disregard black people's resistance. In this regard, the act of writing these essays in themselves serves as a form of resistance, in Wynter's terms a "mode of revolt" ("Word of Man" 638). Again Isaac's voice prefigures Wynter's theoretical thoughts. His literary critique, not only addresses a specific Caribbean history but also relates to the literary

uprising Wynter traces in Caribbean intellectual thought and particularly in Glissant's work. Isaac's essays in this context oppose and contradict the muted portrayal of black people that he himself encounters in literature.

Isaac's conflict with his position as a liminal subject increases after returning to Hebron and leads to his conflicted sense of manhood and eventual rape of Rose. Upon his return, Isaac realises that he is also no longer a member of Hebron community. This is underlined by the narrator's comment that Isaac is "even more a stranger than before." (*Hebron* 261) He still hopes to use the New Believers' approval as a means to redefine himself and to leave his ambiguous understanding of himself behind:

> He convinced himself that, returning home, he would return to the sound of a living language, its rhythms sprung from the earth; he would return to a real people, his people, in whose eyes he could see what he had become, just as they saw themselves mirrored in their land and its seasons: and seeing himself, would see them, and be set free to write without having to share experience vicariously through books written by other peoples, in their language, holding up their images, informed with their rhythms, their words. (262)

Isaac's romanticised picture of home is underlined by natural imagery. He depicts his people as being in tune with nature. Again nature is connected with positive aspects, peacefulness and a harmonic relationship between the land and the living. While, Isaac hopes to gain the ability to write his own narratives in order to free himself from the experience of misrepresentation and racial stigma, he also wants to assert his own humanness and subject position. Isaac is in search for his own language, his own expression of his self and his past, which he hopes to encounter through his return. He wants to leave behind the ambiguity of his own self with which he is constantly confronted. However, he cannot escape the binary thinking he got indoctrinated with. He draws a distinction between himself and the people in Hebron and remains caught within binary thinking which, up until the end, he cannot escape. He critiques western literature and accounts of history but does not resolve the hierarchy connected to a humanist system but rather wants to replace their authority with his own. He in fact is an outsider who appropriates the New Believer's understanding of life. Although in his studies, Isaac realises that he is not part of a humanist world-view, what he propagates instead is a concept of the human that also relies on hierarchies and which is still trapped within western ideologies. Therefore, his hopes to use Hebron's alternative form of what he calls a "living language" which can indeed overcome a binary way of thinking has to fail. To no surprise Isaac's arrival is met with suspicion. He is confronted with the community's resentment and disappointment, reflecting what he himself cannot realise; that he is still trapped within a liminal state:

> Obadiah, as elder, welcomed Isaac and called upon him to tell them about the great world that he had seen outside. […] They listened to his speech with an amiable lack of interest, and showed their resentment by refusing to admit that he could have changed." (263)

The distinction between being inside and outside of the community underlines his binary thinking. Isaac wants to enact his superiority through his speech and does not realise that he cannot reach the community, because in their eyes he has turned into an outsider trying to explain the world to them. He still attaches a hierarchy to his understanding of human beings. He values that he can read and pictures himself as superior: "'For whom am I writing? And why?' For a people who could not read, he told himself." (266) Here, his assessment of the community shows how Isaac interprets his capability to produce written texts as a positive attribute, while the New Believers' illiteracy is proof of their missing knowledge about what Isaac defines as the world outside of Hebron. The New Believers' response further increases his conflict with manhood and his image of himself, being confronted with the community's ridicule: "In church they laughed behind their hands; […] the woman-laugh was shrillest of all, annihilating his timorous manhood." (265) His fragile self-worth he connected to his superiority among the New Believers is shattered. A dream sequence, addressing the inner conflict between his representation of himself and the perception through the eyes of the community, emphasises his desperate state of mind:

> He was trapped in Hebron, trying desperately to escape; he was running over the hills looking for an opening to the sea; each time he thought he was free, an opened book, enormous and shaped like iron bars, blocked his way, and printed on the pages was a musical score of the sound of laughter that echoed round him;" (ibid.)

His dream robs Isaac of the hope for escape. The metaphor of the book that imprisons Isaac shows how language still imprisons his subjectivity. It recalls his experience of the New Believers' ridicule and emphasises his fear of mental enslavement. His only form of expression, namely his language, fails him; the language he encountered in his school is itself tainted by the bourgeois system he has to confront and does not offer the means to convince the community, or to escape the colonial order of knowledge. However, the language of Hebron — a " living language" (262), which he thought would grant him freedom — similarly disappoints him. He finds himself within a vicious circle of his continued liminal status that he himself cannot break. His reaction to his liminality is physical violence, which results in mental disfigurement. The sexual violence against Rose, is his last attempt to prove his masculinity and his ability to act despite his liminality:

> Now Rose was like a field left to lie fallow under the sun, a ripe fruit to be plucked by him, Isaac. Soon he would be free of Hebron, would be able to leave it for ever. He was powerful with a certainty he had never known since the night that he had first seen the sea." (271)

The act of rape resembles an act of power. Isaac ensures that he has some kind of power even in this distorted form by hurting the one person he loves. However, his sexual assault does not fulfil what he wants: "And when she got up and ran, I wanted to shout it out to her that it was me, Isaac, me… Isaac… me…[…] But I didn't shout out that it was me, Aunt Kate, I didn't shout it out" (273-274). In the end, he does not find his voice, nor can he assure his own humanness by using his name, he is trapped and again has to flee. Isaac has to realise that he does not belong to Hebron and decides to leave. He deliberately destroys his links to his community and focusses on his individual journey towards his understanding of himself as a human. As a character who values his own individuality more than his membership within the community, Isaac rejects the overall importance the novel puts on community life, as in the communal narration and its approach to re-establishing a link to their presumed lost ancestry (see 4.1.). However, Isaac cannot realise the potential of Hebron's approach to re-negotiate their history through orality and cultural artefacts. Rather he remains caught within a superior and inferior binary and does not overcome hierarchies connected to his understanding of the human and his own manhood. In this context, the narrator comments on his leaving, revealing that Hebron and its community in fact has shown Isaac the key to his search for subjectivity: "he was walking away from the land and the people whose reflected image of him had shaped his dreams, fashioned the self that he would now go in search of" (*Hebron* 275). The New Believers confront Isaac with his involvement within humanist binaries. At the very end, he is still in the position of a liminal subject who once again has to enter a rite of passage. The narrator hints at the answer to his search, emphasising the importance of community life on his subjectivity. Also, Isaac does indeed flee from his immoral actions and does not confront his fears and anxieties. The confrontation with his former community would rupture the very centre of his being, which according to Wynter is the necessary process in order to overcome the humanist concept of Man. She argues that a similar rupture as the one caused by Man, who disposed of the theological authority, can indeed happen again (see Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). Bogues adds that Wynter underlines the role of Caribbean intellectuals, who can indeed "facilitate an epistemic break in the present." (324) Isaac's failure reveals how Wynter herself is in fact aware of the conflicts and profound struggle that he has to confront. The conflict between Issac and the community represents the need to bring about a break with the colonial education system, the language they use and the humanist focus on the individual who defines himself or herself through the demarcation of others. In this context, Wynter's use of non-human objects and the communal narrator puts the focus on a

more collective and united approach, to define what it means to be human and to challenge humanist norms and values.

Throughout *Boy Sandwich* Tyrone questions his status as being caught between his family's Caribbean norms and values and the London society and surroundings he grew up in. His character development underlines how the struggle with liminality and a search for individual self-determination fails in the end. As a third-generation migrant Tyrone confronts similar issues and conflicts as Isaac does in pre-independece Jamaica. In this context, Gilroy and Wynter both show how the marginalisation and displacement of black people is a continued from of structural violence within western societies that historically repeats itself as a generational conflict. Tyrone attempts to escape his liminal status within British society and leaves with his family to his Caribbean home. However, rather than experiencing a rite of passage, he likewise enters another liminal phase, being caught between Caribbean culture and British culture. In order to find his own place within society, he revisits his family's past and their ways of living. So far, Tyrone has only encountered his family's Caribbean origin through the oral tales of his grandparents and has to realise that his Caribbean home does not meet his expectations. Through his journey, he approaches the question of what it means to be human while being caught between his family's origin and his own search for his understanding of subjectivity. Tyrone struggles with his concept of home give insight into conflicts that arise within a black diaspora. Failing to find what he had been searching for, he eventually leaves his family in oder to return to his studies in London. Although the similarities to Isaac's development as a character are striking, Gilroy adds another level of conflict by putting emphasis on the love relationship between Tyrone and Adijah. Adijah constantly confronts Tyrone with his inability to finally escape his liminal status. Their relationship fails in the end, as Tyrone has an affair with a Caribbean girl, before leaving again to London.

The transnational diasporic conflict Gilroy traces in her character resonates with black intellectual thought on diaspora as formulated by Stuart Hall for example. Gilroy and Hall both argue that Black Caribbean communities outside of the Caribbean still have a link to their origin (Hall 557; cf. Gilroy *Leaves* 12-13). In this regard it is Tyrone's family that establishes a "critical conduit between the two locations" (Hall ibid.). Tyrone's search for individuality reaches its height when he returns to the Caribbean. Within this context, his first-person narration offers insights into his emotions and how he revisits his family's history of migration. Through his own migratory experience he has to confront "his peripheral knowledge of two cultures: one proactive, the other reactive" (Gilroy *Leaves* 52). Gilroy puts emphasis on Tyrone's conflict as one that is caught between the contrast of two cultures with clear cut binaries. Within the in-between space of both

cultures, Tyrone finds himself within a liminal position. He represents the struggles, disruptions and tensions that occur even in the third generation of Caribbean people in Great Britain and their still strong links and "'associational identification' with the cultures of origin" that often clash with new "sources of identification." (Hall 557) Tyrone is caught between his family's Caribbean heritage that puts an emphasis on community life and oral story-telling and his own identification as a young black Londoner with dreadlocks who, through his appearance, tries to demarcate himself from his British home and surroundings: "Julietta gives me a sideways look. She doesn't like my dreadlocks." (*Boy Sandwich* 44) Also, Tyrone's grandfather's hairdresser comments on his looks: "[H]e pleads with me to let him cut off my dreadlocks." (57) He identifies himself through his Caribbean heritage within British society and relies on binary differences in order to assert his humanness.

Tyrone is confronted with his blackness and how it is linked to negativity and an inferior status within British society. At the age of twelve, he is harassed by a police officer on his way back from school: "He picked me out of the group and ostentatiously searched me on the pavement." (47) Tyrone realises that his blackness causes the harassment which results in his loss of confidence with officials and his growing awareness of systemic forms of disempowerment of black people: "My difference was a disease, and when the policemen taunted, 'OK, sunshine' — or ram, or cock — 'see you tomorrow,' I died in my twelve-year-old boots." (ibid.) What Tyrone calls "difference" relates back to Isaac's experience of realising the disparity between black and white characters in literature. This structural hierarchy of race is further underlined by the officer's reluctance to use Tyrone's name which is in itself an act of dehumanisation. Tyrone's experience with the police exposes his imposed liminal status as a black person. His response to the harassment draws a distinction between the two cultures Tyrone is caught in: "I could not understand a conception of hatred that was directed to certain people, and permanently fixed upon them." (49) Tyrone has to realise that there is a hierarchy within British society that makes a distinction between people on the basis of their skin colour. His response to these open forms of harassment intensifies his feeling of non-belonging and racially mark him as a liminal subject: "As I grew older, I became more conscious of the need to defend my ground and fight my corner. To me aggression, anger and hate were normal responses to persecution and racial attack." (ibid.) Tyrone focusses on his emotions as a natural responses to racism and as a way to challenge his displacement and the hatred that is directed against black people. Within this context, Tyrone relates to Gilroy's use of emotion as a literary theme through which she wants to represent what she calls the "Black experience" (*Leaves* 32). Emotions here appear as a means to undermine racial dichotomies and address the historic

displacement of black people as non-humans. Focussing on his emotional response, Tyrone is able to address his dehumanisation and non-human status within British society. However, Tyrone fails to transcend the racial binaries he confronts and does not realise the creative power of his emotions in order to break through the repetitive cycle of his liminality. It is his girlfriend Adijah who reflects his binary thinking attached to his emotions: "'Love I said is a destructive emotion,' I muse, 'but it is life that is the most destructive of all.' 'I disagree,' she says. 'It's how you feel about love and life that either destroys or elevates." (92) Adijah focusses on her own perception of the concepts love and life and that it is in her power to decide if something is able to affect her. She opens another approach and way of thinking in order for Tyrone to realise that he has not to be dependent on the racial structures that surround him. A conversation both have on their journey to the Caribbean further underlines how Adijah questions Tyrone's understanding of his manhood:

> I feel as if I have accomplished something, as if I have worth. I am not just Tyrone, the grandson. I am a man. I nestle beside Adijah. She pulls one of my locks.
> 'Do you still need these?'
> 'I don't know.'
> What do they do for you except make you sinister and peculiar? Why do you need sinister and peculiar? Nobody cares about you, black-man!' (98)

Tyrone values his journey home as one of his personal achievements, because he has secured the financial support by selling the painting. In naming and placing himself within his family, Tyrone emphasises the essence of his being and his humanness. He wants to write his own history in order to be acknowledged as a complete member of society. His definition of himself as "man" exposes his entrapment within racial and patriarchal paradigms. Tyrone does not reflect upon the racial bias he has experienced within a British society that excludes him from being a member of the conception of the human as Man. Travelling to the Caribbean, he wants to leave the racial confrontation behind, but does not realise that his way of thinking about man is still confined by the very structures that displace him. Adijah's ridicule underlines his disruptive understanding of manhood and confronts him with his own blackness. She underlines that he still defines himself within binary classifications.

Rather than escaping his liminality, Tyrone enters another form of liminal status in the Caribbean, recalling Isaac's situation in Hebron. Within this context, Isaac and Tyrone experience similar stages: their hope of being embraced by a community, their disappointment upon arrival, which is followed by their search for and understanding of manhood and culminates in forced and unforced sexual encounters, which both ultimately lead to their escape from their communities. Before Tyrone arrives, he voices his expectations of returning to an idealised home: "We have come

home. It has taken many long hours of flying. We have really come home." (99) And after the arrival once again: "We have come home." (ibid.) The repeated use of the pronoun "we" however does not stress a sense of belonging or community. Rather the frequent repetition conveys a sense of self-doubt and need to reassure himself, foreshadowing Tyrone's frustration and disappointment. His own feeling of self-worth and achievement is confronted upon arrival by the suspicion and opposition from the people surrounding him: "The eyes of the young people almost perforate us with resentment that can be felt like heat against the body and for the first time in this long saga of events I cannot aptly describe my feelings." (107) Tyrone's image of home is not congruent with what he anticipated. His confusion about his own feelings marks his return to the Caribbean not as a journey home, but as a journey towards uncertainty about his own position within his family's home. He is unable to connect with his family's home and his feeling of not belonging and of his own displacement increases: "On the whole young people avoid me. I resemble them and yet am not of their world — neither speaking nor behaving like them. […] To them I am a London black. A weird species of humanity" (108). Tyrone clearly draws a distinction between different conceptions of the human here that divide people into different kinds of human being. Rather than acknowledging the potential of difference, he concentrates on negative markers that keep him from joining the Caribbean community. These contrasts stress the internalisation of a humanist order of humanness. This heightens the conflict he already experiences within his family's community. For his problems in coping with his liminal status, he sees no solution:

> In Picktown I am trapped — in my family identity, the identity of my community and the identity of my opportunity. In London I had lived another life, grown other feelings, got to know myself as 'Tyrone'. I know how and where I am vulnerable. I understand my difference. (110)

Tyrone again calls himself by his name in order to assert his own self and humanness — something Isaac ultimately fails to achieve. Tyrone focusses on his individual self, which is underlined by the constant use of the pronoun "I". He underlines his personal understanding of his own liminality and the subject position he grew up with in London, which contrasts a collective and communal understanding of human beings. Again the role of emotions is important, as he stresses the feelings he developed throughout his life in London. His "difference" within British society is part of his life: "I cannot handle becoming the Picktown person. I do not want the involvement of 'belonging' without the choice of 'not belonging' I feel unhappy outside my harsh urban skin, unable to site myself in time and space." (110-111) Through his experience of disappointment at not finding what he was looking for, he begins to accept that his understanding of himself is different to that of his

family's understanding of himself. Like Isaac, he experiences an incongruence of expectations and perceptions of himself. Tyrone is denied the ideal of escaping the diasporic experience, the racism and the liminal status of black people, or as Stuart Hall calls it, the "promise of the redemptive return" (558). This is underlined by his attempt to be accepted by Stephy, a girl he initially meets upon arriving at the airport and to whom he feels sexually attracted: "There is no dissent. No discord. She accepts me totally. There are no words, just harmony and then ecstasy." (*Boy Sandwich* 114) Escaping his inner conflict, Tyrone finds solace in Stephy, whose presence contrasts his liminality and his disruptive sense of himself. However, the peace he encounters does not last: "Momentarily my sense of maleness ebbs and flows in all its power and then I too feel stigmatised and guilty." (115) His emotions reveal that he cannot escape his conflict and is even more disempowered by the attempt to leave it behind. Rather, he realises that he needs to conceptualise his own version of humanness in order to escape his liminal status. He decides to leave the island in order to go back to London:

> I feel a sharp change culminating in a hatred for the Island. Grandpa's, Grandma's, my parents'. Their Island. I hate the way it shuts me in, and the sloth-like passage of time that lulls me into a false sense of ease and insensibility. […] Most of all I hate my misunderstanding of the idea of home. I don't belong here. And this morning, with the murmuring waters and racing clouds in the distance, I know it. I am British and believe it. (ibid.)

Tyrone stresses the rupture between his family and himself, as his use of pronouns and the ellipsis "Their Island." underlines. His negative portrayal of his family's home stresses that he does not identify with his family's cultural background and realises that he does not need the communal history of his parents and grandparents. Instead he identifies with his conception of Britishness, which counterposes his family's home. Tyrone expresses here that the way of life on the island leads to a loss of emotions that shape his understanding of humanness, as the aforementioned anger, his resistance against oppression and the fight against black people's displacement highlights. He needs those feelings and confrontations with himself as a black Londoner in order to claim his subjectivity. His return to his presumed home lets him find his own conception of being British, of being human, which is still caught within racial and patriarchal ways of thinking. He cannot transcend fixed boundaries and returns to London. By focussing on his British heritage solely, Isaac again chooses between two poles, once again wanting to escape his liminality, disregarding his experience of displacement in London. He does not find a balance between both worlds and similarly to Isaac flees from the rupture he might have to encounter when questioning the very centre of his humanness. In the end, both Tyrone and Isaac leave the places they thought to be their

homes. Both characters reveal similarities in dealing with their liminality and confrontation with family values and expectations. Isaac and Tyrone highlight the constant conflict that is caused by black people's dehumanisation and the need to assert their humanness again and again in order to find self-worth and challenge the bourgeois, colonial system that suppresses them. Yet, eventually both fail and enter a vicious circle of having to redefine themselves again and again. They cannot cope with their position and do not transcend a humanist mindset, resulting in betrayal and violence. This analysis of male characters underlines how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter who are similar in a liminal position within a western discourse use their marginalisation as a creative resource. All three male characters offer a unique view on the struggles and conflicts caused by a humanist mindset, starting with the first colonial encounters up until the experience or Caribbean migration. Next to redefining black people's position within history, Inkle, Isaac and Tyrone remain situated within humanist ideologies and accept liminality as a deficit. Unlike Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work they do not interpret their liminality as a new approach and access to creativity and emphasise why the intellectual fictional and non-fictional texts reinterpret their external perspectives as a form of strength.

4.3. Resistance within Colonial History: Mutiny in Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, Marronage in Wynter's *Maskarade* and Anti-Imperialist Activism in Jones' "To Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (1955)" and "For Consuela — Anti-Fascista (1955)"

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's accounts of historic events in their fictional work emphasise the role and impact of resistance as an intervention into a western discourse on the writing of history. All three highlight different forms of resistance throughout their work by addressing various points in history to underline that black resistance began with the moment of black enslavement. Their work challenges the silence and absence of black subjects within western historical archives and offers an alternative approach that focusses on black people's response against enslavement, displacement and racial violence (see Hartman "Venus" 11). Implementing their assessment of black people's role within history into their literary works, they resonate with Hartman's approach of critical fabulation in which she relates to historical accounts as "fictions of history" (ibid.). Through their literature, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter critique an assumed universality of western historic accounts as well as generic boundaries that confine history to archival texts, sources and non-fictional works. Focussing on five different works, this chapter underlines how the three intellectuals reflect upon different moments in time in order to express resistance through their own, black female Caribbean voices. The historical trajectory of their work begins with Gilroy's representation of mutiny on board of a

slave ship, trough the account of a black female enslaved person, which is followed by the role of Maroons and Marronage in Wynter's novel and play and ends with Jones' expression of political activism and struggles for independence in the 1950s. What further connects their work is an emphasis on the role of communication and communities in order to express this resistance.

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's representations of resistance in their literature contribute to an alternative understanding of black people's role within the history of colonialism, enslavement and racial violence. Utilising their external perspectives, they highlight how their works intervene within post- and decolonial discourse stressing their own voices as black female subjects. What Gilroy's and Wynter's male characters fail to do, namely escape classic colonial binaries, their work achieves by undermining black people's representation as victims and objects. Within this regard, the three intellectuals touch upon the discussion about the subaltern who cannot speak (see Spivak 90). They emphasise that "minority or indigenous groups have the right to make and disseminate their own representations of self and culture." (Ingram 81) What is more they do not engage with the question *if* the subaltern can speak, but rather assert that the subaltern has been speaking for as long as the term exists.

Gilroy's resistance on the level of the narrative voice, through appropriating Inkle's white perspective, is further intensified by Inkle's confrontation with black female resistance. Yarico's drastic way of preventing Inkle's child from being enslaved, namely killing him, and the story of mutiny on board of a slave ship, told by an enslaved black woman named Nimbah, contrasts black female displacement and assumed muted subjectivity. Inkle passively witnesses and listens to these black female accounts of resistance that undermine colonial power relations. In this context, Gilroy rewrites the original versions about Inkle and Yarico from the 17th and 18th century, which all render Yarico as the victim of Inkle's betrayal. While Ligon and Steele both comment on the selling of Yarico, stressing the systemic displacement of black female subjects during colonialism, Gilroy focusses on Yarico's agency and resistance. Ligon's account puts a particular emphasis on the racialised representation of black women as mere victims and objects without agency:

> But the youth, when he came ashore in the *Barbados*, forgot the kindness of the poor maid, that had ventured her life for his safety, and sold her for a slave, who was as free born as he: And so poor *Yarico* for her love, lost her liberty" (107)

Focussing on Yarico's dependence on Inkle, Ligon stresses his sympathy for the betrayal she has to endure. Ligon later mentions her again, further stressing her victimisation: "the most unfortunate *Yarico*, an *Indian* woman" (Ligon 119; original emphasis). Ligon displaces Yarico as the victim of Inkle's actions with no subjectivity nor voice of her own. Similarly, Steele's version highlights the

motivations behind Inkle's transaction, omitting Yarico's perspective completely. He rather empathises with Inkle for his decision to sell Yarico and tries to justify his economic reasoning:

> Mr. *Thomas Inkle*, now coming into English Territories, began seriously to reflect upon his loss of Time, and to weigh himself how many Days Interest of his Money he had lost during his Stay with *Yarico*. […] Upon which Considerations, the prudent and frugal young Man sold Yarico to a Barbadian merchant;" (160)

Steele's portrayal of Inkle's character represents humanist values of individual success and efficiency as well as values of reason. Steele does not represent Inkle's decision to sell Yarico in an emotional way, but rather solely concentrates on the gains that can still be won after his loss of time and money. Both narrations put the focus on Inkle's actions and motivations, omitting Yarico's view and voice altogether. Gilroy's portrayal of Yarico and how she confronts Inkle, after realising that she is to be sold into slavery, presents a stark contrast to both versions. In Gilroy's narrative, Yarico appears as an agent who makes her own choices, even after being sold into slavery. After the act of betrayal, Yarico questions the transaction itself by highlighting the act of dehumanisation and her rejection of her own commodification: "Her head tilted, she peered accusingly at me and then rasped, as only a Carib can, 'If he carry me to my people, why he give *you* present? Why you not give *him* present?'" (*Inkle and Yarico* 94) Yarico's whole demeanour expresses resistance, while being exposed to her dehumanisation, which is underlined by the exchange of money between Dunbar and Inkle. Throughout the scene of her impending enslavement, Inkle as the narrator focusses predominantly on Yarico's voice and gaze and how it expresses resistance against his betrayal. Hereby, the narrative perspective as well as Yarico's voice challenge the enslavement of black people and colonial hierarchies. Her voice expresses her anger and irritation, accusing Inkle openly, as the term "rasped" emphasises. Her resistance is further underlined by her judging gaze:

> She raised her eyes but looked towards the sea as if formulating some devilish plan. […] With true Carib intuition she knew the truth before Dunbar's slave chained her, and for a moment she held my gaze as if challenging me to toy with her soul. (ibid.)

The focus on Yarico's gaze highlights the reversal of colonial hierarchies. Her gaze makes Inkle anxious, revealing that she is still in control, twisting the contemporary structures of colonial rule and power. This reversal of power between Inkle and Yarico is contrasted with the actual transaction of selling Yarico into slavery. Her ultimate act of resistance is to prevent her son from being enslaved by killing him. The moment of her son's death is placed right before the end of the transaction between Inkle and Dunbar and is her last act as a free women:

> she rushed to the full extent of the chain and wrenching the child form her breast she whirled him above her head like a bull-roarer. He shrieked like the spirit of the bull-roarer, as she tossed him with a piercing scream into the sea. (ibid.)

Again the sound of Yarico's voice is of central importance. The scream of the child is reflected in Yarico's own yell and is compared with the sound of a bull-roarer. The bull-roarer is an ancient wooden musical instrument with an attached cord, which creates sounds that can vary "from a low rumble like thunder […] to a high-pitched scream when spun fast." (Morley 105). Bull-roarers or "Schwirrhölzer" appeared across various "ancient cultures of Europe, the Americas, Asia, Australasia and Africa", introducing an alternative cultural realm to Inkle's Englishness (Englund 183). The instrument was used for "religious ritual and music" as well as a means of communicating as "the sound could be controlled in order to deliver codified messages over great distances." (ibid.) It signifies "a cultural sphere where music, ritual and language had not been separated from each other" which further underlines Yarico's resistance (ibid.) The sound of Yarico's voice, the scream of their child and its almost ritual-like killing transports the message of black female resistance. As a result, Yarico is brutally punished but still maintains her agency: "she smiled even as the slave driver unceasingly lashed her for her act of defiance" (*Inkle and Yarico* 95). By showing no emotion or painful reaction to her whipping, she robs her capturers of their power over her. She once more attacks Inkle verbally: "They will come! They will come! Like the moonlight shadows they will come." (ibid.) Yarico's curse is also the last instance in which she uses direct speech in the novel. She foreshadows Inkle's constant fear of her and of black people in general. His state of fearful anticipation that Yarico comes back to haunt him culminates in his growing hatred and extreme brutal actions against his own slaves on his planation. Yarico increases Inkle's inner conflict with his own subjectivity and his liminal position within colonial society. She indeed haunts him as he constantly questions his own manhood and rational mind while dismissing the influence she has over him.

Integrating Nimbah's story into her narrative, Gilroy addresses another account of resistance that deals with the middle passage, challenging the transformation from humans into "human commodities" (Smallwood 6). Hereby, Gilroy also calls attention to the "inexorably one-way trajectory of African dispersal via the transatlantic slave trade and its implications for African life in the Americas" (ibid.). As other colonial commodities and goods, African people were caught within a linear movement. Gilroy contradicts the status of black people as commodities with her account of black female resistance and therefore undermines the process of becoming objects:

> We were taken to the deck to be of service to the sailors who had stayed behind when other had gone ashore. Three or four perhaps had stayed behind. One had carelessly left a hammer lying idle and this we found and took down to the women, who had at once broke their chains with it. While some kept the drunken sailors busy, other wretched women crept up upon the sailors and began to kill them, but they managed to call upon their Dutch brethren who came to their aid with mighty guns and cutlasses, causing dead slaves to fall upon us (*Inkle and Yarico* 137)

Nimbah's story offers a black female perspective regarding her enslavement and journey to the Caribbean. Her story also emphasises her individual encounter with colonisers and her personal experience with enslavement, which challenges historic accounts that rarely focus on individual accounts but on the commodification of black people generally (see Smallwood 101). Through Nimbah's account, Gilroy heightens the fact that each enslaved person has his or her own subjectivity. Nimbah writes her own version of a black female history and thus contests western representations of black women as muted objects. Her point of view emphasises the communication among the captives and their joint efforts to overthrow their captors. Successful communication also implies that the women on the ship were able to form a community as their joint fight for their freedom shows. This challenges the slavers' ambition to cut off any communal links by mixing peoples from different cultural and social backgrounds (see ibid.). Nimbah's account is evidence for resistance and uprising against commodification and enslavement. Like Yarico's before her, she expresses black female resistance, challenging and undermining the colonial and patriarchal systems both women encounter.

Whereas Gilroy emphasises expressions of resistance within the structures of enslavement, Wynter turns in her play *Maskarade* towards the role of Maroon settlements and their active forms of resistance within the context of Caribbean history. Two of her characters, namely Quaheba and Cuffie descend from Maroon people from Portland and can trace back a lineage to Africa, emphasising a continuity of resistance. Maroon history is not only indirectly addressed through the heritage of Quasheba and Cuffie, but also directly referred to by the "frame narrator[s]" Lovey and Boy, who focus on "a story of past events in order to set the scene for the listeners" (Bowles 172). Lovey, a "traditional storyteller" and Boy his 12-year-old apprentice frame the play and comment on the actions, its characters but also give information on the play's context and Jamaica's history (see *Maskarade* 18). Within this context, like Gilroy, Wynter focusses on the survival of aspects of communal life even though the history of enslavement attempts to prevent the creation of communities among the enslaved. *Maskarade* focusses on the role of resistance as a response to black people's displacement and dehumanisation and offers an alternative black Caribbean

perspective on historic events. Revealing the constructedness of history, Wynter focusses on the Jamaican tradition of Jonkonnu and its African heritage which challenges a colonial historic account of Jamaica's history. The play transports resistance through the mingling of dramatic and epic elements which emphasises Wynter's grounding within left-activist ideologies. Her use of epic elements, such as Lovey and Boy who function as a narrative instance and an excessive use of stage directionsvrecalls Brecht's epic theatre.[53] Wynter's black, female Caribbean perspective advances Brecht's epic drama, similar to Jones' reinterpretation and advancement of Marxism and therefore also conveys a sense of political resistance. Her play reveals how "'performing blackness' […] captures the scope and magnitude of the performative as a strategy of power and tactic of resistance." (Hartman *Subjection* 57)[54] Within this regard, *Maskarade* exposes how "certain orders of reality had developed historically and were perpetuated" (Bryant-Bertail 2-3). Within the play, Wynter constantly mingles epic elements with "indigenous performance traditions" (6). As "[e]pic texts and performances are ultimately concerned with *critiquing their specific historical situation*" (ibid.; original emphasis), Wynter's play goes beyond a mere critique and offers her own version of the history of colonialism, focussing on the importance of Marronage and Jonkonnu performance in *Maskarade*. Therefore, she gives her characters the power to challenge a western order of consciousness.

Through a link with African culture *Maskarade* transports a sense of continuity and African community within the Maroon settlements in the Caribbean despite the experience of colonialism. Drawing a direct link between Quasheba's family history, the Maroon settlements and African enslaved not only underlines a sense of ancestry and communal links, but also reveals that African cultural influences indeed survived the middle passage and planation slavery:

> In Africa before our old time people
> come across the salt water
> Akwasiba was the name for a girl born on Sunday
> And up in Portland where Cuffie and my
> Grandmother come from
> They still use that name!
> She did name Quasheba
> And she pass her name on to me
> She was a Maroon
> Like Cuffie. (*Maskarade* 41)

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[53] For a definition of the epic theatre see Pfister, p. 106.

[54] For an analysis and discussion of Black Performance see Hartman's "Performing Blackness" in *Scenes of Subjection*, pp. 56-59.

The structure of the quote emphasises a cut between what Quasheba calls the "old times" and their Caribbean diaspora as the enjambment in the first two lines highlights. Whereas the first line gives information about a link back towards an African heritage, culture and community, the second line follows the loss experienced during the middle passage. Instead of further focusing on the forced dispersal of African people, Quasheba's own name underlines how she puts an emphasis on the African influence within the Caribbean and its lingering importance for Maroon culture. Her history reveals a strong sense of resistance that runs through her family. Her name reveals the direct influence of her grandmother who predominates the last lines of the extract. Quasheba draws upon a matriarchal form of heritage, highlighting the importance of black female resistance within her family. Indirectly, she undermines patriarchal humanist structures, as she does not relate to her male descendants, contrasting humanism's focus on the superior role of Man in singularly male terms.

Next to Quasheba's and Cuffie's ancestry, it is particularly the story-tellers Lovey and his apprentice Boy who serve as witnesses and narrators of historic events. Their dialogue frames the play and comments on the history of the Maroons, their journey to the Caribbean and resistance against colonial rule and enslavement. Their speech also puts emphasis on the role of orality as an alternative way to narrate history. Lovey's and Boy's dialogue builds a superordinate frame that introduces, ends and interrupts scenes with their commentary, underlining the epic elements of the play. They add information, introduce characters and have a superior knowledge of the characters inside the play. What is more, through their commentary, they also disrupt the temporal structure of the play and refer to and remember Jamaica's past. Their commentary allows for a historic evaluation of Jamaica's past that goes beyond the actions and comments of the characters. This is further stressed by detailed and concise stage directions that appear not only at the beginning of each scene but often also interrupt scenes. These two levels of narration are underscored by a two level stage, as the stage directions state: "*The two-level stage serves to mark the difference-interaction of past and present. When the play begins the Jonkunnu Festival […] has had to take refuge in the hills; to go underground like the Maroons*." (*Maskarade* 25) The stage directions also comment on Lovey's and Boy's position: "*LOVEY and the BOY wait on the lower level center stage, although the upper level is their turf*" (ibid.). The two levels of the stage represent past and present. Lovey and Boy are interlocutors between past and present and fulfil the function of heterodiegetic narrators who jump between the play's plot and past events: they focus on the history of the Maroons and how they came to the Caribbean, they narrate the history of the middle passage and rewrite the history of enslavement. Their dialogue exemplifies how the play in itself constitutes a critique of black people's displacement within history:

Lovey: Now Maroon people come like the rest of us,
From another world called Africa,
From a different page that turn
Before the one we live now!
Boy: We can take that page as read.
Go on to Cuffie. (69)

Highlighting the importance of orality and an indigenous form of remembering, their statement "we can take that page as read" signals that Lovey and Boy are about to focus on another part of history that has not been told yet. It emphasises that they are not only rewriting history, but creating a different one — one that has not been told before and which is placed outside the western mindset and hemisphere. Also, by directly referring to a written document, Lovey and Boy contrast the literal writing of history with their oral form of history telling. Hereby, Lovey and Boy recall the connection that Gilroy makes between orality, collectivity and story-tellers (see Gilroy *Leaves* 14). Gilroy comments on the importance of story-tellers who secure a Caribbean cultural heritage through their oral expressions. Indigenous traditions here, not only counter classic historic written accounts, but also offer a distinctly Caribbean perspective on history. Recalling Glissant's "theme of an Antillean history", Wynter's play contributes to her literary mode of revolt and underlines how she actively contributes to an empowerment of a Caribbean tradition of history writing ("Word of Man" 639).

Underlining their superordinate position, Lovey and Boy recall Cuffie's line of ancestry and trace it back to the Ashanti. They offer a black perspective on the history of enslavement and transatlantic slavery that focusses on black people's resistance, rebellion and agency. Maroons, within this context, are depicted as powerful and contradict the portrayal of enslaved as mere objects:

Lovey: Cuffie's generation, long-time back
Come from Ashanti-fighting stock!
Different from the rest of us.
Boy: They catch and get sell
Like the rest of us, Ashanti or not!
[…]
Lovey: Water under the bridge for the rest of us.
We settle for the little we can get
And come to terms
Boy: Only Maroon one hold out! Stubborn!
Lovey: They have cause to stubborn!
When they sail away from the old land
They hide the Oxehead mask that dance the dead.
That dance the gods.
They sail the mask on the sea with them!
Carry the old power in the hold with them. (*Maskarade* 70)

Lovey and Boy draw a distinction between the Ashanti, from which the Maroons descend and other enslaved people that came to the Caribbean who "settle for the little we can get". The Maroons, however, resist the colonial system and remember their heritage and history of the Ashanti, as well as their sense of community. Maroons came as enslaved as most of the Africans, but are portrayed as powerful agents. Boy emphasises that it was only the Maroons who stubbornly "hold out" implying their rebellious resistance against colonial rule. The Maroons Lovey portrays appear not to have been affected by "the practices of commodification [that] most effectively muted the agency of the African subject", as Smallwood remarks (122). This is underlined by the representation of the Maroon's subjectivity in active verbs such as "they sail", "they hide" "they sail the mask" and "Carry the old power". The use of the pronoun "they" also shows the continuity of their community, even after the experience of enslavement and the forced journey of the middle passage. The mask adds another form of rebellion and also directly relates the Maroons to the Jonkonnu masquerade. The mask is portrayed here as a vessel for the power of resistance and incarnates the communal link the Maroons brought with them from Africa. The mask fulfils two functions here. It conveys a deadly power and also offers a form of communal linkage for those Africans who survived the middle passage. This is further expressed in the Maroon's tradition of revolt and their militant attributes: "Cuffie is a Maroon! / And Maroon born for war! Ach!" (*Maskarade* 69) Marronage and the ability to fight appear to be intrinsically linked. Wynter's essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" emphasises the role of Jonkonnu dances and Maroon warriors in Jamaica and how they serve as an expression of revolt and resistance, which also directly connects the play and the essay:

> Not only were drums part of the whole ritual of revolt; so also were dances. We know that war-songs still exist among the Maroons. […] Many of them came from a powerful military caste. In Africa, dancing is the special preserve of warriors since dancing is a ritual and physical preparation for war. ("Jonkonnu" 41)

Wynter draws a connection between war and Maroon rituals. Within the play the connection between the Maroons' and their ancestors from Africa are accentuated by Lovey and Boy who focus on how the Maroons' dancing and masks embody military attributes that survived the middle passage. In her essay and her play, Wynter underlines the disruptive force of Maroons which is equally expressed by Kathleen Wilson. She argues that "Maroon communities managed to […] impose their own theater of terror on seemingly hapless British settlers. Scholars insufficiently appreciate how panicked and distressed the British were by the continual assaults" (Wilson 56). The play and essay contribute to a rewriting of history here in that they both focus on how Maroons were able to upset the colonial order by using military methods. Hence, both texts fill a gap within

the recording of history. What is more, Wynter addresses the scope of Maroon revolts, links them to indigenous forms of cultural expressions and points out their importance for forms of resistance. In *Maskarade*, the beginnings of Jonkonnu dances as rituals for preparing warfare are re-enacted in its original form:

Boy: War Power!

> *Lights up on the Maroon version of the Maskarade. The ceremony will be like the one Bowditch describes. It features Oxehead Mask, the mask of the ancestors. Its formality and gravity separate it from its cultural offspring, the Jonkunnu. War horns. Powerful drums. Dread. Colours of Earth. Colours, muted tones quite unlike the explosion of colour of the Jonkunnu itself.*
>
> War Power!
>
> *Drums alone. Oxehead tied with rope, as he whirls. Sense of dread.*
>
> So hold your breath. Look away. Take care.
> When the Oxehead dance in their masquerade
> Is not man dance like you and me…

Lovey: Is the gods!

> *Formal short powerful dance, but muted. Formal drums. No other sound. Then it breaks off all at once. Mood and lighting back to everyday.* (*Maskarade* 70-71)

The stage directions go beyond a form of informative input but add another literary element to the play by portraying the mood and atmosphere, using several ellipses. The very short exclamations mimic the rhythm of the drums used in the dance. The directions also comment on the difference between the Maroons' version of the Maskarade and the Jonkonnu version which is highlighted by a difference in colour. The secondary and primary text alternate and resonate, forming a dialogue with one another through rhythm, dance and militant imagery. The dance that is performed on stage is "muted", so that Lovey's and Boy's comments and the drums accompanying the dance are the only expressions. The secondary text not only gives information on what is about to happen on stage, but also reveals the tense and war-like atmosphere. It moreover resonates with the rhythm of the primary text due to the incomplete, broken-up sentences. Boy's exclamation "War Power!" and the secondary text's use of ellipses such as "Powerful drums." or "Dread." resonate with each other. The primary and secondary text together increase the aggressive atmosphere by reimagining the original African dance of the Jonkonnu. Contrasting the colourful, lively procession of the Jonkonnu masquerade, the play emphasises its original usage for war. Also, the change in sound,

atmosphere and light emphasises Lovey's and Boy's focus on the narration of historic events rather than the play's plot structure. The Maroon dance is characterised as powerful and fearsome and highlights the Maroons' agency and rebellious attitude. What is more, the abrupt change in the atmosphere of the performance reveals the constructedness of history by interrupting the natural flow of the play through the change in music, light and colours. This rupture also conveys a sense of dread that the imposed order of play can be destroyed at any time. It also emphasises that *Maskarade* in itself is a disruption of western accounts of history whose claim to universality is by no means secured.

While Gilroy and Wynter focus on themes of resistance within the history of the transatlantic slave trade and colonisation, Jones stresses the resistance among the first anti-imperialist feminist activists. Emphasising her sense of community with other female political activists, Jones draws a transnational connection in their joint efforts for fighting for black women's rights. In her two poems "For Consuela — Anti-Fascista (1955)" and "To Elizabeth Gurley Flynn (1955)", Jones highlights a common course of political activism between herself, Blanca Consuela Torres and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Both of them were, like Jones herself, incarcerated for their political ideas in Alderson (see Boyce-Davies *Beyond* xv; see also *Left* 112-113). Boyce-Davies characterises Jones' feminism in this context as "anti-imperialist" and "truly international in nature" (*Left* 111). Jones emphasises a sense of community through their joint political activism and underlines the common political ideology among women with different backgrounds, crossing racial, cultural and social boundaries: Flynn was American, Torres from Puerto Rico and Jones from Trinidad. They were the only women within the group of communists who had been sent to prison for their political convictions and even while serving their time, they continued to send important political messages (see 113). The poems connect Jones' transnational political activism with other women and underlines how she challenges the assumption of a silenced subaltern voice. Her voice and in extension also Flynn's and Torres' voices within this context express resistance and agency. In this context, the autobiographical details of meeting Torres and Flynn are integral for the speech situations of the poems because they blur the line between the voice of the author, Claudia Jones, and the lyrical persona. Both poems address real women Jones was incarcerated with and who joined her fight against American imperialism and fascism. The crossing of lines between Jones subjectivity and that of the lyrical personas stresses her voice as a black Caribbean woman fighting for her rights. The form of poetry as an expression of the struggles Jones and both fellow activists faced in prison is an expression of resistance in itself. It resonates with Wynter's "external observer" perspective and literary mode of revolt ("Ceremony" 56), as well as NourbeSe Philip's

reinterpretation of placelessness and creativity (see 58). Jones' creative confrontation deals with her fear of loss caused by her impending deportation and at the same time expresses resistance towards her own displacement. Resistance in this context is expressed through an emphasis on the voice of the lyrical persona as well as on the sense of community between the intellectual activists. Jones' poems imagine their shared political activism and continued communication while confronting her own imminent deportation. Structurally both poems underline the conflict by disruptions that have different functions. They stress the lyrical persona's voice, but also emphasise the activist's impending forced separation:

> It seems I knew you long before our common ties — of conscious choice
> Threw under single skies, those like us
> Who, fused by our mold
> Became their targets as of old ("Consuela" 189)
>
> Of all the times I'll miss you most
> Is when I'm least aware
> Because you will intrude I know — Upon my inner ear
> Beloved comrade — when from you I tear —
> My mind, my heart, my thoughts, you'll hear! ("Flynn" 188)

The poem's similar speech situations of the lyrical personas who address other female political activists highlight the communication among female political activists but also a form of solidarity and continuity of their friendship and joint efforts against imperialism. The first quote exemplifies that the poem does not follow a classic rhyme scheme, as attached extensions "— of conscious choice" and ", those like us" show. Both clauses represent the lyrical persona's agency and sense of community between speaker and addressee, highlighting how these disruption challenge Jones' and Torres' displacement and loss of communication. Their sense of community is further manifested by phrases like "*our* common ties" and "by *our* mold". The lyrical persona stresses her own agency and that of her addressees by hinting at their role as political activists as "fused by our mold" shows. Also, the lyrical persona traces a lineage of resistance: "became their targets as of old". By not specifying who "their" is, she emphasises the continuity of a community that is bound together by their efforts of fighting against injustices and which is not constrained by temporal boundaries. The structure of the second quote also has multiple disruptions caused by dashes. These interruptions emphasise their separation, as "Beloved comrade — when from you I tear —" exemplifies. Still, the importance of the lyrical persona's voice is central and the personal pronoun "I" occurs four times, the possessive pronoun "my" four times and the address of "you" also four times. This shows the strong emphasis on communication, as well as sending and receiving a

message. Rather than focussing on the loss and separation, the lyrical persona heightens their unique form of communication that will continue across distance even after Jones is deported. Both poems stress the black female voice as one that undermines forced displacement and anticipates communal links and communication. Through the portrayal of an almost subconscious ability to communicate, Jones takes away the power of the American legal system that first of all incarcerates her and then deports her to London. The writing of these poems hereby represents an act of resistance in that Jones actively and creatively addresses possibilities to undermine racial structures that attempt to displace her. She offers a glimpse inside communal resistance that transcends boundaries of race, class and gender while actively confronting the injustices of the American policy of incarcerating political opponents.

Next to the voice of the lyrical persona, the poems clearly stress the voice of each addressee. Imagined communication intensifies resistance and is a means to surpass displacement. The speech situation between lyrical personas and addressees heightens a sense of intimate relationship that undermines the American governments' attempts to prevent political activists' from forming like-minded communities (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 115). In "For Consuela — Anti-Fascista", Jones' and Torres' connection is emphasised as a form of kinship among Caribbean activists:

> Oh wondrous Spanish sister
> Long-locked from all you care
> Listen — while I tell you what you strain to hear
> And beckon all from far and near (189)

The lyrical voice highlights distinct communal links, as she traces kinship among anglophone and hispanophone Caribbean women by using the address "Spanish sister" (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 112). She alludes to Torres' involvement and support in fighting for the independence of her home country Puerto Rico, integrating the lyrical persona's and her addressee's political activism within the wider framework of fighting for independence for Caribbean countries (see *Beyond* 189). The kinship between both exists through their joint political activism. Particularly in line three and four, the choice of words puts an emphasis on communication. Both speaking and listening are active processes of resistance. By using the metaphor of kinship to portray their connection, the lyrical persona subverts the efforts of breaking their bond, as familial relations surpass the understanding of friendship. This strong message challenges any attempts to cut off communication among political activists in the United States and to prevent theses activists from propagating the fight for independence of Caribbean countries. In this context the last line traces a community of activists that goes beyond their connection and which transcends geographical boundaries. This underlines

the lyrical persona's and addressee's joint source of power and how they oppose an American understanding of justice. While Jones expresses a strong link in the terms of sisterhood to Torres, she predominantly uses natural imagery in "To Elizabeth Gurley Flynn" in order to expresses the intensity of their connection:

> I think I'll always see you everywhere —
> At morn — when sunlight bathes all things like verse
> Proclaiming man, not beast,
> Is king of all the universe. (188)

Natural imagery in the form of the sun is at the centre of the poem and connected with Flynn (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 114). The position of the sun marks the passing of time and sets the temporal framework for the poem; it begins with sunrise and ends with sunset and the night's darkness portrays the passing of one day (see ibid.). Again, the structure of the stanza is interweaved with multiple disruptions caused by the dashes which break down the sentence structure and recall the forced separation both activists encounter. The sunlight reflects the lyrical persona's addressee and appears as a powerful entity. Hereby, the addressee seems to be omnipresent, which is underlined by expressions such as "I'll see you too at noontime / When the sun in orbit" and "I'll see you oft at twilight's dusk / Before the sun will fade" ("Flynn" 188). The constant reminder of Flynn's future presence represents the ongoing fight against their separation. The lyrical persona imagines how she can surmount their separation by imagining her addressee's presence and how it continues to influence herself. What is more, the last two lines offer a reversal of racial boundaries and an implied critique of Man as the ideal human being. The perspective of the lyrical persona here represents the black female voice who draws a distinction between "man" and "beast". Therefore, Jones' voice is associated with the concept of *man*, as opposed to the beast that is the American ideal of bourgeois, heterosexual and male *Man*. This reversed dehumanisation adds another level to Jones' expression of resistance and actively counters black women's "super-exploitation" (Jones "Neglect" 75). The poem recalls the diverse and varied expressions of resistance in Gilroy's and Wynter's work and highlights how all three emphasise their refusal to accept black women's displacement in historic accounts. Their voices and those of their characters and lyrical personas reflect the intellectuals' own subject positions and emphasise their contribution to the rewriting of colonial history with an emphasis on black people's empowerment.

5. Rehumanising the Caribbean — From a Critique of Humanism to a New Concept of the Human

Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critiques of humanism not only expose systemic racial structures, but also entail a rewriting of history from a black, female Caribbean perspective with a focus on resistance. Hereby, their works offer academic and epistemic interventions into multiple western discourses that have disregarded their voices. While their theoretical responses to black female displacements expose how humanist norms and values still structure modern society in racial and patriarchal terms, their fictional work establishes alternatives to their colonial and gendered displacement. Beyond critically engaging with humanism and its sub-concepts, their creative texts express new concepts of the human from a black, female perspective. By conceptualising new forms of being human, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter offer strategies and responses towards their own displacement and their position as liminal subjects in order to to deal with racism, violence and anti-blackness. They challenge black people's dehumanisation by reevaluating Man's position as the only available concept of the human. Rather, each individual intellectual develops their own conception of the human, emphasising how, in Wynter's terms, there are many genres that create hybrid human beings (see Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). While Gilroy, Jones and Wynter revisit concepts such as displacement, dehumanisation, systemic violence, history and liminality, their concepts of humanness especially highlight aspects of boundary crossing. This resonates with Wynter's argument that there are multiple conceptions of the human — multiple genres so to say. In this context, Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work structurally reflects how they outgrow racial boundaries through the blurring of generic norms and western standards of writing. Through their literary writing, they transcend racial, colonial and gendered dichotomies, envisioning different futures, offering representations of black female subjectivity and highlighting the influences of African and Caribbean world-views and cultural folklore within their own work.

Gilroy, Jones and Wynter use different literary themes and approaches in order to delineate their concepts of the human. Gilroy and Jones develop their own approaches to express a different conception of the human. While Jones works with the concept "togetherness" and Gilroy with "unorthodoxy", both intellectuals equally envision how their rethinking of the human dissolves colonial and racial binaries. Wynter and, to a lesser extent, also Gilroy use elements from African folklore and an African worldview to counter a humanist mindset. The rediscovery of African forms of life, such as a cyclical concept of time as well as the importance of nature, spirits and dance, enables Gilroy and Wynter to find alternative answers to the question of what it means to be human. A short excursion into African concepts of nature and time illustrates how their representations within literary works underpin a re-thinking of Man and humanism.

Within an African indigenous knowledge system nature and natural elements are understood as elements of a holistic worldview. Human beings, their community and their natural environment — "both physical and spiritual" (Emeagwali and Shizha 7) — are understood in relation to each other. Highlighting a contrast to the biocentric understanding of Man, Emeagwali and Shizha argue that "[i]ndigenous people possess an immense knowledge of their environments, based on centuries of living close to nature." (8) What is more, nature and spirituality are integral to one another. Gwekwerere adds that nature "is viewed simultaneously as material and sacred" within an African approach of science (39). The concept of nature combines biological and physical aspects with the transcendental and supernatural, contrasting humanism's secular approach to nature which aims to measure, dissect and use nature. The fact that nature and spirituality are closely linked further underlines how natural forces offer more than a source for nutrition of humans. Gilroy's and Wynter's use of spirits builds a bridge between between the living, the deceased and the gods. Wynter also draws a clear distinction between the European and African experience and connection with nature. She argues that European colonial powers based their ideology "on the primary accumulation of capital which came from the dehumanization of Man and Nature" while "[t]he African presence […] '*rehumanized Nature*'" ("Jonkonnu" 36; original emphasis). The use of an African concept of nature and the personifications of natural forces, plants and animals as literary entities has a similar function. Gilroy, Jones and Wynter "*rehumanize*" the natural environment within their literary work through representing natural elements as personified and living entities within their semantic structures.[55] This is further underlined by the theme of spirituality and the appearance of spirits. Their work transports a different understanding of nature, which enables them to also portray a different concept of the human.

The representation of an African concept of time in their works similarly contrasts a humanist mindset and expresses a different concept of the human on a temporal level within the narrative texts. Vongai Mpofu states that "[w]hile western science presupposes rectilinear time, indigenous world views frame time as cyclical terms of related space size, progression and continuity." (Mpofu 65)[56] While rectilinear time is "quantitative, numerical, physical, measured space", cyclical time "is defined in qualitative terms", which means it is "embedded in real-life events and is learnt from recurrent natural events" (ibid.). Time itself is understood as being "deduced from life events and is a lived experience" (ibid.). Like the element of nature and spirituality, time is personified as an

[55] Although Gilroy and Wynter more dominantly use natural elements and the themes of spirituality, Jones also uses aquatic imagery in her poems "Paean to the Atlantic" and "To Elizabeth Gurley Flynn".

[56] Mpofu discusses the term "indigenous" and how she uses it on page 66-67.

entity. An example would be the measurement of one day. Within cyclical time a day is measured through the event of a sunrise rather than by using a mechanical clock or a calendar (see 70). The conception of cyclical time is based upon a holistic world view and "originates from the idea that all things are in a constant motion or flux" (67). This "constant motion is observed in cyclical and repetitive patterns", like for example "the human life cycle [which] has a regular pattern that results in conception, birth, growth and death." (ibid.) Underlying the concept time here is the idea that all elements, human or non-human, form a continuous harmonic relationship between biological, physical and metaphysical elements (see 68). A cyclical time model "swings back and forth, rhythmically, between repeated events" (Kearney qtd. in Mpofu 68-69). The temporal framework of Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work represents such an indigenous model of time, as it often blurs the boundaries between past events, the present time-frames of the creative works and future events. Their use of alternative models of time not only contrasts humanism, but challenges the narrative absence of black people as well (see Wilderson "*Social Death*" 139). Undermining a western concept of the human on a literary level in the form of temporal and semantic structures, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter challenge the racial and humanist structures that cause social death. The use of African folklore and spirituality in this context, adds to this resistance against a humanist system, as they focus on the continuity of African forms of cultural expressions within a Caribbean discourse of literature (see Mpofu 69). Hereby, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter offer a response to processes of dehumanisation and the experience of social death with their focus on strategies of resistance and finally on the survival of cultural ancestry.

5.1. New Visions of the Human in Jones' "Ship's Log — December 19, 1955", "Tonight I Tried to Imagine What Life Would be Like In the Future", "Yenan: Cradle of the Revolution" and "For the Unity of Women in the Cause of Peace" (1951) and in Gilroy's *Leaves in the Wind* and *Black Teacher*

Claudia Jones' and Beryl Gilroy's works discuss their visions of the future as well as a black, female Caribbean perspective on the concept of the human. In this context their different texts from various genres envision a world without racial boundaries and dichotomies. In order to formulate their concept of the human and to address the question of what it means to be human from their external perspectives that position them outside of a western humanist discourse, both intellectuals develop distinct approaches and concepts. Jones creates the concept "togetherness" and Gilroy elaborates on the term "unorthodoxy". Both concepts transcend boundaries in multiple ways and offer a first step towards dissolving racial dichotomies. Also, Jones and Gilroy translate their

concepts inside their works in order to portray an alternative concept of the human as examples from their fictional and non-fictional works highlight. While Jones' concept "togetherness" focuses on aspects of unity among human beings as an approach to subvert colonial and patriarchal binaries, Gilroy's "Unorthodoxy" reconnects her work with her Caribbean heritage and how it continues to influence her alternative concept of the human.

The last chapters emphasised how Jones particularly stresses her own subjectivity and voice as a black, female, Caribbean subject, challenging her displacement and dehumanisation as a black human being. Jones' concept of "togetherness" offers a different and unique lens through which she assesses what it means to be human as a black, Caribbean woman. The concept has not been part of a discussion within post- or decolonial discourses and offers an intervention into how to approach black humanness. Her perspective outside of these discourses enables her to critique the binary structures of western society. In her autobiographical essay "Tonight I Tried to Imagine What Life Would be Like In the Future", Jones introduces "togetherness" as a concept to transcend racial boundaries she was confronted with throughout her life and adds a very personal element to her critique of humanism. The essay is self-reflective of her own life and her role within political activism. It was written in June 1964, six months before her death.[57] Within the essay, she reflects upon her role as a political activist, scholar and private person. In this regard, she offers a vision of the future, focussing on her own personal future, but also on her vision for the future of humanity. Jones uses her concept of "togetherness" to show how a different future can be imagined:

> Evocation is a mutual emotion. To evoke a response of togetherness — in all things (maturity tells me this is probably impossible in a single relationship) and remembering human limitations — there must be togetherness. Togetherness also is not an abstraction; its inner laws and contradictions must be studied. (19)

The concept of togetherness resolves dichotomies between Man and its concept of the human and other concepts of humanness. Jones attempts to integrate all human beings with their different concepts and understandings of what it means to be human. Examining "inner laws and contradictions" in order to transcend division and "human limitations", Jones imagines an almost utopian moment of unity. Togetherness, in this context, also implies the need to transcend divisions between people of different cultural backgrounds and the acceptance of multiple conceptions of humans that exist alongside each other. Jones thoughts strongly resonate with Wynter's concept of the different genres of the human and emphasise that humanist Man is not the only blueprint for the

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[57] This piece of autobiographical writing has not been published by Jones herself, but is included in *Beyond Containment* in which Boyce-Davies states that it was "reproduced from a handwritten document" (226).

human (see Wynter and McKittrick “Catastrophe” 31; cf. Wynter “Unsettling” 269). Within this context, Jones puts particular emphasis on how her fight for freedom and equality for black people has shaped herself and how it is connected to her concept of togetherness. Having been written so shortly before her death, the text conveys a certain sense of foreboding that her life will soon come to an end:

> Tonight I tried to imagine what life would be like in the future — personal that is. For on the broad highway of Tomorrow, despite craggy hills and unforeseen gullies, I am certain that mankind will take the high road to a socialist future. (“Future” 19)

Jones clearly places herself within a communist approach as a member of the Communist Party by imagining a “socialist future”. Replacing the capitalist system with a “socialist future”, Jones also imagines the possibility to change the position of black people within it. Through a change of the economic system, Jones wants to change society as a whole. In this context, communism serves as the approach available to her at that time to rethink what it means to be human. Through her black female perspective, representing the most exploited group within western society, she enhances the communist approach. The link between her personal future and the “broad highway of Tomorrow” explains her political activism as an intervention into the shaping of the future of all people. Envisioning a different future for “mankind”, Jones replaces a humanist worldview and concept of the human. In spite of her own dehumanisation and black people’s oppression, which she poetically paraphrases as “craggy hills and unforeseen gullies” (ibid.), she highlights aspects of community and union. Jones connects herself and her work with that of other activists who have suffered because of their political convictions and who have similarly been incarcerated for their political thoughts. She remembers them here, in looking back at their lives but also at her own, within a wider scope of humanity; her fight for liberation and change has been and continues to be her driving force. Jones interprets her determination to change the system within which she herself has experienced oppression and racial and social inequality as the driving force behind her work and her life — as a “characteristic” of her own personality that has “served as a liberating force making and shaping the being that I have become.” (ibid.) In the following course of her essay, Jones elaborates on the role of language and its importance in the context of togetherness as well as revealing the difficulties she encounters through her own outsider’s perspective.

While discussing the role and function of language, Jones attempts to escape language and forms of expressions that entrap her, but realises that she is part of the system of entrapment herself: “Those who know me know this — and I have often known even as I strike back, the verbal flows from which I flee are nourished in an identical soil.” (20) Her language and that of her oppressors

are from "an identical soil", meaning that language itself is tainted by the system of dehumanisation of black people. Hereby, she recalls Wynter's claim that literature and language itself are deeply rooted within a humanist system, which she calls the *Studia Humanitatis* (see "Ceremony" 28; cf. Wynter "Catastrophe" 14). Wynter argues that through the reinvention of the *Studia* "as a higher order of human knowledge", Caribbean intellectuals can "provide an 'outer view' which takes the human rather than any one of its variations as Subject" ("Ceremony" 56). The quote above also resonates with Isaac's conflict between his self-perception as a human and the representation of black people he encounters within literature and his studies. What Isaac fails to do, namely to dissolve dichotomies that define what it means to be human, Jones achieves through her concept of togetherness, as it is able to represent human beings and their differences without the negating tendencies connected to binary representations. At the same time, Jones also raises awareness of the constant struggle she encounters through her different vision of the human. She explains: "Fundamentally regarding the impermissibility of personal weakness […] I seek to counter my own (and others) with a harshness that is also impermissible in close human relationships." ("Future" 20) Jones emphasises that she herself is caught in a constant struggle of fighting for her political conviction while also admitting her own faults and weaknesses. Her drivenness and ambition cause her to fear a break within personal relationships, as she explains later: "Fearing the perpetuation of this one-sidedness in personal relation, I persist in it, fearing the disappointment of non-togetherness." (ibid.) She is caught between her motivation to produce change and the fight for her rights and at the same time tries to find the balance with the people that surround her to not cause a rupture between herself and others, as, in her eyes, togetherness appears to be the key for causing change. Her anxiety about "non-togetherness" reflects upon how binaries and oppositions structure society and influence her personality.

Jones examines different aspects of change, highlighting the tensions, conflicts and disruptions caused by her approach of togetherness — which can ultimately lead to a new way of thinking and of defining her own being. Focussing on her own position and revisiting her life's work, she critically engages with how she tries to change but simultaneously fails:

> And as I become too aware of this state of even try to change - - I realize I not only have become lethargic in these matters (a state not to be emulated!) but positively without *nerve*. All weavers know of tangled skeins. The bad thought [sic] then become 'threads to deceive.' Sometimes they can be untangled and sometimes they serve as webs. How I believe in the Loom of Language! — and in the Family of Man. (20)

Although Jones highlights the immense struggles connected to promoting change, she still ends on a note of hope. She puts an emphasis on the imagery of a family here in another implicit reference to

togetherness. Focussing on relationships rather than binaries, she highlights that "bad thought [sic]" and the "threads to deceive" can be changed as they are man-made and not universally given. What is more, the metaphor of the "web" reveals that the basis of society is not static or based upon a singular approach or concept; rather it is a web that is entangled with multiple, intersected threads and is not constructed through binaries. It is not static but can indeed be changed by its "weavers". Jones reveals that entangled threads have a function in themselves, even if they cannot be dissipated. Critiquing binary representations with the imagery of webs, Jones shows how an intersectional approach supports her representation of a new human as well as addressing interrelated forms of oppression. Jones' essay is in more than one way enigmatic and offers several interpretative approaches. In order to change the system Jones finds herself in, she has to challenge the way she uses language. In this context, togetherness offers an alternative approach that escapes to some extent the humanist, scholarly order of knowledge, even though Jones still emphasises that her struggle is an ongoing conflict. The essay differs from her other autobiographical pieces analysed so far, as it does not openly refer to her critique of imperialism and capitalism and also only subliminally speaks of her role within communism and her communist approach. Rather, Jones finds a more poetic, ambiguous tone to address the underlying binary structures of society.

The Following examples from Jones' work, including the essay "For the Unity of Women in the Cause of Peace" (1951), her journal entry "Ship's Log — December 19, 1955" and "Yenan: Cradle of the Revolution" show how Jones implements the ideal of togetherness within her work. They emphasise how togetherness implements a new vision of the human in different genres and different themes. "For the Unity of Women in the Cause of Peace" highlights how through a joint pacifist appeal against the Korean War, togetherness and unity among women — "not only among working-class women, Negro and white, but among Quakers, church women, intellectuals, pacifist groups, every national group and organized section of the women masses, young and old" — can be possible (106). Jones argues that there is the need for a "*distinct* women's peace movement" as a possibility to resist black women's degradation within society (ibid; original emphasis). Her appeal transcends racial, social and educational and cultural boundaries, emphasising that togetherness is the means to stopping American war efforts. Jones highlights how this also fights black women's oppression: "In our efforts to help build a peace movement of women, we must once and for all overcome the gap between the influence of the triply oppressed Negro women" (111). Togetherness offers an approach to overcome black women's displacement, focussing on their power of resistance through unity. On a transnational level, Jones connects different movements against oppression may that be the cause of the working class, white feminism, or black people's displacement. This

intersectional approach opens up a way to rethink how society on the whole defines itself and has to stand together in order to fight for peace. Hereby, Jones still highlights separating categories such as race, class or gender to further underline the importance of unity as well as togetherness in achieving equality among the American women and beyond that for women in the whole world.

In Jones' journal entry "Ship's Log — December 19, 1955", she reinterprets her deportation and exile as an opportunity to further her activist cause, highlighting the importance of unity and togetherness. Rejecting the notion of her deportation as defeat, she not only focuses on her impending exile but also highlights the possibility of a new beginning (see Boyce-Davies *Left* 118). The Log was written on her journey to London and addresses the Atlantic Ocean in numerous ways, offering her own personal perspective on the journey across the Atlantic. Boyce-Davies draws attention to Jones' depiction of the Atlantic's "natural beauty" and its "vastness and power", which offers an image of the Atlantic that "is not […] racially coded […] but […] challenges national limitations", opening up "a path to new modes of being." (ibid.). In the first lines Jones addresses her father — "My dear Daddy" ("Ship's Log" 193) — introducing an intimate portrayal of her journey aboard the ship:

> We plow through the high seas and tonight […] I peered thru the deck panes to see the mighty ocean spill its foam against her stern. Foam whiter than whitecaps that I have seen […] — the white lights of phosphorus was all around illuming the darkness of the wide expanse which is the Atlantic. Now she veers and rattles. (ibid.)

The extract is filled with contrasts, despite its generally positive tone and atmosphere. There is the contrast between the darkness of the ocean and the light from the ship, as well as that between nature and technology. The contradictory elements reflect Jones' inner turmoil, caused by the loss of friends and family, and the hope for a new beginning in London as well as confidence in her own abilities. She further describes her surroundings: "Our cabin is sumptuous and comfortable — something of a tribute to man's inventive genius to conserve space — and to the unfolding and rising promise of international visits, exchange and culture for the world's peoples." (ibid.) Although her ties to her fellow communist activists have been cut off by her deportation, she already envisions a reconnection, a community of like-minded people. She draws a transnational link between her former homes and her new home and emphasises her own subjectivity as a traveller, even though her journey is not a voluntary one. The possibility of travel she highlights challenges her displaced status on the ship as a deportee. Jones' description of the ocean as a both caressing and menacing entity underlines her contrasting emotions and allows her to address and reframe the negative experiences of crossing instead of ignoring them:

> The cradle of the deep sometimes jerks you sharply — sometimes like a lullaby rocks and caresses you as our Queen ship plows the ocean deep. Tomorrow — the first morning of my exile for my independent political ideas — we will see its beauty at dawn." (ibid.)

The metaphor of a cradle for the ocean as a soothing and calming hideaway is immediately followed by the contrast between its movements. On the one hand, there is the expected movement of rocking to and fro, which the caressing and soothing image of a cradle picks up on. However, this movement is interrupted twice: firstly, this cradle almost paradoxically "sometimes jerks you sharply" and secondly, a dash further underlines this contrast syntactically. Jones also stresses the ocean's unpredictable nature, highlighting its fluidity and the possibility of change rather than the repetitive motion of the cradle. Change, here, is connected to the theme of hope for the future, as Jones' statement about her exile emphasises. She focusses on the future and her positive state of mind, beginning the next sentence with "Tomorrow", which is immediately followed by another dash and hereby singled out even more. The punctuation frames the reason for her exile, namely her "independent political ideas". After the second dash, though, the focus is again on the ocean and its beauty. The positive portrayal of the ocean parallels her positive look into her own future, while also challenging the reasons for her deportation. Jones focusses on the possibility of a new beginning, envisioning the next morning and using the hopeful imagery of the dawn to prefigure her ongoing activism for black people's rights in London: "[S]he transforms her punishment into an opportunity to carry her activism into the further reaches of the diaspora." (Boyce-Davies *Left* 157). Although Jones still conveys her sadness about the loss of her family and friends — "tonight my mind, heart and thoughts are still in the land I belong to" ("Ship's Log" 194) — her final words in the post scriptum reconnect herself with her family and friends by quoting their last farewells: "What is an ocean between us; we know how to build bridges." (ibid.) The metaphor of the bridge connects her new exile in London with her former home in the United States, focussing on her ability to reconnect her own activism with that of her friends, as well as furthering her thoughts and her work in London. Here, she reasserts her own humanness and emphasises her agency and role as a free thinking subject, rather than accepting her role as a victim, convicted by the American legal system.

The poem "Yenan: Cradle of the Revolution" stresses how Jones advances a communist critique of capitalism and the bourgeoisie by imagining togetherness as a way to introduce a new vision of

the future. For her, communism serves as a method to create an alternative way of thinking.[58] The lyrical persona focusses on a trajectory of resistance with an emphasis on members of the working class as agents who challenge their marginalised position against "Capitalist bureaucrats and foreign invaders" ("Yenan" 202). Communist thought equips her with the tools to fight for change, but the lyrical persona goes beyond a critique of capitalism and develops the approach further:

> From Yenan — Cradle of the Revolution,
> Of their dreams, their fight,
> Their organisation, their heroism
> Yenan — Proud monument to Man's will
> To transform Nature, and, so doing
> Transform Society and Man himself!" (203)

The plural pronouns stress the importance of unity and togetherness, as "their dream", "their fight", "their organisation" and "their heroism" show. The lyrical persona does not, however, use the pronoun "our". While Yenan appears important as a site of resistance and an example of possible change to bring forward, the lyrical persona does not stop there. Rather, she expands the communist approach from a fight for equal rights for the working class to addressing society as a whole. Wanting to "transform Nature […] Society and Man", the lyrical persona calls for a drastic change. The poem relates back to Jones' overall critique of social, racial and patriarchal structures and her attempt to imagine a new concept of the human. Jones' poem, in this context, is an intervention not only within a discourse on the ideology of communism but also within the broader scope of redefining what it means to be human.

Beryl Gilroy imagines new forms of being human through her approach and development of the concept "unorthodoxy", which she portrays as a "a multi faceted concept" — a concept that expresses the power of creativity as a form and access to agency (*Leaves* 155). She also focusses on aspects of community and communication by going back to her Caribbean past and family's tradition. However, Gilroy's focus is more strongly on the power of creativity and personal cultural expression as a way to express a different concept of the human, rather than the political dimension of Jones' togetherness. By establishing the difference between unorthodoxy and orthodoxy, Gilroy shows how she in fact undermines a binary way of thinking by counterposing these two different conceptions of thinking and of understanding what it means to be human. Unorthodoxy represents an access to creativity, Gilroy argues, and the "orthodox" is static and creates feelings of anxiety

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[58] Jones' "Yenan: Cradle of the Revolution"was written on her journey back from a two day trip to Yenan in August, 1964, and was later published in *West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian Caribbean News* (see Boyce-Davies *Beyond* 229).

and loss: “I have seen women frozen in the orthodox with all its precision and compulsions while others have survived without experiencing the rigours of fear and self-annihilation of conformism.” (156) Although it appears as if Gilroy draws up a binary pair, she also subverts the binarism, underlining how she wants to confront a fixed way of thinking and being. The orthodox, to Gilroy, represents a binary way of thinking that is fixed within racial and patriarchal paradigms. The experience of black women’s displacement she mentions here also underlines how the orthodox represents daily forms of racism and systemic forms of violence black people are confronted with. Within a western context the orthodox has a close connection to religious traditions. The term orthodox irrevocably evokes the ideology behind such a religiously charged term, which is often used in contrast to heresy instead of unorthodoxy (see Henderson 23ff; cf. Hellemans 12ff). Staf Hellemans defines orthodoxy as a concept that asserts “a doctrine and concomitant praxis (1) which are true, (2) which uphold the authentic tradition (3) in an unchanged way (4) and which, driven by a stern, strict, even rigid mindset, (5) demand unquestioned deference.” (12) What Gilroy’s and Hellemans’ definitions share is that both underline the fixed hierarchical connotations that the orthodox entails. Unorthodoxy, in Gilroy’s work, accordingly represents the opposite of a binary way of thinking, transcending what Hellemans calls a “rigid mindset”. It rather offers an entry into expressions of creativity as well as openness and fluidity of the self:

> Through the power of unorthodoxy I […] learned to establish a criteria of choice and later to accept responsibility for the consequences that ensued. I learned to establish principles rather than values which are amorphous and change under pressure from external forces. Principles, my grandfather said, are what people die for. (*Leaves* 156)

Unorthodoxy enables Gilroy to approach her own agency through “principles”, which are not fixed in any way but rather bend to her will. She highlights here, that there are no universally instated rules that she needs to follow, as the humanist concept Man would propagate. Rather, she connects her individual decision with her environment and stresses how both determine each other. Hereby, she counters humanism and its assumption that Man’s superiority is a naturally determined given fact (see also Wynter “Catastrophe” 16). Unorthodoxy offers her access to a system of knowledge and being that she herself can change through her actions. As Jones before her, Gilroy questions the word of Man and challenges its assumed universality. Gilroy also puts emphasis on the role of unity and evokes Jones’ togetherness by referring to her grandfather and his influence on her definition of unorthodoxy. Gilroy’s Caribbean upbringing and heritage are the key to understanding her conception of herself and of being human:

> When quite young I was allowed to experiment with alternate ways of being and doing and permitted to be inquisitive and persistent. Through creativity I developed the key concepts

> of originality and surprise ability. […] The fact that there were so many ethnic groups and such a variety of cultures in my village, and even within my family, showed me the potency of difference and forced into my eye and heart the consequences of culture. (*Leaves* 156)

Throughout her youth, Gilroy was allowed to discover different forms of being human within the sheltered space of her Caribbean home and family. Without having to conform to one specific way of defining herself, she realises that there are many diverse approaches to defining humanness. Gilroy acknowledges and discovers here what Wynter calls the different genres of the human. The Caribbean in this context represents unorthodoxy, as Gilroy stresses it as "a multi faceted" place that allows for cultural diversity and differences (155). Cultural differences are not considered markers of negativity and demarcation, but opportunities to develop a concept of herself which counters and challenges the binaries that ensure a hierarchy of being, such as that of Man within a humanist system. Culture and creativity are of central importance here in order to express what it means to be human while incorporating the beauty and openness of cultural diversity. Within this context, Gilroy's own work is an expression of her childhood experience in that it asserts black female humanness and its Caribbean tradition. Gilroy represents no fixed concept of the human but concentrates on multiple ways of expressing alternative concepts of humanness through her own creativity. She shifts the focus from a humanist, bourgeois understanding of the human in its drive towards economic success and reason to her upbringing and to creative forms of expressions. In a further step, she reveals that unorthodoxy is deeply embedded within a Caribbean understanding of the human. Tracing the concept back to her home, Gilroy is able to re-define and re-invent herself through unorthodoxy. What is more, the connection to her own family history and its role in expressing an alternative concept of the human underscores her strong rejection of binaries. Her Caribbean heritage allows her to establish a concept of the human that transcends dichotomies, recalling what Wynter traces in Glissant's work as the "anti-Universal, the theme to the claim to [Caribbean] specificity" (Wynter "Word of Man" 639):

> My grandfather would sometimes show us ourselves in the big mirror and say 'what you see is how you look. You can be and do whatever you want.' In my village I saw black people in powerful positions. I always thought of myself as good as everyone or better. I played to win. I was always the team leader. Unorthodoxy gave me an ongoing resource of ideas which I readily articulated. (*Leaves* 156-157)

Within the protected space that is her Caribbean home, Gilroy's grandfather teaches her that the way you appear to others does not determine the way you are as a human, indirectly commenting on the role of skin colour in her self-reflection. Her memory of her grandfather is central to her reinterpretation of the human, as it is an account that undermines the fixed binary of blackness and

negativity within a humanist system. It also offers an answer to Wilderson's critique that "Blackness is coterminous with slaveness", meaning that "Blackness *is* social death" ("*Social Death*" 139). By refusing to use race as a marker that decides who is human and who is considered non-human, Gilroy's grandfather enables her to overcome the equation of blackness with negativity and inferiority. Through her grandfather, Gilroy stresses her objective of transcending racial boundaries and challenging black people's displacement.

Gilroy's work is an intervention into a humanist discourse of representing what it means to be human, as Gilroy's understanding of a Caribbean home, her approach to anti-blackness and her vision of a different future in *Leaves in the Wind* and *Black Teacher* highlight. Examples from both works underline how she applies unorthodoxy in order to highlight the possibilities of confronting a humanist system. Hereby, she constantly stresses her own power and the liberating force of writing, claiming her voice and emphasising her perspective. Writing offers Gilroy a creative form of addressing her own self and of redefining what it means to be human. She keeps returning to her Caribbean home when confronting racism and prejudice, which resonates with her previous connection between her grandfather's wisdom and the effect it has on her concept unorthodoxy. She continuously emphasises the need to reconceptualise the western concept of blackness in order to imagine new forms of being human. Her starting point is to dissolve the binary opposition of blackness and inferiority:

> I overcame my resentment to the use of BLACK as insult by understanding the ignorance of those who use it. I stopped owning and personalising the insult and educated my children to do the same. I explained to white young abusers of Black children that melanin is to us as chlorophyll is to leaves. Knowledge is a kind of invincibility (*Leaves* 155)

Gilroy connects blackness with positivity here, emphasising how she challenges and opposes the connection between blackness and symbolic death. The simile of melanin and chlorophyll emphasises how Gilroy reconnects blackness with life. Gilroy the teacher actively rethinks black as a colour and its negative connotations in linking it to the creation of life. Knowledge is an important key to overcoming binary structures here. While Gilroy offers a creative way to approach the rethinking of what it means to be human, she also directly connects her approach to her role as a writer as well as her role as a supposedly marginalised black women. She focusses on remembering black female voices as an important step towards acknowledging their importance in the world. She expresses her "knowledge" about black women and through her work gives a voice to black women. She argues that being completely forgotten is as if you have not been there at all, as if you

have not existed. Gilroy's work prevents that; she offers a black female perspective not only for herself but also for many other black women:

> I can lay to rest my fears of being forgotten, like so many Black women who were either pushed or chose to plunge into rivers and oceans in search of new lives, then encountered chasms of misinterpretation, absurdity and sedimentation. I know that, blessed with an authentic childhood, I can be authentic in my work, come what may. (ibid.)

The aquatic imagery represents the experience of forced and free migrations and disappointed hopes within the diaspora. As in Jones' journal about her journey to London, being "pushed" into the water can be both an experience of uprooting but also a new beginning. In order to portray the experience within a black diaspora, Gilroy again stresses fluidity instead of static forms of being and hereby challenges the displacement of black women. What is more, the act of submerging into the water is not associated with drowning, but as an act of exploring alternative possibilities of coping with racism and anti-black stereotypes. Although Gilroy concentrates on alternative concept of defining the human, she also highlights the suffering and oppression of black women, exposing "chasms" that run through western society and confront black women. This term emphasises the dichotomies that structure the system of being Gilroy herself confronts; there is a chasm between being black and being human. Gilroy attempts to close this gap through her work, focussing on her authenticity as a form of resistance which she takes from her childhood experience.

Gilroy expresses her authenticity and attempt to dissolve a binary way of thinking within her writing. She connects imagery of Caribbean folklore, nature and her family's heritage with the disruption of the classic genre conventions of essay writing. By integrating a poem into her essay that defines unorthodoxy, she reflects the concept's essence, namely the possibly to creatively and diversely engage with the question of what it means to be human, including the expression of different genres. Her abrupt change of genre supports Gilroy's argument of her own authenticity and her vision for a different concept of blackness. The poem is a free verse poem with no set metre or rhyme scheme. It is directly connected to the essay, as the first line of the poem continues a sentence of the essay, which also creates a somewhat ambiguous speech situation. As the poem disrupts an autobiographical essay, it also blurs the lines between fiction and autobiography, further emphasising Gilroy's notion of dissolving static binaries. This also recalls Jones' ambiguous lyrical persona who addresses women whom she was personally imprisoned with. In this sense, both intellectuals contest generic boundaries in order to underline their own voices. Within the poem, Gilroy imagines a "place" that counters the social and cultural chasms she has mentioned before.

Her change into a lyrical form of expression underlines unorthodoxy as a concept that enables her to undermine a static representation of the human:

> I can then walk in peace to a place
>
> where tongues did not pick
> and honour stayed true
> and distortions stayed true
> and distortions ignored
> and ill-will smothered. Where
> There was no need for power
> to disgorge a hungrier need for power. Where
> There was no rusting of the color of sunshine.
> Or hardening of dewdrops. Where
> At night the Man in the Moon stood still.
> And his children ate green-cheese
> Seasoned with stardust
> and flavoured with shadows, and
> not a harsh note was heard
> in the song of a bird, and
> the palm talked tales of
> Moments to come
> Again and again." (ibid. 155)

The poem offers a creative approach to imagine new forms of being human and adds to her alternative approach discussed in her essay through unorthodoxy. The place she imagines is a place characterised by security, empowerment and which is liberating from racial ideologies and hierarchies of human beings. It is a place in which racial violence or black people's displacement as the ultimate other cannot affect her. It emphasises how her reconceptualisation of blackness can imagine new forms of being human. The poem reflects Gilroy's attempt to rethink binaries she is confronted with as a black female subject through including elements of Caribbean nature and aspects of mythology through the imagery of the moon. Recalling the imagery of the moon made of cheese, she creates a link to folklore and the proverb tradition. These folkloric elements and the emphasis on orality, incorporated through the personification of the palm, imagine a place without boundaries; without racism and dichotomies. She builds a unique and creative link to her Caribbean heritage through the poem and offers a different version of the future within an essay that addresses her resistance and strategies in how to confront dehumanisation and racism. Closing the poem with "Again and again", Gilroy highlights the continuity of this process of change and its recurring, circular nature. By focussing on the ongoing process and conflict of defining a different conception of being, Gilroy reconnects her own work with that of other black female intellectuals. Her vision of

a different place resonates with Jones' vision of a different future and their shared ongoing struggle of challenging a humanist worldview and concept of the human.

In *Black Teacher*, Gilroy propagates a concept of a new human through her work in education. She again draws a link to the Caribbean and her concept of unorthodoxy in order to challenge the connection between blackness and negativity. She asserts her own humanness and agency in her constant struggle against racial prejudice. Hereby, she gives a voice to the generation of immigrants who came to the United Kingdom in the 1950s and continues to lend her voice to the following generations, particularly as a black female Caribbean intellectual living in London. Her rethinking of what it means to be human propels a change within Gilroy's own teaching practices. While she exposes the structures that keep black people's oppression in place, Gilroy also draws attention to opportunities of transcending racial dichotomies. Teaching is one of Gilroy's tools to assert her own humanness and also to change the perception of herself within her pupils, whose perspectives on black people have already been tainted by racial stereotypes. For this reason, Gilroy's teaching is driven by her motivation of showing her pupils a different concept of being human. In her autobiography she comments on the change in her way of teaching by addressing the approach she learned in the Caribbean and how she transformed it:

> Behind it all was a concept of worth through work — something that had its roots in the rigours of a slave society, and the greed and callousness of the slave-owner. A slave was beaten for 'playing'. In other words, 'playing' was akin to shirking. (*Black Teacher* 76)

She characterises the Caribbean approach as still being deeply influenced by the former colonial powers. She confronts her past and liberates herself from the heritage of enslavement: "I had been released from this primitive approach. Indeed, I had sought release" (ibid.). Gilroy wants to change the misrepresentations of black people through education by stressing the possibilities of a child's mind: "The rendering up by the child of some vision, some odd angle on life, just some odd happening, that can enrich one's day." (77) Throughout her teaching career, Gilroy puts a large focus on raising cultural awareness and dismantling racial prejudice and stereotypes among her culturally heterogenous classes. Her classroom offers a space without the constant interference of race. Through Caribbean oral tales, Gilroy integrates her Caribbean heritage into the class-room: "I told them about Anansi, The Spider Man, who is our equivalent of Brer Rabbit. […] I taught them songs and ring-games and, when I danced them, they tittered at first but joined in." (183) Drawing parallels between Caribbean and British cultures, she uses a transnational approach to teaching and her pupils were beginning to accept differences as something positive and unifying. Gilroy uses creative expressions such as singing and dancing in order to draw similarities between British and

Caribbean culture. Hereby, she interprets differences as opportunities and enhances the children's cultural experiences while also fighting against stereotypes and prejudices:

> before long we'd reached the point where even the blacks were saying they didn't like black. Or rather, the lighter shade of black began looking around and condemning the darker gradation.
> 'I like Humans,' I said. 'Have we got any Humans here?'
> Nobody answered.
> 'You're all Humans,' I said. 'Human beings.' (171)

Through her simple statement "You're all Humans", Gilroy not only asserts her own humanness, but also that of her pupils. By changing the children's perception of what it means to be human, Gilroy begins to change the system that puts the dehumanisation of black people in place. Gilroy redefines herself through her role as a teacher and wants to change her pupils' perception and their attitude towards racism. She teaches a concept of the human that defies racial categorisations. She does not say you are human *and* black, which would still engage with a hierarchy of skin colour, bur rather expresses a concept of the human that embraces everybody, including cultural diversity as an asset rather than marker of difference. On top of that, Gilroy develops coping strategies to deal with anti-black violence and self-hatred. Writing itself is an expression of her subjectivity and her resistance against anti-black violence. She does that on several layers. We hear and read her own personal voice telling the story of the teacher, mother and wife, but also the voice of the intellectual and writer who defies western standards of writing and western knowledge systems. Her work also resonates with Jones' concept togetherness, as she imagines a unifying concept of the human. Both intellectuals underline how, through their different approaches, they do not conform to humanist thinking. Their different texts and genres highlight their personal conflict with the humanist understanding of the human. It is through confrontations with their own dehumanisation that they develop concepts such as togetherness and unorthodoxy. Their external perspectives challenge the order of Man and its basis in anti-black though and displacement of black female Caribbean subjects.

5.2. African Folklore as an Alternative World View to Humanism: The Concept Time in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and the Appearance of Spirits in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*

Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* build a link to an African world-view and folklore that contrast the humanist ideology and conception of being. Especially female characters establish this link while offering their perspective on community life, natural

surroundings and ancestral history, thus representing a holistic world-view.[59] In *The Hills of Hebron*, Aunt Kate's conception of time and nature reflects an African indigenous knowledge system (see Cudjoe 42-43). In both novels, the reappearance of spirits is also a central theme and reconnects the characters with the ancestral realm. Kate's daughter Maverlyn returns as a water spirit and in *Inkle and Yarico*, Yarico haunts Inkle and builds a strong link to an African understanding of nature, spirits and spirituality, challenging Inkle's world-view and understanding of what it means to be human. In this context, Gilroy and Wynter reveal the underlying colonial structures in the Caribbean and imagine ways to undermine those structures and their inherent anti-black racism. The women not only remember the history of colonisation but also establish a link to their characters' African heritage and offer a personalised perspective on colonial history. Hartman adds that memory "reiterates and enacts the contradictions and antagonism of enslavement, the ruptures of history, and the disassociated and dispersed networks of affiliation." (*Subjection* 74) In remembering, both Kate and Yarico imagine ways to subvert a colonised and westernised world-view, rejecting a humanist mindset while at the same time revealing ongoing conflicts and struggles caused by colonisation. They are represented as agents who ensure the continuity of their communities' African heritage rather than as colonial subjects. In this regard, the overall connection to nature and spirituality Gilroy and Wynter highlight in both their novels and trace particularly within their female characters, represents an alternative concept of the human that focusses on the natural cycle of life and death, transcending binary representations. Thus, they challenge and contrast humanism's Man and its vicious circle of anti-black violence and structural racism.

In *The Hills of Hebron*, the female characters serve as internal focalisers through whose perspectives the story of the New Believers is told. Aunt Kate, who is structurally the most important focaliser in the novel, offers a cyclical, maternalist view of time, opposing the colonial, male cycle of sexualised violence that Martha, Gloria and Rose are confronted with (see Baker Josephs 61).[60] The novel opens and ends through Kate's perspective and she is also the main focaliser of key events. Through her perspective, flashbacks and memories, the reader experiences, among other things, Isaac's confession about stealing the money box and raping Rose, Maverlyn's death, Gloria's appearance with her mother Martha, the arrival of the community in Hebron, the birth of Rose's child and the story of Gloria's rape. What is more, Kate is the only character who knows that Isaac has raped Rose and has stolen the money box from Miss Gatha. Aunt Kate is the

[59] For an overall discussion of the role of women in *The Hills of Hebron* please see Baker Joseph p. 59 ff; Liddell p. 323ff; Barnes p. 44ff and Toland-Dix p. 61ff.

[60] The impact of sexual violence on Martha, Gloria and Rose is discussed and analysed in chapter 3.1.

only character with such a superior level of knowledge. Kate's dominant role within the structure emphasises how she personally experiences the events in Hebron. This is particularly interesting as Kate understands being human in different terms than humanist Man. Her perspective on her environment and on reality contradicts a western belief system and particularly humanist values.

Kate's African conception of time challenges linear and static representations of time, blurring the boundaries between past and present events. Her mind constantly drifts off into the past so that different time levels appear to mingle: "The past had taken over in her head once more." (*Hebron* 100), or "the future now called to her" (280). Her connection to an African concept of time is further stressed in the first epigraph of the novel that is placed before the first chapter that introduces Kate as the narrator's focaliser. The epigraph establishes a link to African folklore and their African ancestry by referring to an Amazulu account:

> At first he is apparently robust, but in process of time he begins to be delicate, not having any real disease … He tells them that he is being carried away by a river. He dreams of many things and his body is muddled and he becomes a house of dreams. (1)

The tale of the Amazulu contextualises *The Hills of Hebron* within a black African cultural realm and frames the novel as well as Kate's introduction. Herby, before the novel actually begins, the setting refers to an African origin and a different belief system. Most importantly, the epigraph introduces imagery, themes and motifs that appear throughout the novel, such as aquatic imagery, here in the shape of a river, the motif time and the attempt to escape reality, or even imagining an alternative reality. All those themes also directly relate to Kate and her relation to the natural surroundings, aquatic imagery as in her daughter's reappearance as a water spirit and the concept of cyclical time. The latter is represented in Kate's appearances, which add an element of circularity and continuation to the novel which is underlined by the beginning and ending. The opening scene of the novel introduces Kate as she is sitting next to the spring:

> It was early morning. There were mists over the hills and valleys of Hebron. Down in the square, Aunt Kate sat on the cold earth beside the spring. She rocked to and fro and cradled her arms as she hummed a lullaby. The clear water murmured accompaniment. She had dressed hurriedly, and her cotton frock was unfastened at the back, her handkerchief askew, like a crumpled hibiscus. A light wind lifted the loose strands of her grey hair. Her face was oval. Pouches of reddish-brown skin framed a beaked nose and black eyes as swift as bees. (3)

The narrator focusses on the time of day and the natural surroundings before focalising on Kate. Aunt Kate and nature appear at ease with one another, building a relationship with an almost dialogic character. The choice of words, here, creates a calm, peaceful, almost innocent atmosphere.

Nature reacts to Kate's lullaby in personified form: "The clear water murmured accompaniment". The lullaby already hints at Maverlyn's death and the connection mother and daughter share through the spring. The portrayal of the wind and the various similes connect and compare Kate to the realm of nature. Her handkerchief is compared with "a crumpled hibiscus", adding a certain sense of vulnerability to the picture as well as establishing a link to flowers. Flowers play a particularly crucial role in the story line of Martha, Gloria and Rose and add another element of circularity. The simile "black eyes as swift as bees" portrays Kate as vivid and dynamic, contrasting her neglect in getting dressed properly. Her eyes hint at a younger Kate, a woman associated with the characteristics of bees — observant, quick and laborious. She appears peaceful in her seclusion from the rest of the world. Kate's appearance and the peaceful atmosphere that surrounds her strongly contrast the perpetuation of racial violence Wynter addresses in *The Hills of Hebron*. Kate's representation offers an alternative to the lurking fear and doubts that accompany characters such as Isaac, or Martha and hereby also implements an alternative understanding of what it means to be human.

The ending of the novel further underlines the circular nature of Kare's appearances and is set in the same time frame as before. Rose's son is just born and Kate takes him into the church to Miss Gatha and the New Believers: "Kate stood behind her, her grey hair disheveled. Her eyes gleamed as if the wind had blown bits of the moon inside them." (309) The description of Kate again highlights her connection to nature, recalling the opening scene. Again, Kate is associated with the wind. The last scene produces a similar calm and peaceful atmosphere as the beginning, adding to the circular pattern of Kate's appearances within the structure of the novel. This is further underlined by Kate's lullaby for Rose's child: "Aunt Kate hummed a tuneless lullaby. Soon, the two old women are as soundly asleep as the child. Morning, breaking over Hebron, caught them unawares." (310) Like in the opening scene ("she hummed a lullaby") Kate sings for a child, now for a living one. The cycle of life as represented in the image of the two old women and the baby is reflected in the breaking of a new day. Thus, the novel resembles one cycle of a day, recalling the African concept of measuring time through the event of a sunrise rather than the use of mechanical time measurements (see Mpofu 70): The very first sentence — "It was early morning." (*Hebron* 3) — marks the beginning of a new day. The very last sentence — "Morning, breaking over Hebron, caught them unawares." (310) — marks the beginning of another day, emphasising the repetitive cycle of day and night, adding to the circular structure of the novel and highlighting the circularity of life itself. However, Kate's lullaby underlines the change that has occurred, namely that Rose and her son both have survived. Here, the novel breaks through the circle of repetitive racial and sexual

violence which is underlined by the image of the two old women and the newborn child that creates an atmosphere of calmness, peace and innocence. Kate and Gatha represent Hebron's past whereas the child hints at Hebron's future. This picture of innocence gives hope to the New Believers and the generations to come.The hope and promise embodied by Rose's son is directly reflected in the end of the drought: "The drops of rain fell slowly at first, one by one by one. The congregation rose to their feet. The hailstone clattered down, the rain was a rushing, roaring deluge." (309) The community experiences a catharsis. The natural disaster is disrupted by the rain, which marks a new beginning, just like the child. Nature and time appear in continuity with the characters and all three — characters, time and nature — emphasise the cycle of life.

Whereas Kate represents a cyclical concept of time, the community of Hebron is associated with a linear time model, which is emphasised at the end of part one of the novel. This distinction between Kate and the community emphasises how humanist structures are internalised within Hebron society and particularly the ideology of a continued and linear progress. The New Believers gather in order to wait for Isaac's return whom they expect to take over the leadership of the community and rebuild Hebron with Moses' money box. At this point they are oblivious to the fact that Isaac had already stolen the money after raping Rose. Shortly before meeting in the square, the New Believers are called together by the sound of a cowhorn. Miss Gatha wants to dig up the money box in order to secure the community's survival in this time of drought:

> The long, drawn out echo of a cowhorn sounded from the tamarind tree below the spring, and the New Believers hurried to answer its summons. The thought of Isaac's imminent return played upon their already heightened fantasies. The money-box he was due to resurrect became a source of magic. […] The money-box that Moses had bequeathed to his son expanded in their reckoning until it contained the whole run and course of their great expectations. (92)

The communal narrator's linear understanding of time is highlighted by the New Believers' hope of finding the money box as a solution to their problems. They trace the money box back to Moses who leaves the box for Isaac. This linear trajectory is further underlined by their waiting for Isaac's return, which forms a concrete point in the future they long for. Also, the choice of words such as "resurrect" and "run and course" emphasises the linear trajectory of time. Moses represents the past, the Community's hope the present and Isaac's imminent return the future. The money box functions as a symbol for the New Believers' hopes and represents a certain mind set. Money symbolically recalls capitalism and therefore in extension its beginnings in humanism. The fact that the box has been stolen highlights the corruptness of a capitalist system, but also undermines the community's hope, which is crushed by the greed of one individual. Within this context, it is the folkloric

imagery that not only reconnects the New Believers with their African ancestry but also cautions them about the blind belief in progress and the underlying colonial structures it represents. First of all, there is the cowhorn, which in Caribbean folklore is considered a sound of warning and caution.[61] What is more, it is also associated with Jamaican Maroons, as an account by Edward Long who witnesses in 1764 the use of "an abeng, the horn of a cow as a trumpet" by Leeward Maroons (Wilson 46).[62] Secondly, there is the tamarind tree, which originates in tropical Africa, but is now cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions around the world. Thirdly, the image of the spring recalls Kate as well as Maverlyn's spirit, and finally the communal narrator compares the retrieval of the money box with a form of magic, almost heightening the ritual-like atmosphere conveyed by the scene. All these aspects build a connection to African ancestry and emphasise the conflict between linearity — represented by the community — and circularity — in the context of Kate's cyclical concept of time. In this regard, the box represents an interruption and a distraction of the community's connection with its African ancestry in its representation of capitalist values. This is even further underlined by the fact that the community is due to find out about the box having been stolen. The conflict is further intensified by a change of focalisation towards Kate and her understanding of time. Her appearance is a form of disruption, heightening the imminent desperation and realisation of Isaac's betrayal. Kate's perspective disrupts the gathering and the search for the money box:

> She opened the door and stepped down. The pain stabbed through her leg. But as she hobbled along, the fresh morning breeze blowing in her face eased the pain. The cowhorn sounded loudly now and she could hear voices calling to one another. She was a child again and a 'junkonoo' procession was jigging by with drums and whistles and fantastic costumes. She hurried down past the church and round and into the square. (*Hebron* 93)

Different to the community, Kate's thoughts do not concentrate on the future nor false hopes, but go back to her memory as a child and past events. Hereby, she does not express greed but rather delight and joy as the Jonkonnu procession emphasises. In this regard, she also does not associate the sound of the cowhorn with future hopes of the New Believers but with the sounds of the procession she witnessed as a child. The narrator mingles Kate's immediate physical reaction to her pain and the

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[61] The sound of a cowhorn appears in Caribbean folklore as a sound of warning. The figure "Papa Bois" is the protector of the natural realm and uses a cowhorn to warn animals of hunters (see Anatol "Papa Bois" 136). Anatol argues that figures such as Papa Bois "might be said to represent what scholar Robert Marzec calls '[t]he nomadic, resistant component' that comes forth in 'enunciations of the land' to challenge the traditional imperialist script, which tries to contain and control all the territories it represents, whether through fences, maps, or fiction (136)." (Marzec qtd. in ibid.)

[62] The role of Maroons is also discussed in chapter 4.3. with an emphasis on representations of resistance.

present events with her memories of Caribbean folkloric tradition. Her memory of the dancing strongly contrasts her pained walk. By remembering the Jonkonnu, Kate preserves this Caribbean tradition and forms a link to a Caribbean past. Particularly dancing and drums play an important role in Caribbean history. Wynter argues that within Caribbean folklore the dance reassures "the ties with the ancestral spirits and the community, and the Earth, through possession in the dance." ("Jonkonnu" 37) Kate's memory also resonates with the Jonkonnu performance in *Maskarade* and recalls the imagery of resistance and revolt. Thus, the performance adds another level to the seemingly peaceful memory and re-connects Hebron with original African versions of the Jonkonnu in which the dance most importantly had a military function in preparation for war (see 41).[63] Kate takes on the role as go-between for the community and their ancestors, bringing back African and Caribbean folkloric traditions and history, which contrast the community's trust in capitalist values. Kate alternates between past and present and the polysyndeton of "and" — which is used seven times in that short extract — emphasises a rhythmic element and recalls the rhythm of the music Kate remembers. Hereby, she strongly recalls the concept of cyclical time which "swings back and forth, rhythmically, between repeated events" (Mpofu 68-69). Kate's non-linear and disruptive perspective here emphasises how she reconnects the community with its Caribbean folkloric traditions. She offers a different world-view as established in her conception of time and personifies positive attributes such as hope, joy heightened by the peaceful natural surroundings. Her perspective and appearance form a counterbalance to humanism's focus on reason as well as static racial hierarchies. Kate, in this context, represents another concept of the human, one that disrupts the circularity of anti-black violence and ideologies.

The role of spirits is a recurring and predominant element in *The Hills of Hebron* and *Inkle and Yarico* and takes a vital part in further undermining humanism's focus on reason and rational thinking. The supernatural invalidates humanism's understanding of nature as profitable entity to be conquered and connects both novels through a concept of the human to which the transcendental aspects of life form an integral part. The appearance of spirits is also linked with the natural surroundings of the characters and their link to an African ancestry, intensifying the idea of a holistic world view. Aisha Khan argues that within "Afro-Atlantic religion traditions", spirits and "ethereal agents […] represent the epitome of ambiguous borders and fluid development and transformation." (Khan 43) Khan characterises spirits as "unbound, hybrid, dialogic, and disjunctive" (44). As disembodied agents, spirits offer an escape from "the concepts of culture and

[63] The Jonkonnu in relation to Marronage and revolts is discussed in chapter 4.3.

identity that lie at the center of diaspora" as well as challenging racial displacements of black people (ibid.). In this regard, they also offer a different perspective on history as they subvert historic accounts, accessing the past through folklore and spirituality (see 45). The frequent occurrence of spirits in Wynter's and Gilroy's novel and their close proximity with their characters emphasises how the spirit's appearance invites a redefinition of social norms and static conceptions of what it means to be human. The spirits that appear in both novels represent a link between life and death and offer access to a more subconscious and spiritual realm of being. They transcend a western understanding of the human and stretch the boundaries of human thinking and comprehension.

In Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, the death of chief Tomo exemplifies the openness of interpretation of spirits in addressing themes of life and death: "he took the path to the woods without a backward glance. Yarico explained calmly, 'The spirits have come. It is his death day. He hears the voices of the ancestors.'" (*Inkle and Yarico* 77) Yarico establishes a link between the world of ethereal agents and earthly life. The spirits of the ancestors take an active part in Tomo's death and are personified as agents who call him. Tomo communicates with the ancestors and answers their call by turning to the forest. He chooses to join the spirits. He himself turns into an ethereal agent, escaping his human form and life by reconnecting with his ancestors. Tomo's death is surrounded by mythical and inexplicable elements, as Inkle continues: "The next day a search party went out to find his bones. They found nothing for he had become an eagle and flown strongly and merrily back to his home in Africa." (77) The transition between life and death is fluid as death signifies merely a passage to another home, emphasising the different conception of life Yarico's people share. Tomo himself had been captured in West-Africa, in the kingdom of Dahomey or what today would be at the coast of Benin, and had been bound to arrive in the Caribbean as a slave. However, the slavers' ship was attacked by pirates and Tomo was able to escape (see 34). In his death, Tomo returns to his ancestors as established by the return myth of the flying African (see Snyder 39 and Walters 13).[64] This intertextual remark toward the the flying African as a folkloric tale further intensifies the importance of a link with an African ancestry and the Caribbean indigenous people. Tomo wants to return home to Africa as a way to resist his former enslavement and to re-establish his lost link with

[64] Snyder explains that "[t]he folklore redresses the dislocations caused by slavery, as captives literally rise above their enslavement, transcending the natal alienation of the middle passage, and returning to Africa. Because they serve as a form of reparation, the reliability of the memories - and the flying African tales they contain - is less important than their function as a bridge between the living and the dead." (Snyder 59-60) He further notes that "[t]he stories assert the power of culture to maintain community in the face of its forcible dislocation. […] Flying African folklore allows for the possibility of escaping slavery through the supernatural power of refusal rather than through self-destructive violence." (62)

his former community in Dahomey. Hereby, the boundaries between the world of humans and that of spirits blur, offering a more fluid understanding of life and death and the space in-between represented by the spirits. In his death, Tomo subverts colonial and racial structures that brought him to the Caribbean and made it impossible for him to return to Africa. The myth of his return lends his death a hopeful and peaceful element in that he regains the connection to his ancestors that colonial structures had attempted to cut off. At the same time, the fact that Tomo's remains are not found offers a positive reinterpretation of the history of enslavement and a possible escape out of humanism's rational world view.

Next to Tomo's mysterious death and disappearance it is Yarico whose return in the form of a Spirit Woman haunts Inkle. Through Inkle as the narrator, Yarico returns as a constant entity that looms over his life. Adding to her mythical return, her name and with it her identity is somewhat ambiguous. She is called the Spirit Woman, Rabiel and Yarico. Her reappearance strengthens her connection to the spirits of her people as well as nature and emphasises how she represents a different genre of the human compared to Inkle's perception of humanness. Early in the novel, Inkle comments on Yarico's connection with nature and calls her "Nature's child" (*Inkle and Yarico* 18). Gilroy further emphasises Yarico's connection with the spiritual realm and states:

> She was like the earth, the forest, able to whisper truths to the wind. She returns as the spirit of guilt and conscience to which his mind gives form and mocks his arrogance. […] She is evergreen, proliferating, unkillable like the forests that flourish and float in the waters of the jungle." (*Leaves* 83-84)

Yarico's description transcends the earthly realm and builds a bridge between spirituality, nature and her life as a human. Gilroy creates a black female character who is simultaneously an ethereal agent and able to resist and challenge her dehumanisation through her enslavement. Yarico's return and fact that she cannot be killed embodies power and resistance against a system that systematically tries to dehumanise her. The attempt to destroy Caribbean and African cultural influences by a colonial and racial system remains an attempt. Yarico emphasises that although people can be killed and subjugated, their cultural heritage, humanness and link to their communities cannot be destroyed. Her characters represents an extreme form of self-affirmation of being human as well as reassuring the continued existence of cultural expressions. In this context, Gilroy, through Yarico, imagines a different history of black women — one that confronts racial displacement and fixed historical accounts. Gilroy rather imagines a concept of being human through Yarico's appearance as a spirit, one that is changeable and fluid, as her various names highlight, and one that transcends stereotypical representations of black women. Hereby, Yarico offers a different perspective on the

history of enslavement through folkloric elements. She even foreshadows her own reappearance as an ethereal agent as she curses Inkle right after she is sold into slavery (see *Inkle and Yarico* 95). Because of Inkle's betrayal and despite his apparent powerful status within the colonial hierarchy, Yarico still exercises her power over him, challenging his role as a plantation owner. Her return questions the binary structures of Inkle's plantation and overall structure of the colonial system. Yarico particularly draws attention to the flawed moral codes within humanism. Inkle sells her into slavery in order to secure his own financial well-being and by betraying Yarico actually initiates her looming power over him. He simply underestimates Yarico, whose curse is a response to his concept of the human, which is based on racial and patriarchal hierarchies. Yarico not only affirms her own humanness but also her rejection towards dehumanisation and enslavement. Through her connection with nature, culture and spirituality she is empowered to haunt Inkle and makes him realise that she establishes a link between his subdued fears and conflicts he experienced during his captivity and with his assumed superior status as planation owner.

Next to the curse, it is Yarico's ambiguous and supernatural reappearance which leaves Inkle distraught and close to madness. Scrutinising humanism's emphasis on reason and rational explanations, the novel heightens the tension of Yarico's curse by revisiting Yarico's life after Inkle's betrayal from different unexpected tales. These tales explain that Yarico indeed survived her enslavement, but that Inkle is unable to accept that. It is Alice, Inkle's former betrothed, who hints at Yarico's return. She tells the story of a woman whom she returned back to her home "No Man's Land" after finding her on the island of Barbados being left there by a slave ship. Alice describes the woman's clothes which suggest that it is indeed Yarico: "In the red material she wore around her shoulders she carried a piece of wood carved like a child. Sometimes she whispered a name but no one could decipher it." (127) Compared with the scene shortly before selling Yarico into slavery, Inkle similarly describes her clothes: "She wore a length of red material wrapped round her waist" (93). Both descriptions resonate with one another which is intensified by the wooden figure in the form of a child, which recalls Yarico's dead son. The repetition of the red material of the clothes and the image of the child underlines the circular character of the novel and affirms Yarico's survival as a disruption into structural racism and dehumanisation. Later in the novel, Inkle observes an assembly of abolitionists on his planation while he is talking to his enslaved and encounters the Spirit Woman for the first time. Her appearance is anticipated by the surroundings which recall Inkle's life among Yarico's people:

> The shadows of the trees, like dense misshapen ogres on the land, seemed solitary but yet I mistrusted them. From the Caribs I had learned that no one is ever alone. There were always eyes — those of birds, bees, or the living, or the dead ancestors. (146)

Inkle relates back to his experience and establishes a connection between spirits and nature. He draws no clear distinction between natural elements, living entities and the realm of the dead. Again, the fluidity between these boundaries is heightened. Inkle not only blurs the lines between different concepts of being but also between his life as a plantation owner and life with Yarico. He remains unable to put his experience with Yarico behind and attributes power to nature and "dead ancestors", directly resonating with Yarico's power over him. His friend Dunbar disrupts Inkle's thoughts and points him towards the Spirit Woman: "'The Spirit Woman!' hissed Dunbar. 'She tells some story about how she had saved a Frenchman and he was untrue to her!'" (148) Although Inkle realises the parallels to Yarico's story he still questions her identity: "She seemed familiar but too old and broken to be Yarico. They called her Rabiel and Carib Tim translated as she spoke. Yarico knew English — some English. This could not be her?" (ibid.) Up until the end, Inkle denies that Yarico might have returned as the Spirit Woman and tries to reason with himself within his humanist frame of thought. However, his own uncertainty about Yarico increases the myth that surrounds her character. After Inkle's attempted rape of Alice and being poisoned by her servant Tim, the doctor explains the origin of the Spirit Woman, revealing her to be Yarico. Tim's identity is revealed to be in fact Toru, the former best friend of Inkle's first-born son Waiyo, whom Inkle accidentally killed with poison (see 150). The doctor then further reveals: "Rabiel, comes from the same tribe. She was saved from sea but was so famished and distracted that she lost her mind — exchanged it with the sea spirits for her life, as she puts it." (151). The doctor's tale again builds a link between Yarico, or Rabiel, with water spirits to whom she gave her life. As her son before her, she turned into the sea and was resurrected in order to haunt Inkle. The doctor also confirms the story Alice told Inkle before and reveals that Rabiel and Tim came from the same tribe. At the end of the novel, Inkle realises that Yarico's curse was played out by Toru's murder attempt to revenge Waiyo: "So Toru, now Tim, had come!" (150). The choice of words resembles Yarico's curse — "Like the moonlight shadows they will come." (95) — and the changed temporal structure implies that they indeed came to kill him. In the end it is Yarico herself who gives Inkle the only antidote there is against the poison. In his hospital bed he is visited one last time by Yarico as a powerful force of nature and justice, which triggers the return of the unknown and the spiritual realm for Inkle:

> 'Rabiel!' I called again.

> ‘They will come! They will come!’ I heard once more.
> It came as if through a thunderstorm of years. Once more I saw Yarico drown our child. I wept for all those moments when I did not weep. (151)

The repetition of the curse leaves Inkle devastated. The myth that surrounds Yarico’s character haunts Inkle until the end of the novel and beyond that for the rest of his life. Yarico forces Inkle to confront his actions against her and their child. To Inkle, her life and being remain ambiguous, highlighting the fluidity connected to her as a character and Inkle’s denial of her power. This fluidity is underlined by the different temporal levels in the quote above, as if time itself is distraught by Yarico’s appearance, which is paralleled with the natural forces of “a thunderstorm of years”: the past is represented by their dead child, the present embodied by Inkle’s exclamation of the name Rabiel and the future represented by the repetition of the curse. Inkle loses all sense of boundaries between what was and what will be, which leads to his outbreak of emotions. Yarico reminds him of his former life with her and her tribe and their different understanding of what it means to be human. She accesses a different belief system in order to convey her understanding of life and death as well as justice. Her reappearance counters Inkle’s assumption that she is only an imagination or a ghost that haunts him. Yarico in fact represents a conception of the human that constantly challenges and undermines systemic racism and reaffirms her own humanness in the context of enslavement and dehumanisation. What is more, she embodies the continued survival of cultural and communal links to her people’s ancestors and disrupts the circle of systemic anti-black violence which is underlined by the natural imagery and circularity connected to her character. As Kate in The Hills of Hebron, Yarico represents another form of circularity, one that is able to break through the humanist concept of dividing the people into humans and non-humans.

In *The Hills of Hebron*, a death of a community member is also linked to the realm of spirits. Aunt Kate is convinced that after drowning, her daughter Maverlyn is still asleep in the spring and reappears in form of a spirit in the water. Although Maverlyn appears to haunt her mother, she actually returns to calm and soothe her. Note how Maverlyn’s presence has almost the complete opposite effect compared to Yarico’s curse. Maverlyn reconnects the New Believers with their history and their ancestral realm. The fact that Maverlyn drowns recalls the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean and revisits history from a black female perspective. The enslaved Africans on board the slave ships are often referred to as people who are in a condition between the dead and the living, which recalls the belief in spirits (see Glissant 6). Also, there are accounts of Africans who were thrown over board during the middle passage or who deliberately drowned themselves to escape the slave ship. One of the most famous reports comes from Olaudah Equiano: “However, two of the

wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully, for thus attempting to prefer death to slavery." (*Interesting Narrative* 69) Another account which is part of a journal of a slave ship goes as follows: "The other received ditto who Leaped [sic] over board & drowned himself." (qdt. in Smallwood 145) Both accounts highlight that drowning oneself is one way of escaping the conditions on board the ship and imminent enslavement. The wish to escape dehumanisation resonates with the myth of the Flying African in *Inkle and Yarico*. Tomo's disappearance offered a new perspective on death, blurring the lines between the living and the supernatural. Maverlyn's death also builds a link to African and Caribbean spirituality and like Tomo's myth of a return to his home country contradicts a rational, scientific concept of being, as propagated by European colonial powers and the ideology of humanism. Even the community members of the New Believers comment on Maverlyn's spirit, emphasising her presence within communal life:

> Some mornings, standing around her as she sat and cradled her arms, they had almost been persuaded that they could see, glancing on the surface of the water, her child Maverlyn, like some spirit celebrating the eternal life" (*Hebron* 43)

Maverlyn is depicted as an entity that is neither dead nor alive. Through the communal narrator but mostly through Kate's focalisation she reappears as a spirit who haunts her mother. Christopher Vecsey states that within the religious thought of western Africa "there exist numerous abosom, divinities, nature spirits, and the like" who "are thought to be invisible, but manifest themselves through aspects of nature." (109) The belief in spirits and orishas is part of West African folklore, the latter always in connection to natural forces who come back and haunt the living (see Bjorling 105). Maverlyn represents this belief systems and forms a connection to the community's ancestors and spiritual beliefs. Kate, in imagining that her daughter only sleeps and that her spirit lives on in the spring, builds a connection to this belief and therefore to the community's ancestors. Kate expresses a different spirituality compared to Prophet Moses' religious conviction. She embodies the community's link to an African religion rather than to a western-dominated tradition. Kate contrasts a western system and humanist mindset and builds a link between African religion and Caribbean folklore, as Wynter underlines:

> Jamaica too had its water-dance to the water spirit, or river goddess. The spirit known as 'Ribba Mumma' was supposed to: '*Inhabit every fountainhead of an inexhaustible and considerable stream of water in Jamaica*.' The slaves, in time of drought, used to persuade their master to sacrifice an ox at the fountainhead of the water turning the mill. The water spirit was supposed to materialize like a mermaid at noon, combing her long black hair. ("Jonkonnu" 41; original emphasis)

The extract above reveals several parallels to the novel. The most obvious one is that Maverlyn reappears as a water spirit, which establishes a link to Jamaica's past and Hebron's slave ancestry. Another parallel is that of the drought, which also afflicts the New Believers. What is more, the novel recalls the Caribbean past, particularly colonialism and the enslavement of African peoples. This raises attention to black people's dehumanisation and displacement as the ultimate other of Caribbean society within the plantation system. The depiction of Maverlyn's hair as long and black further intensifies the link to the realm of the spirits and folklore. The image of the Ribba Mumma also recalls a link to African ancestry as the rituals surrounding her worship were based on Ashanti myths and West-African folklore (see Moore and Johnson 35).

Similar to Yarico's link with nature, Maverlyn's reappearance as a spirit is underlined by natural elements. Maverlyn equally emphasises a natural rhythm and represents a connection between the realm of the living and the supernatural and spirituality. Rather, she is characterised in continuation with the physical and meta-physical, challenging static humanist representations of the human. Kate, in this context, builds a link between the spirit of her daughter and the New Believers' community in order to connect the community with an alternative conception of the human:

> Aunt Kate woke up from the past. Night had fallen. The moon sculptured shadows on the barren face of the land. She pulled the hessian sack round her shoulders, felt its coarse weave against her bones. She was afraid. (*Hebron* 279)

The moon is personified and appears as an agent, or more accurately as an artist. The atmosphere is dark and gloomy, the landscape is associated with death and darkness, which creates emotions of anxiety and despair. Kate's emotional state — she is afraid and cold — is in tune with the surroundings. The night is a central element to Kate's life as it was at night when Maverlyn drowned and it is always at night, or in darkness when she goes to the spring to see her dead daughter. The moon represents the realm of the unconscious and a space between the dead and the living and also introduces Maverlyn's appearances (see Costello 191). The moon controls the tide, creating a cycle of coming and leaving. Therefore, it is also associated with water. The light of the moon offsets the darkness of the night and creates a twilight, an atmosphere between light and darkness, representing the conscious and the unconscious. The image of the moon also draws a parallel to Yarico's reappearance, which is equally paralleled with moonlight shadows as her curse emphasises: "Like the moonlight shadows they will come." (*Inkle and Yarico* 95) The moon as a symbol creates a strong contrast to a rational way of thinking and to understanding the world according to humanist ideology. There is no separation between nature and human beings but both exist together, connected through natural rhythms. The relationship between Kate and Maverlyn

intensifies a different rhythm and circularity, one that escapes the humanist reiteration of colonial and racial hierarchies as well we continued forms of anti-black violence:

> She sat beside the spring humming her lullaby and rocking from side to side. She had woken up that night to hear Maverlyn calling her name. […] As she watched, the blue shadows cast by the trees drifted together like the movements of a dance. A wind stirred through the leaves. (*Hebron* 271)

The lullaby and the natural elements create a very calm and peaceful atmosphere. It seems that Kate's song is answered by the natural surroundings, which are depicted as being alive and dancing. Kate's whole being resonates with the wind and the shadows, as Maverlyn builds a relationship with the spring, underlining both characters' close proximity and entanglement with their natural surroundings: "Maverlyn slept peacefully, her black hair spread out in the water and tangled with moonlight." (272) Maverlyn's hair is surrounded by water, almost building a unity with the element and again recalls the Jamaican belief of the "Ribba Mumma". The daughter-mother relationship is further described by Kate actually seeing her daughter: "She glanced down at Maverlyn asleep in the spring, cradled her arms and rocked from side to side, her lips moving to the words of her lullaby." (273) Kate still attempts to fulfil her role as a mother. Their relationship transcends boundaries of life and death and fixed definitions of what it means to be human. Both express an almost dialogical relationship with their environment and are both connected through their unity with nature. Hereby, they express possible strategies in order to deal with structural displacement and racism and counter processes of dehumanisation with positivity connected to nature and a cultural link to Caribbean folklore. Kate's relationship to her daughter intensifies the representation of an alternative concept of the human that is informed by nature, spirituality, cultural expression and her different perception of time. Her concept of the human also resonates with Tomo's return to his African ancestry and Yarico's reappearance as a spirit. All these characters imagine a different genre of the human, which strongly contrasts humanist Man. Their positive and mythical relation to African ancestry and Caribbean folklore is underlined by their relationship with natural surroundings and entities. Natural elements have the ability to act as agents with human attributes. Boundaries between time, nature, the living and the dead blur and appear as entities with their own agency, strongly contrasting the very restrictive and racial definition of being human within humanism. The representation of African and Caribbean conceptions of the human offers a disruptive power that not only critiques and challenges humanist ideologies, but systematically undermines and subverts them.

5.3. Expressions of New Concepts of the Human: Rhythm, Dance and Masks in Wynter's *Maskarade* and Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico* and Alternative Forms of Justice embodied by Miss Gatha in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and *Maskarade*

In Wynter's *Maskarade* and Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*, staging masquerades, dances and music offers a performative intervention into the western conception and discourse of the human. Music, dance and rhythm enable characters to transcend the western ideal of Man, escaping their often restrictive and static surroundings, re-interpreting hierarchies and offering a link to African folklore, as two staged performances in *Inkle and Yarico*, as well as Lovey and Boy in *Maskarade* emphasise. What is more, through performances both works transcend genre conventions and boundaries, as particularly the character of Miss Gatha highlights. Her appearance in *Maskarade* and *The Hills of Hebron* as well as the link between Wynter's essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" and *Maskarade* show how these genres overlap and are influenced by one another. Through Miss Gatha, the novel and the play offer a different matriarchal concept of justice, which hugely influences the plots' structures. In both works, Gatha represents a Caribbean conception of the human while at the same time struggling in each work with disruptions and conflicts within Caribbean communities.

Maskarade, published in 1973 and rewritten in 1983 (see Brewster 18), is based on Wynter's essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica: Towards the Interpretation of Folk Dance as a Cultural Process" (1967), which was written shortly after Jamaican independence (see Boyce-Davies "*Maskarade*" 205). Although the play was published several years after independence it is still influenced by the anti-colonial struggles expressed in the essay. "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" discusses the role of folk-tales and folklore within Jamaican culture vis-à-vis colonial rule. The play tells the story of the Jonkonnu festival and the plot evolves around the rehearsals for the festival as well as the love triangle between Quasheba, her boyfriend Cuffie and Driver. The performance at the end of the play reveals Driver's plotting against Quasheba, Cuffie and Gatha and concludes with Driver's and Cuffie's death caused by Gatha herself. Anthony Bogues highlights that Wynter's essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" discusses forms of masquerade, dance and music in Jamaican folklore and that she "wants to posit that this culture offers valid alternative ways of thinking, living and being." (331) Wynter discusses the role of drums, song and dance which are all three recurring themes in her play. In this context, her play represents "the 'indigenization' process", exposing "the more secretive process by which the dominated culture survives; and resists." (Wynter "Jonkonnu"

39)[65] The Jonkonnu carnival surpasses the boundaries between humans and non-humans, as well as the supernatural and can be traced back to an African heritage (see Buckridge 98).[66] It expresses resistance against colonial rule and dissolves the racial structures within Caribbean society. Boyce-Davies further asserts that Wynter's play offers insights into the "re-creation of African culture in the Caribbean landscape deriving elements from European, Amerindian, and African cultural forms" (Boyce-Davies "*Maskarade*" 207). Within this context, the play contributes to rethinking what it means to be human through its representation of Caribbean cultural expressions, while tracing its origin back to Africa (see 220).

Next to *Maskarade*, there are also two scenes in Gilroy's novel *Inkle and Yarico* in which different forms of masquerade are staged and through which the novel traces a connection to the beginnings of an African understanding of the human. Both scenes also counter tendencies in western historical accounts to stereotypically misrepresent black people. Through Inkle's perspective, he portrays first an initiation dance among Yarico's people and later on in the novel a masquerade he witnesses among his enslaved on the plantation. Reading both scenes in dialogue with Wynter's essay on Jonkonnu performances, this analysis shows how they both raise awareness towards the importance of African folklore and the role of rhythm, dance and drums in such performances.

> At the appointed hour, the sound of rattles blended with the whistling of a bamboo flute. A murmur of anticipation ran through the gathering and Paiuda showed himself. He wore a mask of the Water Spirit and danced by jerking his head and thrusting his neck this way and that. As he jerked his head, he clicked and rattled his gourds until Yarico joined in, wailing and clicking in harmony. […] It was a weird, rhythmic blending of sounds and, while it lasted, the gestures accompanying the noise were compelling to watch."
> (*Inkle and Yarico* 37)

The passage shows how rhythm, music, dance and masks are intertwined in the ritual Inkle witnesses. Read against the backdrop of Wynter's essay, both works offer a glimpse into Caribbean cultural rituals that can be traced back to Africa. Wynter emphasises that mask, rhythm and dance are closely related, recalling aspects of African folklore and religion:

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[65] Lloyd Best defines indigenisation in Wynter's terms as follows: "Wynter's extremely suggestive if not wholly completed notion of indigenisation […] would acknowledge a deliberate and necessary involvement in insurgency against the process of acculturation. It would recognise a necessary affirmation of selfhood and, therefore, an unyielding if not unflinching resolve to pursue the paths of the subordinate culture by creating sundry repositories of the ancestral or ethnic tradition." (264) For further analysis of indigenisation within a Caribbean context, see Newton p. 117ff and Boyce Davies "*Maskarade*" p. 211ff.

[66] Buckridge traces the tradition of Jonkonnu back to various African groups: "Among the Mende, Igbo and Yoruba, masks were used in religious ceremonies, festivals and initiation rites. Yoruba ritual masks were very elaborate in design, consisting of human features frequently combined with animals, snakes or geometrical forms." (99)

> The mask is almost always closely connected with the fundamental element of African life, the dance — so much so that it seems difficult to talk about them as separate entities. Rhythm, […] existed at the beginning of time and was often thought to have been the absolute Creator of the worlds and their inhabitants…" (Wynter referring to Franco Monti "Jonkonnu" 38)

Both passages, Inkle's observations and Wynter's insights into African dance relate to one another. While Gilroy portrays Inkle's white gaze as he is confronted with a different belief system that originated in Africa and continues to influence Caribbean indigenous people, Wynter highlights the importance and significance of such a ritual, which Inkle cannot and does not fully comprehend or appreciate. He cannot grasp the intensity of the performance as he observes it through his own conception of being human, through his perspective as a white, bourgeois, English man. Gilroy and Wynter both raise awareness of a link between Caribbean and African cultural expressions. Raising awareness to the survival of African cultural expressions in the Caribbean, both intellectuals challenge a western understanding of culture and its influence during colonialism. Hereby, both assert that these cultural practices are proof of a distinct Caribbean concept of being human that is related to an African origin and form of expression through rhythm, dance and masks. The rhythm expressed in Paiuda's and Yarico's dance resonates with Wynter's understanding of rhythm as "the universal life force" and the mask as an emblem that connects the dancer with the world of the gods: "the dancer '*delivers*' himself by patterning the steps of the god, or ancestral spirit." (ibid.) Wynter and Gilroy emphasise the importance of dance and rhythm as a different expression of power, agency and a link to the realm of the spirits. It opens up a way to transcend static conceptions of the human and rhythmically move beyond stereotypical representations of black people within historic accounts and beyond that the displacement as the ultimate other within a humanist mindset.

Within this understanding of dance and rhythm as a form of expressing life and power, Inkle witnesses a masquerade on his plantation and unwittingly establishes a connection to the beginnings of Jonkonnu performance. He observes his enslaved and remains ignorant of its function:

> The music, though muted, was a haunting bel-canto. It drew me outside and I noticed that the slaves wore masks and were in the act of performing a play. […] It was a most amusing spectacle in which all those of us significant in the day-to-day running of plantation life were being caricatured. (*Inkle and Yarico* 132)

Wynter argues that the Jonkonnu performance proves how the enslaved undermined the plantation logic. She makes a distinction between the ideology of the plantation and the ideology of the provision ground. Whereas the former contains that the "plantation was the property of the master:

mere land; as the slave was the property of the master; mere labour", the latter shows how the enslaved "would remain based on man's relation to the Earth, which linked a man to his community" ("Jonkonnu" 37). The Jonkonnu performances then was developed as an ideology of the provision ground, undermining and challenging the plantation economy and its processes of dehumanisation. Inkle, although his ignorance prevents him from understanding the form of resistance related to the performance, senses that there is a sinister meaning behind his enslaved caricatures of their masters and overseers: "I, relieved to see the happy smiles on their faces, now free of the hideous masks, left them to their clowning." (*Inkle and Yarico* 132) As soon as the masks are gone, Inkle is reassured of the hierarchy of his plantation. He is again free to dismiss their dance as mere "clowning" which only stresses the reversal of power relations reminiscent of Yarico's power over him. Wilson asserts that "[t]his cultural unintelligibility (to whites) […] was a valued feature of the counterpoint of enslaved autonomy and memory." (53-54) The performance parodies the role of the planter and his claim to exclusive power. It is a strong expression of resistance which is made possible within the system of enslavement and is evidence for black people's humanness, contradicting their status as property within the plantation system. Within the context of plantation slavery, the masquerade re-establishes a link with the earth and therefore the power of life as well as with another conception of the human in order to contrast the enslaved status as mere objects and non-humans. While, it recalls the powerful dance performed by Paiuda and Yarico and their sense of power in relation with the earth, the rhythm and African ancestry, the dance on the planation predominantly undermines colonial and racial hierarchies. What is more, the dance also challenges processes of dehumanisation that are integral to the plantation system.

Miss Gatha in *The Hills of Hebron* and *Maskarade* similarly embodies the power of the earth and with it a different conception of justice. Wynter draws a direct link between both Gathas and states that "[o]riginally the Miss Gatha character of the play had been imagined in the same terms as she had originally been in my novel *The Hills of Hebron*" (Wynter qtd. in Brewster 21). As a character she implements a non-western sense of justice in both works and transcends genre boundaries. Hereby, Gatha challenges a colonial and western system of justice that does not include black people in the extreme form of enslaved and more subconsciously within a humanist frame of dividing people into humans and non-humans after the abolition of slavery. The representation of Gatha as a force of justice resonates with Jones' statement in court in which she openly addresses the inequality of a United States legal system that continues to displace black people and particularly black women as the ultimate other of American society (see "[Black] Women" 7). Gatha and her alternative sense of justice offers a response to this unequal treatment by subverting

the very structures that created the western justice system and was based on black people's dehumanisation. In *The Hills of Hebron* and *Maskarade* Gatha represents, according to Wynter, "the major conception of Mother Earth and of the conception of justice, which is fundamentally different from that of the West's legalistic conception." (ibid.)[67] Both Gatha's represent a form of justice outside the official colonial, legal system the play and novel are set in. Natural imagery in both works emphasises how Gatha is stylised as "Mother Earth", standing for a different conception of the human — one that is inspired by Caribbean folklore, nature and black female agency. This interrelation intensifies how Gatha undermines not only a western sense of justice but also disrupts the humanist conception of Man.

Gatha's first appearance in *The Hills of Hebron* highlights her powerful standing within the community. It is the element of the earth that emphasises her ancient power: "She was like a gnarled and knotted tree-trunk in a forest of saplings." (8) The simile of the tree trunk characterises her as old and wise. In contrast to Miss Gatha, the community is depicted as a young and inexperienced "forest of saplings". The tree stands symbolically for Gatha's continuance and its age proves that she airs a sense of resistance and survival skill. This is underlined by another simile of "her face like granite" (11). Her conflict with Obadiah about revealing Rose's pregnancy is underlined by the differing elements both are associated with. Whereas Gatha represents the earth, Obadiah is associated with water: "his body flowed like water […] A perpetual self-doubt lurked in his eyes." (9). Unlike stone, rivers are more erratic and volatile. They are affected by changes in the weather and natural catastrophes such as droughts and hurricanes. Contrasting Obadiah's insecurity, Miss Gatha and all her demeanour represent strength, wisdom and power, but most importantly she offers the community continuity and a form of justice. She undermines Obadiah's eldership in using the very patriarchal structures against him, which ought to keep the women in place. Confronting Obadiah with his lack of control over his wife, she exposes him as weak and uses her role as a mother to gain power over the community. Her missing display of emotions or sympathy for Rose's situation contrasts western concepts of femininity and defies gender categories. Gatha's representation here resonates with Wynter's own "reluctance to be identified as a *feminist* intellectual" (Barnes 36; added emphasis). Gatha's power in this sense is expressed as the force of nature rather than a feminist power or intervention: "A shiver ran through the congregation. From amused spectators, they had become the accused. Miss Gatha was the prosecutor, and behind her

[67] Wynter makes a similar statement in the interview with David Scott. She says that Miss Gatha represents "the African conception of the earth as a powerful sanction system, of an alternative sense of justice." ("The Re-enchantment" 163)

the awful visage of God the Judge menaced their confidence." (14) Gatha represents a link between the community and divine justice, appearing as the judging entity who exposes Rose's pregnancy, which ultimately leads to Obadiah's withdrawal as elder. What is more, the scene resembles that of a play with Gatha on stage enacting her power over the congregation, who in turn are the spectators, further emphasising the link between Gatha in *The Hills of Hebron* and in *Maskarade*. Here, Gatha's position at centre stage within the community gathering recalls the fact that the novel itself had first been envisioned as a play (see Barker Josephs 46). Gatha herself steps in to be elder and offers an alternative to the patriarchal structures in Hebron. While she initially takes on the role of community leader in order to secure the place for her son, she evolves as the community's successful elder herself during the troubling times of the natural catastrophe.[68] What is more, Gatha defies gender categories, underlining how she does not only confront displacement as a woman, but also racial forms of oppression.

In *Maskarade*, Gatha's link to nature and particularly the earth is expressed in her dance as well as her role as the executioner in the Jonkonnu performance that is staged within *Maskarade* (see Boyce-Davies "*Maskarade*" 216). Initially, she is removed as the Jonkonnu Queen in favour of the much younger Quasheba, whom her former partner Driver is in love with. Comparable to her role as elder in *The Hills of Hebron*, Gatha then transcends her role as former queen and in fact appears as the male disguised executioner, challenging Caribbean patriarchal and gendered structures (cf. Barnes 41). Her role connects all performances with one another as her decision to hand the axe to Cuffie results in his and Drivers death. The rhythm of the play adds a performative element in expressing an alternative concept of the human when compared to the novel. As the force of the earth, which enacts justice, Gatha forms a link between the Jonkonnu performance inside the play and the play itself. In fact, it is Gatha who decides who should live and who should die, as two main characters kill each other after her interference. She represent "the old Law", as Lovey's calls it: "the other face that hid / Behind our maskarade!" (105). By dissolving gender categories, Gatha in fact exposes how "gender difference was not part of the constitutive makeup of European colonialism and white supremacy." (Barnes 41) Rather, she recalls what Gilroy calls an "atavistic humanity", expressing a concept of the human that had existed before colonisation (*Leaves* 46). In

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[68] Liddell argues that the role of leader and mother are both intertwined within her character. She further states that being a mother drives Gatha towards her role as leader and "becomes the prime motivation for everything else in her life" (323). What is more, "[e]ven with community acknowledgment, acceptance and approval of her more 'masculine' leadership attributes, Gatha […] never attempts to escape or even to obvert this most sacred of women-roles." (ibid.) Liddell further notes that Gatha still undermines patriarchal structures, as she evolves as the leader of the community, undermining "[t]he prevailing attitude in Hebron […] that women have their particular place and roles in society and should keep them." (ibid.)

this regard, Gatha's dance recalls the mythical elements of ritual dances as part of African folklore and its connection with the earth, as Lovey's and Boy's portrayal of her dance shows:

> Lovey: […]
> The fact that Life keep back
> Was that when Gatha step her step
> One step forward, two steps back
> It's Earth herself that dance that step.
> The Living Law that make man man
> That embody in her flesh! Rhythm
> It's commandment
> In the pattern of her step!
> *The BOY joins him, clapping rhythmically.* (*Maskarade* 102)

Earth itself is depicted as a female agent here, resonating with Wynter's statement of imagining Gatha as Mother Earth. What is more, it recalls the role of dance as an expression of power and creation, as Gatha builds a union with the earth, its rhythms and the creation of life itself. The rhythm in the passage above further characterised by the stage directions state: "*The pattern is that of a calypsonian like Chalkdust who uses the calypso form to put across complex ideas*."[69] (ibid.) The Calypso as a rhythmic form of expression not only highlights the role and importance of female Calypsonian dancers in the Caribbean whose "contribution remains relatively underrecognized", but also heightens the role of Gatha as a force of creation and judgement (Hughes-Tafen 49). As performers Calypsonians have "absolute control over how the song is performed" (50). The Calypsonian beat connected to Gatha's portrayal underlines how she is fact the driving force behind the plot. Her role also resonates with elements of the epic theatre as she adds a third level of intervention to the Jonkonnu performance which is staged inside *Maskarade*. Gatha's intervention is described in the stage directions, emphasising her agency as a force who shapes the outcome of the play rather than a mere character that develops along the structures of the plot: "*The Executioner moves forward, stamps the long-handled axe on the ground before CUFFIE*." (*Maskarade* 116) It is only after the death of Driver and Cuffie that Gatha reveals her true identity, as the executioner: "I write a different end / To a different play." (117) Gatha appears almost as a dea ex machina, who resides over the life and death of the people that surround her and who have disregarded her as unimportant. Gatha embodies the force of the earth and is the link between an African belief system and the Caribbean performance. She connects both worlds and represents a justice system that

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[69] Wynter refers to the Calypsonian Hollis Liverpool here, "whose stage-name is Chalkdust because he is a school-teacher" (Patton 60-61). His performances were seen "as the 'true' or 'authentic' voice of the heritage of calypso" (71). Michel Toussaint emphasises why the musical form of Calypso is integral to the Caribbean: "The calypso is one of the most social musical art forms and, through its own adjustment and transformation, highlights the changing modalities of the societies of the English-speaking Caribbean." (137)

exists outside the humanist systems and its norms and values. Gatha's role on a structural level also shows how Wynter mingles epic elements within her play with indigenous aspects, creating a new way to approach the Jonkonnu performance.

Wynter's different approach to her play as a form of resisting and challenging a humanist, bourgeois conception of the human is further underlined by the role of the chorus, particularly at the beginning and the end of the play. The dramatic chorus formed by Lovey and Boy raise the importance of creating a new concept of the human through their joint song. They highlight that historically there has always been a conception of the human that existed alongside Man and support Gatha's representation of an atavistic humanity. The rhythm of Lovey's and Boy's speech underlines how they confront black people's displacement, again associating rhythm and circularity with a strategy to undermine processes of dehumanisation and in this case also the displacement of black people within historic accounts. What appears to be a dialogue between Lovey and Boy is instead a song with two alternating singers and expresses a strong sense of togetherness as their speech is turned into one element. This is underlined by constant enjambments and the role of sound that emphasises their alternations: "*As he [Boy] narrated, a new dubbing theme, different from Lovey's, accompanies. Lovey's dub and the Boy's dub will counterpoint.*" (27) A comparative reading of the beginning and the ending of the play shows how a form of circularity and continuity structure the play, thus critiquing humanism and its concept of the human:

Boy: Not a damn!
The tale we going to tell
Trace its pedigree
Way back from when
Lovey: The first line trace
On the first rock face.
Boy: The first tool make!
Lovey: The first mask dance
The first drum beat.
Boy: Long before Sumer
Egypt or Crete
Long before Babylon
Genesis or Greece!
Lovey: Long before then!
With the first tale
That man tell of himself! (28-29)

Lovey and Boy trace the history of the human, its lineage and ancestry. They link the story they are about to tell with the beginnings of humanness as the "first line", the "first tool" and the "first mask dance" indicate. The tale they narrate traces the beginnings of humans and its origins are placed

before everything that would be considered early civilisations. They strongly recall Wynter's account of the "Blombos Cave" here, as evidence for the Third Event of human history in Africa. What is more, Boy and Lovey value orality as a form of cultural output and evidence for culture, emphasising a different genre of the human and a different origin story of how the concept of the human came into being. Lovey and Boy highlight the concept of togetherness and unity and its importance for a continued passing on of this heritage:

Boy: And it's our task now
To carry on
Lovey: That first invent
That man invent.
Boy: Himself! Herself! Ourself!
Lovey: So that the separate flesh
Could feel as one
Could live as one
Could share as one.
Boy: Once nature stop.
Lovey: And history begin! (29)

Lovey and Boy emphasise the notion of an invention of humanness, a concept that is created and not singularly of biological origin. Addressing nature and history, they counterpose various aspects of human nature, while at the same time highlighting the aspect of unity. The creation of a conception of the human is portrayed as a process passed on through time, here. This is a constant struggle, a mixture of individuality and togetherness and nature and history, or in Wynter's terms *bios* and *mythoi*. The folkloric story-tellers Lovey and Boy represented here, re-evaluate what it means to be human, resonating with Jones' concept of togetherness. Their alternating speech and their emphasis on unity also relate to Gilroy's understanding of unorthodoxy as both disrupt standards of dialogue and rather represent orality and heritage as their expression of authenticity:

Boy: Jonkunnu play over?
Jonkunnu play just begun!
And its my turn now
To carry on
The maskarade that first began
In Africa with
The birth of Man!
[…]
Till we reinvent
A lineage
New, of man!
Till we reinvent the first invent
That we invent!
Chorus: Ourself! (120-121)

Boy now takes over the role as story teller, as Lovey passes on his role to his apprentice. The continuity of oral forms of narrating history is underlined and secures the survival of folkloric culture into the next generation. The parallels with the beginning are strongly noticeable as both focus on the creation of being and the invention of the human as a concept. Boy repeats Lovey's main message of the beginning of the play, emphasising its circularity, but adds slight changes, focussing on a constant process of change within the concept of the human. Africa is openly positioned as the origin of the conception of the human, which is passed down through generations. Being human here is not a concept grounded in western thought and humanism, but "invented" in Africa. In contrast to the beginning there is also a stronger focus on action and the possibility of intervention while heightening the aspect of togetherness by using the plural pronoun "we". The chorus answers Boy's exclamation with "Ourself!". This one word exclamation lends a new meaning to Boy's song. The term "invent" means various things here: the invention of their communal subjectivity, as well as the original invention of the conception of the human in their own terms. Also, there is a circular structure to the creation of a concept of the human: "Till we reinvent the first invent / That we invent / Ourself!". Looking at the statement without the change of characters, the alternating voices stress that the creation of the concept of the human is in constant change, that it is not a static and fixed concept but that it is fluid and always changing. Their passing on of the story can still change the "first invent" while changing themselves in the present. Boundaries between time blur, emphasising the importance of keeping an oral tradition of storytelling alive. Also, the alternative approach to history highlights the subject positions of the characters and the story tellers as well as of the ancestors and of future descendants. Lovey's and Boy's dialogue shows how the concept of the human joins the past, the present and the future together. They undermine humanism's universal assumption that Man is the ideal human. Rather, there are different genres of the human expressed by the Jonkonnu performance, which ends with emphasising the process connected to rewriting history and imagining a new human:

> Boy: Maskarade play over?
> Chorus: Maskarade play just begun! (122)

At the very end of the play, Boy and the chorus emphasise the continuity of life itself reflected by the Jonkonnu performance. Performance, as in dance, rhythm and music as well as the origin within African folklore, represents a conception of the human which contrasts humanism's ideal of Man. All three works discussed here imagine new forms of being human through a reconnection with an African ancestry, searching for a distinct Caribbean and African answer to the question of what it

means to be human. Also, the aspect of black female agency is central and key to representing the power of the earth and life itself as Yarico's dance and Gatha's interventions highlight. Both female character, thus, strongly contrast the reduction of black women to their reproductive functions within plantation slavery. Wynter and Gilroy use natural imagery, the expression of dance and the importance of a different form of justice in order to express this new image of the human, while also emphasising that their vision is in a constant process of change, never stopping and always in motion. Hereby, they challenge the static and strict conception of the human as Man, which is in itself a static representation of only one possible answer to the question of what it means to be human.

6. Conclusion: Transnational Black Female Perspectives on the Human

> This is the land where I suffered mouth-in-the-dust and the lash.
> I rode the length of all its rivers.
> Under its sun I planted seeds, brought in the crops,
> but never ate those harvests.
> A slave barracks was my house,
> built with stones that I hauled myself,
> while I sang to the pure beat of native birds.
>
> […]
>
> Now I exist: only today do we own, do we create.
> Nothing is foreign to us.
> The land is ours.
> Ours the sea and the sky,
> the magic and the vision. (Morejón "Black Woman" 201-203)

> I have been happy
> being me:
> an African
> a woman
> and a writer.
> Just take your racism
> your sexism
> your pragmatism
> off me; (Aidoo "Angry Letter" 25)

> What is the Martinican?
> — A plant human.
> Like a plant, he abandons himself to the rhythm of universal life. (Césaire "Malaise" 30)

The voices of Nancy Morejón (1944-), Cuban poet, editor and essayist, Ama Ata Aidoo (1942-), Ghanaian politician and author and Suzanne Césaire (1915-1966), anti-colonial activist, author and teacher, speak for a wide range of black female intellectuals whose work is an intervention into the question of what it means to be human. The three glimpses into their works are meant to emphasise how they implicitly relate to Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's ideas. Morejón's poem focusses on the history of colonialism in the Caribbean. It traces the aftermath of the middle passage, enslavement and plantation slavery, but predominantly focusses on black female agency. The poem revolves around a holistic expression of existence including natural elements, spirituality and the cycle of life itself. The voice of the poem disrupts the ongoing forms of systemic and racial violence through the use of natural imagery that in turn expresses resistance and a different concept of the human. Ama

Ata Aidoo reflects on her self-concept of being an African woman and similarly to Morejón emphasises a powerful black female voice. Using the temporal construction of "I have been happy" the lyrical persona goes back to the past, but shows the lasting impact on the present, implying that she has been happy the whole time. She subverts the displacement and victimisation of black women and presents a strong black female voice who expresses her anger and resistance towards various forms of oppression. Her anticlimactic enumeration literally forms a distance between her own conception of the human as an African woman and the conception she encounters as Man. Césaire directly challenges Man by formulating a new concept altogether: "A plant human" — which appears to be a paradox within humanist terms, but embodies in fact a new and unique perspective on defining the human relationally in harmony with his/her/its environment. All three extracts resonate with Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creation of new concepts of the human in black female Caribbean terms. The dissolving of racial categories and binary structures is central to their academic and creative endeavours. They transcend racial, patriarchal and colonial boundaries, they challenge processes of dehumanisation and they offer their own versions of black people's histories. What these black female intellectuals achieve is to disrupt Man's conception of the human while at the same time developing unique, diverse and alternative conceptions of the human in which multiple genres of humans can in fact exist alongside each other.

All of these intellectuals stand exemplary for a whole generation of black female thinkers whose work has largely been disregarded within western academic discourses. Morejón's, Aidoo's and Césaire's works show that Gilroy, Jones and Wynter are by no means the only examples of black women who contest, discuss and transcend humanism's concept of Man. Moreover, their perspectives open up a transnational and multilingual critique of the dominant concept of the human and underline how the question of what it means to be human is not confined to the anglophone Caribbean but rather connects the works of black female thinkers across various boundaries may they be of a geographical, a linguistic or a cultural nature. A transnational analysis of Gilroy's, Jones's and Wynter's work could further elaborate on how black women across various disciplines collectively intervene within a discourse on the human. Their interventions resonate with Jones' concept togetherness through which she imagines to dissolve the dominant binary hierarchies between Man and other concepts of humanness (see "Future" 19). Combined with Gilroy's approach to unorthodoxy as a way to reconnect with a Caribbean and African ancestry and conception of the human as well as with Wynter's concept of different genres of the human, all these black female intellectuals show reoccurring patterns and strategies as reactions to shared marginalising experiences. Their work, which communicates with each other across temporal and

spatial difference, shows that universal human values can indeed be identified but must be freed from an exclusivist western humanist perspective which shows prejudice based on difference within race, class and gender.

While this dissertation discusses a wide range of texts written by Gilroy, Jones and Wynter, it is by no means an exhaustive analysis of their works. Gilroy's compilation of poetry entitled *Echoes and Voices* (1991) comprises over thirty poems that engage with the Caribbean, the human, racism and black people's voices. Wynter's essays are another entry to further follow her critique of humanism, but also her poem "Malcom X" (1965) is a little regarded literary examination of Malcom X's life, which engages with the role of the Caribbean and the history of enslavement in relation to his killing. Jones' essays and poems include many more examples that emphasise the importance of her intersectional and political critique of racial structures in the western world, but also her poetry further discusses the role of memory, pain and hope. Two examples would be "There Are Some Things One Always Remembers" (1958) and "Clay Sculpture" (1955). All these texts are testimony to the fact that this dissertation can be seen as one intervention that can and should be followed by many more. Morejón, Aidoo and Césaire further show that black female intellectual thought transcends linguistic and geographical boundaries. What is more, analyses of works by these different intellectuals can transform the way comparative literature is approached. A joint reading of their work undermines a classic form of comparative reading, which is often thought of as "asymmetrical empowerment: Europe and its other; the West and the rest" (Stam & Shohat 473). However, this study and the possibility of reading Morejón, Aidoo and Césaire dialogically with Gilroy, Jones and Wynter shows that neither of these women writers is established "as original [or] as copy" (ibid.). All these women, within their works and lives, attempt to overcome such binary distinctions and therefore also call for a change within literary studies in order to adequately approach their texts. Thus, taking their works seriously entails to at least expose the implicit structures of a humanist binary system, upon which literary studies is grounded as well as to question and to challenge the established discourses within Post- and Decolonial Studies, Diaspora Studies and Caribbean Studies.

The main intervention of this study is to provide such a dialogical reading of Gilroy's, Jones and Wynter's work while focussing on each unique individual approach to their critique of humanism and to their alternative conceptions of the human. A pluralistic reading of their critiques theoretically frames the analyses chapters. While all three denounce the universal representation of Man as the ideal human, they follow very different approaches to their critiques. Wynter proposes to cause a rupture similar to that caused by Renaissance humanists which displaced the scholastic

order of Christianity. She argues that Caribbean intellectuals are part of a literary mode of revolt that dissolves humanism's universal claims as well as racial and patriarchal ideologies. She engages with the potential of an external view of Caribbean intellectuals, who can redefine their marginal position and racial displacement as a means to counter humanist ideologies and whose work conceptualises and envisions a new "hybrid" human (Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). While Wynter engages with the question of what it means to be human from a highly philosophical angle, Jones critiques humanism's racial and patriarchal structures from a political, activist point of view. Having been confronted with Jim Crow policies and segregation laws in the United States, she connects a Marxist approach with a critique of structural racism. She does not name humanism as a concept, but thoroughly engages with its underlying sub-concepts and addresses the social structures that divide humans according to bourgeois hierarchies into humans, lesser humans and non-humans. She particularly challenges the capitalist system as a system that has been profiting from the dehumanisation and oppression of black people. Within this context, she uses an intersectional reading to expose how black women are triply displaced through the categories race, class and gender. Gilroy's emphasis lies on a personal critique of humanism that is informed by her autobiographical writing. She exposes a historic trajectory of violence and portrays her own experience with racism and how it has influenced her creative writing. She puts a particular focus on the emotional conflicts that are created through racial and patriarchal paradigms while constantly revisiting her Caribbean heritage. Within their fictional and non-fictional works, all three intellectuals, despite choosing very different focal points, still arrive at a similar conclusion. They are not part of the current predominant conception of the human and therefore set out to develop their own answers to the question of what it means to be human because they are constantly being confronted with structural racism and processes of dehumanisation. Their critiques of humanism call for a critical engagement with the method close reading as a literary approach that was largely developed within a European humanist tradition. A critique of close reading's involvement within humanist traditions elaborates on the question of how blackness can be represented within literature. Wilderson's critique of the narrative absence of blackness, as well as Hartman's approach of critical fabulation underlines how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work has to address their own displacement while at the same time engaging with a rewriting of history that enables them to express their own accounts of black representations within the history of colonisation and the black diaspora.

Overall, particularly their literary works semantically and structurally reflect Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's resistance against Man and embody their alternative concepts of the human. There is a

blurring of boundaries between genre categories, between the authors' and their characters' and lyrical persona's voices, their use of rhythm, circularity, natural elements, music and masks — all these themes underline and express alternative answers to the question of what it means to be human and connect Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work *rhythmically* (see McKittrick, O'Shaughnessy and Witaszek 870). Their works' similar literary expressions emphasise the potential of literature as a means of redefining and rethinking the human. The analyses chapters elaborate on how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's creative works express Caribbean literary interventions into a discourse on the human. They delineate three main emphases: chapter three elaborates on how the three intellectuals expose connections between humanist ideologies and anti-black thought. They discuss black people's displacement, exposure to anti-black violence and how racism is structurally embedded within societies. Following their critique of racial and patriarchal paradigms, chapter four examines how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's rewrite the history of black people's displacement. They offer alternative representations of black people that counter black absences within historic accounts and underline the epistemic intervention of their own works; finally, chapter five analyses how Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's alternative concepts of being human are embedded within their writings. Gilroy and Jones develop new concepts in order to address the question of what it means to be human and they envision a different future. Wynter's and Gilroy's work further emphasises how they incorporate Caribbean and African perspectives on the human.

The first analysis chapter discusses the relevance for Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's redefinition of the human and engages with historic trajectories of racism and systemic violence. Spanning a temporal frame from the beginnings of colonisation, planation slavery, the experience of migration and the black diaspora, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter expose racial structures and how these influence the overall conception of being human. A particular emphasis lies on how anti-black violence is a structural element of society securing white hegemony and racial hierarchies. Their work resonates here with leading scholars within Afro-pessimism. Frank Wilderson addresses the movement of humanism in relation to the impossibility of *being* black and Saidiya Hartman elaborates on how black people are exposed to open violence. Beginning with how systemic racial violence causes the disruption of familial bonds, Gilroy, Jones and Wynter engage with the role of brutality, violence and loss and how anti-black violence permeates society. What is more, particularly Gilroy and Jones highlight the need for a transnational perspective on racism within the black diaspora. Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's work critiques how a humanist and simultaneously anti-black ideology continues to exists and to stay deeply embedded in the societies they live in. At the same time they

also subvert the very structures that ensure their displacement. Gilroy transcends classic colonial power relations in *Inkle and Yarico*, Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* focusses on black women's exposure to sexual violence and Jones' poem deals with Emmet Till's lynching and the acquittal of his murderers. What all three works equally share is that they emphasise the disruptive power of black responses to violence. Moreover, Gilroy's and Jones' autobiographical writings underline how both personally experienced open forms of racism. Jones traces what she calls a form of "semi-slavery" (Jones *Beyond* 62) and Gilroy engages with her experience of "subliminal racism" (see Gilroy qtd. in Bradshaw 390-391). While Jones' intersectional approach comments on her family's experience as a means to address the wider framework of anti-black structures, Gilroy's examination concentrates on her personal confrontations with stereotypical representations of black people in Great Britain.

Already hinting at the historical framework within Gilroy's, Jones' and Wynter's critique of anti-black violence and systemic racism as a means to secure Man's hegemonic claims, chapter four puts particular emphasis on the role of black people's narratives, accounts and voices within the history of colonisation, enslavements and the black diaspora. Overall, their work offers a historical critique of black people's displacement while at the same time formulating alternative accounts of historic events. All three choose alternative methods to narrate history and reject western history's emphasis on sources and archival work: there is a dominant presence of non-human agents such as natural forces and cultural artefacts who reconnect the intellectuals' characters and lyrical personas with their past and ancestry. The natural realm opens up an alternative approach to addressing historic events. In this context, nature offers a link to memory and often discusses the past of the enslavement of African peoples, the middle passage and plantation slavery on the semantic meta-level of the texts. The three intellectuals recall black people's displacement and at the same time offer a way of empowering their characters and lyrical personas. Jones revisits her experience of deportation through the imagery of the Atlantic, wich offers an expression of new possibilities and a new beginning; Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* uses non-human agents in order to represent a black historic experience, and Gilroy's character Tyrone discovers family heirlooms that lead to the discovery of his family's entanglement within colonial history. Liminal characters offer another perspective on Gilroy's and Wynter's literary intervention and underline the importance of their own re-definition of their marginalised positions as a source of creativity. The three male characters Inkle, Isaac and Tyrone all fail to escape their liminal status because of their negative associations with difference and binaries. Their continued conflict with manhood reveals how they keep being imprisoned within a humanist mindset and are unable to escape the racial and patriarchal structures

that ensure their displacement. They erroneously concede that liminality is a defect, which underlines how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter themselves choose a different path by interpreting their own liminal positions as a form and source of creativity. Finally, the focus of their rewriting of history is on accounts of resistance. All three intellectuals assert that black female voices have been resisting their absence within history and their silencing for as long as they have been displaced. Gilroy engages with black female accounts of mutiny aboard slave ships and re-narrates Yarico's enslavement as an act of resistance when she kills her son. Wynter concentrates on the heritage of Marronage in Jamaica and Jones focusses on black female political activism that confronts Jim Crow laws and segregation in the United States.

Finally, chapter five focusses on how Gilroy, Jones and Wynter not only critique humanism and offer black responses to history but rather how their works constantly conceptualise new forms of being human. Each intellectual chooses a different approach to express alternative concepts of the human resonating with Wynter's concept of hybrid humans and their various genres (see Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). Jones and Gilroy use a different set of concepts — togetherness and unorthodoxy — to address the question of what it means to be human. Both concepts dissolve boundaries through different techniques that emphasise the importance of community and communication. Jones focusses on a joint unity of political activists and Gilroy reconnects her work with a Caribbean heritage that continues to influence her writing. Wynter, and to some extent also Gilroy, puts particular emphasis on African and Caribbean cultural expressions. Both depict a holistic, harmonic circle of life that contrasts humanism's perpetuation of systemic violence and racism. A rethinking of the concept time and the role of African and Caribbean folklore in the form of spirits, dance and masks represents a new concept of the human in Wynter's *The Hills of Hebron* and *Maskarade*, as well as Gilroy's *Inkle and Yarico*. The focus is on the representation of a holistic world view that is established particularly by female characters and their link to community life, natural surroundings, ancestral history and spirituality. Drawing upon an indigenous knowledge system rather than on humanist ideologies and values, Kate, Gatha and Yarico establish a circle of life that contrasts humanism's ongoing perpetuation of anti-black violence and dehumanisation. Wynter's and Gilroy's works in this context create an alternative draft of black life and black responses to the history of colonisation and displacement by blurring the boundaries between the living and the dead, by creating a strong sense of community and by offering strategies that outgrow and transcend humanism's structural racism. The role of the Jonkonnu dance in this context adds another performative level of resistance and disrupts the western conception and discourse of Man. Both intellectuals value conceptions of the human that existed before European colonial influences

and reinterpret the strength of an atavistic humanity. What Gilroy, Jones and Wynter share is that all three challenge Man and their own displacement as black female Caribbean intellectuals through their distinct, external perspectives. They outgrow their displacement through their unique conceptions of the human which accept differences as strength and as a source of creativity that denounces binary distinctions.

The starting point to this study is exposing anti-black violence that permeates modern western societies. The acronym N.H.I. — No Humans Involved — reveals how human beings have been and continue to be systematically excluded from the western conception of Man based on their race. Gilroy, Jones and Wynter show how historically this acronym can be traced back towards the movement of humanism and its complicity with colonisation and black people's continued exposure to epistemic violence and racism. All three intellectuals use diverse approaches to address black people's dehumanisation and their own role within the western humanist system of displacement. This study has shown that their work in this context is a Caribbean literary intervention into a discourse on the human and develops new and alternative concept of defining what it means to be human from a black female Caribbean perspective. Gilroy, Jones and Wynter systematically undermine the humanist representation of Man and emphasise black resistance, black responses to it and the need to raise their own black voices in the face of colonial and patriarchal structures. All three are joined through their varied conceptions of the human, which should be understood as part of an ongoing process of change. Within this context this study offers an in-depth analysis of their joint literary interventions that should be followed by more works that engage with black female intellectual thought. As it is Wynter who introduces this study, Gilroy and Jones should have the last words. Instead of focussing on endings, both quotes express hopes for a new beginning and their beliefs in a different future:

> But most of all when turning 'round by hand this property
> I turn the lock on all mankind's recorded history
> For here lies proof supremely clear that bold humanity
> Can storm all doors through toil and will — if they but see! (Jones "Clay Sculpture" 191)

> Changing Times!
> Turning mystery to magic
> Magic to pathos
> Pathos into man-made years.
> Darkness — all earth is still.
> And then
> Green is new again! (Gilroy "Changing Tunes" 36)

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8. Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Caribbean Literary Interventions:
Critiques of Humanism
in the Works of Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones and Sylvia Wynter

> You may have heard a radio news report which aired briefly during the days after the jury's acquittal of the policemen in the Rodney King beating case. The report stated that public officials of the judicial system of Los Angeles routinely used the acronym N.H.I. to refer to any case involving a breach of the rights of young black males who belong to the jobless category of the inner city ghettoes. N.H.I. means 'no humans involved.'
> (Wynter "Open Letter" 42)

Mehr als zwanzig Jahre nachdem Rodney King Opfer von Polizeigewalt in den Vereinigten Staaten wurde, gab es immer wieder Fälle, in denen schwarze Menschen systemischer und rassistischer Gewalt ausgesetzt waren und sind. Hierzu zählen unter anderem Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Sandra Bland und Philando Castile, die allesamt durch Polizeigewalt oder in Polizeigewahrsam getötet wurden (siehe Lockhart). Nach dem Tod von Trayvon Martin im Jahr 2012 und dem folgenden Freispruch des Polizeibeamten der ihn erschossen hatte, wurde die *Black Lives Matter* Bewegung angestoßen, die sich seit dem für die Rechte von schwarzen Menschen und gegen deren Entmenschlichung einsetzt. Auf ihrer Homepage schreiben die Gründer_innen: "We affirm our humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression." (Black Lives Matter) In diesem Zusammenhang reiht sich das von Sylvia Wynter benutzte Akronym N.H.I. in ihrem Brief "An Open Letter To My Colleagues" als Beweis für die epistemischen Prozesse der Entmenschlichung und einen offenen strukturellen Rassismus innerhalb des amerikanischen Justizsystems ein. Die *Black Lives Matter* Bewegung zeigt, dass selbst zwanzig Jahre nach der Veröffentlichung des Briefes immer noch die Notwendigkeit besteht, der Entmenschlichung von schwarzen Menschen entgegenzutreten. Die Bewegung zeigt außerdem, dass die Frage nach der Definition von Menschsein immer noch beantwortet werden muss. Nicht nur werden schwarze Menschen erheblich öfter in den Vereinigen Staaten umgebracht, sondern es bleiben auch legale Konsequenzen für die Tötungen aus und es zeigen sich zum Teil heftige Gegenreaktionen auf Twitter (hier vor allem #BlueLivesMatter und #AllLivesMatter). Dies legt nahe, dass das Konzept des Menschseins in den Vereinigen Staaten strukturellen Rassismus begünstigt. Es scheint als würden hier verschiedene Konzeption des Menschen gegenübertreten, die eine Einteilung aufgrund von Rassenunterschieden vornehmen. Wynter spricht diese Unterschiede in ihrem Brief an und untersucht die historischen, sozialen und rassistischen Strukturen die hinter

dem Akronym N.H.I. stehen. Sie verfolgt die Anfänge des europäischen Humanismus zurück bis ins 14. und 15. Jahrhundert, sowie in die Geschichte der Kolonialisierung und dessen Auswirkungen. In diesem Zusammenhang betont sie insbesondere wie das Konzept *race* als Kennzeichnung für unterschiedliche Kategorien des Menschseins funktionalisiert wurde. Sie unterscheidet zwischen dem Menschen der als "[w]hite, of Euroamerican culture and descent, middle class, college-educated and suburban" repräsentiert wird und den sie *Man* nennt und dessen entmenschlichtem schwarzem Gegenentwurf, ausgedrückt als: "[T]he *Lack* of the human". (Wynter "Open Letter" 43; original emphasis). Statt auf der Ebene einer Kritik an Polizeigewalt zu verweilen, deckt Wynter auf, dass die Gewalt nur ein Symptom des eigentlichen Problems darstellt. Sie betont, dass die Hierarchien die dem Menschenbild zu Grunde liegen innerhalb des europäischen Humanismus entwickelt wurden und im gleichen Zuge die Entmenschlichung von Schwarzen nutzen, um das eigene Selbstbild, und vor allem die eigene Überlegenheit, zu legitimieren. Aus diesem Grund ist es laut Wynter notwendig, Humanismus neu zu denken und in kritischer Weise in Beziehung zur kolonialen Geschichte zu setzen. Hierbei möchte Wynter nicht humanistische Ideologien ablösen, sondern das fast schon sakrosankte Bild des weißen, westlichen Mannes hinterfragen und zeigen, dass die als universell dargestellten humanistischen Normen und Ideologien nur eine Möglichkeit von vielen sind, den Begriff des Menschen zu definieren.

An diese Problematik und Kritik am Begriff des weißen Mannes schließt die vorliegende Arbeit an. Die schwarzen, karibischen Intellektuellen Beryl Gilroy, Claudia Jones und Sylvia Wynter sind innerhalb ihres Lebens und ihrer Arbeit konstant mit Prozessen der Entmenschlichung und strukturellem Rassismus konfrontiert worden und hinterfragen und kritisieren die binären Strukturen die durch die Entwicklung des Humanismus entstanden sind und diesem Menschenbild zu Grunde liegen. Darüber hinaus entwickeln alle drei ausgeprägt karibische Gegenentwürfe zu *Man* innerhalb ihrer literarischen Texte, welche narrative, dramatische, poetische und autobiographische Arbeiten mit einschließen. Ihre Werke umfassen einen großen zeitlichen Rahmen, beginnend in den 1940er Jahren bis hin zu den frühen 2000er Jahren. Gilroy, Jones unter Wynter konzentrieren sich hier insbesondere auf eine Kritik des Ursprungs des Humanismus, den sie innerhalb kolonialer und rassistischer Strukturen und Ideologien sehen, welche sich bis in die heutige Zeit auswirken. Die historisch-kritische Lesart von Humanismus ermöglicht ihnen, die Universalität des Ansatzes zu hinterfragen und zu unterwandern, sowie die inhärenten ungleichen Hierarchien des Menschseins aufzudecken. Die Analyse der Kritik der drei Intellektuellen trägt dazu bei, eine große akademische Leerstelle zu füllen, da die Werke dieser Autorinnen in einem westlichen Diskurs zum Humanismus bisher ausgeschlossen worden sind. Innerhalb ihrer

fiktionalen und nicht-fiktionalen Texte, positionieren sich diese drei zu Konzepten die oft erst Jahre später, innerhalb eines post- und dekolonialen Diskurses, beachtet wurden. In diesem Zusammenhang ist diese Arbeit nicht nur eine Intervention innerhalb von Geschlechterungleichheiten, sondern zeigt auf, wie die Werke der drei Intellektuellen intersektional patriarchale, koloniale und rassistische Strukturen aufdecken und systematisch unterwandern. In diesem Zusammenhang sind die humanismuskritischen Texte von Gilroy, Jones und Wynter bisher nicht in Verbindung gebracht worden oder gemeinsam gelesen worden. Dies mag auch daran liegen, dass ihre Werke nicht einheitlich einem Diskurs zugeordnet werden können, sondern stattdessen thematisch verschiedene Diskurse ansprechen. Hierzu zählen unter anderem Diskurse des *Black Feminism*, *Post- and Decolonialism*, *Afropessimism* und der *Diaspora Studies*. Was ihre Arbeit eint ist, dass sie Diskursen zu Themen wie *white supremacy*, *race* und *dehumanization* oftmals vorausgehen, ohne später rezipiert worden zu sein. In diesem Zusammenhang antizipieren sie Konzepte die oftmals später mit männlichen Intellektuellen assoziiert wurden. Zwei Beispiele wären Edward Saids *Orientalism* (1978), oder Homi K. Bhabhas *The Location of Culture* (1994); zwei renommierten Werke von Autoren die einen post-kolonialen Diskurs intensiv geprägt haben. Claudia Jones' Essays "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!" (1949) und "The Caribbean Community in Britain" (1964) stellen bereits vor Said heraus, dass koloniale und binäre Strukturen innerhalb der westlichen Welt schwarze Menschen als unzivilisiert und rückständig betrachten. Außerdem hinterfragt sie die Akzeptant dieser Dichotomien und stellt fest, dass sie die amerikanische und britische Kultur prägen und unterwandern. Wynters Essay "Jonkonnu in Jamaica" (1967) wiederum zeigt, inwiefern sie Bhabha Konzept der hybridity antizipiert, indem sie sich mit jamaikanischen Tanzformen befasst, die sie als "*agent* and *product* of cultural process" beschreibt, welcher zugleich auch kolonialen Einflüssen ausgesetzt ist ("Jonkonnu" 34). Dadurch zeigt Wynter, dass kulturelle indigene Praktiken den Prozess der Kolonialisierung und Versklavung überlebt haben.

Ihre Interventionen innerhalb diverser Diskurse spiegeln sich auch innerhalb der Biographien von Gilroy, Jones und Wynter wider. Gilroy (1924-2001) war Romanautorin, Essayistin und Lyrikerin. Darüber hinaus promovierte sie in Psychologie und war die erste schwarze Schulleiterin in ganz London. Claudia Jones (1915-1964) war vor allem politisch aktiv und Mitglied in der Kommunistischen Partei Amerikas. Als erste schwarze Frau wurde sie für ihre politischen Überzeugungen unter McCarthy verurteilt, musste eine Haftstrafe absolvieren und wurde später nach London deportiert. Dort war sie Mitgründern des *London Carnival* und der *West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian-Caribbean News* (siehe Boyce-Davies *Left* 2 und 25). Sie schrieb vor allem

politische Essays, aber auch Gedichte, Tagebucheinträge und autobiographische Essays. Sylvia Wynters (1928-) akademische Texte beeinflussten eine karibische intellektuelle Tradition enorm. Neben ihren philosophischen Essays schrieb sie auch Romane und Dramen. Sie verfolgte eine akademische Karriere und war Dozentin an der *University of the West Indies* und später Professorin an der *Stanford University*.

Der Korpus dieser Arbeit verdeutlicht das Spektrum an Werken, die Gilroy, Jones und Wynter verfasst haben. Alle drei haben sowohl fiktionale und nicht-fiktionale Texte verfasst und dabei eine große Bandbreite von Genres abgedeckt. Sie haben politische und historische Essays geschrieben, Gedichte, Autobiographien, Romane und Dramen. Oftmals verschwimmen in diesem Zusammenhang die Grenzen zwischen analytischen und literarischen Texten und Elementen, sodass ihre literarischen Texte durch ihre analytischen beeinflusst sind und umgekehrt ebenso. In diesem Zusammenhang bilden ihre nicht-fiktionalen Texte den theoretischen Rahmen dieser Studie, wohingegen die Analysen sich mit den literarischen Texten auseinandersetzen. Die Analysen gliedern sich hierbei thematisch anhand von Konzepten, die alle drei Intellektuelle auf unterschiedliche Weisen beleuchten. Was sie gemeinsam haben ist jedoch, dass Gilroy, Jones und Wynter neue und alternative Konzepte des Menschseins entwickeln und sich so kreativ mit ihrer eigenen Marginalisierung und Entmenschlichung innerhalb eines westlich und humanistisch geprägten Systems auseinandersetzen.

Das zweite Kapitel beleuchtet die unterschiedlichen Ansätze der drei Intellektuellen und deren Positionalität als schwarze, weibliche, karibische Intellektuelle. Ihre Arbeit schließt sich hier Katherine McKittricks Kritik an einer "[i]mposed placelessness" und in diesem Zusammenhand der "negation of black humanity" an ("Rebellion/Invention/Groove" 82). Gilroys, Jones' und Wynters Kritik am Humanismus beleuchtet hierdurch, wie koloniale Prozesse die Verdinglichung von schwarzen Menschen systematisch vorangetrieben haben. Anstatt jedoch innerhalb einer Opferrolle zu verweilen, nutzen alle drei diese Form des "displacement" und die damit einhergehende Aussenseiterolle als Quelle für Kreativität, da sie sich dadurch außerhalb einer humanistischen Denkweise positionieren können (siehe M. NourbeSe Philip 58). In diesem Zusammenhang formuliert Wynter eine philosophische Kritik am Humanismus, Jones verfolgt einen politischen Ansatz und Gilroy unterstreicht vor allem ihre eigenen autobiographischen und persönlichen Konflikte innerhalb eines Systems das sie ihr das Menschsein abspricht. Was alle drei eint ist jedoch die Kritik an der universellen Repräsentation des weißen, westlichen Mannes als Ideal des Menschseins. Wynter möchte einen Bruch mit ebendiesem Ideal herbeiführen und argumentiert, dass vor allem karibische Intellektuelle, durch ihre literarischen Texte, Menschsein neu definieren

können. Sie konzeptionalisiert in diesem Zusammenhang den Begriff des hybriden Menschen, der sich aus verschiedene menschlichen Genres zusammensetzt (siehe Wynter "Catastrophe" 16). Hierbei zeigt sie, dass viele unterschiedliche Definitionen des Menschseins existieren und nicht eine einzige universell gültig ist. Wo Wynter sehr philosophisch argumentiert, ist Jones' Kritik am Humanismus stark durch ihren eigenen politischen Aktivismus geprägt. Sie stellt sich Jim Crow Gesetzen und Rassentrennug in den Vereinigten Staaten entgegen und verbindet einen marxistischen Ansatz mit ihrer Kritik an strukturellem Rassismus. Sie deckt auf, inwiefern das System des Kapitalismus eng mit der Unterdrückung von schwarzen Menschen verbunden ist und macht besonders die Benachteiligung von schwarzen Frauen deutlich. Gilroy wiederum deckt auf, inwiefern eine historische Spirale von Gewalt und Rassismus gegen Schwarze existiert und macht dieses an persönlichen Beispielen in ihrem eigenen Leben und ihrer Erfahrung mit Migration fest. Sie widmet sich insbesondere emotionalen Konflikten die durch humanistische, binäre Strukturen entstehen. Sie nimmt außerdem Rückbezug auf ihre eigene karibischen Herkunft und wie diese ihre Werke beeinflusst. Obwohl alle drei Intellektuelle auf unterschiedliche Weise Humanismus kritisieren, kommen sie zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen. Gilroy, Jones und Wynter argumentieren, dass sie nicht Teil des vorherrschenden Konzeptes des Menschseins sind und entwerfen vor diesem Hintergrund alternative Konzepte, während sie sich konstant ebenfalls mit strukturellen Formen des Rassismus befassen müssen. Im Anschluss an die Auseinandersetzung mit ihrer Kritik geht es am Ende des zweiten Kapitels darum, die Methode des *close readings* kritisch zu beleuchten, insbesondere unter Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass es innerhalb des europäischen Humanismus entworfen wurde. Eine kritische Lesart dieses Ansatzes beleuchtet, inwiefern *blackness* innerhalb von Texten repräsentiert werden kann.

Die Analysekapitel widmen sich den kreativen Texten von Gilroy, Jones und Wynter und stellen dar, inwiefern ihre Arbeit literarische Interventionen innerhalb eines Diskurses des Menschsein ausdrücken. Drei große Themenbereiche beleuchten unterschiedliche Facetten ihrer Arbeiten: Kapitel drei widmet sich der Diskussion zu der Erfahrung von *displacement*, der Enthüllung und dem Ausgesetztsein gegenüber Gewalt und Rassismus und inwiefern diese Teil gesellschaftlicher Strukturen sind. Des Weiteren, widmet sich das Kapitel der Relevanz von Gilroys, Jones' und Wynters Interventionen innerhalb eines Diskurses zum Humanismus. Ihre Werke betrachten die historische Entwicklung von Rassismus und systemischer Gewalt. Sie umfassen einen weiten zeitlichen Rahmen, der sich mit den Anfängen der Kolonisierung, der Versklavung von schwarzen Menschen, einer schwarzen Diaspora und mit Migrationen beschäftigt. Dadurch decken sie auf, wie Gewalt und Rassismus das westlichen Menschenbild prägen. Ein Beispiel wäre hier der Roman

Inkle and Yarico, geschrieben von Beryl Gilroy. Der Roman ist aus der Ich-Perspektive von Thomas Inkle geschrieben, einem weißen englischen Mann der Schiffbruch in der Karibik erleidet und von Yarico, einer indigenen karibischen Frau, gerettet wird. Gilroy beleuchtet durch den kolonialen Konflikt zwischen Inkle und Yarico inwiefern Inkle rassistische Strukturen und Denkweisen internalisiert hat. Sie konfrontiert ihn mit einem anderen Konzept des Menschseins, das durch Yarico und ihren Mitmenschen verkörpert wird. Inkle durchlebt in diesem Zusammenhang eine komplette Umkehrung von Hierarchien, da er selbst innerhalb der Stammesstrukturen als Yaricos Objekt verstanden wird. Durch den Roman schafft Gilroy eine neue Perspektive auf eine koloniale Begegnung, die im Mittelpunkt zwar einen weißen Mann stellt, ihn aber als passiv und in Abhängigkeit von Yarico beschreibt. Gilroy schreibt hierzu:

> He is like a slave, in exactly the same way as the Caribbean slave ... and that is the whole point of that book—and nobody has made it so far. Nobody has seen that this man is living the comparative life of a slave, if you trace his life among the Indians ... he is a slave. (Gilroy in Bradshaw 393)

Inkle erlebt "social death" und muss die Abtrennung von kulturellen und sozialen Wurzeln ertragen (siehe Wilderson "Master/Slave Relation" 18). Er wird gezwungen den gleichen Prozess zu erleben, der versklavten Menschen aufgezwungen wird. Die Auseinandersetzung mit seinen Emotionen und den Konflikten die daraus resultieren zeigt wie ein humanistisches Weltbild Inkle korrumpiert. Dadurch drückt Gilroy eine Kritik am Humanismus und dessen Hierarchien zwischen Menschen aus und widersetzt sich gleichzeitig der Repräsentation von schwarzen Frauen als reine Opfer.

Ausgehend von der Kritik der rassischen und patriarchalen Tendenzen, setzt sich Kapitel vier mit dem Umschreiben von Geschichte auseinander. Gilroy, Jones und Wynter befassen sich in diesem Zusammenhang mit Lücken in der westlichen Geschichtsschreibung, die oftmals die Perspektive von schwarzen Menschen unbeachtet lässt. Hierbei liegt der besondere Schwerpunkt auf der Rolle von schwarzen Menschen innerhalb der Kolonialgeschichte und dessen Folgen. Insgesamt formulieren Gilroy, Jones und Wynter ihre eigenen Perspektiven auf die Geschichte und entwickeln alternative Methoden, die sich einer westlichen Geschichtsschreibung widersetzen. Hierzu zählen unter anderem die Rolle von nicht-menschlichen Wesen, wie Naturgewalten und kulturelle Artefakte, die eine Verbindung zwischen Charakteren und lyrischen Personen und der Kolonialgeschichte herstellen. In diesem Zusammenhang ist es insbesondere die Natur, die eine alternative Perspektive auf die Geschichte ermöglicht. Hierbei machen alle drei deutlich, dass sie sich dem Bild der stummen, passiven Opferrolle entziehen und einen Fokus auf den eigenen Widerstand gegen das humanistische Konzept des Menschsein unterstreichen. Ein Beispiel ist hier

Jones' Gedicht mit dem Titel "Paean to the Atlantic", das sich mit ihrer Überfahrt nach London während ihrer Deportation beschäftigt. Durch die Bildsprache des Atlantik setzt sich Jones mit ihrem eigenen "displacement" auseinander und betont vor allem die neuen Möglichkeiten die dadurch entstehen. Darüber hinaus bewertet sie Migrationen und Bewegung, ob aus freiem Willen oder unfreiwillig getätigt, positiv als Neubeginn und stellt sich somit dem negativen Bild der Entwurzelung und des Verlusts entgegen:

> To understand your motion
> Is to reason why like you
> Millions move towards ascension
> Nurtured by your ancient dew
> (Jones zitiert in Boyce-Davies *Left* 119)

Die Bildsprache des Atlantik ist durch Bewegung und Positives geprägt und lässt bewusst koloniale und rassistische Elemente außen vor. Jones' Reise wird eingereiht innerhalb der vielen Überquerungen die der Atlantik gesehen hat. In diesem Zusammenhang ist das Gedicht eine literarische Intervention innerhalb der Debatte um den *Black Atlantic*. Jones bezieht sich nicht auf eine historische Erfahrung von Unterdrückung oder eine "common experience of powerlessness" (Gilroy *Union Jack* 158). Im Gegenteil, sie betont ihre eigene Handlungsstrategie als Mensch der sich seiner eigenen Opferrolle als deportiert entgegensetzt.

Kapitel fünf diskutiert im Anschluss alternative Konzepte des Menschseins und in welchem Umfang Gilroy, Jones und Wynter Lösungen für ihre Kritik aufzeigen. Hier liegt ein besonderer Schwerpunkt auf karibischen und afrikanischen Ansätzen und deren Konzeptionen des Menschen. Gilroy und Jones entwickeln in diesem Zusammenhang vor allem Konzepte die sich mit alternativen Visionen der Zukunft auseinandersetzten. Gilroy beleuchtet ihr Konzept der *unorthodoxy*, durch das sie einen Schwerpunkt auf ihre karibische Herkunft legt und Jones argumentiert, dass durch *togetherness* ein Konzept des Menschseins entworfen werden kann, das binäre Strukturen auflöst und Unterschiede als Kreativität wertet. Wynter und Gilroy setzen sich außerdem dezidiert mit karibischen und afrikanischen Ansätzen zum Konzept des Menschen auseinander und entwerfen ein Welt- und Menschenbild, das sich dem westlichen strukturellen Rassismus entgegensetzt. Sie beschreiben ein Weltbild, das durch Kontinuität und einem holistischen Ansatz geprägt ist, der sich aus der Natur, Vorfahren und dem Überirdischen zusammensetzt. Alle drei Intellektuellen unterwandern hierbei humanistische Tendenzen, den weißen Mann als universellen Menschen zu begreifen und lösen koloniale binäre Strukturen systematisch ab. In diesem Zusammenhang zeigt Wynters Roman *The Hills of Hebron*, durch die Rolle von Kate, wie eine alternative Konzeption des Menschsein innerhalb der narrativen

Strukturen umgesetzt wird. Kate zeichnet aus, dass sie eine starke Verbindung zu natürlichen Elementen hat, das Konzept Zeit als zirkulär versteht und dass ihre tote Tochter Maverly als Naturgeist zu ihr zurückkehrt. Kate verkörpert ein holistisches Weltbild, das durch afrikanische und karibische Folklore geprägt ist: “The cowhorn sounded loudly now and she could hear voices calling to one another. She was a child again and a ‘junkonoo’ procession was jigging by with drums and whistles and fantastic costumes. She hurried down past the church and round and into the square.” (*Hebron* 93) Durch Kate wird ein Rückbezug zur afrikanischen Tradition des Jonkonnu Tanzes hergestellt, das somit darstellt, inwiefern kulturelle Ausdrücke die Kolonialisierung überlebt haben und sich einem westlich geprägten Menschenbild entgegenstellen. Jonkonnu bezieht sich in diesem Fall auch auf verschiede Ausdrücke des Widerstands, da die ursprüngliche Version des Tanzes ein Ritual der Kriegsvorbereitung war (siehe Wynter (“Jonkonnu” 41).

Abschließend diskutiert das Fazit, inwiefern die vorliegende Studie anschlussfähig an weitere Diskurse sein kann. Ausschnitte aus den Arbeiten von Nancy Morejón (1944-), Ama Ata Aidoo (1942-) und Suzanne Césaire (1915-1966) zeigen auf, inwiefern die Analyse von Gilroys, Jones’ und Wynters Arbeiten durch eine transnationale Perspektive erweitert werden kann, die sowohl Diskurse innerhalb der frankophonen und hispanophonen Karibik als auch in Afrika mit einschließen. Diese Beispiele verdeutlichten, dass Gilroy, Jones und Wynter nicht die einzigen Intellektuellen waren und sind, die sich mit der Frage des Menschseins und einer Humanismuskritik auseinander setzen. Darüber hinaus ist die vorliegende Analyse der Werke von Gilroy, Jones und Wynter bei weitem noch nicht endgültig oder vollständig. Gilroy veröffentlichte beispielsweise einen Gedichtband mit dem Titel *Echoes and Voices* (1991), Wynters Gesamtwerk umfasst noch zahlreiche weitere Essays und auch Gedichte, wie zum Beispiel “Malcom X” (1965) und Jones’ Arbeiten schließen noch weitere Essays und Gedichte mit ein, wie zum Beispiel “There Are Some Things One Always Remembers” (1958) und “Clay Sculpture” (1955). Der Anfang dieser Dissertation verweist auf die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Akronym N.H.I. — No Humans Involved — um Gewalt gegen Schwarze Menschen als strukturelles Phänomen aufzudecken. Gilroy, Jones und Wynter zeigen, wie sich dieses Akronym historisch innerhalb humanistischer Strukturen entwickelt hat. Alle drei Intellektuelle entwickeln in diesem Zusammenhang Strategien um der Entmenschlichung von Schwarzen entgegenzuwirken und entwickeln eigene Konzepte des Menschseins, um diese zu begründen.

9. Versicherung

Ich erkläre: Ich habe die vorgelegte Dissertation selbständig und nur mit den Hilfen angefertigt, die ich in der Dissertation angegeben habe. Alle Textstellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten oder nicht veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen sind, und alle Angaben, die auf mündlichen Auskünften beruhen, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Hannover, den 12.02.2020 Lea Hülsen