

Kraków, 09.03.2023 r.

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#### SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

*Third Space in Literature. A Creative Synthesis of African and European Literary Traditions in the Caribbean Writing After 1960 (on the basis of the novels by Patrick Chamoiseau, Simone Schwarz-Bart and Namba Roy)*

The aim of my doctoral dissertation is to illustrate the idea of a cultural third space in contemporary Caribbean literature. The reading of *Solibo Magnifique*, a novel first published in 1988 by the Martinican author and intellectual Patrick Chamoiseau, was the reason for undertaking the study of this phenomenon in the writing of the Caribbean region. The elements of cultural syncretism and specific narrative solutions recognized in it, related to the spatio-temporal nature of the novel world, polyphony, and deliberately introduced discontinuities (aesthetic, narrative, cultural) made me realize the need to develop a critical language that could bring the literary contexts and cultural mosaic of the Caribbean closer to Polish researchers and readers.

This doctoral dissertation consists of three main parts. In the first one there are two introductory subchapters that place my research against the background of postcolonial and ecocritical studies at Polish and foreign universities. The writings of two of the three authors discussed by me – Patrick Chamoiseau and Simone Schwarz-Bart – have been the subject of many monographs and comparative studies in the above-mentioned fields, but none of them has so far put forward as the main interpretative key the recognition of inspiration and aesthetic

transformations related to the influence of the oral literary tradition and orality competence (oral literacy).

The second part of the dissertation, entitled "The Theory of Third Space", contains four chapters presenting the complexity of cultural substrates co-creating the contemporary Caribbean identity. The richness of cultural sources results in the important role of the so-called oral literature. After presenting a short history of the pre-colonial Antilles, I show the process of socio-cultural creolization, which was the result of the coexistence of communities of different origins in a limited space. The actions of European colonizers led to the mixing of the presence of native Caribs, kidnapped Africans, and then - after the abolition of slavery - Indians and Syrians who were transported to the colonial islands as cheap labor. This process concerned most of the Antilles, regardless of the dominating European metropolises and the languages implemented on them. Caribbean creolization is therefore the basis for a comparison of experiences, identity changes and artistic expressions made in many languages belonging to the Caribbean today. I research these phenomena from the point of view of the third space concept proposed by Homi K. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*. However, I introduce it with an extra supplement of the *Tout-Monde* theory of the Martinican writer and thinker Édouard Glissant. His idea of a relational world, which, as a result of bottom-up intercultural interactions, creates a place for local cultural phenomena in the world's globality, which together with the concept of cultural traces allowed me to explore the ways of introducing elements of orality aesthetics into Caribbean written literature. This required resolving definitional disputes around the term. For this purpose, I use the studies of: Albert B. Lord (*The Singer of Tales*), Wanda Leopold (*Eposy Czarnej Afryki*, ed.), Isidore Okpewho (*African Oral Literature. Backgrounds, Character, and Continuity; The Epic in Africa. Toward a Poetics of the Oral Performance*), Eileen Julien (*African Novels and the Question of Orality*), Barbara G. Hoffman (*Griots at War. Conflict, Conciliation, and Caste in Mande*), Dennis Tedlock (*Finding the Center. The Art of the Zuni Storyteller*, ed.) and Hanétha Vété-Congolo (*L'interoralité caribéenne: le mot conté de l'identité. Vers un traité d'esthétique caribéenne*). These unique studies allow the contexts of oral literary performance to be brought to light thanks to two research approaches that characterize all of those books. I consider as such an attempt to capture the literariness of the pieces of orality (literariness understood, according to Henri Meschonnik, as a particular rhythmization of the language of given performances of a literary work, along with the characteristic interaction between the storyteller and his audience), and a comparison of various performances, genres and local varieties of orality, taking into account their innovative, not reproductive character. These works make it possible to understand the unique role of the

storyteller as an artist crossing the existing boundaries of culture, allowing for the creation of new relationships, transforming and constantly renewing one's own identity as well as the community identity.

Caribbean writers consciously and deliberately refer to the artistic potential of oraliture, wanting to include in their works a reflection on the essence of culture and literature itself. The narrations I discuss in Part Three of the dissertation (“The Practice of Reflecting Third Space in Caribbean Literature”) not only evoke the presence of memory and fragments of symbolism inherent in local oral literature of a given period. The literary pieces of work I have chosen: Patrick Chamoiseau's *Solibo Magnifique* (Martinique), Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Ti Jean L'horizon* (Guadeloupe) and Namba Roy's *Black Albino* (Jamaica) refer to the phenomenon of oraliture in at least two additional ways: in a stylistic way (of the whole narration, including, the way of shaping the characters' utterances) and in a structural way (related to the way of shaping the narrative and creating meanings both of the events of the setting and of the book itself). In each of these attempts, I recognize original solutions aimed at transforming the strategies of writing and telling literature in such a way as to be able to synthesize them in the medium of the novel. The combination of these two different ways of literary expression was to be, according to Lord, unthinkable. In three chapters of this part of the dissertation, I show how the creative effort to create a literary space for the echoes of oraliture exceeds this impossibility with individual, unprecedented narrative solutions. The first of the chapters of the third part of my dissertation presents *Solibo Magnifique*, and herewith the interpretation of the central role of the storyteller for this novel and the mechanisms that his present-absence introduces to this piece of writing. In the second chapter, I compile *Ti Jean L'horizon* and *Black Albino* interpretations in search of different ways of implementing prose transformations of the heroic epic structure. The third chapter of this part present the conclusions of the dissertation, with one of the most important findings being the special educational function of these novels, which are addressed to the reader of world literature, who gets to know it and transfers it to their own locality.

In the two appendices attached at the end of the dissertation, I present my proposal for a translation of the fictional final performance of the master of speech Solibo Magnifique as described by the Chamoiseau's narrato, and the descriptopn of the latest novel by the Martinican author - *Le Vent du nord dans les fougères glacées*.