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Maroon Logics as Flight from the Euromodern

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Abstract

A critical study of marronage is urgent since certain anthropological and historical analyses have painted an image of slavery—and therefore of marronage as well—as something of the past. This text will demonstrate that marronage, rather than being simply flight from the plantation in a literal sense, also refers to flight from oppressive institutions through permanent institutional reconfiguration as well as to an existential state of *Being*. In this text I sketch out ways in which marronage is made manifest within and outside Euromodernity, which I call *maroon logics*. Maroon logics consists of two interdependent modes of embodying freedom and struggling for liberation. On the one hand there is *sociogenic marronage*, elaborated by political theorist Neil Roberts in his book *Freedom as Marronage* (2015), which refers to permanent institutional change as a manifestation of marronage. On the other hand, there is what I call *analectical marronage*, which denotes resistance to the *coloniality of being*.

Keywords: marronage, liberation, modernity, struggle, slavery, coloniality

Resumen

Un estudio crítico del cimarronaje es urgente ya que ciertos análisis históricos y antropológicos han pintado una imagen de la esclavitud—y por lo tanto el cimarronaje—como un fenómeno relegado al pasado. En este texto demuestro que el cimarronaje, en lugar de ser meramente la huida de la plantación en un sentido literal, se refiere además a la huida de las fuerzas opresoras de las instituciones dominantes a través de la reconfiguración institucional permanente. En adición, el cimarronaje se refiere a un estando existencial del *ser*. Trazo las maneras en que el cimarronaje se manifiesta dentro y fuera de la Euromodernidad, un fenómeno que he denominado *lógicas cimarronas*. Las lógicas cimarronas consisten en dos modos interdependientes de encarnar la libertad y luchar por la liberación. Por un lado, está la *cimarronería sociogénica*, elaborada por el politólogo y filósofo Neil Roberts en su libro *Freedom as Marronage* (2015), que se refiere al cambio institucional permanente como manifestación del cimarronaje. Por otro lado, está lo que he llamado *cimarronería analéctica*, que denota resistencia a la *colonialidad del ser*.

Palabras claves: cimarronaje, liberación, modernidad, lucha, esclavitud, colonialidad

A critical study of marronage is urgent since certain anthropological and historical analyses have painted an image of slavery—and therefore marronage—as something of the past. Such historicist interpretations can have purely juridical connotations, which, according to Venezuelan historian Germán Carrera Damas, confuse the formal existence of slavery with its concrete existence (Carrera

Damas 35). In this essay I demonstrate that marronage, rather than being simply flight from the plantation in a literal sense, also refers to flight from oppressive institutions through permanent institutional reconfiguration as well as to an existential state of Being. The focus on the juridical act of the abolition of slavery in historical narratives was required in order for liberal thought to cleanse its conscience since slavery resulted in an apparent contradiction of principles (Carrera Damas 35). By this, Carrera Damas refers to the cries for liberty and the condemnation of despotic political power on the one hand and the persistence of the institution of slavery on the other. This juridical framework ignores “sequels” or “remnants” of slavery. More specifically, it ignores the coloniality inherent of Euromodernity. Put differently, it leaves out social, cultural, economic, political, ecological, epistemological, and ontological elements which have persisted after the abolition of slavery and struggles for independence. If the study of these elements leads to the conclusion that slavery (read: coloniality) is constitutive of Euromodernity and we constitute slavery and flight from slavery as two inextricable processes (Quintero Rivera 38), it could be said that remnants of marronage must also constitute our present.

Following this line of thought, I sketch out ways in which marronage is made manifest within and outside the Euromodern *world*, which I call *maroon logics*. The term *world*, when italicized in this text, refers to an ontological totality which informs a singular or collective subject’s conception of the ontical (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 16); this is elaborated further. The first section of this text consists of a brief historical overview of marronage in order to seek out elements that allow for an existential phenomenological analysis. The second section establishes two key concepts that occupy a central role in the work of Argentine-Mexican historian and philosopher Enrique Dussel, which allow for a philosophical view of marronage. These concepts are *totality* and *exteriority*, which, under the influence of French-Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), allow Dussel to develop his concept *the analectical moment*, which is fundamental for what I call a Philosophy of Marronage. The next section consists of an elaboration of maroon logics and their relationship to community and Euromodern institutionality. I offer an overview of the concept *sociogenic marronage*, elaborated by political theorist Neil Roberts in his book *Freedom as Marronage* (2015), which refers to permanent institutional change as what can be considered a manifestation of marronage. According to Roberts, “Sociogenic marronage allows us to finally understand how revolutions are *themselves* moments of flight that usher in new orders and refashion society’s foundations” (Roberts 115-16. Emphasis in the original). I also elaborate what I call *analectical marronage*, which denotes resistance to the *coloniality of being*. The coloniality of being refers to the degradation of the racialized/colonized Other to the realm

of the sub-human, producing what Martinican revolutionary Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) called the *damnés* (Maldonado-Torres 144-51). The manifestation of sociogenic and analectical marronage in different political and social spaces constitute what I regard as maroon logics.

Sociogenic and analectical marronage are distinct inasmuch as they operate in two different metaphysical spaces. The former operates within the totality of Euromodernity, seeking to excise remnants of coloniality through permanent institutional change. Roberts's work can therefore be considered a contribution to the *decolonial turn* in political theory. The latter, analectical marronage, is made manifest in the exteriority of Euromodernity. This implies that it also operates outside established institutional orders. For Roberts, the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) is the historical event underpinning his conceptualization of marronage. I will demonstrate how underpinning my conceptualization of analectical marronage is marronage in the literal sense. I will also highlight the differing relationship between sociogenic and analectical marronage on the one hand and institutionality on the other, through a brief study of the community solidarity that manifested in post-Hurricane María Puerto Rico. To conclude, I show analectical and sociogenic marronage as complementary modes of struggling for liberation.

Historical Insights into Maroon Communities

Marronage was a distinct manner of embodying freedom inasmuch as it was a struggle for life and an affirmation of a way of life within the material limits of the sociopolitical context of the enslaved. Enslaved subjects of African descent collaborated and mixed-in with indigenous subjects in solidarity, which resulted in the development of new practices and institutions. This combining of cultural elements was caused by the sociopolitical context in which both groups, with all their complexity and diversity, faced annihilation. This syncretism also involved the incorporation of cultural elements of the dominant culture of the slave owners as a means of survival. For example, Yorubas used the numerous Catholic saints as a cover to openly worship the *orishas*. While piracy and buccaneering may be considered a form of marronage in a general sense, there is a sharp contrast with racialized maroons in the strict sense, inasmuch as piracy was not the affirmation of exteriority nor an attempt to radically change the foundations of Euromodernity, but rather a temporary escape from the domination of colonial governments. Put differently, it consisted of a temporary political escape which did not involve the affirmation of a separate culture or the creation of a new society (compared to maroon societies). Pirates had their culture and they knew it well (Knight 70). Furthermore, one of the ways in which European imperial powers were able to tame the “many-headed hydra” (Linebaugh and

Rediker 40), that is, the multiple revolts and uprisings carried out by enslaved Black subjects and poor white subjects, was to produce a racial solidarity amongst whites (Horne 47). This was achieved through the accommodation of poor white subjects, pirates included, into the nascent capitalist system while forging “whiteness” as a new political identity. The *world* of the pirates was the Euromodern *world*.

There is also a fundamental difference between marronage and revolts carried out by enslaved subjects. Revolts by enslaved subjects refer to violent acts of resistance carried out by groups of individuals who find themselves, at the time of the act, enslaved, and who were—during the height of the institution of slavery—mostly subjects of African descent. For example, Baralt states that in the town of Toa Alta in Puerto Rico in 1843 a group of enslaved Black subjects led by a slave whose alias was “Bembé” took over the *Casa del Rey* and the weapons and munitions stored within it. Afterwards, they took over the town (Baralt 111-26). It was a direct confrontation with the institution of slavery. This is not the same thing as marronage, inasmuch as marronage consisted in flight from the plantation, in many cases, without any confrontation, and the establishment of a new society that was a product of the fugitives’ social and political imaginary. In addition, white and indigenous American subjects also lived in these maroon societies, or *palenques*. Some subjects were even born and raised in these *palenques*, such as Zumbí, a creole maroon and the last leader of Palmares, Brazil, which was considered the largest *palenque* of the Americas. With regards to the difference between slave revolts and marronage, Baralt shows that in Puerto Rico, although there were a series of revolts and conspiracies to revolt throughout the nineteenth-century (the height of the sugar industry in Puerto Rico), no *palenques* were ever established (Baralt 158-59). This distinction between marronage and revolts by enslaved subjects is characterized primarily by the space in which these phenomena occur: revolts and conspiracies occur within the *totality* (the ontological) of the colonial system while marronage occurs in the *exteriority* (the metaphysical). Enrique Dussel, in his *14 tesis de ética*, makes the distinction between the ontological and the metaphysical. For Dussel, ontology is the reflection upon the everyday world as totality in a practical sense whereas the metaphysical is the trans-ontological, as proposed by Levinas (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 30-31). Put differently, the metaphysical is the exteriority of the Other’s existence (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 31). These concepts will be elaborated further in the following section. Nevertheless, the existence of *palenques* had an impact in the imaginary of the rebel slaves and in some occasions, maroons benefited from these rebel enslaved subjects in the sense that rebel enslaved subjects would sometimes join the ranks of the maroon communities. In other words,

although marronage and rebellion by the enslaved were fundamentally distinct, there was/is a complementarity at play.

Totality and Exteriority

To understand the struggle for life, the search for liberty, and the way in which those that fled from slavery to establish and develop their own communities embodied freedom, it is necessary to understand the concept *the analectical moment* proposed by Dussel. This concept is central to the Philosophy of Liberation, a diverse intellectual movement in which Dussel is a key figure (González San Martín 45). According to González San Martín, Dusselian thought as a methodology is a product of a critical dialogue with the German philosophers G.W.F Hegel (1770-1831) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), two figures who elaborated the dialectic as a method to articulate a philosophy of consciousness and a hermeneutic phenomenology as a method of articulating a philosophy of existence, respectively (González San Martín 47). In this way, González San Martín tells us that “the methodology of the Philosophy of Liberation, the *analectic*, is the result of a critique of the Hegelian philosophy of the concept and a critique of Heideggerian essentialism” (González San Martín 47).

For Heidegger, there is no world external to the subject but rather that *Being-in-the-world* is the “fundamental mode of human existence, preceding all action or human position, such as theory or the *cogito*, for example” (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 29. My translation). This is to say that before we can reflect on any event, we *are*, and we *are* in a historical and cultural context. “Before knowing—Dussel tells us—we must be in a practical *world*. The *world* of the family, the community, class, and culture” (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 29-30. My translation). For Dussel, this *world* (*mundo*) is “the conceptual point of departure for all other categories” (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 29-30. My translation). Dussel clarifies this point in a footnote, in which he states: “The *cosmos* is the totality of the real; the *world* is the totality of the ontological; the *universe* is the totality of the cosmos understood theoretically in a model of the *cosmos* in the *world* . . . Therefore the Greek *universe* is not the *universe* of the Aymara, and the Semite *universe* is not the Modern *universe*” (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 15. My translation).

Put differently, the phenomenological truth of our *Being* is revealed in the same fashion as perceptual truths. Because we are *radically thrown in the world* (*Geworfenheit*), our grasp of the truth occurs as a function of our perspectives. We see and constitute the *Being* of things from a certain point of view that is influenced by all aspects of our *world*, such as our culture. Exteriority, then, is “that location in which the other human being, as free and unconditional within the system, not as part of my *world*

is revealed” (Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* 78. My translation and emphasis). Exteriority is the trans-ontological, or that which manifests *beyond* the totality.

The *analectic*, and *the analectical moment*, is an attempt to think of the Other from his or her irreducible and unassimilable distinction, from the exteriority, where “the interest is the word of the Other, that which seems incomprehensible to the logos of the totality” (González San Martín 50. My translation). The analectical moment is an ethical decision to allow the Other, as Other, to interpellate my *world*, which results in the expansion of my ontological horizon, the positive growth of the dialectic. For Dussel, the analectical moment is an affirmation of exteriority *from exteriority itself* (Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* 240). Said differently, it is not simply the denial of negation but the denial of negation by means of a primary affirmation. The enslaved, whose humanity was denied by slavery, did not simply deny slavery, but rather first affirmed his/her humanity and by means of that affirmation denied the institution that denied his/her humanity.

Flight Within and From Euromodernity: Sociogenic and Analectical Marronage

In his text *Freedom as Marronage*, Roberts uses the Haitian Revolution as a conceptual point of departure to analyze freedom and unfreedom as fundamentally fluid conditions. In other words, Roberts seeks to develop a theory of freedom as *flight* and provide a critique of current theorizations which conceive slavery “as a state that agents are locked into without any mobility” and freedom “as a motionless attribute of agents who are simply in a condition antithetical to the unfree” (Roberts 9). Roberts deems the bifurcation of *petit* and *grand* marronage as insufficient to understand macropolitical movements since these acts of marronage are insufficient for carrying out structural changes. I add that Roberts is referring to changes from *within* the totality of Euromodernity. He suggests two new categories of marronage: sovereign marronage and sociogenic marronage; I will focus on the latter. Roberts defines sociogenic marronage as “macropolitical flight whereby agents flee from slavery through non-fleeting acts of naming, vèvè architectonics, the state of society, and constitutionalism” (116).

Naming is the act of giving or receiving names, voluntarily or by force. A name can affect individuality, groups, institutions, organizations, and the way these relate to the world. Historian Pedro L. San Miguel states that naming is also a way of exercising power, since to name something is a way of appropriating it, a way of making it one’s own (55). Naming also influences the social epistemology of a group. Two examples that stand out is the decision to name that republic founded in 1804 *Ayiti*, the island’s indigenous name, and the use of the pseudonym *El Antillano* (The Antillean) by Puerto Rican intellectual Ramón Emeterio Betances (1827-1898). In the first example, the decision to name

the new republic the way it was known prior to its colonization was an attempt to erase all remnants of French colonialism and anything French. It also underscores the collaboration between those of African descent and the indigenous of America during the entire process of colonization and the knowledge of indigenous culture those of African descent had acquired. It was also the way in which those citizens made themselves feel native to the island. It was a formal act of giving cohesion to this new community. The use of the name *El Antillano* by Betances constituted the adoption of an identity that resulted in the creation of a new intersubjectivity that had never been seen before. By assuming that name, Betances became the voice of the entire Caribbean. It was a way by which Betances identified with the heterogeneous societies of the region and initiated a particular vision of liberty and community (Chaar-Pérez 15-16).

Using concepts from voodoo, Roberts establishes *vèvè architectonics* as the second pillar of sociogenic marronage. *Vèvè* is a ceremony in which the voodoo practitioner elaborates certain images on the floor using coffee grounds with the intent of communicating with the gods, or Loas, and tells them when to appear and mount the practitioner. Each Loa has a *vèvè* that corresponds to them. These ceremonies are symbolic architectures of the gods whose principles govern right and wrong. Roberts defines *vèvè architectonics* as “the blueprint of freedom that an individual or collectivity imagines in an ideal world” (126). It can be conceived as a praxis of liberation underscored by some normative ethical principles. For the Haitian revolutionaries, we can assume that what underscored their revolutionary praxis were the normative ethical principles of voodoo theology. It is important to remember, as Roberts highlights, that the Haitian Revolution was initiated with the Bois-Caïman ceremony, where allegedly, a pig was sacrificed, a voodoo chant recited, and a speech was given by the voodoo priest Boukman Dutty. Roberts conceives *vèvè architectonics* as mass flight that resists the fetishized power of “sovereign decisionism and institutional design” carried out by the State without the authorization, input, or contribution of the citizen, *el pueblo* (126).

The state of society is Robert’s third pillar of sociogenic marronage. He defines this as the civil order (the sphere of the nation), the political order (the government structures of the state), and the location of the citizen within these orders. The state of society essentially dictates the *type* of society that the people want to construct using the present order as a starting point. For Roberts, flight always occurs within the existing orders of civil and political society, every new order in superposition with the last, and thereby views social and political change dialectically in a Hegelian sense. The right to own land and the dismantling of colonial notions of race are examples of this third pillar, which were elements of the Haitian Revolution. Sociogenic marronage is a type of marronage that manifests *within*

the Euromodern totality (the ontological) and seeks incorporation into said totality. It seeks a material restructuring through a reconfiguration of the foundations of the Euromodern *world*. It is a type of marronage which manifests in accordance with *Caliban's reason*, or “within the framework of Euro-Caribbean plantation societies” (Henry 5), the Euromodern *world* par excellence.

Constitutionalism is the fourth and final pillar of sociogenic marronage. For Roberts, this is the anchor and foundation of freedom. When the people decide to act and attain their liberation in accordance with the first three pillars of sociogenic marronage, this fourth pillar creates a legislative organ which serves as the foundation for the creation of all laws. Fundamental to this process is excising the remnants of coloniality—this is to say, assuming a decolonial posture—to avoid succumbing to neocolonial practices. For example, Roberts highlights how “the final mainstay of the 1805 document” is the notion of “political blackness” (133). This is to say, the notion of Blackness as being “problematic,” as being relegated to political irrelevance, as being the biological indicator of the sub-human subject, was subverted. “The citizen becomes *black*,—Roberts says—as do land proprietors, property holders, the women and men jointly classified under its label, and, by the act of renaming, the Republic” (Roberts 133. Emphasis in original). The establishment of this new constitution that is aligned to the will of the people (*el pueblo*) with respect to society is what anchors, and establishes as hegemonic in the Gramscian sense, the process of marronage carried out thus far.

Coining the term sociogenic *marronage* is problematic because the example that Roberts uses to develop this concept is the Haitian Revolution, a revolution led by rebellious enslaved subjects, not maroons.² The distinction is fundamental, for it implies a manifestation of marronage restricted to the confines of the ontological. For Roberts, “Maroon’s resistance and power of political imagination are admirable, yet their aversion to creolization is a flawed inertia valorizing a bygone past” (152). The historical record shows that creolization was in fact an important aspect of maroon societies (Price 20-21). For example, maroon societies formed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were typically led by maroons born in Africa and legitimized their political power as monarchs. But after the turn of the eighteenth century, the leaders of those communities were subjects who understood European culture while maintaining strong links with the enslaved population because of their knowledge of African traditions. The strategic benefit of having a leader well versed in the enemy’s culture goes without saying. Therefore, I believe Roberts’s critique is aimed at the resistance the maroons showed to assimilation into the totality, into the Euromodern *world*.³ This does not mean that Roberts’s conception of sociogenic marronage is incorrect. It means that there are complementary ways of conceiving marronage. If sociogenic marronage is defined as flight from the dehumanizing

and oppressive forces of Euromodernity through a decolonial political praxis, then there are ways of conceiving marronage as flight from the Euromodern totality in a movement to affirm the trans-ontological.

If we accept the distinction between the dialectic as Hegel understood it and the dialectic in a Levinasian and Dusselian sense, we can elaborate a metaphysical, trans-ontological, understanding of marronage. For Hegel, exteriority “is definitely interior to the totality of Being or, finally, of the Idea” (Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation* 40). This is to say, exteriority is conceived as that which opposes the totality from *within*. Hegel’s dialectic then is the assimilation and annihilation of the distinction of exteriority in a movement towards unity since: “According to Hegel Spirit is ultimately a totality, and thus nothing is outside of it. Consequently, a separation between Spirit and anything that exists would produce a multiplicity, and thus, it would cease to be a true totality or unity if anything were genuinely distinct from it” (Astore 2).

The Hegelian conception of Spirit does not allow for the existence of a trans-ontological multiplicity of *worlds*, but rather one unified, homogenous *world*. This leads to the relegation of distinct subjects to the sub-ontological and the classification of subjects into the categories of human and sub-human within the Euromodern *world*. Rhetoric espoused by modern (Eurocentric) man to dehumanize, and criminalize, racialized subjects is what Fanon observed the Black subject internalizes as truth. Fanon realized that the white man forges an archetype of what the Black subject is for him, which the Black subject then assimilates ontologically. Philosopher Tommy J. Curry states that the Black man “possesses no character that stands apart from the imposition of the ideas others thrust on him” (169). This leads to a *coloniality of being*, which refers to a Euromodern human intersubjectivity that produces racialized/colonized subjects and attempts to devoid them of *Being* while normalizing extraordinary events which occur in contexts of war (Maldonado-Torres 148. My translation), producing what Fanon called the *damnés*. I say “attempts” because analectical marronage, inasmuch as it consists in the affirmation of a distinct *world*, resists the coloniality of being. Rather than understand analectical marronage as a means for humanization vis-à-vis dehumanization, it should be understood that the *Self* of the maroon—or any singular or collective subject constituted as the Other—was/is never dehumanized in *all worlds* but rather he or she was only dehumanized in the Euromodern *world*.

For Dussel, informed by Levinas’s understanding of the Other, the exteriority is that which is *outside* the totality (Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* 76-77). This in turn permits the manifestation and co-existence of multiple *worlds*, since exteriority is intrinsic to the *world-world* relationship. Marronage as practiced by those residing in Palmares, for example, can be characterized as *analectical marronage*

inasmuch as it was flight from the Euromodern *world* to affirm another *world*, in addition to flight as self-preservation from premature death in bondage. It is an effort to resist being reduced to the realm of the sub-ontological by means of flight from a colonizing/racializing *world*. The analectical moment is therefore an ethical decision to resist reducing the Other and their *world* to the realm of the sub-ontological, while analectical marronage constitutes resistance to said reduction, as the Other, by means of flight from Euromodernity.

Maroon communities developed complex societies and organized in this exteriority, outside the totality of Euromodernity, in the physical and metaphysical sense. They used their own languages and epistemologies to curse the “master,” rather than using the master’s language. Maroons did not rely on established Euromodern institutions in their pursuit of freedom, nor did they rely on nascent nation-states. They created and developed cultural, political, economic, social, and religious institutions that were *distinct* from those of the totality, without seeking to change the totality. Even when acts of marronage did not result in the formation of complex societies, like in the case of Puerto Rico, the act of marronage by a singular subject meant an affirmation of exteriority which, other than physical flight from the plantation to conserve his or her life, sought to affirm a *world* in accordance with his or her own imaginary by means of flight from the *world* of Euromodernity. This is to say, rather than embark upon a direct confrontation with the dominant *world* in an attempt to change it (read: sociogenic marronage), maroons in the strict sense sought to affirm their own *world* at the margins.

Analectical marronage resists the relegation to the sub-ontological inasmuch as the analectical maroon recognizes that this attempt at dehumanization is a rhetorical tool employed by the Euromodern *world* to justify enslavement, exploitation, and permanent war. Analectical marronage, by definition, is the antithesis of the colonality of being. Curry, although he does not use the term, refers to the same existential state of *Being* when he states the following passage:

The Black male stands alone in his surety of self. He defines himself for himself against a *world* that condemns him for being. The existential import of this choice cannot be disregarded, since it is the basis of his social self and his attempts to resist the imposition of society. This social self, this humanity, is denied as possible within the larger society. The at-large consensus of others has predetermined his fate, so to speak, making him an *outcast* even among other Blacks. (169. My emphasis)

The existential manifestation as *outcast* is precisely analectical marronage as a state of *Being*. When marronage is viewed in this light, it is revealed that freedom can be conceived of as an existential

state of *Being* in which one rejects the imposition of foreign archetypes by means of an affirmation of one's own *world*. Analectical marronage is flight from Euromodernity itself.

Community Revelation and Institutionalality

Maroon logics, as the manifestations of sociogenic and analectical marronage, break down notions of individualism, the foundational fallacy of Euromodernity, in the sense that maroon logics are guided by the primacy of the community for the sake of survival. Community solidarity was fundamental for the success of the Haitian Revolution and for the survival of maroon communities. Anthropological and historical studies of maroon communities show how the survival and defense of the community took priority over the desires—and even the lives—of singular subjects. For example, maroons who would leave the *palenque* or *quilombo* before the completion of a sort of probation period were hunted down and executed. On the other hand, historian Laurent Dubois discusses how there was a series of meetings that took place in August 1791 to plan the revolution other than the famous Bois-Caïman meeting (94). In the context of Puerto Rico, Baralt states that there was a great amount of social cohesion amongst *bozales* that facilitated the planning of revolts (162). It is also well known that enslaved subjects in Puerto Rico would often coordinate revolts through *bomba* music and dance. What this demonstrates is that for flight from the oppressive forces of Euromodernity to be successful, there needs to be a vulcanization of that community that reveals itself when faced with annihilation through strategic sociopolitical organization. On the other hand, it demonstrates that for successful flight from Euromodernity itself, the community must protect itself at all costs by prioritizing its survival over the desires of singular subjects.

Archaeologist Daniel O. Sayers characterizes maroon life in the Great Dismal Swamp as one which saw the emergence of a new identity tied to labor, resistance, and praxis in *community* which he denotes *communigenesis* (215). Sayers's concept should not be understood in the sense that its etymology implies but rather that in the Great Dismal Swamp a community was *revealed* or *unveiled*. Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe states that “it is precisely through death that community reveals itself” (34). I reinterpret this to signify that death, or the possibility of death, has the capacity to reveal a fundamental communitarian tendency that is effectively stunted within the Euromodern totality. Maroon logics, therefore, should not be understood as birthing a new community but rather as revealing or unveiling said community when faced with annihilation.

Dussel, again under the influence of Levinas, tells us how prior to the constitution of a *world*, there is a face-to-face (*cara-a-cara*) relationship referred to as *proximity* (Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* 46). He reminds us that we are not born in “nature,” nor from hostile elements, but rather from

another person and it is that person that provides security during the first years of life. A person is born from another person and grows within a family, or some other social group, and in a society in a specific historical context and it is there that his or her *world* will develop. This implies that the face-to-face relationship is at the foundation of any and all human intersubjectivity although it is true that it may become veiled, which is the case with the individualism of liberal thought. What occurs is that when faced with destruction, with death, this veil is removed to reveal what has always been there to begin with: the community.

In times of catastrophe, such as during a climatological disaster or when enslaved, the work required to reveal that primordial community is simplified due to the existential threat that the community faces. Ideological elements that obfuscate this community are dispersed. Without what may be considered such an explicit and direct existential threat such as a hurricane, existential threats such as neoliberal austericide become veiled due to the ideological apparatus established by the State, the media, and capitalist interests. Austerity measures, for example, are presented as the only possible option to survive economic crises and capitalism is presented as the only viable economic system. What goes unnoticed is the fact that those austerity measures, which reduce public programs meant to foster community well-being, pose as much of an existential threat to the community as a category 5 hurricane, the difference being that climatological disasters physically threaten shared infrastructure and dominant political and economic orders, whereas neoliberal policies prove disproportionately disastrous for the most vulnerable members of the community, *el pueblo*.

While both sociogenic and analectical marronage exhibit resilience to annihilation through the revelation and galvanization of community, they each have distinct ways of relating to the dominant institutions of Euromodernity because of the metaphysical spaces they manifest in. The distinction between how sociogenic and analectical marronage relate to the institutionality of the Euromodern *world* is made evident when the example of the Haitian Revolution, which undergirds Roberts's conception of sociogenic marronage, is seen vis-à-vis the post-Hurricane María experience in Puerto Rico. If sociogenic marronage is conceived as flight from the oppressive forces of established institutions through their permanent reconfiguration, analectical marronage is conceived as flight from Euromodern institutions in their entirety.

Because of this, during times of crises brought on by climatological disasters or other events that affect established sociopolitical institutions, analectical marronage as a mode of political and social organization becomes fundamental. Sociogenic marronage as a mode of political praxis, by definition, is of no use during an event in which the existence of political institutions is threatened because

sociogenic marronage seeks structural changes of those institutions. During a climatological disaster which renders the state inoperative, seeking to modify state institutions becomes unfruitful for survival. Analectical marronage on the other hand becomes necessary because, precisely, it operates outside established sociopolitical orders. In addition, the ideological apparatus of the State renders the execution of sociogenic marronage difficult, which explains the uniqueness of the Haitian Revolution in world history, precisely because the Euromodern State veils fundamental communitarian instincts.

Baralt states that the most common way in which conspiracies of slave revolt were discovered—at least in the context of Puerto Rico—was by means of a enslaved informant who would share information with his or her master (Baralt 173). The high frequency of this mode of discovering slave conspiracies was because enslaved subjects were encouraged to share information on planned conspiracies since they were promised monetary compensation and manumission. For example, the enslaved informant who provided information regarding the planned revolt set to occur on 15 July 1848 in Ponce, in which eight enslaved subjects were planning to set fire to the plantation, destroy the town, abolish slavery, and murder all white inhabitants, was awarded his freedom as well as 300 *pesos* (Baralt 132-34).

Subjects of African and indigenous descent faced annihilation by means of the demographic catastrophe brought about by the colonization of Africa and America. Climatological catastrophes also have the power to annihilate. Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico in the southeastern town of Yabucoa on 20 September 2017 and its trajectory split the main island diagonally in half, exiting the northwestern town of Camuy.⁴ While the initial government report put the death toll at sixteen, a 2018 article titled “Study Estimates Prolonged Increase in Puerto Rican Death Rate After Hurricane Maria” states that a Harvard study put the death toll at 4,645 (*Study Estimates Prolonged Increase in Puerto Rican Death Rate after Hurricane Maria*).

The revelation of community when confronted with annihilation that is characteristic of maroon logics in general, as well as the organization and praxis outside established institutions characteristic of analectical marronage specifically, played a fundamental role in the survival of Puerto Ricans in the days, weeks, and months after the hurricane.⁵ There are multiple instances where individuals admit to never having spoken to their neighbors prior to the hurricane. One of the elements that facilitated transportation immediately after the hurricane were not government agencies but rather *el pueblo*, the people, picking up machetes and going to work clearing roads and access-ways. Angie Vázquez, in an article for *Diálogo UPR*, the University of Puerto Rico’s official newspaper, titled “*Puerto Rico nace por su gente*” (“Puerto Rico is born because of its people”), states that “Within the

spectrum of so many misfortunes and blunders, several facts have been revealed. Fundamentally, the help and support [after the passing of the hurricane] came from the same people in crisis, from the communities that were ruined but were nevertheless standing tall, from the families that held onto the love that overcomes tragedies” (Vázquez para 7. My translation).

The article also states that the American Psychological Association (APA) establishes the centrality of communities in managing a climatological or human misfortune: “It is the community that has the aptitude to transform a disaster into interventions of urgent re-organization because it is the community that knows the needs and vulnerabilities of the people” (Vázquez para 7. My translation). An article published on 13 February 2017 in *The Conversation* titled “Recovering from disasters: Social networks matter more than bottled water and batteries” highlights this fact as well but in the context of the 2011 crisis in Japan in which they were hit with an earthquake, a tsunami, and finally a nuclear power plant meltdown. The author stated that “the ability to recover from shocks, including natural disasters, comes from our connections to others, and not from physical infrastructure or disaster kits” (Aldrich para 1). Although I present a superficial reading, these articles all highlight the capacity that potential annihilation has to reveal a primordial community as well as extra-institutional praxis as fundamental for survival. In recent studies and discussions regarding popular movements in Puerto Rico, this is referred to as *auto-gestión comunitaria*, which Puerto Rican anthropologist Adriana Garriga-López translates to “autonomous organizing” in her detailed analysis on this particular mode of political praxis (180). I will limit myself to state that *autogestión* can be conceived as the manifestation of analectical marronage inasmuch as it consists of a social and political praxis outside the Euromodern institutions of the nation-state.

One of the most interesting manifestations of autonomous organizing that characterized analectical marronage in post-Hurricane María Puerto Rico is the case of an abandoned school turned into apartments and a community center. An article published in *El Nuevo Día* on 28 April 2018 states that the Manuel Rojas Luzardo School, as the school was known, had been closed and abandoned by the government in 2015 but, after various weeks of waiting for government aid after the passing of the hurricane, the local community decided to take over the school, habilitating it to offer housing and services (Figuroa Cancel). Five months later it came to be known as the Centro de Apoyo Mutuo Jíbaro, which provides housing for seven families, a theater café, community kitchen (*comedor social*), as well as areas to house livestock. There are at least fourteen other organizations across the island that operate under similar terms and principles.

The revelation of community is not limited to the human-human relationship. The concept of proximity should be understood as relating not just to the face-to-face experience between human subjects but between all living subjects. A person, being born from another person, is born in a particular geographic location, in a particular ecosystem in which each plant, each animal plays a role in maintaining its balance. The community that is revealed when faced with annihilation is a community that involves every organism. It is the understanding that human subjects, as self-conscious and reflexive subjects, have the duty to take care of life, the whole of life on the planet. As Dussel states, it is not a question of a supposed anthropocentrism. Because the human being is the only *Being* that is self-conscious and thus endowed with moral capacity, human beings have a duty towards the whole of life, not just human life (Dussel, *14 Tesis de Ética* 16).

This understanding of community as encompassing all life, rather than just human life, is in stark contrast with established Euromodern understandings that, informed by Lockean thought, posits that “nature” is devoid of any value until it is developed, or Baconian thought which posits that “nature” must be dominated for the benefit of humankind (Tully 169; Scalercio 1077). Therefore, it is key for all liberation struggles to view the *cosmos* as having the potential to accommodate every *world* as well as the urgency of becoming attuned to the primordial community obfuscated by liberal thought and excising colonial views toward other lifeforms.

Sociogenic and Analectical Marronage as Complementary Modes of Struggle

Historical and anthropological analyses of marronage have hitherto obfuscated a mode of embodying freedom and struggling for liberation which is fundamentally distinct from Western (read: Euromodern) theorizations of liberty. While freedom has typically been conceived of as a static state antithetical to slavery, an existential phenomenological analysis of marronage reveals that freedom can be conceived of as an existential state of *Being* in which one affirms the trans-ontological and which manifests as social and political praxis outside Euromodern institutions. It could be conceived of as ontological autonomy, or the ability to create or affirm one’s own *world* according to their own imaginary. On the other hand, marronage can be conceived of as flight from the dehumanizing institutions of Euromodernity by means of a decolonial political praxis which seeks to reconfigure established social and political orders. Marronage, therefore, manifests in two distinct metaphysical spaces: within and outside Euromodernity.

Liberation struggles require praxis on both fronts. The Haitian Revolution was not a political project protagonized by maroons but by rebellious enslaved subjects. Nevertheless, maroons had a

significant impact in the imaginaries of the revolutionaries and one can argue that the Haitian Revolution would never have occurred without the existence of maroons. Additionally, it could be assumed that the Haitian maroons benefited from the revolution inasmuch as persecution by the colonial government ceased and they were then seen as human beings. Dussel alludes to this double movement, this symbiosis between analectical and sociogenic marronage, in his “critical rational paradigm of liberation” (*paradigma crítico racional de la liberación*) (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 197). For Dussel, the enslaved may be regarded as oppressed in and by the existing totality, or may be situated in the exteriority as an excluded Other (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 199). This possibility may cause what African American intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) called “double-consciousness”, which referred to the oppression of the Black subject as an American and their exclusion as an African within the United States. Du Bois stated that “One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (9).

According to Dussel, one can challenge and fight the system internally or externally, which results in a liberation praxis that assumes the best of the current system and creates a new system which sprouts from creative transformative action (Dussel, *14 tesis de ética* 199). However, the Haitian Revolution and its relationship with marronage has shown that fighting the system must not happen “internally *or* externally” but must happen simultaneously, internally *and* externally. Analectical marronage serves, pedagogically, as an example of what is possible while sociogenic marronage serves as the agent of structural change in the current system. Maroon logics therefore consists of two complimentary modes of embodying freedom and struggling for liberation. On the one hand, it consists of a direct confrontation with the institutions of Euromodernity while assuming a decolonial attitude. And on the other, it consists of resistance to the relegation to the realm of the sub-ontological by means of the affirmation of one’s own *world*, which in turn manifests as political and social praxis at the outskirts of Euromodern institutions.

When conceived in this manner, acts of marronage reveal themselves everywhere in daily life. Seeing marronage in this way allows the racialized/colonized Other to resist the permanent war and dehumanization of modernity/coloniality. This last point is critical. In saying that racialized/colonized subjects were dehumanized, it must be specified that dehumanization occurs in the Euromodern *world* and may or may not be internalized by the racialized subject. The analectical maroon resists the dehumanization that the Euromodern *world* tries to impose. This explains the existence of epistemologies that persist in “relative exteriority”, as Grosfoguel has pointed out (87). It must be

specified that dehumanization can be resisted, resulting in an unsuccessful sedimentation of colonial archetypes in the ontology of the racialized/colonized subject. Or as Puerto Rican poet Clemente Soto Vález said, “man is free when his consciousness rebels against all external forces” (Soto Vález 77; my translation). Otherwise, it seems that we will perpetuate our dehumanization if we continue to reaffirm that every subject from the Global South has been dehumanized. Fanon said that “*it is the racist who creates the inferiorized*” (73. Emphasis in original). Dehumanization can be resisted—and fortunately, maroon and indigenous communities have been showing us what that looks like for centuries.

Notes

¹ The *Casa del Rey*, or King's House, was a municipal prison, weapon's storage, and mayor's house at the time.

² It is possible to read the Haitian Revolution as a maroon movement because of the participation of Boukman Dutty and the legacy of François Makandal, but this requires a more nuanced and extended discussion which falls outside the scope of this essay.

³ The role of creolization as it relates to maroon logics requires a larger discussion and deeper theorization which falls outside the scope of this essay.

⁴ A discussion of the exacerbation of the hurricane's effects due to Puerto Rico's colonial status falls outside the scope of this text.

⁵ There are multiple discussions to be had regarding the manifestation of maroon logics during other climatological disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, or marronage as a way of overcoming disaster capitalism. Due to space constraints, these fall outside the scope of this text.

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