

**THE POWER OF DISCOURSE AND THE VISUAL IMAGINATION IN CARIBBEAN  
RESISTANCE: THE INTERTEXTUALITY BETWEEN JOSUÉ “JAY” FONSECA  
APONTE (PUERTO RICO) AND STANLEY JOSEPH GREAVES (GUYANA)**

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### **Dedication**

Esta disertación es dedicada a Mildred Montás Aquino.

Para Mami

Te amo con todo lo que soy. Gracias por ser y estar.  
Gracias por tus consejos, tu paciencia, y tu fe en mí.  
No hay un amor más puro que el tuyo.

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The LORD is my strength and my shield;  
my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.  
My heart leaps for joy,  
and with my song I praise him.  
Psalm 28:7

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I am honored to have worked with such dedicated and respected linguists.

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### **Abstract**

Ecclesiastes 1:9 states “...there is nothing new under the sun.” Thus, public corruption is not a recent phenomenon and neither is the act of denouncing it. The Caribbean has known public corruption for centuries. Similar histories were experienced across Caribbean lands, which have provoked citizens to raise their voices. Some of these voices may seem more salient and effective than others, for they are read or heard on forums like television, radio, newspapers, social media, etc. which allow for greater exposure. This is the case of the Puerto Rican political analyst, Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte. Nonetheless, there are prominent voices that are expressed through non-textual media such as the visual arts, as done by Guyanese painter and poet, Stanley Joseph Greaves. Curiously, the works of both Fonseca and Greaves address sociopolitical issues, advocate for change, emphasize the need to redress governmental decisions that have led to poverty, and educate, so that their audiences, who are the people who endure the hardships caused by self-serving politicians, rise and resist. This dissertation explores the power of oral, written and artistic discourse as articulated by two Caribbean public figures who voice their opposition to political criminal activity with the use of satire and religious references. It analyzes the language and symbols they employ and the effects these have had on their audiences and public opinion overall. The main methodology used is the critical discourse studies/critical discourse analysis framework (Ideological Square Model) of Teun A. van Dijk and Stuart Hall’s representation theory, while also taking into account the works of scholars such as Foucault, Saussure, Peirce, and Goffman, among others. In particular, van Dijk’s and Hall’s approaches allow for the study of the intersection between semiotics and discourse.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

French painter, Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), whose work is recognized under the artistic style known as academicism, is the creator of *The truth coming out of her well to shame mankind*. The piece is presently in Moulins, France at the Musée Anne de Beaujeu, and it is one of various paintings by Gérôme in which truth is personified. The painting depicts a pale, naked woman with long, dark hair stepping out of a well with a whip in her hand. Observers would most likely focus their attention on the woman's face, for her expression is one of dismay, disbelief, anger, and/or indignation. The message behind the painting, much like all art, is left to interpretation. Some have commented that Gérôme was questioning his own artistic abilities and comparing his work to the work of younger artists of his time. Others believe it is Gérôme's response to Greek philosopher, Democritus's statement, "Of truth we know nothing, for truth is in a well." (Jean-Léon Gérôme Overview and Artworks, n.d.)

When researching Gérôme's painting on websites such as *OM Times*, the art piece is accompanied by an allegorical narrative. The story tells how Lie and Truth engage in a conversation during which Lie tells Truth that the day is splendid and the water in the well is refreshing enough to swim in. Truth accedes and both Truth and Lie take off their clothes and get into the water. Eventually, Lie steps out of the well, puts on Truth's clothes, and leaves. Truth would not dare to put on Lie's clothes and therefore, steps out of the well and begins to walk around naked. People see her and become horrified by her nudity. Thus, until this day, it is said that humankind has preferred lies disguised as truth instead of the bare truth.



## Figure 1

*The truth coming out of her well to shame mankind*



*Note.* By J.L. Gérôme, 1896, painting, oil on canvas, located at Musée Anne de Beaujeu in Moulins, France. From Important Art by Jean-Léon Gérôme, by The Art Story, n.d. (<https://www.theartstory.org/artist/gerome-jean-leon/>).

This introduction creatively reveals what encouraged the development of this dissertation. Public corruption stems from the absence of truth and becomes greater with the practice of manipulation. It takes on even more power when politicians use religion and the Bible to justify their exploitation and fraud. This is so, for the Bible is considered, primarily by those of Christian faith, to be "the truth" because it is believed to be the word of God. Jesus Christ said as written in the New King James Version of the Book of John 14:6, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Therefore, politicians shaping "the truth" to suit their own desires is like the story behind Gérôme's

painting, Lie dressed as Truth. However, although they may fool a part of the population that does not see or refuses to see beyond the façades, there is always someone who sees the naked truth, resists against the lies, and turns the tables. It is then that public corruption is challenged by those who compose art, write, and/or speak in opposition.

Concentrating on the works of Fonseca and Greaves to develop this dissertation allows for the study of the different avenues employed to resist discourses of domination. It also offers insight to both the geographic and historical vastness of the Caribbean. Fonseca is from Puerto Rico, located in the northeastern Caribbean Sea with its northern shore facing the Atlantic Ocean. The archipelago, one of the Greater Antilles, is considered part of the Hispanophone Caribbean, and has endured colonization primarily from Spain and the United States. Greaves is from Guyana which is on the Caribbean coast of South America and is particularly close to the Caribbean both culturally and economically. Its colonial background is Dutch and British making it consequently a part of the Anglophone Caribbean. Guyana is active in The Caribbean Community and Common Market, CARICOM, an alliance of twenty countries which work together to fulfill their proclaimed mandate of “promoting and supporting a unified Caribbean Community that is inclusive, resilient, competitive: sharing in economic, social and cultural prosperity” (CARICOM, 2021).

Through this dissertation, I aspire to affirm, emphasize, and put into perspective what Fonseca has said for years, “*Puerto Rico es un paraíso, solo falta que cooperemos*” [Puerto Rico is a paradise, if only we’d cooperate.] (All translations are by the present author unless specified otherwise.) Looking at the bigger picture, Fonseca’s statement can be rephrased as follows: The Caribbean is a paradise, if only we’d cooperate. How would this “cooperation” be achieved? One essential element would be an inquisitive, thoughtful, and appreciative attitude regarding the value

of our people and land strong enough to propel us to stand up against the ruling classes who violently misappropriate and abuse what rightfully belongs to all of us.

### **Religious Historical Background of the Colonization of the Americas**

European powers invaded the Americas in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, not only with the goal of conquest and plunder of land, labor and gold, but also with a religious agenda: “The history of the Roman Catholic Church in the colonial era is marked by the Church’s complicity with and support of Spanish colonial domination and exploitation of Indigenous and African peoples throughout the Caribbean” (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 45). The objective was to conquer the Caribbean lands by gaining control over territory, people, and spiritual beliefs.

The Spanish Inquisition and specifically the culmination of the approximately 800 yearlong Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 greatly influenced the colonization of the Caribbean. The Spanish Inquisition began in the year 1478 and lasted until 1834, as a judicial office that persecuted Jewish and Muslim people as well as all those who believed and practiced varieties of Christianity other than Catholicism. From the Umayyad conquest in 711 until the fall of Granada in 1492, the Iberian Peninsula was the site of conflict between Muslims and Christians. When King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile married in 1479, their kingdoms united and in the years to come they banished the Islamic Moors from the peninsula and issued the Alhambra Decree which mandated that all Jews leave the country. “The Reconquista was a brutal conflict fueled in part by devotion to Christianity – not just a war between Kingdoms but a crusade against infidels” (Walbert, 2007, p. 1). In other words, religious doctrine was used as a justification to consolidate political power.

The centuries-long era when Muslims, Jews, and Christians peacefully coexisted in Europe thus came to an end as Catholicism was imposed. *The Online Etymology Dictionary* explains that

the literal meaning behind the English word ‘catholic’ is universal acceptance. In Medieval Latin, the term *catholicus* is said to have been used as a synonym of the term Christian, meaning constituting or conforming to the church, its faith, and organization. Additionally, *The Online Etymology Dictionary* states that the Greek root of catholic is *katholikos*, which is defined as ‘on the whole’ or ‘in general’. Hence, the Spanish set out to subjugate lands and the people who inhabited them while enforcing Catholicism as the only faith to be acknowledged and practiced by everyone regardless of their previous belief systems.

In 1492 the Spanish acquired total control of the Iberian Peninsula, and that same year, Christopher Columbus navigated to the Americas and came across Caribbean islands that had been populated long before by groups of Indigenous people. Yet, Edmonds and González (2010) note that the Catholicism that was brought to the Caribbean was not “a pure Catholicism but instead a Catholicism that had been mixed with folk religion” (p. 47). These authors cite William Christian, a specialist in medieval Spanish history, who argues that

in the villages, towns, and cities of Central Spain (and [he] suspects, in most other nuclear settlements of Catholic Europe) there were two levels of Catholicism --- that of the Church Universal, based on the sacraments, the Roman liturgy, and the Roman calendar; and a local one based on particular sacred places, images, and relics, locally chosen patron saints, idiosyncratic ceremonies, and a unique calendar built up from the settlement’s own sacred history. (p. 47)

All in all, the form of Catholicism mobilized by the Spanish to colonize the Caribbean, was a Catholicism that “... had been thoroughly influenced and shaped by other [non-Christian] European and African religious worldviews” (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 47). Nevertheless, the Spanish Crown worked hand in hand with the Catholic Church for centuries in a project geared

towards plundering land and converting people. The idea of spreading the gospel became an instrument for control.

Thus, “ultimately, the Catholic Church legitimized its role in the transatlantic slave trade by arguing that, through enslavement and conversions, souls were being saved” (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 52). Edmonds and González mention three methods by which Africans, who were enslaved and brought to the Caribbean, were introduced to Christianity under the Spanish. The first happened prior to the Middle Passage, as there was some missionary activity along the West African coast itself from the 1400s onward. For example, Portuguese and other missionaries preached and performed voluntary baptisms in the Congo region, where local religious traditions and those of Catholicism began to merge to create new forms of religious hybridity. The second took place through obligatory baptisms with little or no exposure to Christian doctrine. Lastly, some slaves received religious instruction upon arrival in the Americas since the Spanish Crown made it mandatory for slave owners to construct a church on their plantations and allot time for the enslaved to participate in religious activities, and receive hegemonic religious indoctrination (p. 59).

Juan Fernando Badía (1972, p. 25) defines political power as “*la función social que consiste en establecer, mantener, sancionar, aplicar...los modelos de conducta vigentes en un grupo social*” [the social function that consists of establishing, maintaining, sanctioning, applying ... the prevailing models of conduct in a social group]. The Spanish colonizers promoted Catholicism as a mechanism for consolidating their domination of the Americas by institutionalizing obligatory indoctrination and severely punishing all who refused to acknowledge Catholic dogma. Edmonds and González (2010) state that “A 1528 law required all Indigenous and African slaves to go to Santo Domingo for religious instruction” (p. 56) and more African and

indigenous influenced varieties of Catholicism began to emerge. During the 1540s, the Catholic Church of the Americas was separated administratively from that of Spain. While there were important differences between the European Spanish and the Spanish-American churches, until the mid-1700s, they were united in their support of Spanish imperial hegemony.

According to Church historian Ramón Torreira Crespo (cited by Edmonds & González 2010), in Cuba “...the period between 1697 and 1837 marked the high point of the Church’s control over the island; it owned a third of its riches and controlled the educational system, ultimately becoming a key component of colonial exploitation” (p. 54). However, when Latin American independence movements began to emerge, some Catholic clergy joined forces with them, while others supported the Spanish colonial government. Faraclas and Delgado (2021) sum up the role of Catholicism in the Spanish colonial enterprise as follows:

Catholicism is, by its very name, a universalizing and evangelizing religion, and the Spanish colonial enterprise both officially justified and defined themselves ideologically first and foremost as an effort to make all of the peoples of the Americas part of a universal Catholic community. This was to be achieved preferably by consent, but wherever discursive force proved insufficient, there was little hesitation to deploy coercive force. This inclusive rhetoric and the (albeit often forced) inclusive dynamics that accompanied it were largely absent under the Northern European colonial powers until after the Haitian Revolution and the reconfiguration of imperial systems that followed .... In any case, Spanish/Portuguese language and Catholic religion were made freely available and accessible to all Iberian colonial subjects in the Afro-Atlantic, being held up as norms to which all, including the enslaved, could aspire, but also being imposed as norms to which all would be obliged to conform. (p. 39)

On the other hand, Haiti's encounters with the Roman Catholic Church were unlike those of Cuba and the Dominican Republic, first because it was colonized by the French, many of whom were Calvinist Huguenot Protestants, after it was ceded to them by the Spanish under the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, and secondly because the first successful and permanent overthrow of a plantation regime by the enslaved in the Americas led to the independence of Haiti in 1804, at which point ties with the Vatican were severed until the Concordat of 1860. Edmonds and González (2010) outline the early history of the church in Haiti in this way:

The first priests arrived at the turn of the sixteenth century, initially Franciscans and Dominicans, two religious orders that played a pivotal role in the evangelization of not only Africans but also the Indigenous populations throughout the Spanish-speaking Americas. From 1697 until independence in 1804, the French colony was named St. Domingue. Priests in the colony owned slaves, and the transatlantic slave trade was legitimated by religious imperialism under the guise of saving Indigenous and African souls. (p. 58)

Citing Archaeologist José R. Oliver, Edmonds and González note that the French slave trade brought approximately 600,000 slaves to Haiti by 1787, mainly from the region occupied by the present-day nations of Benin, Nigeria, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (p. 58). These Africans arrived with their own religious practices which they combined with those of Catholicism and those of the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean. However, the French passed laws that formally required the enslaved to adhere to fundamental Catholic principles. The colonial authorities restricted gatherings of the enslaved without the presence of a Catholic priest and threatened slaves with death if they played drums in religious

ceremonies, engaged in non-Catholic religious rituals, or attempted to leave their plantations for religious practices not formally approved by the Catholic church.

The preceding paragraphs offer a glimpse of early colonial Catholicism and support Levine's (1979) thesis that the relationship between religion and politics is:

both mutual and multifaceted; mutual because religion and politics have evolved together over the years, taking material and symbolic support from one another, and multifaceted because it embraces interinstitutional conflict and accommodation as well as more subtle and elusive exchanges whereby religious and political orders gave legitimacy and moral authority to one another. (p. 5)

During the 1600s, a major shift occurred in the dominant paradigm of colonialism in the Americas, as the pre-capitalist economics and pre-racialized politics of the Catholic Spanish and Portuguese were superseded by the capitalist economics and racialized politics of the Calvinist Protestant Dutch, English, and (Huguenot) French. As Faraclas (2021) explains, the Calvinist Dutch spearheaded this shift as they waged what they considered a 'Holy War' against Catholic Spain:

Between 1620 and 1650, the Dutch reorganized sugar production ... as a more capitalistic type of enterprise, combining Dutch and Sephardic financial expertise, trade networks and production techniques .... This new model of capitalistic production of sugar as a world commodity depended crucially on the transformation of Afro-Atlantic societies from 'colorist'/pre-racialized societies with *castas* to completely racialized societies ... to ensure much higher levels of labor exploitation and lower levels of *marronage* ... As Calvinists, the Dutch believed that their monetary wealth was proof that they were 'the elect', i.e. those who were 'chosen' by God and predestined for heaven. They also believed that the lack of wealth of the enslaved was proof that Africans were damned by God and predestined for



hell. Therefore, the Dutch were not generally interested in sharing their church, their language and their lifeways with the enslaved peoples of African descent on their plantations... (p. 25)

Protestantism began in the 16th century in Germany, when “On 31 October 1517, Martin Luther, until then an unknown monk from Wittenberg in Saxony, voiced his objections against a series of practices of the Catholic Church” (Cantoni, 2012, p. 505). Cantoni explains that Luther’s 95 theses, a list of propositions criticizing the corruption that riddled the Catholic Church at the time, was not only a moral document, but a political one, which inserted itself into “power struggles between [Holy Roman] Emperor, Pope, and territorial lords as well as the support given to Luther by his [own] territorial lord, Frederick III of Saxony” (p. 505). According to the digital dictionary at the vocabulary.com website, the etymology of the word Protestant, can be traced to the Latin word, *protestari*, which means to publicly declare, testify, or protest.

But it was not the more mainstream Lutheran form of Protestantism that was to predominate in the colonial Caribbean. Most of those who directed the Dutch, English, and French colonial enterprises adhered to the more radical Calvinist “Reformed” form of Protestantism, as promulgated by French theologian Jean Calvin and others from the 1530s onward. In their virulent anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda, English Calvinists “instruct[ed] the nation that it had a moral responsibility to establish colonies in the Americas, where it could spread pure religion, instead of allowing the Catholics to dominate the area with its corrupt form of Christianity” (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 65). First the Dutch, then the English and finally the French used a combination of ideological (Calvinist), economic (capitalist), and innovative military strategies to establish their political dominance in the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas.

The first island in the Caribbean to be successfully occupied by the Northern Europeans was St. Kitts, which was briefly controlled by both the English and the French in the 1620s. After both were expelled by the Spanish, the English returned as sole rulers over the island in the 1630s. During the 1630s and 1640s, the English extended their control over other islands of the eastern Caribbean such as Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat, and Barbados; the French established themselves in Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Martin; and the Dutch gained control over Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire off the coast of Venezuela, as well as over Saba, St. Eustatius, and St. Maarten in the northeastern Caribbean. Many of these islands passed from one colonial power to another over their turbulent histories, and St. Maarten/St. Martin remains under the control of two colonial powers, the Dutch and the French up until the present day. By the latter part of the 1600s, the English had seized control over Jamaica and other areas of the Western Caribbean, and the French had taken the western part of Hispaniola to establish their colony St. Domingue, which was to become Haiti after independence. All in all, most of the Caribbean islands that the Spanish crown had laid claim to since the 1500s became the possessions of the Dutch, English, and French from the mid-1600s onward.

Because the colonial classes of the Netherlands, England and France were primarily Calvinist, they showed little interest in converting the Indigenous and African descended peoples whom they enslaved in the Caribbean up until they found themselves obliged to completely reconfigure their colonial enterprises by the successes of the Haitian Revolution at the beginning of the 1800s. In many cases, this provided opportunities for other Christian denominations, including the Catholics, to evangelize the enslaved during the 1600s and 1700s. This is in fact what happened in Haiti as well as in Curaçao, where Edmonds and González (2010, p. 68) report that the conversion of the enslaved was left first to the Catholic diocese of Caracas, then placed

directly under the Vatican, subsequently transferred to Franciscans from Holland, and finally became a provisional diocese led by a delegate of the Pope, Martinus J. Niewindt, who consolidated Curaçaoan parishes, schools, and social service organizations. Edmonds and González suggest that “the Dutch ruling class tolerated the Catholic Church because of its usefulness in placating the slaves and discouraging them from militant activities” specifically since the slaves were denied social gatherings and the Church was seen as a “haven” for them (2010, pp. 68-69). While the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church served the colonial classes of Curaçao, it was not as strong there as it was in Dutch Suriname, where it became the official religion of the colony in 1667 (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 69). Even though some of the Dutch colonizers were Lutherans, the Dutch Reformed Church received financial support from the Dutch West India Company colonial government and the Lutherans did not.

The reluctance of the Calvinist colonial ruling classes of the English Caribbean to include the enslaved in their church was similar to that of the Dutch. The English considered the enslaved to be heathens who had no right to become Christians. Planters used their religion to foster exclusion and ignored Galatians 3:28 (*New King James Version*) “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Church doors served as bulletin boards for announcements in the interests of the slaveholders and the pulpit was used to justify enslavement. Gerbner (2018) points out that:

The Church [of England] stood together with the colonial government as an instrument of planter power .... [and] .... local vestries were able to consolidate control over the church in Barbados. Recognizing this imperial context is critical for understanding how and why Protestantism came to play such an important role in defining and maintaining the slave system that developed on the island. (p. 39)

Gerbner also notes that by the 1640s, the term Christian itself became a synonym for a person of European descent:

This shift in taxonomy was due, in part, to the “sugar revolution” that transformed the labor system of the island. As Barbados became a society with a majority slave population, Christianity increasingly became used as an ethnic indicator, juxtaposed with the word “negro.” ... The taxonomy provided an implicit justification for slavery by suggesting that “negroes” were “heathen” and thus could be legitimately enslaved. (p. 42)

In order to prevent the two groups from unifying against their common oppressors, the English colonial ruling classes extended the term ‘Christian’ to European descended indentured servants while discouraging its use to refer to non-European descended slaves. These indentured ‘Christian’ servants included poor whites, captured soldiers, political prisoners, European workers, and Irish Catholics. By establishing this discursive difference, the English ruling classes were able to “reorganize the entire labor force of the island” in their imperial interests (p. 45).

Kristen Block (2012) explains how the labeling of “Christians” and “Negros” as two groups in opposition to each other “was not a matter of religion, it was about putting in place a morally defensible political economy that yielded profits —the plantation model—one increasingly defined by racialized labor” (p. 144). Block also mentions the moral economy operationalized by the colonists “that addressed the intertwined issues of religion and race in the colonies, in which “Christian” or “white” servants were to be uniformly treated with more humanity than Africans and their descendants” (p. 144). Block concludes that, by excluding them from the class of ‘Christians,’ the enslaved could be treated without any moral or ethical reservations “as objects to be bartered and traded, sold and mortgaged; they were treated as livestock, sometimes even given the same kinds of pet names. Most lived and died without any record, without names” (p. 151).

The Haitian Revolution changed the political, economic, ideological, and social landscape of the Americas. Faraclas (2021) observes that:

European imperialism undergoes an existential crisis triggered by the successes not only of the Haitian Revolution, but also of a multitude of other resistance struggles led by enslaved people and maroons throughout the Americas. This existential crisis obliges the Northern European colonial classes to substantially reconfigure their political, ideological, economic and other agendas in order to reimpose imperial domination. These paradigmatic changes include a gradual replacement of chattel slavery with wage slavery in the colonies ...[and] a gradual replacement of coercive domination with discursive domination, including the propagation of imperial discourses of ‘the white man’s burden’ that gave new impetus to efforts under all of the colonial powers toward the internalization of hegemonic norms by the working classes, through the imposition of the nuclear family, universal evangelization, universal education, etc. (p. 34)

From 1800 onward, the Dutch, the English and the French began not only to extend membership in their churches to people of non-European descent, but actually initiated a systematic process designed to force people of non-European descent to conform to the European linguistic, cultural, and religious norms of the colonizing power. As the enslaved gradually attained emancipation over the course of the 1800s, the metal chains of chattel slavery were replaced by the mental chains of ideological allegiance and subservience to the colonizer, chains which were forged by indoctrination in colonial churches and colonial schools. Under this new colonial regime, Calvinist fundamentalist churches gradually came to play an increasingly important role.

Since the 1960s, when many of the islands of the Caribbean achieved their nominal independence from their former colonial rulers, these Calvinist fundamentalist churches have seen

a spectacular rise in popularity, as they have become one of the main instruments through which Caribbean peoples are discursively and ideologically beaten into submission to the neo-colonial globalized world order of the 21st century. Levine (1979) states that “religious notions of hierarchy, authority, and obedience reflect and reinforce the pattern of existing social and political arrangements to such an extent that the two orders often seem indistinguishable” (p. 5).

Since the focus of this dissertation is on Christian discourse in the Caribbean, attention has been directed primarily at Christianity in the region. However, the intention is not to render invisible other religious practices that have not only left an important and lasting mark on the history of the Caribbean but have also often played a key role in resistance to enslavement, colonialism, and neo-colonialism. Therefore, when examining the artistry and meaning behind Stanley Joseph Greaves’s *There is a meeting here tonight* series, a collection of 14 acrylics on canvas on ply composed between 1992 and 2001, obeah-rituals will be explored as they are featured or alluded to in some of the pieces.

### **Christianity in Puerto Rico**

It was on November 19, 1493, that Christopher Columbus arrived in Borikén, as the archipelago was then called by some of its indigenous inhabitants. The discursive influence of Catholicism began immediately as Columbus renamed the island San Juan Bautista, in reference to St. John the Baptist, the ascetic Jewish prophet recognized in Christianity as a forerunner of Jesus, although Puerto Rico (‘Rich Port’) later became the formal name as large quantities of gold were found on the island by the Spaniards (Duany, 2017, p. 9). From the moment Spanish colonization arrived in Puerto Rico, so did Catholicism. Together, the two institutions transplanted their political, economic, and religious structures, violently attacking the Indigenous people, and transporting many of them as slaves. “In 1511, Pope Julius II established the Archdiocese of San

Juan as one of the first three ecclesiastical provinces of the Catholic Church in the Americas” (Duany, pp. 19-20). The Catholic Church effectively retained exclusive control not only over religion, but also over education in Puerto Rico until the late 1800s. The notion of freedom of religion was unheard of until around the 1860s when an Anglican congregation was formed in the town of Ponce and an Anglican school was founded in Vieques. Both of these Anglican projects had to be pre-approved by the Spanish Crown, and even then, there was a concern that these represented threats to the Catholic Church.

“Spanish missionary priests sought to “save souls” by imposing their religious beliefs and customs on the Indigenous inhabitants and later African slaves. ...[Overall,] a Catholic worldview permeated colonial Puerto Rican culture through folk beliefs, customs, icons, prayers, and devotions” (Duany, 2017, p. 20). An example of this which is still evident today is how every one of the main towns of the 78 municipalities into which the archipelago has been administratively divided has a central plaza that includes the town hall (*la alcaldía*) with a Catholic church situated across from it. This architectural configuration serves as a notifier and a reminder that colonial/neo-colonial politics and Christian religion have been and will continue to be interconnected. At the level of individual households, spirituality and expressions of faith are many times manifested through the presence of household altars, often with the Virgin Mary encased in a shrine near the entrance, as well as through the presence of rosaries and carvings, which often represent the patron saint of the local town. Nonetheless, up until the late 1700s, it appears that “the process of evangelization was partial and superficial in ample sectors of the population, especially among the peasantry in the most remote areas,” for Catholic influence remained concentrated in the few urban centers that were actually under colonial control before 1800 (pp. 20-21).

Catholicism also made its mark on language in Puerto Rico. There are popular phrases and sayings used today that contain references to church doctrine and the Bible. One example, often said in three different ways, is: ¡*Ave María!* ¡*Ave María Purísima!* or ¡*Ave María Purísima, sin pecado concebida!* This is a plea to the Virgin Mary which can best be translated as “Hail, purest Mary, conceived without sin.” Puerto Ricans tend to use this expression when they are surprised by something, are enduring stress, or are experiencing a strong emotion. Another example is *A quien Dios se lo dio, San Pedro se lo bendiga* [To whom God gave (something), may Saint Peter bless (it)]. This is typically said by Puerto Ricans to express that things happen by God’s will and Saint Peter can only obey and bless what God has permitted. This same expression is sometimes articulated using the name of a different patron saint. There are numerous other adages with religious denotations or connotations and while some seem to show a historical Catholic imprint, others are neutral, and some can be identified as alluding to Protestantism. (e.g. *A cada santo le llega su día.* [Each saint has his day. / Everyone will have his or her moment of glory. / Everyone gets what he or she deserves.] *El hombre propone y Dios dispone.* [Man proposes and God disposes.] *Le dieron como pandereta de culto.* [They hit him like a tambourine is hit during a service.]

Along with the colonial invading forces of the United States, Calvinist Protestantism also arrived in Puerto Rico in 1898, although some less radical Protestant churches had prior presence on the archipelago. At first Protestantism was seen as “an alien importation from the United States and entirely antagonistic” to Catholicism, which had been the dominant religion for approximately four centuries (Duany, 2017, pp. 118, 129). The colonial authorities of the United States explicitly promulgated an official discourse that their mission was to “civilize” the people of Puerto Rico to make them more like North Americans in terms of their language, culture, attitudes, lifeways, and



religion. “In 1899, Protestant congregations – Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists – divided the Island into four regions to facilitate their missionary work ... other denominations later arrived...such as Pentecostals in 1916 ... and Congregation of Mita” (p. 130). Up until the present, the hundreds of sects established on the archipelago by Calvinist fundamentalist Protestant missionaries have shown great disapproval of many Puerto Rican traditions that they believe are products of Spanish colonialism and Catholicism, such as patron saint festivals, the consumption of alcohol, and cockfighting.

As in the rest of the Caribbean, over the course of the 1900s, many Puerto Ricans converted from Catholicism to Calvinist fundamentalist Protestantism. This can be attributed to a variety of factors, including, in the earliest years, general discontentment with the cruelty of Spanish colonialism, and by extension, the Catholic Church. The substantial enticements offered by the well-funded Protestant missionaries have also played a role here, such as “incentives to read the Gospel, the sense of belonging to a spiritual community, the active participation in religious ceremonies, the extensive system of health care, ... spiritual healing practices .... catchy songs, the convenience of marriage ceremonies for divorced people, and educational and social services” (pp. 130-131). Since fundamentalist Protestant congregations emphasize the accumulation of wealth through hard work, managing one’s finances, and saving money, many have become ‘mini-mafias’, where new converts are given access to loans, employment, and other business opportunities. According to Duany (2017) and a 2014 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, Puerto Rico is considered one of the Latin American countries with the highest share of Protestants, some 33 percent of the population (p. 129).

## **Christianity in Guyana**

Guyana is located on the northeastern coast of South America. It is considered one of the smallest countries of the continent along with Suriname and Uruguay. The early history of Guyana establishes that its first inhabitants were Indigenous groups of Arawakan, Cariban, and Waraoan language speakers. Guyana (Guiana) is an Amerindian word which means the land of many waters. This name is inspired by its numerous rivers and waterfalls; its four major rivers are the Essequibo, Berbice, Courantyne, and Demerara which all empty into the Atlantic Ocean. Colonial history has recorded that in 1498 Christopher Columbus sighted the land of Guyana and claimed it on behalf of Spain, although the first Europeans to settle there were mainly the Dutch who founded trading stations upriver in the late 1500s. In the colonial era, the Guianas were often referred to by the colonial classes as the “Wild Coast,” given the fierce and initially very successful resistance of their indigenous peoples to colonization as well as their climate and terrain, which were particularly inhospitable in the eyes of the European invaders (BBC News, 2019).

By 1620, the Dutch West India Company had secured its presence in Guyana with armed bases and slave importation from Africa for the development of sugar and tobacco plantations. The Dutch Reformed Church ministered only to the Dutch settlers in their homes. Therefore, there was a great absence of church buildings. Specifically, in the Dutch colony of Berbice which later became part of Guyana, Lutheran and Presbyterian missionary activity began and influenced a large part of the planter class. Some Moravian missionaries, members of a Protestant religious order with roots in what today is known as Czechia, were given permission to work with the enslaved in the late 1730s. Since the Moravians’ evangelizing strategies involved teaching the enslaved to read and write, this brought about conflict with the plantation owners, and they were soon forced to leave. A brick building constructed by slaves became the first Lutheran church in

1753 in Berbice to minister to the planters. Other church buildings were constructed after. The enslaved, however, were predominately Muslims or practiced traditional African spiritualities which were prohibited by the planters as heathen superstitions. The teaching of Christianity to the enslaved under Dutch rule was eventually permitted as a method of hegemonic control. This resulted in some slave conversions, as well as in the emergence of religious practices such as obeah, that incorporate indigenous, African, and Christian beliefs. (BBC News, 2019)

During the period of 1780-1813, colonial governance in Guyana alternated between the Dutch, French, and British. The latter gained absolute control in 1831 in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Four years later, the abolishment of slavery occurred and indentured workers primarily from South Asia began to work the plantations. “Between 1845 and 1917, more than 400,000 Indian indentures were transported to the Caribbean with the largest concentration settling in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana” (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 3). Because Guyana was originally colonized mostly by Calvinist Dutch and French businessmen, there was very little done to evangelize the enslaved. However, as a post-Haitian Revolution British colony and with the arrival of the indentured workers from India,

the Church of England (also called the Anglican Church) ... was as an integral part of the colonial venture, reflecting the situation in England, where civil and ecclesiastical authorities were closely allied. Settlers and governors were enjoined to preserve the integrity and authority of the Church. In some colonies, certain religious observances such as church attendance, the religious education of children, and even family devotions (Barbados) were legally mandated. (Edmonds & González, 2010, p. 71)

According to Pinnington (1968), the Church of England was initially able to work in evangelizing indentured workers and non-whites overall since there was financial stability from England to pay

for the clergy (p. 357). Nonetheless, England soon required the British local government of Guyana to take on this responsibility. This became a challenge, and the language barrier between the colonizers and the indentured workers also hindered the church's work from progressing.

Catholicism contested Protestantism in Guyana with the arrival of Portuguese laborers in 1835, who insisted for years that a Catholic priest come attend to them in their language, a demand that was ultimately met. By 1857, the Catholic Church was evangelizing East Indians and Africans on the sugar plantations (Menezes, 1988, p. 63). Catholicism strongly persisted approximately until Guyana gained independence in 1966. This is because the Portuguese immigrants had gained substantial control over the economy and politics. Although the interests of the Portuguese were generally aligned with those of the British, enmity began to emerge against them once Guyana became independent, at which time many Guyanese Portuguese emigrated. This brought about a decline of Catholicism in the country, in favor of Protestant denominations, especially Pentecostals and Adventists.

According to a 46-page document revised in July 2016 titled, *The Census Road: Compendium 2 Population Composition by the Bureau of Statistics Guyana*, in 2012 the largest religious group in the country was listed as 'Hindu' with 24.8 percent of the national population. Hinduism was introduced in Guyana with the arrival of South Asian indentured workers, and despite the Church of England's attempts to proselytize this population, the majority refused to renounce their convictions. At that time, many of these indentured workers planned to return to South Asia and therefore, they wanted to maintain their religion. They also were suspicious about the connection between the Church of England and the British Government. While Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Muslims constituted less than ten percent of the population, Pentecostals and other Christian groups constituted 22.8 and 20.8 percent of the country's population,

respectively. When enumerating religious affiliation in terms of gender, there was equal female and male representation in all groups, with the exception of the group of Non-Believers, among whom men exceeded women. Significant growth was seen among Protestants during the intercensal period, specifically among Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses. (Bureau of Statistics, Guyana, 2016, p. 33)

### **Obeah: Its Historical Context**

In the text, *Obeah: Healing and Protection in West Indian Slave Life* by Kenneth M. Bilby and Jerome S. Handler, it is explained that the Guianas are a region of the Caribbean with an extraordinarily significant number of African cultural influences, which are often incorporated into religious practices, such as obeah. For example, in French Guiana and the rest of the Guianas, “present-day Maroons maintain semi-autonomous, so-called ‘tribal’ societies. Their enslaved ancestors escaped from the coastal plantations into the interior forests during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and founded societies beyond the reach of their enslavers” (p. 154).

Beginning in the 1980s, Bilby conducted fieldwork for approximately twenty years among a group called the Aluku (Boni) who practice obeah or *obia*. The Aluku define *obia* as “medicine, remedy or healing” (Bilby & Handler, 2004, p. 155). Other groups of Maroons like the Ndyuka in Dutch-controlled Suriname also recognize obeah as a positive force of protection and benefit. In contrast to several online dictionaries that provide denotations for obeah that are associated with sorcery, witchcraft, wizardry, conjuring, and trickery, Bilby and Handler state that Dutch colonial archival sources “rarely if ever denote malevolent sorcery meant to inflict harm” in reference to obeah (p. 155). Nevertheless, “European interpretations of obeah were shaped not only by their racist ideologies, ethnocentric religious beliefs, and their own cultural perceptions of witchcraft

and sorcery, but also by the limited opportunities they had to gain information” (Bilby & Handler, 2004, p. 156).

Bilby and Handler indicate that obeah “is not an organized religion” and prefer to argue that the word, obeah, most likely derives from Igbo or a similar language of the Niger Delta, in which the term *dibia* means doctor or healer and *abia* is knowledge acquired by them, including the knowledge of herbal healing (pp. 153 and 163). They also claim that obeah has two principal characteristics regardless of where it is practiced:

“(1) ... [obeah] involves the manipulation and control of supernatural forces, usually through the use of material objects and recitation of spells and (2) ... [obeah is] primarily concerned with divination (e.g., foretelling, finding lost or stolen goods, ascertaining the cause of illness), healing and bringing good fortune, and protection from harm – although it was sometimes used malevolently to harm others. (pp. 153 -154)

If these two attributes are analyzed through the lens of resistance, it can be said that the maroons and the enslaved used obeah to combat the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual cruelty they endured at the hands of the colonizers. They needed hope to imagine a better future, aid in reclaiming their identities, guardianship from the abuse of the colonizers, restoration of wholeness, and transcendence of suffering.

...The spiritual power of some obeah practitioners could be translated into political leadership and resistance to, or aggression against, white authority – surely one major reason Whites found obeah so objectionable and threatening. Throughout the West Indies, obeah men were alleged to have played prominent roles in slave revolts and conspiracies... (Bilby & Handler, 2004, pp. 160 -161)

This is reason enough for the European mental model of obeah to be one that erases any and all positive elements and maximizes the concept of diabolical evil. Therefore, to suppress it, “obeah became a felony punishable by death or transportation and was viewed as a monolithic form of sorcery or ‘black magic’” (Bilby & Handler, 2004, p. 161). The appendix of Bilby and Handler’s work offers evidence concerning anti-obeah laws in the Anglophone Caribbean. Under the section titled, “British Guiana/Guyana,” a timeline is provided beginning with a law outlawing obeah which was passed in 1855 and passed again in 1893. In the 1958 Criminal Code of British Guiana/Guyana a punishment of three months of imprisonment or a fine was imposed on “whoever practiced obeah, or by any occult means or by any assumption of supernatural power or knowledge intimidates ... or pretends to discover any lost or stolen thing ... or inflict any disease, loss, damage, or personal injury...” (p. 170). This law persisted until 1966, the year of Guyana’s independence. In 1973, under the governance of the Prime Minister Forbes Burnham, it was understood that he sought to revoke ordinances outlawing obeah and many began to practice obeah more openly. However, no official documentation substantiates the repeal of the anti-obeah laws. In fact, as recently as October 2018, news articles with headlines such as, Guyana considers removal of obeah and witchcraft from law books / Guyana scrubs witchcraft, colonial laws / and /Witches are free to operate in Guyana, after dismissal of colonial laws were published reporting on the government’s intentions to remove the practice of obeah from the criminal code, but no such measure has thus far been announced.

Despite this, it is only fair to mention that Bilby and Handler’s text as well as those of others acknowledge that although “obeah helped enslaved people solve many problems...it could also be remarkably violent and dangerous” (Browne, 2011, p. 459). Obeah is often characterized as ambiguous for “it could be used to heal or to harm, to preserve life or to destroy it, and was thus

both respected and feared by slaves” (p. 459). In any case, the harm, destruction, and fear provoked by obeah at times can be seen at least in part as stemming from a desire to exercise one’s power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint, which is the dictionary definition of freedom. If this is so, obeah can be considered to have played a role in challenging the coercive and discursive power of the colonial authorities.

### **Conclusion of Chapter One**

This introductory chapter provides preliminary background information that contextualizes the discussion in the chapters that follow. Providing this glimpse into the religious history of the Caribbean with a focus on Puerto Rico and Guyana is helpful in explaining the biblical references found not only in the oral and written discourse of political analyst Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte, but also in the political commentaries manifested through the paintings of Stanley Joseph Greaves. In general, the present study proposes to answer the following questions in relation to Fonseca and Greaves:

1. What role does religious language and symbolism play in the contestatory work of Fonseca and Greaves?
2. How does the incorporation of religious language and symbolism by Fonseca and Greaves impact their audiences?

The chapter that follows presents a discussion of the theoretical frameworks which will be used to answer these questions.



## **Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

This research examines how language, in its variety of forms, whether verbal, nonverbal, written or drawn as in printed material or in images, respectively, can function as an efficacious tool of resistance against the morally depraved conduct of politicians. Through the study of the work by Caribbean public figures such as political analyst Josúe “Jay” Fonseca Aponte and graphic artist Stanley Joseph Greaves, whose use of words by the former and images and symbols by the latter incorporate satire and religious references, an intertextuality between the two is readily identifiable. Both influence their audiences, vesting in the average citizen the courage to speak out and openly object the words and deeds of supposed local leaders who engage in unethical practices which have caused a crisis greatly affecting the systems of health, education, as well as the general economy and other institutions and pivotal aspects of their respective societies.

The objective of this study is to analyze the underlying significances of Fonseca’s and Greaves’s compositions in terms of their use of language, as explained above, to identify and single out the governmental leaders’ abuse of power. Teun A. van Dijk’s critical discourse studies and his work on critical discourse analysis were the main theoretical approaches and methodological guidelines followed to understand Fonseca’s use of language. To comprehend Greaves’s art pieces, Ferdinand de Saussure’s and Charles Sanders Peirce’s theories will be elaborated upon later in this chapter, but a greater focus will be given to Stuart Hall’s representation theory.

### **Intertextuality**

Intertextuality is a term and concept coined by the Bulgarian-French philosopher, Julia Kristeva, who was inclined to combine her thoughts with those presented by Saussure. It is “text as an interplay of texts not as a singular entity” (Raj, 2015, p. 80). This is the idea that one work (a literary text, musical composition, painting, movie, etc.) comes to exist because of its interaction

with other works. It is to borrow from a prior work and transform what is taken by integrating it into one's own work. Additionally, it can be understood as the process of adding a layer of depth to a work. This is the idea behind Mary Orr's view that "intertextuality names a text's relations to other texts in the larger 'mosaic' of cultural practices and their expression" (2010). The metaphor of the mosaic seamlessly represents the connection between Fonseca and Greaves because, similar to the small tile pieces of glass, terracotta, marble, and others that fuse together to make a design, when considering Fonseca's and Greaves's works in light of one another, it is evident that the two are inlaid and intricately linked. For example, Fonseca's reference to Matthew 14:13-21, Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand, to interpret the actions of political parties can be adopted in Greaves's painting titled *Election results* in which a fish hangs over a wooden board that has a bread loaf and a microphone.

It is as if Fonseca's and Greaves's works are dialogical. One converses with the other. However, it is significant to acknowledge that the intertextuality between the two is latent. This is so as they were born in distinct countries and time periods. They do not know each other. However, their works mirror one another and it is because of

...a wider historical or cultural network in which intertextuality showed itself to be a form of cultural memory inscribed in a verbal work of art, as well as a medium of preserving, refashioning, and erasing the collective memory in a society's historical development.  
(Juvan, 2008, p. 132)

This highlights the two-way avenue of environment, society, and culture influencing an author's work and an author's work influencing the environment, society, and culture. Fonseca and Greaves subconsciously play a role in each other's work. This is in contrast to deliberate intertextuality which is an intentional dependence on someone's work when creating one's own.

## Resistance

Spaces of resistance are inevitable, for the act of resisting comes about when unnatural processes such as imposition, oppression and captivity are exercised. Craton (2003) proposes that resistance cannot “merely include plots and acts of overt rebellion,” for it would be “unduly limiting and misleading” (p. 222). Thereupon, he defines resistance as a “...whole spectrum of activities and behavior, shading from covert sabotage, through manifestations of internal rejection and anomie, to forms of dissimulated acceptance and accommodation that were, perhaps, as subversive as other forms” (p. 222). Craton’s denotations refer particularly to slave resistance, yet they can easily be transferred to defiance or to the refusal to comply in general.

Resistance is the gradual but persistent dismantling of a system or institution. What was once whole or appeared to be whole begins to subsist only in parts and becomes less effective. This alludes to French philosopher, Michel Foucault’s theory that the struggle is not against power, but rather to take power. Foucault expresses “where there is power there is resistance” (1978, p. 95). He perceives resistance as existing within power and not against it. The interaction between two or more forces is what allows for power and resistance to be. For this reason, both are omnipresent, and, in turn, the act of escaping is technically illusory. This is so because, according to Foucault, what actually occurs is not a breaking free from confinement but rather a changing of roles.

Foucault states that “...if power was never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really believe that we should manage to obey it?” (1978, p. 36) He characterizes power as productivity. This proves that all humans have power, and so, they can choose to be submissive to the power, challenge it, and/or exercise it. If the decision made is to challenge power

and exercise it, it is then that the question of how to exercise it arises. There is a myriad of mediums.

In their book *Practices of resistance in the Caribbean: Narratives, aesthetics and politics*, the authors affirm that

Resistant interventions and practices also feature prominently across Caribbean artistic-aesthetic, socio-political, and theoretical contexts. In music and dance, written texts and oral histories, linguistic and religious practices, pamphlets, essays, journalistic and academic writing, articulations of post- and/or decolonial discontent, and forms of protest express discursive and epistemic rebellion against histories and experiences of oppression, dispossession, and exploitation. Historically, enslaved Africans practiced their resistance through forms of religious syncretism as well as oral histories, dances, and songs. Genres such as the ‘slave narrative,’ the *Testimonio*, or more recent so-called ‘neo-slave narratives,’ have introduced voices, subject positions, and patterns of narration and aesthetics that question Eurocentric canons. (Beushausen et al., 2018, p. 6)

All of these forms of expression fueled by resistance are aimed at achieving social change. Therefore, it can be said that resistance is “agitation on behalf of humanity” as expressed by Nigerian political activist, Wole Soyinka (*Al Jazeera English*, 2014). Resistance comes from an inner tension and a desire to take power for the greater good. Thus, the definitions and examples of resistance that refer to slaves are still applicable today for as stated by Soyinka, “the global community is coming to an awareness that certain problems are not specific to certain areas [or certain periods of time] ...” (*Al Jazeera English*, 2014).

## **The Coalescence of Religion and Politics**

The colonization of the Caribbean inevitably involved a religious invasion which led to a fusion of doctrines and, as asserted by Gerbner (2018), religion was a building block in the establishment of slavery and the notion of race. Subsequently, “the church in the Caribbean has had a paradoxical relationship to society. At times the church used the Bible to challenge the assumptions on which ‘slaveocracy’ thrived and at other times the church and the Bible became instruments of oppression” (Erskine, 2014, p. 10). Afro-Caribbean people viewed and may continue to view religion as a “tool for dismantling the shackles of slavery,” a method of resistance, solace, and a link to their ancestors, among other things (Erskine, 2014, p. 10). On the other hand, religious discourse in politics, both now (post colonialism, neocolonialism) and then (colonialism), has been used as a persuasive technique aimed at gaining control and manipulating. The unavoidable link between politics and religion brings about the following idea: although political discourse may often contain religious imagery and vocabulary that is self-legitimizing, biblical verses and symbolism can also be inserted in political resistance communication as a mechanism for subverting corruption.

The books in the Bible contain substantial figurative language, and when biblical verses are integrated into political communication, they become part of the public discourse. Likewise, biblical symbolism can be inserted into artwork and thus becomes a part of the visual imagination that is typically accessible to all. This is particularly interesting when considering the framing theory accredited to Erving Goffman (1974). Entman (1993), as cited in the article “Figurative framing: Shaping public discourse through metaphor, hyperbole, and irony”, defines framing as “selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral

evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 410-411). The latter implies that the way information is presented to an audience affects the decisions audience members make with regard to how they will process the information. “Figurative language types like metaphor, hyperbole, and irony are important in shaping public discourse, because these figures contain important linguistic and conceptual content about the issue under discussion” (Burgers et al., 2016, p. 410). The concept of figurative framing is assessed within the four processes of framing research: frame building, frame setting, individual-level effects, and feedback loop.

Frame building focuses “on when and why societal actors decide to use (which) figurative frames for which purpose” (Burgers et al., 2016, p. 422). Factors such as the topic to be discussed, ideological perspectives, and characteristics of the medium all come into play. Burgers, Konijn, and Steen argue that figurative frames with metaphors and hyperboles are “used relatively more often if knowledge about the problem is lacking in the audience” (p. 422). Thus, for the common citizen who is frequently oblivious or indifferent to political issues, figurative language is useful in maintaining or attacking an argument. As to frame setting, it is about determining what should be presented in the public sphere, when, and the impact that these decisions (the what and when) will have on the audience. For this component, Burgers, Konijn, and Steen claim that figurative frames are more memorable, for they typically clarify a complex topic and/or offer an innovative way to think about an issue (p. 423). This thought supports the use of biblical references in both political discourse and political resistance communication.

Individual-level effects concern how frames can leave an impression on the audience’s beliefs, attitudes, and/or behavior. Therefore, it is about contemplating how a figurative frame can place a positive or negative weight on an individual’s standpoint. Lastly, the feedback loop

“pertains how journalists [politicians, political analysts, writers, artists, etc.] use audience feedback to perpetuate or change their framing of an issue over a longer period of time” (Burgers et al., 2016, p. 424). Overall, figurative framing theory indicates how perceptions of society are organized and how positive and negative associations have a cause-and-effect relationship with ways of thinking and acting.

### **Van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis: The Ideological Square Model**

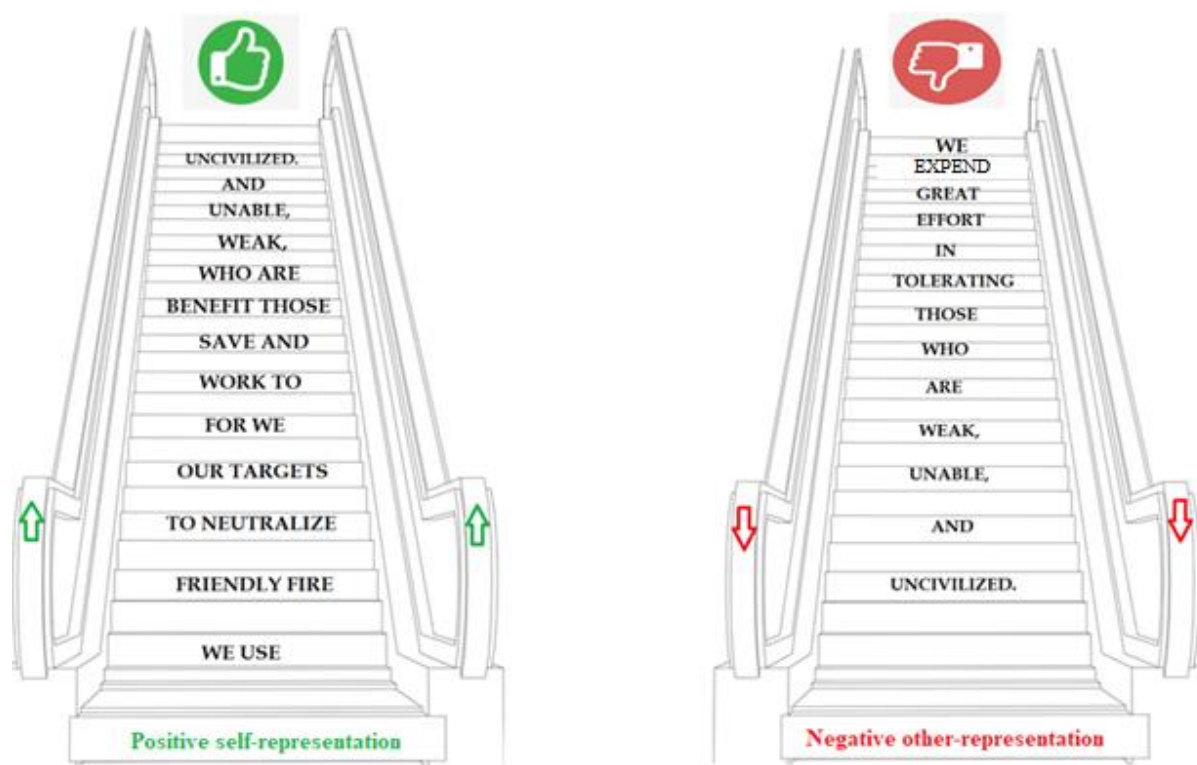
Van Dijk’s critical discourse studies / critical discourse analysis and specifically his Ideological Square Model incorporates a “self-other” schema that focuses on the “us versus them” binary in which there is a positive self-representation and a negative other-representation. The latter reinforces conjectural ideas and practices. The Ideological Square Model emphasizes a polarizing macro-strategy. The speaker and his or her allies are considered “us” or “the in-group” and his or her opponents are “them” or “the out-group.” The in-group mitigates its own bad actions and statements and hides or mitigates the out-group’s efforts and contributions. Hence, it is all about legitimizing and delegitimizing. Van Dijk proposes two stages of analysis to the Ideological Square Model: macro analysis, that has four principal strategies, and micro analysis, that presents 25 discursive strategies (van Dijk, 1998, p. 245).

The macro analysis strategies can be compared to a set of escalators. These are always in movement as long as there is electricity (power). One goes upward and the other goes downward. The escalator that moves up to the next floor is the positive self-representation. This is the in-group, the “us,” that aims at surmounting the other. The in-group ascends by preserving and promoting its so-called exemplary attributes and by blocking and demoting all adverse traits. In an effort to remain on top as the dominant and elite, the steps climbed are those that justify, rationalize, legitimize, and perpetuate inequality, racism, and injustice (Strauss and Feiz, 2013).

On the other hand, the out-group is the escalator that moves downward. Van Dijk calls this the negative other-representation. The in-group repetitively attempts to minimize the out-group's strengths and maximize what they believe are their weaknesses. This is because the "other" is perceived as different, abnormal, and inferior. Since the in-group feels threatened by the out-group, it focuses on marginalizing the other. The goal is to rise by pushing the other down.

**Figure 2**

*Escalator Metaphor for van Dijk's Macro Analysis*



*Note.* Own Work.

The sentences on the escalators are examples of the type of language an in-group would use to maintain a good standing while the out-group is portrayed as the ultimate antagonist. The phrase, friendly fire, is a figure of speech which can be identified as an oxymoron and a



euphemism. It is an oxymoron because the two terms juxtapose one another in opposition, and it is a euphemism as its purpose is for the audience to feel less confronted by the situation itself. “Friendly fire” is the act of firing weapons to provoke injury or death. However, when looking at the phrase and pronouncing it, the connotation of these opposites implies something less harsh. This is also true with the use of the term ‘neutralize’. In this context, it means to render ineffective, kill, or destroy; however, that is not necessarily the visual image that comes to mind when it is pronounced. Instead of visualizing warfare and destruction when verbalizing the word neutralize, something much less graphic like a weighing balance or a scientific experiment may be envisioned. The verbal phrase ‘save and benefit’ allows for the in-group to be depicted as heroes whose actions are justified for the good of those who allegedly cannot fend for themselves. The ‘others,’ the members of the out-group, are characterized as weak, uneducated, uncivilized, and helpless and the in-group is portrayed as the redeemer who rescues and purportedly acts in the best interest of everyone.

At the macro level, the main concern is the content of the topic being discussed and at the micro level, the focus of the discourse is its lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical qualities. Nonetheless, each correlates with the other. Van Dijk defines the 25 discursive strategies of the micro level as “general strategies of ideological discourse production and also a handy discovery or recognition procedure for ideological analysis of political discourse” (2005, p. 735). These strategies can be categorized by the following functions and many have overlapping functions, mostly in meaning and argumentation:

- a) **Argumentation:** the attempt to make one’s stance on an issue more convincing
- b) **Meaning:** the significance of one’s thoughts and the intention in which they are expressed

c) **Normalization:** the process and range of techniques, tools, and mechanisms employed for imposing, restoring, or sustaining normalcy (Visoka & Lemay-Hébert 2022, p. 2)

d) **Political Strategy:** activities carried out in order to gain control and have an advantage over a group, society, community, etc. especially during times of conflict

e) **Rhetoric:** persuasive use of written and oral language

f) **Topoi:** refers to where a speaker or writer can insert an argument or point when discussing a subject.

g) **Style:** how language is used both meaningfully and systematically

To better understand these discursive strategies, it is best to briefly explain each. Below, they are listed in alphabetical order.

1. **Actor Description (Function – Meaning):** a spoken or written representation of a group to identify who they are and the role they hold in a social and political context
2. **Authority (Function – Argumentation):** the act of mentioning a greater force, an expert, a jurisdiction, etc. to support one's claim in a statement
3. **Burden (Function - Topoi):** a technique that refers to human or financial loss for a specific group so as to victimize the group with the propose of prompting the audience's feelings
4. **Categorization (Function – Meaning):** the process of grouping people with shared political or religious perspectives and opinions
5. **Comparison (Functions – Argumentation and Meaning):** the act of considering the similarities and differences between two persons or groups
6. **Consensus (Function – Political Strategy):** the act of reaching agreements and developing solidarity, in order to offer protection from a threat on a greater scale (i.e., nationally) to a specific group

7. **Counterfactuals (Functions – Argumentation and Meaning):** an argumentative-persuasive tactic that intends to provoke a sense of empathy as it uses hypothetical circumstances to depict what would or would not be if certain conditions were to come about
8. **Disclaimers (Function – Meaning):** the act of presenting the positive traits of a group and simultaneously implying doubt about the latter by expressing terms like *however*, *but*, and *yet*
9. **Euphemism (Functions – Meaning and Rhetoric):** the use of indirect or mild language to delegitimize a negative expression and avoid speaking in a blunt manner
10. **Evidentiality (Functions – Argumentation and Meaning):** the act of displaying creditability by using facts and/or statistics to support one's ideas, beliefs, or opinions
11. **Example/Illustration (Function – Argumentation):** to put effort towards making one's statement believable by referring to either factual or fictional instances
12. **Generalization (Functions – Argumentation and Meaning):** the act of applying the qualities of one person or a small group to a large population
13. **Hyperbole (Function – Rhetoric):** a form of figurative language that depicts someone or something in an exaggerated manner
14. **Implication (Function – Meaning):** the act of speaking with minimal details as to be brief and potentially omit information
15. **Irony (Function – Meaning):** the act of verbalizing a dissimilarity among what one says and what one meant to say
16. **Lexicalization (Function - Style):** the use of particular word choice selected for ideological reasons to describe a person or group either positively or negatively

17. **Metaphor (Functions – Meaning and Rhetoric):** a form of figurative language that presents two unlike things with the objective of pinpointing some common feature
18. **National Self-glorification (Function – Meaning):** to eulogize one's own country to foster a positive image and reputation
19. **Norm Expression (Function – Normalization):** to emphasize a group's norms and values as a way to point out how another group violates these very rules and ideals
20. **Number Game (Functions – Argumentation and Rhetoric):** the act of integrating numbers or statistics into one's statement to enhance one's credibility and authority on a topic
21. **Polarization (Function – Meaning):** to exaggerate differences and overgeneralize as to present two persons or groups at extreme opposing ends
22. **Populism (Function – Political Strategy):** to express support for the common citizen  
In political discourse, populism separates the selected elite from the people, so that the people's well-being is presumed as the motivation behind all actions and decisions.
23. **Presupposition (Function – Meaning):** the act of presuming that an idea is understood as true without any definite evidence to prove its validity
24. **Vagueness (Function – Meaning):** the use of "expressions that do not have well-defined referents, or which refer to fuzzy sets" (van Dijk 2005, p. 739)
25. **Victimization (Function – Meaning):** the act of taking on the role of a victim when speaking to cause the audience to empathize with one's position and therefore, feel unsympathetically towards the out group

Van Dijk's Ideological Square Model is a linguistic tug-of-war. The in-group consistently pulls on the language rope so that the out-group is perceived as contradictory to all that is good,

real, and true. Strauss and Feiz (2013) present five questions that interestingly summarize the gist of van Dijk's Ideological Square Model. They are:

Who must make appointments to see whom for expert advice? Who may speak when and how? Which voices are validated and which are not? Whose voices are censored, silenced, ignored, or devalued? Whose version of the TRUTH is being advanced and how? (p. 321)

When the responses to these questions by a great majority of a population are that the in-group is who is "validated" and whose "TRUTH is being advanced" while the out-group is who is "censored, silenced, ignored, or devalued," then it is evident that a discursive mechanism for domination that is more powerful than coercion has triumphed. This is discursive power, mind control. It is all about "shap[ing] their (the people's) minds in such a way that they will act as we (in-group) want out of their own free will" (van Dijk 1997, p. 19). Furthermore, van Dijk (1998) states, "By controlling the access to public discourse, only specific forms of knowledge and opinions may be expressed and widely circulated, and these may lead to mental models and social representations that are in the interest of the powerful" (p. 162). Fortunately, Fonseca and Greaves have chosen to be like salmon. Yes, salmon, which are anadromous, a Greek term meaning 'running upwards.' Fonseca and Greaves, like salmon, swim against the current, for they refuse to take part in hegemonic acts. They have decided to stand up to those powerful groups, institutions, and/or symbolic elites who consistently attempt to control discourse structures with the goal of propagating social attitudes, ideologies, and socio-cultural knowledge they have on their personally benefiting agendas. This framework for resistance is also part of van Dijk's (2015) schema of the discursive reproduction of power.

### **Ferdinand de Saussure's and Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotic Theories**

Semiotics, in the simplest of definitions, is the study of signs. Yet, what is a sign?

Daniel Chandler, author of the book *Semiotics: The basics*, explains that “semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as ‘signs’ in everyday speech, but of anything which ‘stands for’ something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects” (p. 2). To understand the definition of a sign, one should examine the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce.

Saussure’s theory, which introduced structuralism in linguistics, identifies a sign as having two elements, a signifier and the signified. A signifier is the form (letters, photos, actions, etc.) of the sign. The signified is the concept which that form represents. For a sign to be, it must indeed have both, a signifier and the signified, yet the relationship between the two is arbitrary because they are changeable (Saussure, 1983). Take the word, microphone. According to Saussure’s principles, the sounds [m, k, r] etc. do not have a direct correlation to the tangible equipment that amplifies sound, other than the fact that an implicit social agreement has emerged among speakers of English that those particular sounds pronounced together in a certain order mean ‘microphone.’ Therefore, any other group of sounds could potentially be verbalized to refer to microphone. For this reason, there exists *mikwofòn* (Haitian Creole), *gbohunghohun* (Yoruba), *makarafoon* (Somali), among others. When reading the word microphone in English or any language, typically the idea of the actual device (not a specific one) will come to mind without having a microphone literally present. The word is standing in for the instrument itself.

In contrast, Charles Sanders Peirce, known as one of the founders of the linguistic discipline of pragmatics, devised a model of the sign that consists of three elements: 1) representamen, 2) interpretant, and 3) object. The representamen and the interpretant are more or less equivalent to Saussure’s signifier (form) and signified (concept). Peirce also includes the element ‘object’ which is an extension of the sign because it goes beyond it to incorporate the real

world. Additionally, Peirce recognizes three modes for signs: icon/iconic, index/indexical, and symbol/symbolic. Firstly, iconic signs physically resemble what they evoke, or in the words of Chandler “imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it) – being similar in possessing some of its qualities” (2002, p. 36). An example is a radio personality articulating the bray of a donkey. (Fonseca tends to utter this sound to mock foolish political decisions or actions.) Another example is Alison Chapman-Andrews’s painting titled, *Imitation of birds*, a portrait of Greaves. Secondly, indexical signs demonstrate a direct connection between the signifier and the signified, functioning as an indicator of what is being represented. For instance, Chandler mentions footprints (p. 37) as indexical in a similar way to the shadows portrayed in Greaves’s 2006 works *The portal*, *Passing by*, and *Alley game*. A metaphoric indexicality might be suggested by the dogs repetitively painted in Greaves’s *There is a meeting here tonight*, for dogs are, among others, one of his emblems for “sly and double-talking politicians” (Hadchity, 2020, p. 33). Thirdly, a symbolic sign does not show any transparent or direct connection between the signifier and signified and therefore must be learned as incorporating an arbitrary association between them.

To summarize the concepts of the sign and signifier and link Saussure’s and Peirce’s theories with Hall’s representation theory in the next subsection of this chapter, it is important to acknowledge that semiotics really deals with how culture and society work beyond basic language and the way humans interact with things around them in daily life. An example to expound upon this is to imagine that some individuals come to live in Puerto Rico for the first time having never been to the archipelago before and not knowing anything about it and see the following three logos. The first is a white palm tree over a blue rectangle. A red circle with a centralized silhouette of a man wearing a straw hat is the second logo, and the third one is a white cross over a green rectangle.

At the initial time that they see these logos, these objects will just be exactly what they literally see. This is considered denotation and it is also the sign. Then in due time, the association these individuals make with the logos, what becomes signified in their brain, and what they understand from seeing the logos is the connotation that is based on experiences and cultural understanding. What they read and hear about the logos will affect the connotation they will ultimately formulate with regard to them. Who writes and speaks what people read and hear is fundamental in the construction of connotation.

Consequently, a key aspect of the logos is that they are polysemic (poly = many / semic = meaning). Therefore, everyone who sees the logos will see them with differentiating connotations because of differences in generations, ages, background, what each person has been taught and what each person knows about the logos. For some, when seeing one of the logos, they may think of loyalty and prosperity (positive connotation) and for others seeing the very same logo may generate thoughts of disloyalty and deficiency (negative connotation). Over time, the connotations that are repetitive for each logo become what is referred to as naturalization. This will eventually cause the connotations to influence peoples' thoughts, words, and decisions, specifically during election periods, as the three logos represent the three main political parties in Puerto Rico. This whole thought process beginning with seeing the sign and then what becomes signified in one's brain can also cause stereotypes to emerge which can be rather damaging and limiting. With this said, the following subsection will confirm the notion that the theories mentioned are not isolated from one another, but instead overlap, communicate, and exchange vital information with each other aided by intertextuality.



## Stuart Hall's Representation Theory

Hall's representation theory is connected to media studies. The media take many forms such as print media, publishing, the news media, photography, broadcasting, digital media, advertising, art, and others. All of these media forms claim to represent social, cultural, political, and other realities, but there is a question as to how accurate these representations are, because as the media encode and their audiences decode these representations, they potentially lose their accountability to any empirical reality. So, what is real?

In a video recording by MEF Challenging Media titled *Stuart Hall in lecture: Representation and the media*, Hall defines representation and gives more or less an introduction to his theory.

The word [representation] has a kind of double meaning even in its common sense. ... It does mean to present, to image, to depict, to offer a depiction of something else and the word representation or re-presentation does sort of carry with it the notion that something was there already and through the media has been re-presented. Nevertheless, this notion that somehow representation re-presents a meaning which is already there is a very common idea and on the other hand, one of the ideas that I am going to try to subvert. So, I give you the common sense meaning to try to take it back...There's another understanding of the word representation which also plays a role...We speak of political figures as representing us in some way. We probably don't say that very often these days because you may not think they represent us very well, but they're sort of supposed to represent us and in that sense, they stand in for us...where we can't be, they can be. Both of those ideas [definitions of the word, representation] are kind of brought together in the notion of representation. (Challenging Media, 2006)

In general terms, the idea behind Hall's representation theory is that the media, precisely those who decide what will be exposed to the masses, are the ones that regulate how people see the world. How people feel towards a societal issue, an event, a situation, as well as all the nuances related to said issue, event, or situation come from the discursive constructions of the media. People choose the outlet to watch or believe in, but behind each outlet are the symbolic elites, and behind the symbolic elites are the ruling classes or dominant groups. Particular companies and political parties fund media platforms to then manipulate the content publicly shared provoking a cause-and-effect reaction. People's perspectives are swayed because certain voices are allowed to be heard and others are purposefully repressed. Depending on the media the people consume, they will believe in some things and not in others. Hall's idea can be tested. For example, take a city's newspaper and try aligning it with the corresponding political parties in that city; it will most likely be quite obvious who the newspaper sides with and where its editors' bias lies. The articles, advertisements, headlines, etc. produced tend to be parallel to a certain political party's ideologies and values.

To understand Hall's ideas further, it is important to review the concept of stereotypes and the attempt to create fixed ways of thinking. A stereotype tends to reduce individuals, groups, and things to a few attributes, and if the media fosters these, then the general public begins to make associations, so that eventually the ideas portrayed are considered facts. This is so, even if there is nothing substantial to justify them. Negative clichés are often propagated by what Hall calls the dominant, hegemonic group in their constant efforts to maintain their systems of domination. Hall's representation theory is about the many meanings behind representations and the deconstruction of stereotypes in order to subvert systems of domination.

Hall's theory directly relates to the concept of intertextuality as he states that images "gain meanings as they are read in context, against or in connection with one another..." (1997b, p. 232). Now, referring back to the subsection of this chapter titled, Intertextuality, and focusing on the notion of cultural memory as well as how the environment, society, and culture contribute to what an author or artist produces and vice versa, brings this section to Hall's definition of culture. He understands that culture is a set of practices and the lifestyle of the people who perform said practices.

It is the participants in a culture who give meaning to people, objects, and events. Things 'in themselves' rarely if ever have any one, single, fixed and unchanging meaning...it is our use of things, and what we say, think and feel about them---how we represent them---that we give them a meaning. (Hall, 1997a, p. 3)

Therefore, the selections of Fonseca's texts and oral expressions and the graphic imagery in Greaves's paintings considered in this research project in connection to political resistance are closely examined so as to identify the use of satire and religious references, the manner in which socio-cultural factors shape the works of these two Caribbean public figures and the way that their works shape those factors. The methodology to be utilized in these endeavors is qualitative and is based on and guided by the theoretical stances discussed in this chapter.

The discussion that follows in Chapter 3 is the result of a close reading of Fonseca's work. The work of Greaves is examined in Chapter 4.

### **Chapter 3 Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte: *La voz del pueblo, una voz de resistencia* (The People’s Voice, A Voice of Resistance)**

Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte is a public figure who is well-known mainly in Puerto Rico and parts of the United States of America. His professional career stems into several fields, for he is a lawyer, journalist, radio host and commentator, television producer and host, author, entrepreneur, and social media influencer. All of the previously mentioned roles serve as the means for Fonseca to exercise his principal vocation, which is that of political analyst. This vocation requires the study of political systems to identify how they come to be, evolve, and function. Fonseca is an avid reader and researcher who keeps up to date with current events and public affairs in order to examine and comment about domestic politics, foreign policy, and social issues. Through the collecting and interpreting of data, he draws conclusions and makes evaluations with regard to policies as well as political and economic trends. Fonseca is often invited to share news platforms with other journalists, and curiously, in this setting, the lines between facts (truth) and opinions can tend to blur. However, Fonseca knows exactly how to separate the two and even frequently verbalizes the following sentence, “*Los datos son los datos.*” (Facts are facts.). For the “function of news is to signal an event, the function of truth is to bring to light the hidden facts, to set them in relation with each other, and make a picture of reality on which men can act” (Lippmann, 1922, p. 358).

Fonseca, who has also completed studies in theology, is a seeker of truth. He has identified and strongly suggested that injustice and attitudes of indifference seem, to a certain degree, to have been normalized, yet he is convinced that apathy cannot be the answer to corruption. Similarly, the Bible states in the Book of Isaiah 42:20, “You have seen many things, but you pay no attention; your ears are open, but you do not listen.” Government leaders worldwide have been following agendas that benefit only themselves for decades, and Fonseca is the people’s voice, as he is

referred to by his fans, a voice of resistance that continues to speak up regardless if he is in the minority, for he knows that in the end, society and politics will not improve for the greater good if the response to bias is silence.

### **Biography**

Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte was born on March 1, 1982, in Chicago, Illinois, to Puerto Rican parents, Teresa Aponte and Victor Fonseca. He was raised in Jagual, San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico by his single mother although he always had contact and support from his father who continued to reside in Chicago during Fonseca’s childhood. At the age of thirteen, Fonseca read the Bible on his own and soon after began attending a Seventh Day Adventist church. As an adolescent, Fonseca was active in his local church, where he served as a youth leader. His primary and secondary education was completed entirely within the Puerto Rican public education system. He graduated from Escuela Superior José Campeche with a 4.0 grade point average and proceeded to study theology at la Universidad Adventista de las Antillas, located in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. Fonseca aspired to be a pastor, but his professional aims changed when he had a daughter out of wedlock. He then completed a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, where some years later he graduated from the School of Law, going on to pass the Puerto Rico Bar Examination (Fonseca, 2013, p. 245).

Fonseca, the entrepreneur, is the owner of Jagual Media, LLC, a digital platform also available as a mobile application under the name JAY. Fonseca that offers audiences a variety of video podcasts and news categories and was created by Fonseca himself and other professionals with expertise in their corresponding areas. The majority of the podcast spaces include the phrase *con calle* in their title which when literally translated is ‘with street,’ but implies ‘street smart,’ including: *Abogados Con Calle, Economía Con Calle, Empresarismo Con Calle, Mascotas Con*

*Calle, Medicina Con Calle, Noticias Con Calle, Recursos Humanos Con Calle, and Religión Con Calle* [Street-Smart Lawyers, Street-Smart Economy, Street-Smart Business, Street-Smart Pets, Street-Smart Medicine, Street-Smart News, Street-Smart Human Resources, and Street-Smart Religion]. Fonseca's use of *con calle* alludes to the fact that in his discourse, academic topics are discussed in a colloquial manner, so that a university degree is not required in order to understand and become informed.

Although Fonseca associates the phrase *con calle* with accessibility, common sense, self-awareness, and practical problem solving, there are others who may perceive the use of this expression in a negative light, associating it instead with inferiority, idleness, and lack of education. The controversial nature of his use of this expression extends to Fonseca's public persona itself, including his very frank manner of speaking, his passionate approach to his work, his use of nonverbal behaviors such as displaying a flushed face, smirking, opening his eyes wide, employing hand gestures, and his confrontational questioning of acts of injustice regardless of how uncomfortable it may make others feel.

Contentious is also a word that many use in reference to Fonseca, especially when they refer back to his original 2010 segment on daytime television program, *Día a Día* [Day to Day] called *La Furia de Jay* [Jay's Fury] broadcast on Telemundo television Channel 2 in Puerto Rico. As Fonseca explains in his 2013 book, titled *Banquete Total: Cuando la corrupción dejó de ser ilegal* [Total Banquet: When corruption stopped being illegal], he accepted his role on *La Furia de Jay* “para intentar hacer un balance y ---entre ruido--- llevar un mensaje de cambio a la audiencia” [to try to strike a balance and --- amidst the noise --- bring a message of change to the audience], but he later realized that he was participating in what he calls “un síntoma de la enfermedad colectiva que sufre el País” [a symptom of the collective disease the country suffers

from] and therefore was not proud of it (p. 226). While depicting his experience with *La Furia de Jay*, he points out that many viewers appreciated his performances mainly for their drama, comedy, and entertainment content rather than for their investigative news content. He complains that the episodes of the segment that were most viewed were trivial, gossipy, and surreal and expresses displeasure with them, although he also acknowledges that he has learned from the experience.

Even though Fonseca has always expressed the desire to reveal the truth to his audience, he has confessed that for *La Furia de Jay* he created a fictitious character, since he claims that he himself does not have an aggressive and exasperated personality. So, in *La Furia de Jay* he used fiction as a vehicle to reveal truth, that is, he utilized the opposite of truth in order to expose truth itself, referring to the creation of this character as “*la estrategia de llegar a las masas y entonces hacer propuestas de cambio y activismo social*” [the strategy of reaching the masses and then making proposals of change and social activism] (p. 236). Fonseca states that while he prefers not to have to use a fictitious character to send a message, he believes that it is impossible to reach the majority of people by simply speaking as a common broadcaster. He concludes that his technique worked, and the fictitious façade that he erected got people to listen and made him famous.

When Fonseca says that “*resulta imposible llegar [hasta] esas personas hablando como si fueras locutor de Radio Francia o de la BBC de Londres*” [It is impossible to reach these people speaking as if you were a radio host for Radio France or the BBC in London] (p. 236), he refers to common citizens as “these people.” This is reminiscent of American author, reporter, and political commentator Walter Lippmann’s (1925) concept of “the disenchanted man” that is:

The private citizen [who is] ... like a deaf spectator in the back row, who ought to keep his mind on the mystery out there, but cannot quite manage to keep awake. He knows he is somehow affected by what is going on. Rules and regulations continually, taxes annually

and wars occasionally remind him that he is being swept along by great drifts of circumstance. Yet these public affairs are in no convincing way his affairs. They are for the most part invisible. ... As a private person he does not know for certain what is going on, or who is doing it, or where he is being carried. No newspaper reports his environment so that he can grasp it; no school has taught him how to imagine it; his ideals, often, do not fit with it ... He lives in a world which he cannot see, does not understand and is unable to direct. (pp. 3-4)

Ergo, the average citizen is present in the world, but not necessarily in the here and now of what is happening around him or her. Nearly a century later, Fonseca proposes an idea that is analogous to Lippmann's. He understands that to truly get his message across to the vast majority of people, he cannot consistently speak in conventional ways. Fonseca knows that his public, as Lippmann describes it, is often partially informed if not oblivious about world issues that affect them both directly and indirectly. Some get caught up in idle talk, rumors or even conspiracies, and miss what is of actual importance. Hence, in his first chance to speak on local television, Fonseca had to disguise the information that he wanted to convey behind the character of *La Furia de Jay*.

Despite being characterized at times as controversial and/or argumentative, and besides having founded Jagual Media, LLC, Fonseca's ideas have been aired on radio shows since the early 2000s on stations such as Magic 97.3, WKAQ 580, and Red 96, among other media forums (Jayfonseca.com, 2020). In Puerto Rico, he has pioneered the use of social media networks like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to unsettle the day-to-day reporting on political affairs and "*contar en prosa y soliloquios la historia de su patria, la que vive y la que sueña. Un verso, un cigarro y un libro*" [to tell in prose and soliloquies the history of his country, the one he lives and the one he dreams of. A verse, a cigar, and a book], as he writes in his user information space on



Twitter. Fonseca also managed to develop and host *Jay y sus Rayos X* [Jay and his X Rays] an investigative news program broadcast weekly on Telemundo Puerto Rico for a little over five years. Additionally, his political analysis was presented three times daily on Telemundo Puerto Rico, twice on the *De Frente con Jay* [Head-on with Jay] segment of the program *Día a Día* and once during the *La opinión de Jay* [Jay's Opinion] segment of the five o'clock news. Fonseca also appeared briefly in between skits on the popular comedy show *Raymond y sus Amigos* [Raymond and His Friends], to give the audience a preview of what to expect on his own program that followed the two hours of humor hosted by Raymond Arrieta. Unexpectedly, Fonseca resigned from Telemundo Puerto Rico in July 2021 after close to 12 years working with the channel. About a week after his resignation, he announced he would begin working at WAPA-TV, Channel 4 independent television station in Puerto Rico. This new contract has given him the opportunity to work as a producer.

On August 23, 2021, Fonseca premiered his afternoon show "*Los datos son los datos*" at 3:20 p.m. on WAPA-TV. The program which is 35 minutes long and airs on Monday to Friday is mainly a political analysis of current events during which Fonseca shares his perspectives and encourages the discussion of situations affecting Puerto Rico. It also features special guests and a political satire segment called "*Estado crítico*" [Critical State] by actor Juan Pablo "Juanpi" Díaz who, through the creation of parodies, fuses entertainment and politics. At 4:00 p.m., WAPA-TV airs *NotiCentro Edición Estelar* during which Fonseca has a segment also called "*Los datos son los datos*" which is often an extension of his 3:20 p.m. program. Having accumulated an audience of a million and a half followers (Hernández Mercado, 2020), Fonseca has definitely toned down the persona that appeared on *La Furia de Jay*. Presently, his participation in the four o'clock news is approximately five to eight minutes long, which permits him to interview public figures and a

variety of professionals, as well as to react to what he has learned from the latest news stories. Moreover, his commentary often serves as an educational piece in which Fonseca explains island wide and world events in a simple manner. Additionally, Fonseca at times holds a conversation with the news anchors, Normando Valentín and Katiria Soto, who pose several questions for Fonseca to share his response with the audience.

On Tuesday evenings at 10 p.m. on WAPA-TV Fonseca produces and hosts *Cuarto Poder con Jay Fonseca* [The Fourth Estate with Jay Fonseca], a one-hour long investigative news program. The name of the program literally translates as The Fourth Power or The Fourth Estate. This term refers to the news media and the press being the fourth authority because they advocate for political problems to be closely examined and then propose solutions. The Fourth Power comes from the idea of the branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial. Likewise, The Fourth Estate derives from the European board orders of social hierarchy in which the clergy is the First Estate, the nobility is the Second Estate, and the commoners or the majority of the people are the Third Estate. On August 31, 2021, the first show of *Cuarto Poder con Jay Fonseca* was aired presenting the work done by Fonseca himself alongside his team of journalists, Milly Méndez, Laura Isabel González, Hermes Ayala Guzmán, Katriana Alexa Vélez Huertas, Ámbar Suárez Cubillé, and, surprisingly, Miss Universe Puerto Rico 2020, Estefanía Soto Torres, who possesses an interdisciplinary master's degree with a concentration in sociology, cultural anthropology, and gender perspective. This new program places the limelight on Puerto Rican television as it is innovative content with a name that highlights Fonseca's principal goal as a political analyst: to monitor political processes, in order to guarantee that politicians do not distort or destroy democratic processes.

In addition to frequently presenting live on television, radio, and internet platforms, Fonseca publishes a newspaper column. His first work in print was published on Monday, July 30, 2012, in the daily newspaper *Primera Hora*, titled “*Esto tiene salvación*” [This Can Be Saved/This Has Salvation]. The etymology of the English word salvation, originates from the Latin *salvatio* meaning deliverance and from Old French, *salvacium*. In the Book of Deuteronomy, in the *New King James English* version of the Bible, chapter 20, verse 4, it states “for the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.” The use of the word *save* here comes from a translation of the Hebrew verbal root יָשַׁע (Y-Sh-Ah) which means to rescue as explained on the site [ancient-hebrew.org](http://ancient-hebrew.org).

Additionally, the noun that derives from יָשַׁע (Y-Sh-Ah) is יְשׁוּעָה (yeshu’ah) which is understood to mean relief in the context of alleviating trouble. In the Gospel of Matthew 1:21 of the *New King James Bible*, the Scripture says, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” This verse proclaims that the name Jesus is synonymous to the action of saving. Linguistically, the name Jesus is the Anglicized form of the Greek name Yesous. Yesous is equivalent to the Hebrew Bible name Yeshua which in English is Joshua and in Spanish Josué, Fonseca’s first name. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary offers six meanings for the term, salvation, ranging from 1a- deliverance from the power and effects of sin, 1b- agent or means that effects salvation, 1c- Christian Science (a Christian sect founded by Mary Baker Eddy in 1879): the realization of the supremacy of infinite Mind over all bringing with it the destruction of the illusion of sin, sickness, and death, 2- liberation from ignorance or illusion, 3a- preservation from destruction or failure, and 3b- deliverance from danger or difficulty. It can most definitely be argued that Fonseca’s column met many of these definitions as it was meant to provide insight and solutions to the social, political, and economic

problems Puerto Rico faces. On April 28, 2021, after close to six years, Fonseca wrote his last column for *Primera Hora* titled “*Esto tiene salvación, ¡hasta pronto!*” [This can be saved; See you soon!] in which he summarizes some of his experiences in media and asserts

*De todos mis trabajos hasta hoy, siempre había pensado que ser columnista era el más importante porque quizás algún día dentro de 80 años, cuando nadie recuerde quién fue Jay Fonseca, verán que [éramos] muchos tratando de evitar el camino que llevábamos y que alternativas siempre estuvieron siendo discutidas, propuestas y analizadas, solo faltaba la voluntad de hacerlas. (Fonseca, 2021)*

[Of all my jobs until today, I had always thought that being a columnist was the most important because maybe, someday, 80 years from now, when no one remembers who Jay Fonseca was, they will see that there were many of us trying to avoid the path we were on and that alternatives were always being discussed, proposed and analyzed; we just lacked the will to do them.]

Fonseca’s goodbye to *Primera Hora* was actually a greeting to *El Nuevo Día*. The week after his last “*Esto tiene salvación*” column, on May 6, 2021, Fonseca published his first opinion article in *El Nuevo Día* titled, “*El delito de ser la víctima,*” [The crime of being the victim] about the possibility of a law being passed that would grant prisoners whose original verdict was not unanimous the opportunity to have a new trial. While many may see Fonseca’s opinion column in *El Nuevo Día* as a mere continuation of his work at *Primera Hora*, especially since both publications are a part of the company GFR Media, it is actually a rite of passage in the field of communications. *Primera Hora* seems to target a young adult audience while *El Nuevo Día* is read more often by young professionals and adults. It sets a more serious tone. Fonseca went from *Primera Hora, ¡Habla como tú!* [Just like you talk!] to *El Nuevo Día, Un Gran Periódico* [A Great

Newspaper]. That in itself could be understood as Fonseca going from the minor leagues of newspaper publishing to the major leagues. He himself would understand this metaphor very well as the zealous Chicago Cubs baseball fan that he is.

When he is not at work or enjoying a sports game, Fonseca keeps himself busy on social media interacting with his fans and it is sometimes through these informal posts that one can get an even closer look at the person that lies within. On August 23, 2020, Fonseca invited his fans through social media, specifically via Facebook and Instagram stories, to ask him questions. When asked about his original intention to become a pastor, he commented that the ministry had not failed him, but instead he had failed the ministry. Another fan asked Fonseca what had motivated him to study theology, given that his current profession branches out into many other disciplines, and he responded “*Sentí el llamado a predicar el Evangelio. Aún lo siento muchas veces. Trato de predicar desde mi nueva trinchera. Jesús y su mensaje es demasiado poderoso. ...*” [I felt a calling to preach the Gospel. I still feel it many times. I try to preach from my new trench. Jesus and his message are too powerful. ...]. When asked about his favorite book, he replied that the book which changed his life is, *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen Gould Harmon, best known as Ellen G. White (wife of James Springer White, 1827 – 1915).

Ellen G. White was one of the people who founded the Seventh Day Adventist church in the early 1860s and her followers consider her to be a prophetess. She became a well-known author, even though she stopped attending school at the age of nine when a young girl threw a stone that hit White in the nose. From that moment on, her health weakened and she could not write without her hand trembling, could not read without seeing the letters in movement, could not be still without feeling dizziness or faintness, etc. For this reason, Seventh Day Adventists as well as many others who have read White’s *oeuvre* believe that she was touched by the Holy Spirit,

because they cannot imagine any humanly possible way for her to have written her works given her physical and educational challenges. The 1858 text which Fonseca identifies as having been life-changing for him, is said to have been written by White after experiencing a divinely inspired vision. *The Great Controversy* is volume five of a series titled *Conflict of the Ages*. White composed 42 chapters in this book in which she traces the history of the Christian church beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 up until the present. She also summarizes her vision of the final events of the earth's history and what is at risk to be lost by all humanity (Whiteestate.org, 1999-2020).

Fonseca's encounter with White's book is a part of what influences the work he produces today in combination with his humble upbringing in a single-parent, low-income home and his fondness for politics and economics. He is the common citizen who did not allow economic factors to hinder his success, but rather identified the power that lies within him, has acted on it, and has become an agent of change. Although Fonseca did not come from an affluent community, from the ordinary, he identified the catalyst that would allow him to inspire others. Fonseca uses his work to bring awareness. He encourages the common citizen to look beyond what is in front of him or her and take heed to what is really happening. Fonseca advocates for collective growth because as he wrote on a Facebook post he published on May 10, 2015, Mother's Day,

Cuando hago mi trabajo de forma apasionada en gran medida al pueblo que es como ella tengo en mente. Ese pueblo bueno, gente decente que tuvieron que empezar a trabajar desde que eran niñas para poder llevar el pan a la casa. Ese pueblo honesto y humilde que trabajaba duro y lo menos que merece es un gobierno limpio y que no use su dinero de forma irresponsable y corrupta.

[When I do my work passionately, to a large extent, it is the people who are like my mother that I have in mind. Those good people, decent people who had to start working since they were little children to be able to bring provisions home. Those honest and humble people who worked hard, the least they deserve is a clean government that does not use their money in an irresponsible and corrupt way.]

### **An Analysis of Some of Fonseca's Work**

In a text written on September 4, 2019, for his column in the newspaper *Primera Hora*, Fonseca focuses on rampant governmental corruption related to disaster aid in Puerto Rico. The article is titled using a religious metaphor “*Un pueblo Cristiano que aplaude el diablo*” [A Christian Nation that Applauds the Devil]. In the piece, Fonseca states that

*En realidad, lo que hacen es bregar con los fondos federales y contratar a los panas en momentos de emergencia y luego no tienen los documentos al día para que le paguen y van llorando de que no les dan los chavos.... El pueblo anda de espaldas y realmente no saben que esos mismos alcaldes son los que no permiten que usted mismo tenga los materiales y preparación en caso de huracán.*

[In reality, what they [the mayors] do is use federal funds and hire their friends during an emergency, and then they do not have their documents up to date in order to get paid and they cry saying that the money is not given to them.... The people do not see or realize that those same mayors are the ones who do not allow them to have the materials to prepare for a potential hurricane.]

Here Fonseca criticizes the blind allegiance of many Puerto Ricans (i.e., a ‘Christian nation’) to the deeply corrupt mayors who control their municipalities (i.e., ‘the Devil’), even when that corruption threatens their very survival in a disaster.

The mayors' actions can be categorized within van Dijk's Ideological Square Model as the creation of a positive us by denying culpability (1992). They do not have their documents in order, so they act as the victims who are not given sufficient funds. This is their way of moving the spotlight off their poor administration and dishonest behavior and toward the higher ranks of government. They are de-emphasizing their negative conduct, which is the twenty-fifth micro level strategy explained in Chapter 2, victimization. A façade induces the townspeople to empathize with their mayor while masking fraud and blindfolding the eyes of the citizens so they do not realize that it is their own leaders who are betraying them.

In his weekly column on November 6, 2019, Fonseca published the piece titled, "*Mata la serpiente del Edén*" [Kill the Serpent of Eden], in which he describes how Puerto Rican governmental officials were offering thousand-dollar contracts to family members and friends in legal acts of corruption, seemingly an oxymoron. As they did in the colonial past and continue to do today, those with governmental authority, Fonseca reports, were making corrupt decisions in their own interest, yet when brought before a court of law, it was found that no law per se was broken. Calling the reader's attention to the then Speaker of the House, Carlos 'Johnny' Méndez, Fonseca writes

*El presidente de la Cámara al terminar su ayuno y oración tan consagrado, defiende el nombramiento y la permanencia de Jerón en su puesto. Obviamente, que la palabra del Padre nos enseña que en los puestos de poder somos: "Carta al mundo, escrita en nuestros corazones, conocida y leída por todos los hombres". O sea, en Corintios la propia Biblia manda a que no solo seamos creyentes y seguidores de Cristo, sino que parezcamos al Maestro, que seamos iguales al Maestro. Pero parece que al momento de la invocación*



*legislativa esa parte de la palabra se da como un apéndice y no como el centro de la escritura.*

[The Speaker of the House, after finishing his consecrated fast and prayer, defends the appointment and tenure of Jerón in his position. Obviously, the word of the Holy Father teaches us that in positions of power we are: “A letter to the world, written in our hearts, known and read by all men.” In other words, in Corinthians the Bible itself commands that we not only be believers and followers of Christ, but that we be like him. But it seems that at the time of the legislative invocation, that part of the Word is thought of as an appendix and not as the main text of the scripture.]

Fonseca thus points out how Carlos ‘Johnny’ Méndez, who often verbalizes his Christian beliefs and faith, turned a blind eye to the corruption of Jerón Muñiz Lasalle, Capitol Building Superintendent, who is said to have administered public funds for personal use. In this instance, Fonseca refers to the Bible to denounce criminal acts while those in power cleverly use the same text in their favor to justify their deeds. 2 Corinthians 3:2-3, which is cited here by Fonseca is interpreted primarily by those of Christian convictions as divine instruction advising humankind that one’s life should be a representation of the character and love of God. Ironically, those in power both in the former colonial and in the present day neo-colonial Caribbean have proclaimed for centuries to believe in the Gospel and speak its truth, selectively forgetting these verses, while preferring instead to concentrate on the parts of the Bible that might be twisted to justify their corrupt rule.

The micro level strategy identified in Chapter 2 as authority is used here by Fonseca and the politicians. Both allude to God and/or Christian practices to sustain their ideas. Méndez’s fasting and praying could be understood as a tactic for mind control. By continuously presenting

himself in the public eye as a person who is drawing himself closer to God, this eventually becomes the impression the public believes. Therefore, when he pretends not to be aware of the misuse of funds, the public remains in that “trance” of perceiving him as a man of God. Fonseca turns the tables on him. He uses a biblical text as a counter-argument to Méndez’s actions and decisions. Fonseca highlights how Méndez acts deliberately, contrary to what one would expect from someone who proclaims to be a follower of Christ. He attempts to unmask Méndez just as implied in the title of the article.

“*Mata la serpiente del Edén*” [Kill the Serpent of Eden] is also a micro level strategy of van Dijk’s Ideological Square Model; it is a metaphor. Fonseca’s rhetoric is comparing Méndez’s conduct that of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden. The serpent symbolizes temptation and deceit. It is a guise used by Satan to entrap Adam and Eve. The serpent uses wordplay to convince Eve to disobey, as stated in Genesis 3:4-5 “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’” (*New King James Bible*). In the literal sense, Eve did not die and Satan told her what would happen, but he minimized the severity of the consequences. Once the fruit was eaten, neither Adam or Eve died, but upon knowing of sin, they were now prone to making decisions that could eventually lead to physical and eternal death. Likewise, Méndez and other government officials play with language, the law, and their actions. The public sees the man who fasts and prays and apparently gives common citizens the opportunity to apply for governmental positions, but behind all of this, we have an individual and his team who intentionally overlook fraud, appoint family members into offices that will allow for the fraud to persist, and contort the law so that what is obviously corrupt appears to be permissible.

On December 3, 2021, Fonseca aired on his WKAQ radio show, *Jay en el 580*, and a large part of his program focused on the case of the mayor of the municipality of Cataño, Félix “El Cano” Delgado Montalvo, who pleaded guilty to conspiracy, bribery, and kickbacks. Fonseca compares the fall of man, fall of grace, and the temptation faced by the biblical character Adam in the Garden of Eden to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, to the circumstances Delgado Montalvo brought upon himself. Fonseca poses the following questions:

*¿Hubiera hecho yo lo mismo que hizo Adán? ¿Hubiera hecho yo lo mismo que hizo el Cano? Te voy hacer una pregunta. Tú tienes un sueldo de cinco mil pesos mensuales y te sobran tres mil quinientos pesos al mes. ... Eso es tu cheque y con una firma al productor de seguros de tu municipio ...tú acabas de hacer que esa persona se gane ocho ciento mil pesos y tú te ganas tres mil ... y si tú no le das la firma, él no se gana ocho cientos mil y él te dice ‘oye, dame la firma y de esos ochocientos, yo te paso cien.’ Y tú te ganas tres. ¿La respuesta es: ¿Na’mas? Dame doscientos. o es ¿Qué te pasa irresponsable usted? ¡Yo no me pego con usted! ¡Usted es un corrupto! ¡Pa’fuera de mi municipio! ¿Cuál de las dos cosas va a pasar? ¿En ese momento, te tiemblan las rodillas o no? ¿Qué nos dice la historia de la humanidad? Por eso es que la tentación no debería haber estado puesta en primer lugar y para eso hay unos sistemas de balances y chequeos. ... Hay que buscar la manera de evitar la concupiscencia, la naturaleza humana, la discreción de la humanidad. Porque el ser humano es pecador ensimismo. Desea el mal. Nos dice la palabra que el Maestro fue tentado en todo y no cayó. ¿Pero cuando busca la naturaleza, era igual o diferente a la del ser humano? ... La naturaleza del pecado del Cano ...*

[Would I have done what Adam did? Would I have done what Cano did? I am going to ask a question of you. You have a salary of five thousand dollars a month and you have three

thousand five hundred dollars a month to spare. ... That is your check and with a signature to the insurance agent of your municipality ... you have just made that person earn eight hundred thousand dollars and you earn three thousand ... and if you do not give him the signature, he does not earn eight hundred thousand and he says 'hey, give me the signature and of those eight hundred thousand, I will give you one hundred'. And you earn three. The answer is: 'Just that?' Give me two hundred. or Is it 'What's wrong with you, you irresponsible person? I don't go along with you! You are corrupt! Get out of my municipality!' Which of the two things is going to happen? At that moment, do your knees tremble or not? What does the history of humankind tell us? That is why temptation should not have been on the table in the first place and that is why there are systems of checks and balances. ... We must find a way to avoid concupiscence, human nature, the [lack of] discretion among mankind. Because human beings are sinners themselves. They desire evil. The Word tells us that our Lord was tempted in all things and did not fall. But was his nature the same or different from that of the ordinary human being? ... The nature of Cano's sin ...]

The questions asked by Fonseca can be recognized as an instance of the micro level strategy of van Dijk's Ideological Square Model known as counterfactuals, which is the seventh strategy defined in Chapter 2. Fonseca proposes a What if? hypothetical situation to his audience. His motive is for the public to empathize with the mayor's circumstances. This does not mean he tries to curtail the graveness of the mayor's crimes or encourage compassion. On the contrary, Fonseca uses counterfactuals to shatter the positive self-representation and the other negative-representation. There should be no 'us' and 'them' as any human is capable of being on either side.

The power is in each person to choose whether to use discourse and action for a collective good or an individual, egoistical outcome.

By stating that sinning is a part of human nature, he is not justifying the mayor's actions, but rather trying to establish a common ground to state that anyone and everyone is likely to commit the same crime as the mayor. It could be argued that Fonseca is challenging the 'us versus them' discourse, the polarized binaries. At the end of the day, underneath the typical suit and tie worn by politicians, they are not much different from the common folk. It is about the actions they perform, and anyone, regardless of age, sex, gender, religious affiliation, socio-economic background, education, nationality, among others, etc. could have done the same as Félix "El Cano" Delgado Montalvo, for perfection and the selected elite are illusory. Exclusivity is not real. Certain individuals try to institute divisions and rankings among people and even force laws to be passed that segregate, but when all is unveiled, even with the obvious, infinite number of differences among peoples, we are the same. No one is untouchable, exempt from erring. No one is greater than another.

Moreover, it is evident that Fonseca is conscious of the influence religion has had and continues to have in politics. He uses conversational discourse of Puerto Rican Spanish, a language imbued with religious connotation, and an intonation that is particularly his and sounds much like the beginning of a religious sermon, something that he seemingly acknowledges, for minutes after, he says jocularly, "*por si acaso, no estoy citando la Biblia nada más, tambien estoy hablando del libro Sapiens y otros libros para que no digan que soy bíblico hoy ni que estoy recogiendo los diezmos y las ofrendas*" ["Just in case, I'm not just quoting the Bible, I'm also talking about the book Sapiens and other books so that they do not say that I'm biblical today or that I'm collecting tithes and offerings."] The style in which Fonseca presents his proposition about the venal actions

of the mayor of Cataño proves what he stated on August 22, 2020, in a Facebook Story as a response to a question asked by a fan. He was asked “¿Por qué no podemos sacar la religión por completo de la política?” [“Why can’t we take religion out of politics altogether?”] He answered, “La religión es en gran medida la base de nuestra sociedad y en gran medida la que permitió crear la civilización occidental. Suena loco, I know. Lee Sapiens.” [Religion is to a large extent the basis of our society and to a large extent what made it possible to create western civilization. Sounds crazy, I know. Read Sapiens.]

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about much controversy and debate from all sectors including religious groups as many have turned to the Book of Revelations verse 13:17: “and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (*New King James Bible*). The use of this verse is in opposition to the vaccination mandate. Fonseca has also cited the Bible when analyzing situations that have come about due to this health crisis, but some of his citations are from the Book of Luke and Hosea in his continual fight against a pandemic whose repercussions have been and will continue to be even more severe and far-reaching than COVID-19 itself, the virus of public corruption. The cure? Speaking and acting truthfully. On May 21, 2020, Fonseca published the following on his social media platforms:

*Lo que dice la Biblia y lo que papi me enseñó – Papi decía, “Nadie empieza robándose 1 millón, todos empiezan con una peseta.” – Papi tuvo un colmadito en Chicago llamado “La People” al lado de Goldblatt’s y me decía mucho eso... Vean las fotos de la izquierda. Como ven, en esa foto aparece el Secretario de Salud Lorenzo González cerca de la gobernadora. Entonces, ese tweet lo borraron. De repente, aparece otro tweet horas después luego de que se supo que el secretario tuvo su ‘emergencia’ y subieron las fotos*

*del mismo evento y la misma gente, pero 'croppeando' la foto y ahora MAGIA, no sale el secretario. Nos dice la Biblia en Lucas 16:10 – 'El que es fiel en lo poco, es fiel en lo mucho' ... ¿Por qué no decir la verdad si la verdad es tan sencilla? 'Mi pueblo perece, por falta de conocimiento' Oseas 4:6*

[What the Bible says and what my dad taught me – Dad used to say, "Nobody starts by stealing \$1 million; everybody starts with one quarter." - Dad had a little grocery store in Chicago called "La People" next to Goldblatt's and he used to tell me that a lot...See the pictures on the left. As you can see, that photo shows the Secretary of Health, Lorenzo Gonzalez, near the governor. Then, that tweet was deleted. Suddenly, another tweet appears hours later after it was known that the secretary had his 'emergency' and they uploaded the photos of the same event and the same people, but cropping the photo and now MAGICALLY, the secretary does not appear. We are told in the Bible, in Luke 16:10 - 'He who is faithful in a little is faithful in much' ... Why not tell the truth if the truth is so simple? 'My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge' Hosea 4:6.]

Fonseca's post is in reference to information provided as to whether the Secretary of Health at that time, Lorenzo González, was present at governmental meetings held to discuss an executive order related to COVID-19 restrictions, but not present elsewhere because of a supposed emergency he had. This was especially disheartening when days before it was revealed that the Government of Puerto Rico could have been purposefully involved in a deceptive \$38-million-dollar purchase of alleged COVID-19 rapid tests. It was thankfully halted by the local bank whose manager's suspicion drove him to cancel the wire transfer. Fonseca cites the Bible once again to emphasize the lack of honesty among government officials and sadly, during a critical time in the history of Puerto Rico. He underscores how effortless it is to speak the truth, and if one reads

between the lines, it is clear that Fonseca recognizes how ignorance is a predominant ailment as the disease of malfeasance continues to cause a social and economic crisis leading to school closures on the island, the devastation of industries, jobs lost, and the overall widening of inequality among communities.

All of the samples of Fonseca's work intersect with the long history of using religious discourse in the Caribbean both to justify and challenge the abuse of power. His choice of language highlights his subversive use of discourse, and it can be concluded that Fonseca's presence on television, radio, newspapers, and social media serves as a voice that speaks in favor of the people of Puerto Rico who have long withstood the fraudulent acts of politicians.

Summarizing Fonseca's use of language, the following can be concluded concerning the factors that specifically make his analytical discourse of local politics so successful:

- his adept use of a formal language that is continuously sprinkled with forms of relaxed speech, a characteristic of Puerto Rican Spanish conversational discourse and also of *lenguaje chabacano*, a Spanish term for ways of speaking that include lexical items from the varieties spoken by the working classes, so that the lay person in the Puerto Rican sociolinguistic context is able to understand his critical stances
- his integration of figurative language to make otherwise foreign concepts familiar and to engage his audience as to make them think critically and emotionally connect to the information presented
- his use of lexical items and phrases from the Hispanic Caribbean that allow his audience to identify with his critical portrayal of local politicians



- his strong belief in a language that juxtaposes fact to opinion because it is his understanding that the function of truth in language is overwhelming,
- his firm position that his religious beliefs constitute the basis of his use of religious discourse in order to challenge apathy in the people and to critically analyze the corrupt workings of governmental leaders and thus be the voice of resistance
- the latent intertextuality that is present in Fonseca's work when he refers to the Bible and thus, weaves together biblical passages and present-day politics
- the urgency that is present in his intonation and non-verbal expressions to empower others to become agents of change, battle injustice, advocate for community, and remind others of how resistance and ingenuity can rise above any challenge
- his use of social media as a tool to transmit his language and enhance interpersonal communication, "the verbal and nonverbal interaction between two (or sometimes more than two) interdependent people" (DeVito, 2019. p.18) which allows him to shape public opinion, because, as Murcia Bielsa and O'Donnell (2014) state: "... if one can shape public opinion, one can change [or strengthen] the power structures that exist" (2014, p. 1)

### **An Interview with Jay Fonseca**

The following in-person interview with Fonseca was conducted on September 19, 2021, in a conference room at WAPA-TV Channel 4 in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. Getting in contact with Fonseca was initially quite a feat. The first attempt to reach him was done through email on April 23, 2021. No response was received. In the next months, May and June, two other emails were sent with attention getter subject titles like *¡Jay Fonseca SI apoya la medida de Orlando Aponte 100%! Aquí está la VERDAD* [Jay Fonseca DOES support Orlando Aponte's measure 100%! Here

is the TRUTH.]. This statement of course is the opposite of the truth for Fonseca never fully agreed with Aponte, a member of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives from the Popular Democratic Party, who presented legislation which would grant freedom to inmates to await a new trial because their original trials were not by unanimous juries in the past. That subject title may have made Fonseca look twice, but it did not provoke a response from him.

In July 2021, the next attempt to contact Fonseca was made with the help of Puerto Rican naturopathic vegetarian chef, Rebecca Méndez. She was contracted to design, prepare, and deliver a personalized lunch to Fonseca at his then workplace, Telemundo Puerto Rico Television Studios in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Méndez delivered a gourmet basket that contained a creole lentil soup, Fonseca's favorite meal, a baked vegetable pie, an organic mixed greens salad with coriander dressing, the Puerto Rican traditional dessert known as *tembleque* made with fresh coconut milk, Chef Rebecca's signature handmade cookies called *Adivinas*, and a bottle of sparkling water accompanied by a lemon. All of the items prepared were packaged in glass containers and the utensils were eco-friendly as they were made of wood. Chef Rebecca was given a blue folder that contained a printed copy of the position paper written for this investigation and copies of the three emails that had been previously sent so that she could deliver it with the lunch basket. The delivery was made, but even then, no response was received from Fonseca for the interview request.

On July 23, 2021, Fonseca was live on his WKAQ *Jay en el 580* radio program and for the first time during his then recently new 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. timeslot, he was accepting phone calls from the audience. Fonseca's original program time was at noon and the change in the broadcasting schedule set a considerably high standard for him as he expressed during a telephone interview with *Primera Hora* and published by José Karlo Pagán on August 28, 2020. He said, "*Estamos hablando de las grandes ligas del análisis político. Es un gran reto, pero vamos a meterle. Ahora*

*me toca tratar de llenar las expectativas de la audiencia de 'Fuego Cruzao' y la de Luis Dávila Colón. Esas expectativas son altas.*” [“We are talking about the Major Leagues of political analysis. It’s a big challenge, but we’re going to do it. Now it’s up to me to try to meet the expectations of the audience of ‘Fuego Cruzao’ [Crossfire] and that of Luis Dávila Colón (a well-respected radio commentator). Those expectations are high.”] Therefore, as soon as Fonseca announced he was accepting phone calls, the competition was on to get through to Fonseca and request an interview with him. After over a hundred attempts and at exactly 6:53 p.m., minutes before Fonseca closes out his program with a biblical verse of the day, “Gracias por llamar a WKAQ. Este es Jay Fonseca.” [Thank you for calling WKAQ. This is Jay Fonseca.] was heard on the line. After telling Fonseca who was calling him, he acknowledged knowing who was speaking with him and he agreed to schedule the interview. Moments later, a text was received, so that direct contact with him could be feasible and the interview could be planned in the upcoming weeks. It so happened that in August, the month after the on-air conversation, Fonseca underwent many changes in his professional career and that is the reason why the interview did not occur until mid-September.

On September 19, 2021, at about noon, Fonseca was in contact via text message. He suggested meeting at WAPA-TV and he bought lunch, which in my opinion, made up for the fact that he had not responded to the lunch that was delivered to him in July. Fonseca definitely proved to be a gentleman and a professional who pays attention to detail. From asking each and every aspect about how to order a side of French fries to opening doors, cleaning off the table when lunch was finished, and being completely available with no time constraint during the interview, nothing went unnoticed. He accepted zero interruptions and was open to answering all the questions asked. Fonseca presented himself exactly as he is. There was no acting. His replies were well-thought out

and genuine. He dressed in casual attire, a short-sleeve button-up shirt, shorts, sneakers, and a cap. His demeanor was very relaxed and comfortable as he even took off his shoes at one point and lifted his legs up on a chair next to him. All of these gestures show his rather humble, down-to-earth personality. Although Fonseca is a public figure, he is modest. Fonseca may be consistently in the public eye, but he is in many ways like his audience. He is indeed **extraordinary**, but with a constructive emphasis on ordinary for he is generally unassuming and self-effacing. The experience of interviewing Jay Fonseca was a positively memorable one. The interview was conducted in Spanish; the English translation appears below.

### **Interview Transcription and Translation**

1. M: There have always been individuals who prefer for religion to be a private matter. Why do you regularly insert biblical references and verses in your discourse although you have social media followers that prefer secularism and find this characteristic of your writing style controversial?

**M: Hay personas que prefieren que la religión sea un asunto privado y/o personal. ¿Por qué insertas regularmente referencias y versículos bíblicos en tu discurso si tienes seguidores en las redes sociales que prefieren el laicismo y encuentran esta característica controversial?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Para mí es natural. Yo no lo hago como una estrategia para el mercado. Son mis pensamientos. La opinión de Jay es literalmente la opinión de Jay. Mi opinión. No es una fabricación. De hecho, casi siempre es improvisado. Que es algo que muy poca gente me cree. Casi nadie sabe que yo no leo “teleprompter”. Muy pocas veces yo leo

“teleprompter”. En mi caso, para mí la espontaneidad es lo que hace que mi producto o mi opinión sea genuina y que la gente vea que es legítima. Yo creo que eso es algo bien importante. Y inserto el concepto bíblico porque yo tengo creencias bíblicas y porque creo que utilizamos el evangelio para lo que nos conviene y no para lo que es. Somos un país muy cristiano o *pseudocristiano* pero tú ves una disparidad enorme entre lo que decimos y lo que hacemos. Pues yo lo traigo precisamente por esos elementos. Por los elementos de que se supone que hagamos esto, si somos tan creyentes, y no lo que estamos haciendo. Básicamente, esa es la razón principal por la cual inserto lo bíblico. Y aunque yo soy una persona liberal en posiciones públicas, en mi vida privada creo que soy más conservador. Yo soy de los que cree que la libertad religiosa es la esencia del cristianismo. La esencia de ser un creyente es que Dios nos creó y nos dio la libertad de escoger. Y por tanto pues mi punto principal bíblico o mi punto principal de mi análisis es esa libertad de escoger. Nosotros escogemos. Nosotros escogemos nuestro estatus político. Nosotros escogemos nuestra pareja. Nosotros escogemos nuestra vida. Nosotros escogemos nuestras creencias religiosas. Nosotros escogemos y típicamente escogemos hacia donde no deberíamos escoger.

### **Translation.**

J: For me, it is natural. I don't do it as a strategy, as a way to market. They're my thoughts. Jay's opinion is literally Jay's opinion. My opinion. It's not a fabrication. In fact, it's almost always impromptu which is something very few people believe. Almost no one knows that I don't read the teleprompter. Very rarely do I read the teleprompter. In my case, for me, spontaneity is what makes my product or my opinion genuine and makes people see that it is legitimate. I think that is something very important. And I insert biblical concepts

because I have biblical beliefs and because I believe that we use the gospel for what is convenient for us and not for what it is. We are a very Christian or pseudo-Christian country, but one can see a huge disparity between what we say and what we do. Well, I bring it up precisely because of those elements. Because of the fact that we are supposed to do this, if we are such believers, and not what we are doing. Basically, that's the main reason why I insert biblical concepts. And while I am a liberal person in public positions, in my private life, I think I am more conservative. I am one who believes that religious freedom is the essence of Christianity. The essence of being a believer is that God created us and gave us the freedom to choose. And so my main biblical point or the main point of my analysis is that freedom to choose. We choose. We choose our political status. We choose our partner. We choose our life. We choose our religious beliefs. We choose and typically we choose what we should not choose.

2. M: You have stated that your favorite quote is “Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth.” What is your definition of truth and does only one truth exist? Would your answer vary if responding as a pastor rather than a political analyst?

**M: Has dicho que tu cita favorita es "Antes que el amor, que el dinero, que la fama, dame la verdad". ¿Cuál es tu definición de la verdad? ¿Piensas que existe solamente una verdad? ¿Cambiaría tu respuesta si respondieras como pastor y no como analista político?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Si algo yo tengo consciente e incluso bíblicamente, es que yo no sé. Primero que todo, yo soy un predicador de la duda porque la respuesta es que yo no siempre estoy seguro 100% de lo que es la verdad. Yo simplemente busco llegar a esa verdad. Y me pasa

bíblicamente y me pasa en mi experiencia como analista político. Sí te puedo decir, que mi impresión es que yo intento genuinamente buscar esa verdad. No sé si lo alcanzo, pero lo intento. ¿Hay una sola verdad? No necesariamente; todo depende. Yo pienso que podemos ver la verdad de forma muy variada. De hecho, los filósofos que se han dedicado a buscar la verdad dicen que no necesariamente la han encontrado. Yo no tengo la presunción de creerme que yo soy más grande que ellos.

### **Translation.**

J: If there is one thing that I am aware of and even biblically speaking, it is that I do not know. First of all, I am a preacher of doubt because the answer is that I am not always 100% sure what the truth is. I simply seek to arrive at that truth. And it happens to me biblically and it happens to me in my experience as a political analyst. I can tell you that my impression is that I genuinely try to seek that truth. I don't know if I reach it, but I try. Is there only one truth? Not necessarily; it all depends. I think we can see the truth in many different ways. In fact, philosophers who have devoted themselves to searching for truth say that they have not necessarily found it. I do not presume to believe that I am greater than they are.

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Yo creo que todos tenemos derecho a nuestras opiniones. Los datos son importantes. Tenemos que partir de la misma base. Dos más dos es cuatro. Hay cosas que sí hay una verdad. Pero hay cosas, en la que realmente no. Te voy a dar un ejemplo. El tema del aborto es un ejemplo tan controversial. La Biblia no habla del aborto. ¿Eso implica que la Biblia condena o no condena o permite o no permite el aborto? Yo no sé. Y uso ese ejemplo

porque es un ejemplo tan controversial. Yo no sé. Es una interpretación de la Biblia. Por ejemplo, en el Viejo Testamento hablan del diezmo. En el Nuevo Testamento, el diezmo no existe. Sin embargo, la iglesia usa el Viejo Testamento para plantear el concepto del diezmo y ofrenda. ¿Cuál es la verdad? ¿Debemos dar diezmo porque lo dice el Viejo Testamento cuando para otras cosas decimos que el Viejo Testamento no nos sirve? De nuevo, es un asunto.... yo creo que es muy personal. Yo creo que cada uno individualmente en su propia creencia, que se siente con su conciencia tranquila.

### **Translation.**

J: I believe we are all entitled to our opinions. Facts are important. We have the same starting point. Two plus two is four. There are things for which there is only one truth. But there are things in which there really is not. I will give you an example. The theme of abortion is such a controversial example...The Bible does not mention abortion. Does that imply that the Bible condemns or does not condemn or allows or does not allow abortion? I don't know. And I use that example because it's such a controversial example. I don't know. It's an interpretation of the Bible. For example, in the Old Testament they talk about tithing. In the New Testament, the tithe does not exist. However, the church uses the Old Testament to establish tithing and offering. What is the truth? Must we tithe because the Old Testament says so, when for other things we say that the Old Testament does not serve us? Again, it is an issue that... I think is very personal. I believe that each one individually in his or her own belief, that each one has to feel at ease with his or her own conscience.

### ***Interview Transcription***

M: ¿Responderías diferente si fueras pastor?



J: Por eso, pienso igual. No pensaría diferente. Por ejemplo, me pasó cuando estudiaba para ser pastor. Había cosas en la que yo difería de mi iglesia y aun ocurre, aunque no soy miembro hoy día. Claro que no soy miembro hoy día. Por ejemplo, yo no soy miembro de la iglesia y la razón por la cual no soy miembro es porque yo peco. Trabajo en sábado o tengo sexo fuera del matrimonio o he tenido. Así, ¿para qué voy a ir, si sé que no voy hacer las cosas como establece la iglesia? Pero independientemente de eso, pues sí te puedo decir, que yo soy de los que cree que los pastores tampoco tienen la verdad agarrada por el mango. No existe ese concepto. Solo Dios sabe nuestra conciencia. Yo creo que nosotros sabemos cuándo estamos haciendo algo mal porque nuestra conciencia nos grita y nos dice, “No lo hagas”. Y yo creo que eso es bien individual. Ahora, eso no significa que matar un ser humano no está mal. Pero si pienso que el concepto de la verdad, ¿Que es la verdad?, es bien difícil establecerlo. Yo no pretendo ser el tipo que lo va establecer.

**Translation.**

M: Would you respond differently if you were a pastor?

J: That's why I would think the same way. I would not think differently. For example, it happened to me when I was studying to be a pastor. There were things that I disputed with my church and it still happens, even though I'm not a member today. Of course, I am not a member today. For example, I am not a member of the church and the reason I am not a member is because I sin. I work on Saturdays or I have sex outside of marriage or I have had sex. So, why am I going to go if I know that I am not going to do things as the church establishes? But regardless of that, I can tell you that I am one of those who believe that pastors do not have the whole truth either. There is no such concept. Only God knows our conscience. I believe that we know when we are doing something wrong because our

conscience screams at us and tells us, "Don't do it." And I think that this is a very individual thing. Now, that doesn't mean that killing a human being is not wrong. But I do think that the concept of truth-- What is truth? It is very difficult to establish it. I don't pretend to be the guy who is going to establish it.

3. M: I have always been curious about the notion of truth and the fact that truth can be adjectivized (scientific truth, mathematical truth, religious truth, secular truth, etc.) According to dictionary.com, truth can be defined as "a verified or indisputable fact, proposition, principle, or the like." If we go by this, then, according to you, what is the role of faith in religion if religious truth is "a verified or indisputable fact..."? Something verified or indisputable requires no faith or belief. Please share your thoughts about these ideas and how the latter may impact your work.

**M: Siempre he sentido curiosidad por la verdad y por el hecho de que la verdad pueda ser adjetivada (verdad científica, verdad matemática, verdad religiosa, verdad secular, etc.) Según dictionary.com, la verdad puede definirse como "un hecho, una proposición, un principio o algún similar verificado o indiscutible". Si nos dejamos llevar por esto, entonces, ¿cuál es el rol de la fe en la religión, si la verdad religiosa es "un hecho verificado o indiscutible..."? Algo verificado o indiscutible no requiere fe o creencia. Por favor, comparte tu opinión sobre estas ideas y sobre el modo en que estas pueden afectar tu trabajo.**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: El trabajo de un analista político parte de premisas de que primero no lo sabemos todo, segundo, que hay variables que no controlamos, y tercero y creo que es lo más importante,

que estamos dando nuestra opinión, pero es imposible tener todos los elementos de datos. Partimos de premisas tratando de partir de los datos. Así que no creo que yo pueda decirte que hay una verdad absoluta y completa de todas las cosas de las que hablamos porque obviamente hay un montón de zonas grises. La vida no es blanco y negro. Yo de verdad creo eso y eso suena bien cursi, pero eso es la verdad. La vida es bien gris. Hay muchas áreas donde estamos en el “borderline” de lo que está bien o de lo que está mal o de lo que creemos que está bien y lo que creemos que está mal. ¿Cómo impacta mi trabajo el concepto religioso de la verdad? Totalmente impactado. Porque parto de la premisa siempre que yo soy creyente y estoy consciente que mucha gente en mi audiencia no es creyente o no le importa mis creencias.

**Translation.**

J: The work of a political analyst stems from the premise that first, we do not know everything; second, that there are variables that we do not control, and third, and I think this is the most important thing, that we are giving our opinion, but it is impossible to have all the facts. Our opinions stem from premises that stem from facts. So, I don't think I can tell you that there is an absolute and complete truth for all the things we talk about because obviously there are a lot of gray areas. Life is not black and white. I really believe that and that sounds corny, but that's the truth. Life is very gray. There are a lot of areas where we are on the borderline of what is right or what is wrong or what we think is right and what we think is wrong. How is my work influenced by the concept of religious truth? Totally influenced. Because I always stem from the premise that I am a believer and I am aware that many people in my audience are not believers or don't care about my beliefs.

### ***Interview Transcription***

M: Pero esta pregunta es: ¿Cuál es el rol de la fe en la religión si la verdad religiosa es un hecho verificado e indiscutible? Algo que es verificado no requiere fe porque simplemente lo es.

J: Bueno, según la Biblia, requiere fe todo lo que hacemos. O sea, Hebreos 11:1 dice: Es la fe la certeza de lo que se espera, la convicción de lo que no se ve.

M: Eso sí, pero yo digo: If something is true then it's true, you don't need faith because it is true. ¿Me entiendes?

J: Sí, te entiendo perfectamente, pero de nuevo, se basa todo en la fe porque es simplemente lo que tú crees. La religión está basada básicamente en el concepto de la fe. La verdad es un concepto secundario entre la fe.

M: OK.

J: ¿Me equivoco? Porque el concepto de la fe es que tú crees en lo que te están diciendo. Tú crees en lo que estás leyendo. Tú decides creer. Es una decisión tomada de creer. La verdad viene posteriormente. ¿Por qué? Por ejemplo, ¿tú crees que Jesucristo ascendió al cielo, de verdad, murió, que fue crucificado, y que... tocó las heridas y resucitó? ¿Tú crees en eso? Yo sí lo creo, pero no puedo probarlo como un acto, un concepto verdadero e indubitado, como plantea tu premisa. Claro que no puedo decirlo como concepto indubitado. La base principal de la religión es la fe. Es creer en algo.

### **Translation.**

M: But this question is: What is the role of faith in religion if religious truth is a verified and indisputable fact? Something that is verified does not require faith because it simply is.

J: Well, according to the Bible, everything we do requires faith. In other words, Hebrews 11:1 says: Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

M: Yes, but I say: If something is true then it's true, you don't need faith because it is true. Do you understand me?

J: Yes, I understand you perfectly, but again, it is all based on faith because it is simply what you believe. Religion is basically based on the concept of faith. Truth is a secondary concept within faith.

M: OK.

J: Am I wrong? Because the concept of faith is that you believe what they are telling you. You believe what you are reading. You decide to believe. It's a decision made to believe. The truth comes later. Why? For example, do you believe that Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, really? That he died, was crucified, and... touched the wounds and rose? Do you believe that? I do believe it, but I cannot prove it as an act, a true and indubitable concept, as your premise states. Of course, I can't say it as an indubitable concept. The principal basis of religion is faith. It is believing in something.

4. M: Why did you specifically choose Psalm 11 as the biblical verse to initiate your book when there are numerous texts in the Bible that point to the Lord's righteousness and his reaction towards wrongdoers?

**M: ¿Por qué elegiste específicamente el Salmo 11 como el verso bíblico para iniciar tu libro cuando hay numerosos textos en la Biblia que señalan la justicia del Señor y su reacción hacia los malhechores?**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: Naturalmente en ese momento... Honestamente, no tengo la respuesta a tu pregunta. Fue en ese momento. El Salmo 62 y 63 me gustan más. Probablemente hubiera habido otro Salmo. Pero no hay una razón específica. A lo mejor en ese momento sí lo hubo y no me acuerdo ahora. Eso hace 8 años.

#### **Translation.**

J: Naturally at that time... Honestly, I don't have the answer to your question. It was at that time. I like Psalm 62 and 63 better. There probably would have been another Psalm, but there is no specific reason. Maybe at that time there was and I don't remember now. That was 8 years ago.

5. M: French Philosopher Michel Foucault uses the metaphor of the panopticon to describe discipline in society. In a panopticon, the prison guard has absolute control because although he/ she can only physically watch one prisoner at a time, the prisoners do not know who is being observed at each particular time, so they are forced to always be on their best behavior. The prisoners are disciplining themselves as much as they are being disciplined by the guard. What do the communication media accomplish so that citizens internalize self-discipline and/or feel that their behavior is always being monitored?

**M: El filósofo francés Michel Foucault utiliza la metáfora del panóptico para describir la disciplina en la sociedad. En un panóptico, el guardia de la prisión tiene control absoluto porque, aunque sólo puede vigilar físicamente a un preso a la vez, los presos no saben quién está siendo observado en cada momento, por lo que se ven obligados a siempre comportarse lo mejor posible. Los presos se disciplinan a sí mismos tanto**

**como son disciplinados por el guardia. ¿Qué hacen los medios de comunicación para que los ciudadanos interioricen la autodisciplina y/o sientan que su comportamiento esté siempre bajo vigilancia?**

***Interview Transcription***

J: Los medios de comunicación no hacemos mucho para eso. Hacemos bien poco. Hacemos demasiado poco. Porque predicamos más que el estado tiene la responsabilidad más que el individuo. Eso es parte de lo que, en mi opinión, es una dicotomía de analista político. Es un falso análisis político. Y pasa mucho. O sea, hay cosas que simplemente el estado no puede hacer. El estado no puede vigilarte en la práctica. Y por más 1984 que tengamos y tengamos el “big brother watching”, la realidad es que hasta el día de hoy el estado no puede estar en todas partes. El concepto de autodisciplina se dedica muy poco en análisis político. Siempre estamos apuntando de que el estado tiene que hacerlo mejor. En gran medida, eso ocurre también por el asunto de las demandas. Al individuo apuntar al estado, pues automáticamente hace menos riesgo a la operación del negocio del medio.

**Translation.**

J: We in the media don't do much of that. We do very little. We do too little. This is because we preach more that the state has the responsibility rather than the individual. That's part of what, in my opinion, is a political analyst's dichotomy. It's a false political analysis. And it happens a lot. I mean, there are things that the state simply cannot do. The state can't police you in practice. And no matter how much we have of 1984 and the big brother watching you, the reality is that to this day the state cannot be everywhere. The concept of self-discipline is very little engaged in political analysis. We are always pointing out that

the state has to do it better. To a large extent, that happens also because of the issue of lawsuits. The individual targeting the state therefore automatically makes the operation of the media business less risky.

6. M: How do the media, in which you have an influential voice, cause citizens to internalize certain ways of thinking, thus limiting the knowledge they are able to gain? How would you describe these imposed ways of thinking?

**M: ¿Cómo es que los medios de comunicación, en los que tienes una voz influyente, hacen que los ciudadanos interioricen determinadas formas de pensar, limitando así los conocimientos que pueden adquirir? ¿Cómo describirías estas formas impuestas de pensar?**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: Nosotros los medios de comunicación somos un ente de entretenimiento. Desgraciadamente, cada vez más es el “info-tainment” el verdadero negocio de los medios. Requiere del ciudadano educarse para saber quién es el que le hace menos “info-tainment” y no educarte mientras a la misma vez te entretiene. Eso es un asunto bien individual de cada ser humano. Desgraciadamente, cada vez más vemos que la gente escucha lo que quiere escuchar y no quien reta sus creencias e impacta para que tengan pensamiento crítico. Así que yo trato genuinamente de no ser un mero entretenimiento. Siempre trato de hacer eso. Pero desgraciadamente el mercado en Puerto Rico y en el mundo se está convirtiendo cada vez más en predicarle a tu redil, predicarle a tu iglesia... no retar el pensamiento crítico de tu iglesia...de tu audiencia en este caso.



### **Translation.**

J: We in the media are an entertainment entity. Unfortunately, more and more often infotainment is the real business of the media. A citizen must educate him/herself to know who is doing less infotainment, so as to not be educated and entertained at the same time. That is a very individual matter for each human being. Unfortunately, we are seeing, more and more, that people listen to whomever says what they want to hear and not to whom challenges their beliefs and influences them to think critically. So, I genuinely try not to be just entertainment. I always try to do that. But unfortunately, the market in Puerto Rico and in the world is becoming more and more about preaching to your fold, preaching to your church...not challenging the critical thinking of your church...of your audience in this case.

7. M: You frequently offer political analysis about the United States. How do your studies in theology, specifically your knowledge about the Book of Revelations as well as the prophetic meaning of Daniel 2, influence your commentary?

**M: A menudo ofreces análisis político sobre los Estados Unidos. ¿Cómo influyen en tus comentarios tus estudios de teología, específicamente tus conocimientos sobre el Libro de Apocalipsis y el significado profético de Daniel 2?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Influyen, pero no es determinante. Por ejemplo, yo creo que Estados Unidos tiene muchos defectos y obviamente me estás hablando del concepto del cordero...hablaba como cordero y entonces era un dragón. Para mí, Estados Unidos es, dentro de los defectos que tiene, el mejor imperio en el sentido de que su prédica es la libertad individual y eso lo hace muy diferente a todos los sistemas e imperios previos. Sí, tiene un impacto el concepto

de cómo pudiera ser Estados Unidos cambiado para convertirse en el dragón... en este lugar que lo que ha hecho es abusar del poder y la autoridad...entonces eliminar el concepto de la libertad individual. Así que, sí, influye. Sí, creo que los poderes de Europa y Estados Unidos están en un momento de mucho riesgo en donde por primera vez la democracia se ve realmente retada. Nunca antes había estado tan vulnerable la democracia. Las redes sociales han hecho posible que la desinformación y la manipulación y el fanatismo exploten al nivel de que se nos olvidaron los fundamentos básicos de la democracia. Así que, sí, influyen en mi opinión. Tiene un pensamiento más en mi “background” que en la prédica principal de mi análisis. Pero, sí, está ahí. Ahora, si me da escoger entre el sistema Chino o Arabia Saudita o Iran y nuestro sistema, “I’ll choose the United States. The whole deal.

**Translation.**

J: They do influence, but they are not determinant. For example, I believe that the United States has many defects, and obviously you are talking about the concept of the lamb...it spoke like a lamb and then it was a dragon. For me, the United States is, within the defects it has, the best empire in the sense that it advocates for individual freedom and that makes it very different from all previous systems and empires. Yes, it does have an impact. The concept of how the United States could be changed to become the dragon...this place that has abused power and authority...then eliminate the concept of individual freedom. So, yes, it influences. Yes, I think European powers and the United States are at a very risky moment where, for the first time, democracy is really being challenged. Never before had democracy been so vulnerable. Social media have made it possible for misinformation and manipulation and fanaticism to explode to the level where we forgot the basic fundamentals of democracy. So, yes, they influence my opinion. It is a thought that is more in my

background than in my main analysis. But, yes, it is there. Now, if you give me a choice between the Chinese system or Saudi Arabia or Iran and our system, I'll choose the United States. The whole deal.

8. M: You have stated that in your opinion Rexford Guy Tugwell has been the best Governor of Puerto Rico appointed by the United States. Is this response prompted by the fact that Tugwell was raised in a Congregationalist tradition, by his governmental work in Puerto Rico during World War II, by his educational background in economy and participation in The Brains Trust, or by all or some of the aforementioned?

**M: Tú has afirmado que, en tu opinión, Rexford Guy Tugwell ha sido el mejor Gobernador de Puerto Rico nombrado por los Estados Unidos. ¿Esta respuesta está motivada por el hecho de que Tugwell fue criado en una tradición congregacionalista, por su labor gubernamental en Puerto Rico durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, su formación en economía y su participación en The Brains Trust o por todo o parte de lo anterior?**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: Creo que todos los seres humanos son un todo. La religión sí tiene que ver con lo que él hizo. La compasión, la pobreza extrema que él vio en Puerto Rico tiene que ver con esa formación. El concepto de él ser un economista le permitió ser un institucionalista, que fue lo que él hizo. Él creía, al igual que John Maynard Keynes, [en] el concepto que el estado sí tiene un rol cuando hay necesidad. Y ese rol es bien importante que lo comprendamos. Para mí, la razón por la cual él es tan instrumental para nosotros en nuestro futuro es porque él vio mucho potencial en el concepto geopolítico de Puerto Rico y ese potencial en el contexto geopolítico de la relación de Puerto Rico y Estados Unidos, pues él lo explotó.

Obvio que había un interés real de Estados Unidos de mantener el control del Caribe y Sur América a través de unas bases militares en Puerto Rico. Así que tampoco es que él era una monjita de la caridad de un todo que no estaba con intereses geopolíticos de los Estados Unidos. Pero dentro de eso, él entendió que para poder lograr ese dominio tenía que buscar la forma de crecer económicamente a Puerto Rico y ayudar a un país tan pobre como lo que éramos nosotros pues tuviera acceso a mejorar sus condiciones económica. Y yo pienso que ese concepto, sí del economista, del político, del hombre cercano a John Maynard Keynes, del hombre cercano a Franklin Delano Roosevelt, y a su secretario de Estado, del director del Departamento del Interior, todo ese grupo de personas que siempre estaban, más sus creencias religiosas sin duda en mi opinión lograron que él viera como él podía hacer que Puerto Rico fuera un lugar tan diferente. Obviamente, Puerto Rico era bien católico. Eso también es parte de lo que tuvo que enfrentar, pero no fue tan instrumental conjunto a todas las otras reformas que él se inventó.

### **Translation.**

J: I think all human beings are a whole. Religion does have to do with what he did. The compassion, the extreme poverty that he saw in Puerto Rico has to do with that formation. The fact that he was an economist allowed him to be an institutionalist, which is what he did. He believed, like John Maynard Keynes, in the concept that the state does have a role when there is a need. And it is very important for us to understand that role. To me, the reason why he is so instrumental for us in our future is because he saw a lot of potential in the geopolitical concept of Puerto Rico and that potential in the geopolitical context of the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, he exploited it. Obviously, there was a real interest of the United States to maintain control of the Caribbean and South

America through military bases in Puerto Rico. So, it is not that he was a sister of charity that was not in the geopolitical interests of the United States. But within that, he understood that in order to achieve that dominance he had to find a way to grow economically in Puerto Rico and help a country as poor as we were to have access to improve its economic conditions. And I think that that concept, the economist, the politician, the man close to John Maynard Keynes, the man close to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and his Secretary of State, the Director of the Department of the Interior, all that group of people who were always there, plus his religious beliefs, no doubt, in my opinion, made him see how he could make Puerto Rico such a different place. Obviously, Puerto Rico was very Catholic. That's also part of what he had to deal with, but it wasn't as instrumental as all the other reforms he came up with.

9. M: During the 2020 election period, you asked each candidate whether he or she believed that the Department of Justice of Puerto Rico should be headed by an elected Attorney General (Secretario de Justicia). You have also stated your professional interest in holding this position if it were selected by vote. If you were to be the head of the archipelago's Department of Justice one day, how would your spiritual beliefs affect your work ethic and the decisions you make?

**M: Durante el período electoral de 2020, le preguntaste a cada candidato si creía que el Departamento de Justicia de Puerto Rico debería ser dirigido por un secretario de Justicia elegido por el pueblo. También has manifestado tu interés profesional en ocupar este cargo si fueras elegido por votación. Si algún día fueras el secretario de Justicia, ¿de qué manera tus creencias espirituales afectarían tu ética de trabajo y las decisiones que tomes?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Primero, que eso nunca va a pasar porque requiere una enmienda a la constitución y lograr tener que el gobernador y la legislatura estén de acuerdo en que la persona con más poder de enjuiciarlo a ellos no tenga un elemento político a su nombramiento, sino que sea elegido por el pueblo. Eso crea básicamente las condiciones de casi imposibilitar que eso ocurra. Segundo, yo pudiera sonar antiético. “Ah, estás empujando que sea electo para tú poder entonces aspirar a la posición.” La verdad que yo creo que debe ser elegible, electo por el pueblo. ¿Correría si estuviera la posición? Sí, correría para esa posición. Es la única posición que me interesaría correr públicamente. Pero como sé que nunca va a pasar, pues simplemente es un asunto de una prédica de un concepto que me gustaría que pasara. No por yo correr sino porque creo que el pueblo debería escoger a quien pueda enjuiciar a sus políticos electos.

Dicho todo lo anterior, sin duda la fe y la religión es parte de todo. Uno no deja la religión en la puerta de la casa cuando uno va a pensar o analizar las cosas. El concepto a[de] la misericordia, el concepto a[de] la justicia... son conceptos que incluyen ética religiosa. Yo no las dejo en mi casa cuando voy hablar al aire o cuando voy a tomar decisiones de que temas tocar y que temas no tocar.

M: ¿Entonces sería lo mismo si estuviese en esa posición algún día?

J: No creo que cambiaría. Nunca va a pasar.

### **Translation.**

J: First, that is never going to happen because it requires an amendment to the constitution and getting the governor and the legislature to agree that the person with the most power to prosecute them should not have a political element to his appointment but should be

elected by the people. That basically creates the conditions to make it almost impossible for that to happen. Second, I might sound unethical. "Ah, you are pushing for it to be an elected position so that you can then aspire for it." The truth is that I think it should be elected by the people. Would I run if the position was by vote? Yes, I would run for that position. It's the only position I would be interested in running for publicly. But since I know it will never happen, it is simply a matter of preaching a concept that I would like to see happen. Not because of me running for it, but because I believe that the people should choose who can prosecute their elected politicians. Having said all of the above, certainly faith and religion are part of everything. One does not leave religion at the door of the house when one goes to think or analyze things. The concept of mercy, the concept of justice... these are concepts that include religious ethics. I don't leave them at home when I am going to speak on the air or when I am going to make decisions about what topics to talk about and what topics not to talk about.

M: So, it would be the same if you were in that position someday?

J: I don't think it would change. It's never going to happen.

10. M: The Conflict of the Ages is the book series by Ellen G. White which you have said has changed your life. Could you tell me a little about your experience with this series? One of the five books has had a major impact on your way of thinking, specifically in relation to politics? If that is so, which one and why?

**M: Has dicho que El Conflicto de los Siglos es la serie de libros de Elena G. de White que ha cambiado tu vida. ¿Podrías hablarme un poco de tu experiencia con esta serie? ¿Uno de los cinco libros ha tenido un impacto mayor en tu forma de pensar, específicamente en relación con la política? Si es así, ¿cuál y por qué?**

*Interview Transcription*

J: El Conflicto de los Siglos es el libro que más a mí me hizo reflexionar sobre el...

M: ¿Cuántos años tenías cuando lo leíste?

J: Quince.

M: ¿Por tu cuenta?

J: Si, siempre he sido curioso.

M: ¿No fuiste a la iglesia por tus padres? ¿Fuiste a la iglesia por tu cuenta?

J: Mi hermana y yo fuimos. Mis papás no eran adventistas. Yo leí la Biblia como a los trece años, doce años. A los trece, mi hermana conoce un chico con quien empieza a compartir sentimentalmente y él era adventista. Él básicamente creía en las mismas cosas que yo había leído en la biblia. Yo dije: “A mí me interesa saber de esa iglesia.” Y fui a la iglesia. Y básicamente el resto es historia, ¿no? Entonces yo leo la serie del Conflicto, la leí completa pero el libro que más me impactó y el primero que leí fue El Conflicto de los Siglos. La razón es porque vi una trayectoria, o sea, un “build-up” de la historia de cómo se fue creando una historia del cristianismo. Y como la verdad presente, un concepto muy adventista, fue aumentándose hasta llegar obviamente al concepto actual. Y me parece que el concepto de que hay un fin de que al final va haber una redención de la humanidad y que serán los menos pero ciertamente va haber una redención, un final, pues es algo que me parece extremadamente genial. Obviamente, influye todo el pensamiento porque tengo una expectativa que va pasar después de esta vida. Yo no sé qué es lo que va pasar. Pero yo sí sé que yo tengo la fe de que algo va pasar. No sé si pase, pero pues prefiero ir con esa fe que sin ella.



**Translation.**

J: The Great Controversy is the book that made me reflect the most on the...

M: How old were you when you read it?

J: Fifteen.

M: On your own?

J: Yes, I've always been curious.

M: You didn't go to church because of your parents? You went to church on your own?

J: My sister and I went. My parents were not Adventists. I read the Bible when I was about thirteen, twelve years old. At thirteen, my sister meets a boy with whom she starts having a romantic relationship and he was an Adventist. He basically believed in the same things that I had read in the Bible. I said, "I'm interested in knowing about that church." And I went to the church. And basically, the rest is history, right? Then I read the Conflict series, I read it all, but the book that impacted me the most and the first one I read was The Great Controversy. The reason is because I saw a trajectory, that is, a build-up of the history of how a history of Christianity was created. And as the present truth, a very Adventist concept, was increasing until it obviously reached the present concept. And it seems to me that the concept that there is an end, that in the end there is going to be a redemption and that they will be the least but certainly there is going to be a redemption, an end, well, it is something that seems to me extremely great. Obviously, it influences my thinking because I have an expectation of what is going to happen after this life. I don't know what is going to happen. But I do know that I have faith that something will happen. I don't know if it will happen, but I'd rather go with that faith than without it.

11. M: This past January 2021, the newspaper, *El Nuevo Día*, published an article by Javier Colón Dávila in which he informs that Mariana Nogales Molinelli refused to stand during the invocation and did not want to recite the phrase, “So help me God” (“Así me ayude Dios”). What are your thoughts about this as a believer and a political analyst who often references the Bible?

**M: El pasado mes de enero de 2021, el periódico El Nuevo Día publicó un artículo de Javier Colón Dávila que informa que Mariana Nogales Molinelli se negó a ponerse de pie durante la invocación y no quiso recitar la frase "Así me ayude Dios". Como creyente y analista político que sueles hacer referencia a la Biblia, ¿qué opinas de esto?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Yo pienso que ella tiene todo el derecho de hacer eso y parte de lo que Dios (si creemos en el Dios de la Biblia) ha permitido en la historia de la humanidad es que la gente no lo sigan si no quieren. Los seres humanos tenemos la tendencia a olvidarnos de cómo llegamos a donde estamos. Se nos olvida nuestra propia historia y parte de lo que creo es que a la iglesia se le ha olvidado cuando era perseguida, cuando tenía que huir para poder predicar su fe y que fue la iglesia la que pidió la separación de iglesia y estado. Fue la iglesia protestante en Puerto Rico la que pidió la separación de iglesia y estado, fueron los “Founding Fathers” de Estados Unidos los que pidieron la separación de iglesia y estado y el tribunal supremo la concedió después de que se ratificó la constitución. Cuando te conviertes en la mayoría, ahora tú te vuelves lo que antes criticabas y eso es una cuestión muy humana. Grupos minoritarios que exigían tener un rol social...ahora si tú piensas diferente a ellos y esto pasa con la comunidad LGBTQ, tú escuchas como de repente, si tu

difieres de ellos, ya es odio. No, no no... no es odio, simplemente diferimos en algunos puntos. Yo estoy de acuerdo en la mayor parte de sus puntos, pero hay algunos puntos que difiero pues automáticamente el concepto es, "Tú eres odio. Cállate. No puedes hablar". Y yo creo en parte lo que le pasa a la iglesia es que se le olvidó cuando era minoría y cuando fuimos nosotros lo que pedimos la separación de iglesia y estado y de que cada cual escogería su libertad religiosa. En el caso de Mariana Nogales es no creer. Esa es su libertad.

**Translation.**

J: I think she has every right to do that and part of what God (if we believe in the God of the Bible) has allowed in human history is for people not to follow him if they don't want to. We humans have a tendency to forget how we got to where we are. We forget our own history and part of what I believe is that the church has forgotten when it was persecuted, when it had to flee in order to preach its faith and that it was the church that asked for the separation of church and state. It was the Protestant church in Puerto Rico that asked for the separation of church and state; it was the Founding Fathers of the United States that asked for the separation of church and state and the Supreme Court granted it after the Constitution was ratified. When you become the majority, now you become what you were criticizing before and that is a very human issue. Minority groups that demanded to have a social role...now if you think differently from them and this happens with the LGBTQ community, you hear how all of a sudden if you differ from them it's hatred. No, no, no... it's not hatred; we just differ on some points. I agree on most of their points, but there are some points that I differ from, but automatically the reaction is, "You are hate. Shut up. You can't talk." And I think part of what is wrong with the church is that they forgot when

they were the minority and when we were the ones who asked for the separation of church and state and that everyone would choose their religious freedom. In the case of Mariana Nogales, it is not to believe. That is her freedom.

12. M: How do you rate your role as a political analyst? What area(s) would you say you could improve?

**M: ¿Cómo calificas tu función de analista político? ¿En qué área(s) podrías mejorar?**

### ***Interview Transcription***

J: Yo creo que el elemento de entretenimiento cada vez es más necesario para lograr detener la audiencia y cada vez es más frustrante. Para mí, lo es porque uno espera que no tenga que estar entreteniendo si no que te importe porque los datos son importantes, porque esto te afecta en tu día a día. Pero yo noto que cada vez es más necesario el concepto o la idea de ser entretenido el material o el contenido que das y eso me frustra. ¿Qué áreas puedo mejorar? Para mí, por ejemplo, el hecho de que no me debería frustrar, número uno. Número dos, el aceptar que hay cosas que no puedes cambiar. Eso es otra cosa que tengo que aceptar y se me ha complicado. Siempre hay más material por leer. Siempre hay más material por profundizar. Yo creo que también escuchar la otra parte más, la otra parte que piensa distinto a uno. Yo trato de hacerlo todo el tiempo, pero creo que siempre hay espacio para mejorar en ese sentido. Ahora en mi opinión y esto va sonar horrible, yo quiero ser el mejor en esto. Yo trato de ser el mejor en esto. Yo busco ser el mejor y creo que lo soy, pero puedo ser mejor todavía.

M: Entonces, ¿Lo más que mejoraría es aceptar que hay cosas que no puedes cambiar?

J: Bien brutal. Dejar de frustrarme. .... Es bien duro. Te voy a dar un ejemplo. El plan de ajuste de la deuda es el tema que más nos va afectar por los próximos treinta años. Está

negociándose el fin del plan de ajuste de la deuda y como nadie lo entiende porque desgraciadamente tenemos un pueblo que no profundiza en los temas económicos, solamente cuando le afecta el bolsillo. Bueno, certeramente va afectar el bolsillo dentro de par de años. No lo vas a saber ahora. Lo mismo pasó con los peajes cuando en el 2011 yo estaba gritando diciendo que Fortuño estaba vendiendo la autopista y pensé que era un muy mal negocio, pero la gente estaba a favor porque obviamente la autopista estaba muy desalineada...uno lo veía. Suena que fue un muy buen negocio, pero no lo fue. No te enteras de cuan mal negocio fue hasta que empiezan a subir los peajes todos los años desde el 2014 para acá. Y ahora que cuesta básicamente dos horas de trabajo ir y volver de Arecibo a San Juan pues como... Wao, espérate. Ah, pues ahora. Esa realidad tú no la puedes cambiar. La gente no va entender cómo le va afectar esto hasta que le afecte.

Entonces, me pasa todo el tiempo. “Oye, ¿Por qué él no está hablando de tal y cual tema?” Y Yo: “Mano, yo hice un programa de eso el martes pasado. ¿Tú no lo viste?” “Ah, pero nadie habla de eso.” El hecho de que tú no leas los periódicos. El hecho de que tú no leas las columnas. El hecho de que tú no veas los canales de televisión local. El hecho de que tú no estés al pendiente no significa que no estamos hablando, es que tú no estás pendiente. Pues no hay forma de tú obligar a la gente a ver el programa los martes. Prefieren ver Netflix. Y esto pasa en otras islas del Caribe, como no tienen medios locales, tienen que depender de que algún medio internacional le importe su situación. Sabes que a la gente no le importa tu situación. Igual que nosotros no hablamos aquí de las noticias de South Dakota, en South Dakota no se da noticia de Puerto Rico. El concepto de que “yo veo Netflix.” OK, chévere. Ve Netflix. El día que venga un huracán o terremoto, espero que Netflix haga un reportaje de ti dentro de cuatro años cuando no haya ninguna gente aquí

porque entonces te vas enterar que estaba pasando tal y cual cosa en Puerto Rico. ... Esa indiferencia es para mí el mayor reto que tenemos nosotros los analistas políticos.

**Translation.**

J: I think that the entertainment element is becoming more and more necessary in order to maintain one's audience, and it's becoming more and more frustrating. For me, it is frustrating because I hope that it doesn't have to be entertaining, but that people care because the facts are important, because it affects their day-to-day life. But I notice that the idea that the material or the content that you give be entertaining is becoming more and more necessary and that frustrates me. What areas can I improve? For me, for example, the fact that I shouldn't be frustrated, number one. Number two, to accept that there are things I can't change. That's another thing I have to accept and it's been difficult for me. There's always more material to read. There's always more material to dig into. I think also listening to the other side more, the other side that thinks differently from me. I try to do it all the time, but I think there is always room for improvement in that sense. Now in my opinion, and this is going to sound horrible, I want to be the best at this. I try to be the best at it. I seek to be the best and I think I am, but I can still be better.

M: So, the most you would improve is to accept that there are things you can't change?

J: Well, yes. To stop getting frustrated. .... It's really hard. I'll give you an example. The debt adjustment plan is the issue that will affect us the most for the next thirty years. The end of the debt adjustment plan is being negotiated and nobody understands it because unfortunately, people do not get deep into economic issues unless it affects their pockets. Well, it will certainly affect their pockets in a couple of years. You are not going to know it now. The same thing happened with the tolls. In 2011, I was shouting saying that Fortuño

was selling the highway and I thought it was a very bad deal, but people were in favor because of the obvious conditions of the highway. You could see it. It sounds like it was a very good deal, but it was not. You don't find out how bad a deal it was until they start raising the tolls every year from 2014 onwards. And now that it costs basically two hours of work (salary) to get from Arecibo to San Juan and back... Wow, wait! Ah, well now they worry about it. You cannot change that reality. People are not going to understand how this is going to affect them until it actually affects them.

This happens to me all the time. Someone says, "Hey, why isn't he talking about this and that?" And I'm like, "Man, I did a program on that last Tuesday. Didn't you see it?" The response: "Ah, but nobody talks about it."

The fact that you don't read the newspapers. The fact that you don't read the columns. The fact that you don't watch the local TV channels. The fact that you are not paying attention does not mean that we are not talking. It means that you are not paying attention. Well, there's no way you can force people to watch the show on Tuesdays. They prefer to watch Netflix. And this happens in other Caribbean islands too. Since they don't have local media, they have to rely on some international media forum to care about their situation. People don't care about your situation. Just like we don't talk about South Dakota news here, in South Dakota there is no news about Puerto Rico. The concept of "I watch Netflix."... OK, cool. Watch Netflix. The day a hurricane or earthquake comes, I hope Netflix does a report on you four years from now when there are no people here because then you're going to find out that such and such was happening in Puerto Rico .... That indifference is for me the biggest challenge for us political analysts.

13. M: Journalism is often recognized as a pillar of our democracy because of how it shapes public opinion. Nonetheless, Donald Trump continuously pointed his finger at journalists and labeled them as reporters of fake news during his presidential term. Those who do not support Trump may say he used the phrase as propaganda to discredit news he did not like. However, those who do support him, cheered him on and agreed with him. How has the notion of fake news affected journalism, political analysis, and, simply speaking, what is considered to be true?

**M: El periodismo es a menudo reconocido como un pilar de nuestra democracia por la forma en que moldea la opinión pública. Sin embargo, Donald Trump continuamente criticó a los periodistas y los tildó de reporteros de noticias falsas durante su mandato presidencial. Los que no apoyan a Trump pueden decir que utilizó la frase como propaganda para desacreditar las noticias que a él no le gustaban. Sin embargo, los que sí lo apoyan, lo aplaudieron y le dieron la razón. ¿Cómo ha afectado la noción de “fake news” al periodismo, al análisis político y, sencillamente, a lo que se considera verdadero?**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: El impacto es incalculable. No hay número que tú puedas poner. Eso es elevado a la n. Es imposible saber exactamente el impacto. Lo peor es que la verdad es cada vez menos verdadera. Porque cada vez es más mi percepción de lo que es la verdad. Así que obviamente, nosotros los que trabajamos en lo que hacemos nos queda solamente tratar de establecer los datos. Establecer lo que entendemos que dicen esos datos y tratar de demostrar que lo que se dice que es “fake” no lo es. Que lo que se dice que es un engaño, es el intento de engañarte. Lo puedes hacer solo cuando tienes la atención del público. Y



ese es el principal problema. Por eso digo que el principal problema es la indiferencia porque si tú tienes a alguien que está atento y tú lo dices, te están diciendo esto para lograr aquello cuando la verdad es otra. Pues eso cambia el juego. Pero si la persona no está ni atenta y solamente está escuchando y viendo lo que suena a lo que quiere escuchar pues “it’s a done deal”. En el caso del “fake news”, eso cambió totalmente el concepto de lo que es noticioso. En las redes sociales, lograron democratizar la información y la opinión. Pero igualmente lograron establecer el que todo está bajo fuego, todo está en duda. Hasta dos más dos es cuatro. Hasta la verdad matemática está en duda.

### **Translation.**

J: The impact is incalculable. There's no number you can put on it. That's raised to the  $n^{\text{th}}$  power. It's impossible to know exactly the impact. The worst thing is that the truth is less and less true. Because it's more and more my perception of what the truth is. So obviously, we who work at what we do are left with just trying to establish the facts. Establish what we understand the facts are and try to demonstrate that what is said to be "fake" is not fake. That what is said to be a hoax is actually the attempt itself to fool you. You can do it only when you have the attention of the public. And that's the main problem. That's why I say the main problem is indifference because if you have someone who is attentive and you say it, “They are telling you this to achieve that and the truth is something else.” That changes the game. But if the person is not even attentive and is only listening and seeing what sounds like what they want to hear then it's a done deal. In the case of "fake news" this totally changed the concept of what is newsworthy. Social networks managed to democratize information and opinion. But they also managed to establish that everything

is under fire; everything is in doubt. Even two plus two is four. Even mathematical truth is in doubt.

14. M: Please explain your use of reggaeton lyrics in your work, given the controversy over them.

**M: Por favor, explica el uso de las letras de reguetón en tus escritos, dada la controversia sobre ellas.**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: Yo creo que el “pop culture” es inevitable. El reguetón ya es pop culture...es “popular culture”. Ya no es un género musical y ya. Yo uso mucho el concepto del reguetón porque creo que es la forma de llamar la atención de públicos que no están pendientes de lo que yo hago. Todos tenemos momentos para esparcimiento. Por ejemplo, yo no juego videojuegos. Desde que tengo ocho años, yo no juego nada. Pero, hablo continuamente de “Grand Theft Auto”. Sé lo que es. Lo he jugado una que otra vez para pasar el rato, literalmente veinte minutos. Uso “Fortnite” como referencia continua porque es una forma de popcultarizar el concepto de análisis político...llamar la atención de personas que no estarían muy interesados de lo que estoy hablando si no uso ejemplos de su diario vivir. El reguetón es la música del momento. Es la música que está escuchando el público especialmente de doce a cuarenta y nueve años. Por tanto, como tan gran parte de mi audiencia creció con el reguetón como concepto musical urbano desde el 2003 que salió “Gasolina” que es la canción que de verdad popularizó el concepto de reguetón. Llevamos veinte años en ese mundo ya. Esa es la realidad. La audiencia es *reguetonero*[a] y, por tanto, yo no quiero hacerle ver a ellos que yo soy el tipo que escucha baladas. Sí escucho música, pero quiero darles un concepto que ellos comparten conmigo. Creo que el usar el

reguetón logra que se identifiquen unos públicos que no se identifica bien conmigo de otra manera.

**Translation.**

J: I believe that pop culture is inevitable. Reggaeton is already pop culture...it is popular culture. It is no longer a musical genre and that's it. I use the concept of reggaeton a lot because I think it's a way to get the attention of audiences that are not paying attention to what I do. We all have moments for recreation. For example, I don't play video games. Since I was eight years old, I don't play anything. But I talk continuously about "Grand Theft Auto" all the time. I know what it is. I've played it here and there to literally hang out for twenty minutes. I use Fortnite as a continual reference because it's a way to popculturalize the concept of political analysis...get the attention of people who wouldn't be very interested in what I'm talking about, if I didn't use examples from their daily lives. Reggaeton is the music of the moment. It is the music that is being listened to by the public especially between the ages of twelve to forty-nine years old; therefore, such a large part of my audience grew up with reggaeton as an urban music concept since 2003 when "Gasolina" came out, which is the song that really popularized the concept of reggaeton. We've been in that world for twenty years now. That is the reality. The audience is reggaetonero and, therefore, I don't want them to think that I am the guy who listens to ballads. I do listen to music, but I want to give them a concept that they share with me. I think that using reggaeton makes audiences, that don't identify well with me in any other way, identify with me.

15. M: If I were to describe your style in political analysis to someone who did not know of you, I would say: "He uses simple language in order to get to the masses and if he must

use jargon, he will explain it in detail. His analysis and overall work are like an educational project for the archipelago. Additionally, he sometimes integrates reggaeton lyrics into his work and just as easily cites the Bible too.” How do you react to this description and what would you personally say about your political analysis style and the purpose you have behind what you do?

**M: Si le tuviera que describir tu estilo de análisis político a alguien que no te conociera, le diría "Utiliza un lenguaje sencillo para llegar a las masas y si tiene que utilizar jerga, la explica con detalle. Su análisis y su trabajo en general es[son] como un proyecto educativo para el archipiélago. Además, a veces integra letras de reguetón en sus escritos y con la misma facilidad cita la Biblia". ¿Cómo reaccionas a esta descripción y qué dirías personalmente sobre tu estilo de análisis político y el propósito de lo que haces?**

### *Interview Transcription*

J: Esa crítica me la han hecho bastante. ¿Cómo es que yo puedo citar la Biblia y justo después hablar de Anuel AA? “I’m not a preacher. I’m not preaching.” Yo tengo mis propias creencias, pero son muy mías. Yo trato de vivirlas y trato de ser conservador en mi vida privada. Pero, no le impongo mis creencias al público. Yo trato de que el público sepa que “I’m one of them”. Yo no veo contradictorio el ser creyente y tratar de hacerle ver a la gente que yo sé lo que es Anuel AA. Yo sé que es Bad Bunny. Yo sé lo que es “crispy”. No lo he usado. Nunca lo he probado. Ninguna. Pero eso no significa que no sé que existen y que no sé qué parte del dialogo común de gente especialmente joven es “¿Fumaste crispy?” It is what it is. Yo no estoy predicando cuando estoy en el aire. Yo estoy tratando de hacerle saber a la gente que sí yo sé lo que tú estás haciendo. Yo entiendo lo que estás

haciendo y honestamente, creo que deberías estar haciendo esto otro. Por tanto, pues uso el contexto bíblico y la música ... tratando de evitar de llegar al extremo porque Anuel AA tiene letras que no citaría jamás igual que Bryant Myers.

M: ¿Nunca piensas regresar a posiblemente ser pastor?

J: Esa pregunta me la hacen todo el tiempo. La respuesta es yo no sé. Yo no lo voy a buscar. Me lo han ofrecido. Me han preguntado si quiero volver a estudiar ministerio.

M: ¿Quieres?

J: No sé. Hay días que pienso que sí. Hay días que me siento muy mal por pensar que sí. Yo soy un pecador y como tal pues no escondo quien realmente soy. No me gustaría tener que vivir un doble estándar. No lo haría si no estoy preparado para estar "all in" y como sé que no estaría "all in" ahora mismo pues no lo hago. No quiero vivir un doble estándar.

**Translation.**

J: I've been criticized on that one quite a bit. How is it that I can quote the Bible and right after that talk about Anuel AA? I'm not a preacher. I'm not preaching. I have my own beliefs, but they are very much my own. I try to live them and I try to be conservative in my private life. But I don't impose my beliefs on the public. I try to let the public know that I'm one of them. I don't see it as contradictory to be a believer and try to let people see that I know who Anuel AA is. I know what Bad Bunny is. I know what "crispy" is. I haven't used it. I've never tried it. None. But that doesn't mean I don't know that they exist and that I don't know that part of the common dialogue especially among young people is "Did you smoke crispy?" It is what it is. I'm not preaching when I'm on the air. I am trying to let people know that yes, I know what you are doing. I understand what you are doing and honestly, I think you should be doing something else. So, I use the biblical context and

music ... trying to avoid going to the extreme because Anuel AA has lyrics that I would never quote just like Bryant Myers.

M: Do you ever think about going back to possibly being a pastor?

J: I get that question all the time. The answer is I don't know. I'm not going to pursue it. I've been offered it. I've been asked if I want to go back to studying ministry.

M: Do you want to?

J: I don't know. There are days when I think I do. There are days that I feel very bad for thinking I do. I am a sinner and as such I don't hide who I really am. I wouldn't want to have to live a double standard. I wouldn't do it if I'm not ready to be all in and since I know I wouldn't be all in right now, I don't do it. I don't want to live a double standard.

### **Chapter Four Stanley Joseph Greaves, A Maker of Things**

Stanley Joseph Greaves is “a maker of things” as he prefers to identify himself rather than as a Guyanese visual artist, educator, poet, and musician. This description of Greaves “merely scratches the surface” for he is “an excellent draughtsman, sculptor, a critic, a prize-winning author...and one of Guyana’s most respected intellectuals – a lively, stimulating, if unconventional, intellectual” (Stabroek News, 2007). This “maker of things” developed and led the Division of Creative Arts at the University of Guyana. He expanded the program offerings and involved himself in the performing arts by playing guitar in two folk music bands. This is only a glimpse of the man behind the name Stanley Joseph Greaves.

Greaves’s recognition of himself as an inventor, constructor, composer... (all synonyms of maker) “might be out of a sense of humility..., [but it also] involves his belief in and his autobiographical association with improvisation and the necessity to create with slim resources” (Stabroek News, 2007). At a reading of his collection of poetry, *Haiku* (2015), at Moray House Trust in May 2016, Greaves commented that his first tool was double-edged razor blades that he used to collect as a child from a neighbor of his named, Mr. Cummings. It is important to note that his artistry recurs to his roots, his past, the working classes of his hometown, his early training in art, Guyanese landscape, and societal issues. Furthermore, Greaves is a maker stimulated by intuition, spiritual sympathies, and metaphysical dimensions. He sees himself as “a mere medium in the creative process” (Stabroek News, 2007) who composes from the muse that arrives to him. Greaves (2015) asserts this in his Number 14 haiku: Like friendly fecund trees / ideas produce fruit. /At such roots poets wait.

## Biography

Born in Georgetown, Guyana on November 23, 1934, to Priscilla née Whyte and John Greaves, Stanley Joseph Greaves was raised in a tenement yard located at 132 Carmichael Street, a poor multi-family housing area where sanitation, safety, and comfort were lacking. From his paternal grandparents, Greaves has Barbadian descent from his grandfather and Portuguese descent from his grandmother. As a young boy, Greaves's father, John, was sent by his own father to travel alongside a reverend and later became a choirboy at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Eventually, John Greaves worked primarily as a rope-work specialist at the waterfront. This required the making of slings and mooring lines for cargo boats. He was also a musician who performed at social gatherings. His income was minimal and therefore, Greaves's mother did household chores and needlework for pay. This is all proof of Greaves's humble upbringing and of what has been influential in the composition of his works. He recalls his childhood home with a gentle heart and great admiration as he is grateful for the social cohesiveness of the yard. He once explained, "People looked after one another. You could not abuse children. The children belonged to the yard" (Cambridge, 2004). Greaves was and is part of the urban working class of the people of Guyana. He recognizes the tenement yard, a place that no longer exists, as having been alive with creativity, for it was there that he was introduced to the arts.

As explained by Rupert Roopnaraine in the section, Chronology (pp 193-205), within his book, *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, at the age of 16, Greaves knew he wanted to study art and his first formal education in the arts was at the Working People's Art Class (WPAC) where courses were originally offered to the townspeople for free. He studied painting, sculpture, and printmaking. Then, he earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Newcastle-



upon-Tyne in art and art education as well as a master's degree with a specialization in sculpture from Howard University in Washington D.C. Like Fonseca, Greaves did not allow the setbacks of his economic status to pose as obstacles inhibiting him from progressing; instead, the poverty that surrounded him became his inspiration. Greaves quoted the Guyanese poet Martin Wylde Carter during an interview with Anne Walmsley for *Bomb Magazine* on January 4, 2004, when he stated,

I come from the nigger-yard. The term has come to have a pejorative ring, but to my mind the yard was a vibrant community. ... I have always been interested in people and the things they do --- which, perhaps, is an extension of myself. ... I think my interest in society and what people do in society have been ... focused on the working class.

Today, Greaves is recognized as “a Guyanese cultural hero, the archetype of the Guyanist” (Cambridge, 2004). He has exhibited his art nationally, published his written work, and has been awarded numerous acknowledgments such as a Fulbright Award, the Guyana National Honor of the Golden Arrow of Achievement, Guyana Prize for Literature, Guyana National Lifetime Award for Art, a gold medal at the Santo Domingo Biennale of painting for the triptych, *There is a meeting here tonight*, among others. It is precisely this collection of paintings previously mentioned which displays political satire and the relationship between the electorate and the elected in the Caribbean while incorporating religious symbolism. Greaves has expressed the following about his art.

The noise of living has shut out the inner voice. We've become too engaged, overly engaged, in the material things around us, and the benefits, of what we can get from this and that. ... Painting itself is of no interest to me. It is a means to an end. ... You are invited to look at that and to develop a relationship with what you are seeing. It may or may not happen. Painting is an invitation. My mission really is to make people aware of their location, where they are, what is around them, to make them be more sensitive to what is

happening around them. ... You need to be so conscious of things that if an ant falls dead on the floor there, you're aware of it. I don't mean to be disrespectful to those people who are religious, but you must have the eye of God, the all-seeing eye, you must be able to see everything going on around you. You begin to notice things. (CaribNation TV, 2011)

Although Fonseca and Greaves were born years and miles apart and possess distinct talents, they share some common ground, the most significant being that their work/art is done with the purpose that others can respond to it, interact with it; in other words, they endeavor to urge others to move and they aspire to educate their people. As noted in Roopnaraine's book (2005) specifically in Chapter 10, "The Politics of Desolation," Greaves wrote in his journal in November 1993 the following quote by the pianist, Alfred Brendel, "If an artist doesn't educate the public, what will become of mankind?" (p. 153). Both Fonseca and Greaves connect themselves to their people and land. They want their people to break free from the bondage of ignorance. Greaves feels

you have to see, look at, and listen to the land and you do not necessarily have to reproduce what you are seeing or looking at, but it is the spirit of the land which has to inform what you're writing [painting]. (Moray House Trust, 2022)

This thought is inspired by Martin Carter's poem (1977), "Listening to the Land." It reads as follows:

That night when I left you on the bridge  
 I bent down  
 kneeling on my knee  
 and pressed my ear to listen to the land.  
 I bent down

Listening to the land  
 But all I heard was tongueless whispering.  
 On my right hand was the sea behind the wall  
 The sea that has no business in the forest  
 and I bent down  
 listening to the land  
 and all I heard was tongueless whispering  
 as if some buried slave wanted to speak again.

Greaves's work, similar to that of Fonseca, gives a voice to the "tongueless whispering...[of] some buried slave want[ing] to speak again" as both speak on behalf of the citizens of their respective lands who have been buried by the jobbery, nepotism, unscrupulousness, and overall exploitation of politicians and public servants who work only to serve themselves and those who join them in committing corruption.

### **Analysis of a Selection of Greaves's Paintings from *There is a meeting here tonight***

Greaves's collection *There is a meeting here tonight* consists of 14 acrylics on canvas on ply composed between 1992 and 2001. The title comes from

...the words of a song often rendered by religious spiritualists, practitioners of folk denominations of Christianity. These are grassroots types involving preachers and small groups who would gather on the street corner to preach, inviting the flock with the song 'There is a meeting here tonight / Come one and all and gather around / There is a meeting here tonight.' (Creighton, 2014)

The nine-year time span taken to complete the collection reveals how Greaves did not initially contemplate creating a series. The 14 paintings were elaborated in sets of two or three and

ultimately came together to tell a story. The latter presents a rather grim outlook on Caribbean politics, specifically an electoral cycle going askew. “In Guyana all elections, both fair and unfair following the fragmentation of the national movement between 1953 and 1957, have unfailingly left in their wake seething discontent and at times convulsions” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 159). The “national movement” alludes to a time of rebellion that Guyana experienced in the late 1940s and early 1950s against colonial powers. It brought a sense of hope to the people, but it did not last very long. Some historical context will be given here and other archival facts will be presented when analyzing the pieces from the collection.

The uprising peaked on June 16, 1948, when five sugar plantation workers who were on strike “struggling to win respect from the very powerful sugar bosses of the day and at the same time in their just efforts to obtain improved working conditions and social justice in general” were murdered by colonial police at Enmore Estate (Mangar, 2021a). Fourteen other individuals were also injured. This initiated “a season for new teachings, calling into question the right of Empire and the right of others to dominate our lives” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 155). However, although the original People’s Progressive Party under the leadership of the Presidents, Dr. Cheddi Jagan and Mr. Forbes Burnham was founded and supported by a great majority of the people of Guyana as it intended to establish national unity and proclaim their freedom, colonial powers intervened. “Great Britain under considerable American pressure, suspended the Constitution, and overthrew the legally elected government under the guise of preventing the establishment of a communist state in the then British Guiana” (Mangar, 2021b). Although political independence was ultimately achieved on May 26, 1966, unfortunately, the road to autonomy was a turbulent one. “In the end, the united nationalist movement succumbed to the complex mix of pressures and fragmented, resulting in the African/Indian ethnic polarization of the country that has blighted its development

ever since. Manoeuvre and manipulation replaced the politics of heroism and revolt” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 156).

The rivalry that was born at this time still continues today. “Political stability and national unity are as elusive as ever. ...We are often plagued with the blame game, insensitivities and controversies which do us more harm than good” (Mangar, 2021b). Thus, Greaves’s *There is a meeting here tonight* serves as a caution light. Roopnaraine (2005) defines the collection as “a conscious intervention in a political conjuncture” (p. 157). It is the intentional ringing of an alarm to announce the “crisis-ridden and riven” politics that politicians consistently attempt to disguise (p. 157). Greaves himself wrote the following about the exhibition as cited by Roopnaraine (2005)

It is a savage irony that the institution of politics which should be the instrument of protection of the people (and the development of their strength across a range of activities) and contain the potential for significant action should be the instrument of the destruction of the same values...Herein lies the irony which is the fundamental message of this body of work which poses questions who[se] answers lie in the manner the will of the nation is expressed – self damnation or self-salvation. The choice is clear. (p. 157-158)

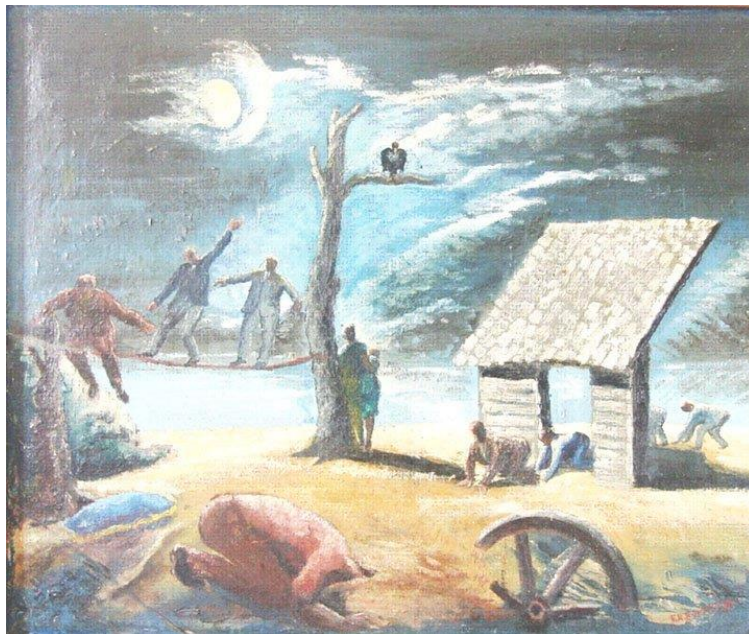
Furthermore, besides the historical socio-political events that play a major role in the formation of the collection, it is significant to credit what Greaves calls the “singular motivation for the *There is a meeting here tonight* series” as cited by Roopnaraine (2005, p.157). Greaves refers to a painting by Edward Rupert (E.R.) Burrowes (1903-1966) called *Guyana, Land of the dolorous guard* (1951, oil, 46 x 57 cm). Burrowes was born in Barbados yet is considered a Guyanese painter because he moved to Guyana at a very young age, grew up and studied there, and founded the Working People’s Art Class, the first art institution in Guyana and the place that

was Greaves's first art school. *Guyana, Land of the dolorous guard* is best described by Roopnaraine:

A waste land of ruination under an angry, blue-black sky; scudding clouds, a full moon, and a stretch of stagnant water reflecting the sky. ... Burrowes's painting is as fine an image of the colonial waste as any, Fanon's 'motionless Manicheanistic world' made vivid. It is the nightmare of oppression. Its bleakness is cosmic; the Guyanese condition is the human condition. (2005, pp. 153-154)

### Figure 3

*Guyana, Land of the dolorous guard*



*Note.* By E.R. Burrowes, 1951, painting, oil on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 154), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

The painting represents the political turmoil that has plagued Guyana. The politicians try to keep balance amidst the chaos they themselves have created while the common citizen is either

looking for shelter or hiding from the reality encompassing the surroundings. When Roopnaraine relates Burrowes's painting to Frantz Fanon's (Martinican psychiatrist, political theorist, and author) "motionless Manicheanistic world," he is referring to "one of Fanon's most innovative arguments [about how] the organizational logic of colonial domination was spatial in nature" (Persaud, 1997, p. 174). Fanon contends that the colonial world is a divided one, "every colonial social formation was constituted not only around two distinct spaces, but rather two opposed worlds" where settling disputes and reaching compromises are not possible (Persaud, 1997, p. 174). Manicheanistic is a proper adjective that derives from the noun, Manichaeism. The latter is a dualistic religious system founded in Persia, today's Iran, by the prophet Mani whose the central belief is in two conflicting forces co-existing, such as light and darkness, hence, good and evil. This is precisely what is illustrated in Burrowes's piece. He paints a cloud-filled night sky contrasting the desolate land while there are figures standing tall on the tightrope and others are warping into the ground. There is a clear disequilibrium; it is the dominator over the dominated. This same theme is evident in Greaves's work.

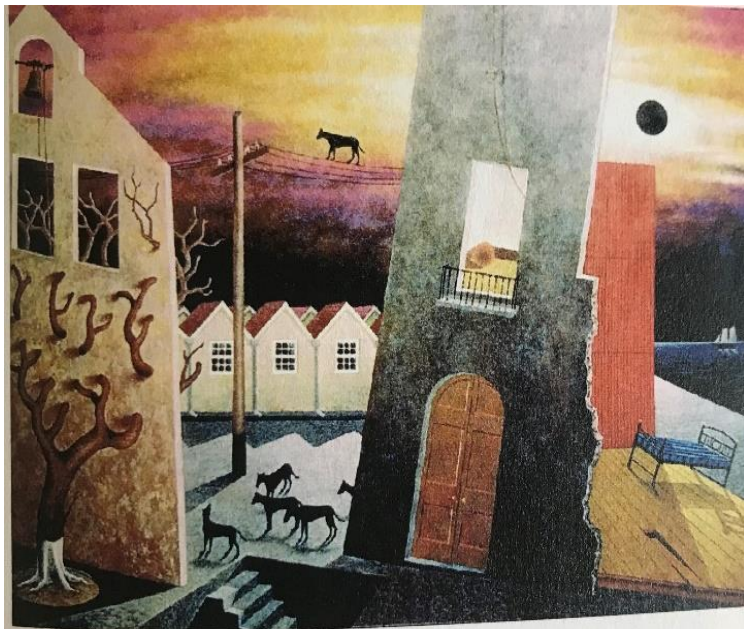
Of the 14 pieces, four have been selected and examined closely. They were chosen because of the religious imagery that principally emerges in each one. The titles of the pieces are *Prologue* (1994), *The manifesto* (1996), *Election results* (1997), and *Political protest* (2000). When we draw our attention to Greaves's series, we realize that art can be an inaudible, nonviolent medium of protest and resistance that aims at connecting with us as observers. This is so because we immediately relate to the work, given that we also have grievances, are tired of the harm caused by injustice, and are eager to mobilize for change. Furthermore, like Fonseca, who fuses politics and religion since separating the two is futile, Greaves allows for the two to synchronize in his art to show that religion is deeply rooted in the history of the Caribbean, while also sending a sardonic

message about how faith in politicians has been devalued because of the economic, cultural, and social destruction they have caused.

*Prologue* as indicated in its title is the introduction to the collection. Knowing the background information of how Greaves created his paintings motivated by Burrowes's work helps in the interpretation of the features in Figure 4. Immediately, similarities are noticed such as the occupied "politician" in a balancing feat on the tightrope, the dilapidated buildings, the diverging colors, and the manifestation of an unstable mood as described by Martin Carter in his poem, "Black Friday 1962," "in sleep or sudden wake, nightmare, dream" as cited by Roopnaraine (2005, p. 155). Additionally, at first glance, the observer can also easily identify the characters, the setting, and the tone.

#### **Figure 4**

##### *Prologue*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1994, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 173), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.



The characters are the black dogs who are gathering in the center. Together, they represent “political meetings on street corners ... in very sarcastic, ironic fashion” (Creighton, 2014). The setting is a divided space. It is composed of “ruined facades, one sacred/religious, the other profane/secular, both crumbled and decrepit” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 162). The wooden floor of the tilted building to the right has an uneven plank and a fashionable bed. The sun is a black circle, an antithesis to the golden, crimson, and purple hues around it. At a distance there is a schooner drifting. Also, in the center of the painting, there are rows of houses with a lamp-post situated before them.

The cross formed by the lamp-post reinforces the religious dimension, inviting us to consider not only the exploitation of religious imagery and idiom in the utterances of the politicians, but, more significantly, the accelerating dissolution of faith in the politicians as original spiritual beliefs gain more and more ground. (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 163)

“If we think of politicians working primarily for their own interests, those of the country take second place. This is perhaps part of the narrative content of the satirical painting. The symbols of a neglected nation are to be found...” (Greaves, 2015). Greaves said these words during a conversation with artist Akima McPherson for Stabroek News published on May 3, 2015, in which the two analyzed Burrowes’s *Guyana, Land of the dolorous guard*. However, Greaves’s words can easily be used to describe his own painting, *Prologue*. The symbols of the “neglected nation” are the hollow structures, the still-like ocean, the tree growing into the church wall, and the stone steps that lead into a dark unknown. Hall’s representation theory can be applied here particularly his notion of asymmetries of power. The dog on the tightrope, “the politician,” who is in authority stands high up above all and parallel to the cross, but with the possibility of losing his balance at any moment. This could be interpreted as a depiction of the persistent wounds and

damage inflicted on the political life of the post-Independence Caribbean by a colonial legacy in which the Church and the imperial powers such as Great Britain collaborated in the enslavement of African and Indigenous people, who did not remain passive, but instead waged campaigns of resistance that ultimately led to the abolition of chattel slavery as well as to Independence. Because of the strength of this resistance, both the British authorities in the form of the colonial administrators and the neo-colonial authorities in the form of corrupt local politicians have always had to be vigilant against the constant threat of challenge to their illegitimate and precarious rule.

Additionally, the sun setting and appearing to lack life brings to mind the circular motion of the Earth orbiting the sun, the circularity of life, and thus, Hall's explanation of "the circularity of power" in his text, *The Spectacle of the Other in Representation: Cultural representations and the signifying process*. He writes of Foucault and Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, best known for his theory of cultural hegemony. Hall (1997b) states

The circularity of power is especially important in the context of representation. The argument is that everyone — the powerful and the powerless - is caught up, though not on equal terms, in power's circulation. ...[Although] Gramsci, of course, would have stressed 'between classes', whereas Foucault always refused to identify any specific subject or subject-group as the source of power, which, he said, operates at a local, tactical level. ... For Gramsci, as for Foucault, power also involves knowledge, representation, ideas, cultural leadership and authority, as well as economic constraint and physical coercion. Both would have agreed that power cannot be captured by thinking exclusively in terms of force or coercion: power also seduces, solicits, induces, wins consent. It cannot be thought of in terms of one group having a monopoly of power, simply radiating power downwards

on a subordinate group by an exercise of simple domination from above. It includes the dominant and the dominated within its circuits. (p. 261)

The title of the painting illustrated in Figure 5 by definition is a declaration of a mission statement which is traditionally done by political parties or candidates prior to an election. The manifesto is one of two obeah paintings in the collection. According to the text, *Creole religions of the Caribbean: An introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo*, “the development of a complex system of religious and healing practices allowed enslaved African communities that had already suffered devastating cultural loss to preserve a sense of group and identity” (Fernández Olmos & Paravisini-Gebert, 2011, p. 4). Ergo, Greaves may very well be illustrating the irony behind neocolonial politics. The message of the painting may be that as the people proclaim to conserve the essence of who they are and demand to be delivered from corruption, the politicians ignore their outcries, publicly state their objectives, policies, and aims, and sardonically use obeah as a way to bring good fortune only to their own election process.

### Figure 5

*The manifesto*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1996, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 178), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

The manifesto exposes a paradox because Greaves may illustrate obeah, a symbol of identity conservation and resistance, to prove how twisted politics in Guyana (and in general) have become, to the extent that politicians are willing to use on their own people “a meaningful and rich element in the Caribbean’s ancestral cultural heritage that needs to be nurtured and preserved...a set of secret rituals intended to bring about desired effects or actions and promote healing” to only benefit themselves (Fernández Olmos & Paravisini-Gebert, 2011, pp. 155-156). It is important to clarify that obeah was indeed also used during colonial times “as a system of intergroup justice” among the enslaved to avoid, halt, and/or punish crimes (Fernández Olmos & Paravisini-Gebert, 2011, p 156). Nonetheless, in reference to *The manifesto*, the people (the voters) are not the ones committing transgressions; instead, it is the politicians who are at fault, yet they are the ones maneuvering obeah in the painting. On the other hand, it can also be interpreted that since the politicians are aware that they have acted wickedly towards the people, they feel that “ritual and magic [are] the way to salvation” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 165). They can no longer rely strictly on their own abilities to remain in political control but rather must succumb to the aid of spirits.

This painting presents a political altar constructed from an upturned barrel (garbage container). It

invokes cult practices, with its altar laden with offerings to the various spirits. The offerings include ... a cake, one wedge removed, goodies for the electorate; blue candles to summon help from the spirits, the columns of smoke rising from the two lit candles, solemnly, as from a pyre; the bell, perhaps a party election symbol, to summon voters and spirits alike.

The broken book at the foot of the altar is full of the broken promises to the electorate. The blue egg, key and schnapps glass are ‘obeah’ objects. It is the most symmetrical of the paintings, its objects studiously deployed as if to contain the swirling dark energies in the most elaborately formalized of structures. Magic and knowledge of the arcane are the key to electoral success. The power of the leader over the led resides in the unseen, the unspoken, the irrational. (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 164)

The three items specifically named “obeah objects” by Roopnaraine can serve different purposes. For instance, the egg is often considered a symbol of life, creation, and/or fertility, but can also be a medium for absorbing all negative energy. In addition, the “egg can fit into the empty glass [across the table from it], a play on space and volume” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 164). In the text, *Materialities of ritual in the Black Atlantic*, Danielle N. Boaz, contributes a chapter titled, Instruments of Obeah: The Significance of Ritual Objects in the Jamaican Legal System, 1760 to the Present, in which she writes “some of the items prohibited in the 1760 Obeah Act, such as egg shells and glass bottles, were often described as components of obeah charms that enslaved persons used to protect their provision patches” (pp. 147-148). Similarly, the website of the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic, which is physically located in Boscastle, England, exhibits images of a variety of iron keys under the classification of protection and a brief explanation indicates that the keys are considered charms of guardianship.

Therefore, the egg, key, glass and other items painted in *There is a meeting here tonight* can be considered to be “... ‘obeah’ objects, standard paraphernalia for the performance of the dark ceremonies” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 169) and stereotypical language verbalized about obeah is that it is magic, superstition, and/or witchery. When Caribbean people practiced it during colonial times (and even today), there are those who classify obeah acts as primitive or backwards.

*The manifesto* may also serve as Greaves's pursuit to break away from this stereotype. Following Hall's theory, the purpose is not to replace the stereotypes that have been established, but rather to dismantle them and leave room for a myriad of meanings.

Hall (1997b) affirms that

stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes 'difference'. It deploys a strategy of 'splitting' and divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. Stereotyping then excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different. In other words, it is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. It sets up a symbolic frontier between the 'normal' and the 'deviant,' the 'normal' and the pathological,' the acceptable' and the 'unacceptable,' what 'belongs' and what does not or is 'Other,' between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', Us and Them. (p. 258)

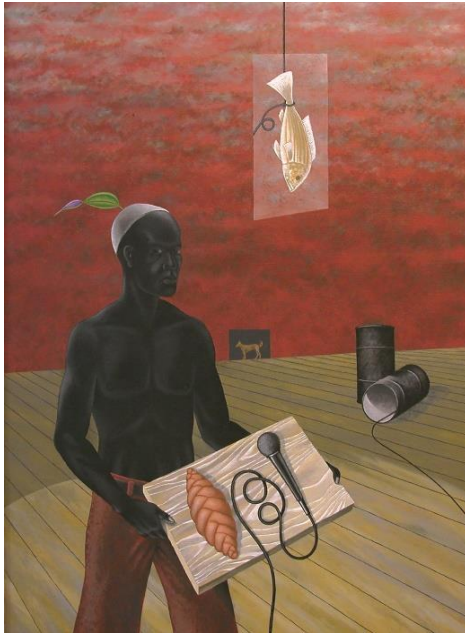
Therefore, it can also be argued that Greaves intentionally incorporates obeah in his collection to call attention to a cultural aspect of Caribbean African roots and protest against the binary discourse frequently used in politics. He wants to subvert the stereotypes and present obeah as a manifestation of the social ties that bind people together for it is rituals that were and could be practiced so much by common citizens as by politicians (public figures).

This analysis of *The manifesto* is multifarious. Greaves would be satisfied as he stated during a presentation at Moray House Trust in 2016.

I believe in that type of participation that you create whatever you need to create from what you see and people come and ask me what things mean. I tell them let me hear what you think of this and very often I get the most extraordinary explanations that never crossed my mind. So [,] it tells me that the piece of work is indeed doing its job, allowing people to participate.

## Figure 6

### *Election results*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1997, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 181), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

The painting, *Election results*, “explicitly invokes religious imagery where the loaf of bread and the fish descended from on high are for the feeding of the hungry multitudes, manna from heaven in a degradation of the miracle of Christ” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 164). It can be understood that Roopnaraine refers to the biblical reference in the painting as a depiction of the “degradation of the miracle of Christ” since the fish is not next to the loaf, but rather dangling and a microphone has taken its place. This can be meant to typify how politicians have distorted Christianity as a mechanism to deliberately provoke their desired outcomes. The dangling fish can denote the act of tantalizing the public. A politician stands before the people and makes promises knowing that once elected the promises will not be kept. Thus, “the microphones that amplify and broadcast the

lies and empty promises are everywhere, the primary instrument of mobilization and inducement, the essential tool of the contenders for power” (Roopnaraine, 2005, p. 168). Moreover, the fish is close enough to be grabbed, but once someone attempts to attain it, it will be pulled out of reach. Interestingly, the fish hangs from a knotted rope reflecting Greaves’s childhood and link to his father who was a rope worker at the waterfront.

The microphone is continuously inserted in the paintings that constitute the collection. Greaves’s purpose for doing this is not to call attention to the instrument itself, but rather to metonymically symbolize the discourse of politicians. As a result, the Peircean Model as well as Saussure’s theory can be applied. The microphone is a symbol because those who observe the painting have to learn that it denotes politicians and their discourse. The painted shapes that Greaves combines such as a black circle to show the windscreen or wire mesh, a silver diagonal rectangle that demonstrates the aluminum body of the device, a looped black line as the cord, among others, all make up the microphone. Hence, these shapes could be seen as the signifier or the representamen for they are the form of the sign. The microphone itself is the signified or interpreter because a common observer will make sense of the shapes that have been drawn and painted together and will determine that collectively they indeed illustrate the electronic instrument known as a microphone. The idea of politicians and their discourse being symbolized by the microphone is the object because the object, in Peirce’s model, is what the sign stands for or represents. The common observer arrives at this conclusion through a process such as metonymy or metaphor. (See the figure that follows.)

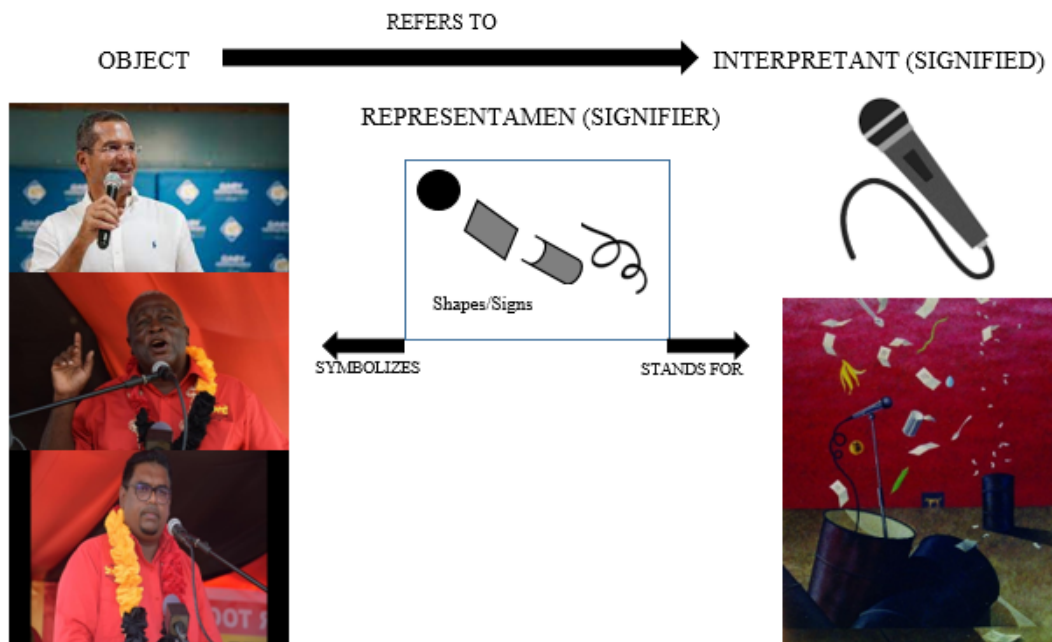
Now, if one were to follow Saussure’s thinking, one would say that Greaves’s intention behind the microphone is only understood because of the context of the work. In this manner, Saussure stated “a language is a system in which all the elements fit together, and which the value



of any one element depends on the simultaneous coexistence of all the others” (1983, p. 113). In other words, as per Saussure, Greaves’s microphone presented in isolation cannot be fully made sense of. To discern its significance, one must take into account the other signs around it. One must question how the signs operate and relate to one another.

**Figure 7**

*Peirce’s Theory Applied to Greaves’s Art: Ballot boxes from There is a meeting here tonight*



Object – Images from top to bottom: Pedro Pierluisi, current Governor of Puerto Rico, Mark Phillips, current Prime Minister of Guyana, Irfaan Ali, current President of Guyana

Interpretant – Image at bottom: Stanley Greaves, *Ballot boxes*, 1997 acrylic on cotton canvas and plywood from the series, *There is a meeting here tonight*

*Note.* Own Work. The images on the left-hand side of the figure were retrieved from three different websites cited in the references of this dissertation. The image of Greaves’s painting, *Ballot boxes* is from *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 182), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

In Figure 7, Peirce's Theory is applied to Greaves's *There is a meeting here tonight* particularly in relation to the symbol of the microphone. The figure incorporates the painting, *Ballot boxes* alongside images of the current major politicians in Puerto Rico and Guyana.

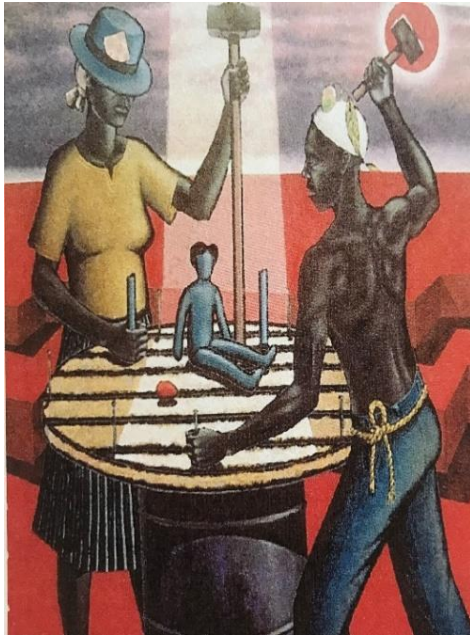
In addition, it is interesting to note Roopnaraine's use of the word, manna, in reference to the dangling fish because of the ironic undertone. Manna, as described in the book of Exodus 16:31, "was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey." It was a provision of God to the Israelites as they traveled in the desert during the 40-year period. However, unlike the fish that multiplied to feed the 5,000 as narrated in the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the manna, was ephemeral. God would permit for it to "rain down" (Exodus 16:4) and the Israelites were to take only what they needed for the day's nourishment. "Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away" (Exodus 16:21). Likewise, if they were to take in excess, the next morning "it was full of maggots and began to smell" (Exodus 16:20). On the contrary, the loaves and fish were so greatly multiplied that after everyone had eaten "the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over" (Matthew 14:20). The irony is in the dissimilarity between the two as one represents abundance and the other adequacy yet in politics neither is provided to the people. What is abundant seems to be exclusively for those in governmental power and what is adequate is for those who applaud them, but for the rest (the majority), it is scarcity that they receive.

Another ironic detail is how politicians use the name of God to pledge that they will "feed the hungry." They use the microphone to verbalize commitments to the people, but when the time comes to act, they do not model God. Instead, they are more like the disciples who preferred not to feed the 5,000 and said to Jesus, "Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food" (Matthew 14:15) and "That would take more than half a year's wages! Are

we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” (Mark 6:37). Similarly, the politicians are like some of the Israelites who “paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of the manna until morning” (Exodus 16:20). Greaves’s painting *Election Results* sends the message that politicians’ promises are ephemeral and empty. They win the election, but the people lose.

Roopnaraine (2005) provides a detailed description and explanation of Greaves’s painting, *Political protest*. He writes

...the votive table is illuminated by a beam of light from above. The red egg and blue candles surround the doll, all hemmed in by the spikes being driven into the table. ... it is the woman, eyes hidden under the brim of her hat, who is the figure of authority. There is more menace in the hammer, upturned and at rest, than in the hammer being wielded by the male figure. She is the officiant, he the acolyte, her striped skirt rhyming with the stripes of the upturned cable spool that forms the work table. *Political protest* was triggered by the street activity of protesters outside the courts in Georgetown following the 1997 elections. With their candles and other paraphernalia, they were ceremonially beating white dolls with the cry ‘We gun wuk pon she!’, referring to the then President of Guyana, Mrs. Janet Jagan, a white American-born Guyanese citizen, the object of their wrath. (p. 165)

**Figure 8***Political protest*

*Note.* By S. Greaves, 2000, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 185), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

To better understand the actual political protest that was carried out in the late 1990s in Guyana, it is pivotal to review the nation's political history. In this chapter, it was previously mentioned that in the late 1960s the initial People's Progressive Party (PPP) was founded and led by Dr. Cheddi Jagan who was of South Asian descent and Mr. Forbes Burnham who was of African descent. Yet the breakthrough that they accomplished for the people was short lived as the British intervened and manipulated the situation to ensure that the two leaders would eventually part ways, with Burnham forming the People's National Congress (PNC) in 1958 and Guyanese politics being defined thereafter by a racialized division between people of South Asian descent and people of African descent. This divide and conquer strategy has ensured that Guyana and its resources have

remained completely at the mercy of the commercial interests of the former colonial masters in Europe and the U.S.

The first election was won by Jagan representing the PPP, but the victory was not accepted peacefully. Riots took place against Jagan by the PNC and another group called the United Force (UF) which included businessmen, the Church, and Chinese, Portuguese, and indigenous voters. Before Guyana gained independence, British officials implemented electoral reforms in 1964 which resulted in the 53 legislative seats being divided up as follows: PPP 24, PNC 22, and UF 7. The PNC and UF decided to form a coalition and became the majority. It was at this moment that the initial accusations of corruption were raised by Jagan, who called the election a fraud, refused to give up the position of Prime Minister and was forcefully removed from office by the British governor, to be replaced by Burnham.

According to a timeline on [refworld.org](http://refworld.org) titled Chronology for East Indians in Guyana, the years 1971–1980 were a time when election fraud was rampant, with police intimidation of East Indians and there were claims against the army for allegedly tampering with ballot boxes. It is worth noting that the deaths caused by American cult leader Jim Jones in 1978 placed Guyana under the scrutiny of other nations, mainly the United States. The years that followed were characterized by a great number of assassinations and arrests of political leaders. During the 1980s, Guyana endured great economic distress, and in 1985 Burnham died after undergoing surgery. Desmond Hoyte who was the vice president at the time became acting president. That same year, the PNC won the election while the PPP joined forces with other political groups and created the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD).

Economic strife left Guyana paralyzed for some time. There was absolutely no growth. The year 1990 was one of many changes, but few were positive. That year “a reform movement,

GUARD (Guyana Action for Reform and Democracy), aided by the Church [,] took the lead in the campaign for free and fair elections and attracted thousands to rallies” (*Chronology for East Indians in Guyana*, n.d.). Additionally, the PCD ceased to exist as the members could not agree on a candidate to represent them in the elections. During a march, PNC supporters, mostly Afro-Guyanese, attacked GUARD supporters, who were mostly East Indians. Cheddi Jagan won the presidency in 1992, but this was preceded by great national instability, as wage-increase rallies were frequent, thousands emigrated, and police brutality against protestors increased. Under Jagan’s government, opposition continued, but there was an attempt to improve race relations with the establishment of a commission and the declaration of a day of healing for the nation on May 26, 1996. Almost a year later, on March 6, 1997, President Cheddi Jagan died of a heart attack.

Nine months later, in December 1997, incidents of violence between PPP and PNC supporters occurred frequently as the PPP accused the PNC of disrupting political meetings and badgering public speakers. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, Janet Jagan from the PPP won the election with 56% of all votes. Her swearing in ceremony was held secretly and shortly after, she received a summons. “The courts had ruled in favor of a PNC request to bar Jagan’s swearing in and barring her from performing the duties of president. The Elections Commission acknowledged there were serious problems with the vote counting and verification of voters” (*Chronology for East Indians in Guyana*, n.d.). CARICOM eventually declared her victory valid, despite receiving threats and demands for a recount of votes, as well as holding court hearings. Jagan became president, but under an agreement she made with her contender, Desmond Hoyte, that her term would run for two years rather than four and then elections would be held again.

Janet Jagan winning the elections and the national disorder that followed are the influences of Greaves’s painting, *Political protest*. Jagan was born in Chicago, Illinois and therefore, was the

first American-born white Guyanese president of Guyana and the first elected female president in South America. She became a citizen of Guyana in 1966 and prior to her presidency, she had served in the cabinet and parliament. Regardless of this, the criticism she received from people in Guyana had much to do with her marriage to Cheddi Jagan, her ethnicity, and her age as she was 77 years old when she was elected. Janet Jagan was born Janet Rosenberg. She was of Jewish descent.

Regardless of the political turmoil, Jagan's leadership triumphed over the opposition and hostility she faced. Peepal Tree Press published a brief summary of her biography and wrote

Janet Jagan soon won a place in the hearts of the grass-roots Indo-Guyanese sugar workers who provided one element of the core support for the PPP. From the time of the Enmore estate shootings of 1948, when she was one of the leaders of the funeral march, she was known, for instance, as the 'blue-eyed bowji' (sister). (*Peepal Tree Press*, n.d.)

Jagan was imprisoned for six months after engaging in political activities during the oppression in 1955. She was supportive of cultural and literary life in Guyana and contributed to both by publishing poems written by Martin Carter in the publication, *Thunder*, a PPP journal, which she edited, as well as composing her own works of Guyanese children's literature such as *When Grandpa Cheddi was a boy and other stories* (1993), *Patricia, the baby manatee* (1995), *Anastasia the anteater* (1997), and *The dog who loved flowers* (2001.)

Having now outlined the historical context that prompted Greaves's painting, *Political protest*, the interpretation of this work is easier. The votive table which allegorizes obeah is supported by a barrel. The latter is an object repetitively incorporated across the 14 pieces of the collection much like the microphone. Roopnaraine (2005) refers to both items as "the main

elements in Greaves's iconographic scheme" (p. 168). The barrel "signifies the rubbish bin from which political exhortations arise" and it is believed that

for Guyanese who lived through the long night of the Burnham dictatorship, barrels brought in not only votes from overseas to rig the elections but also essential food items the government had banned from the shelves and kitchens of the people. (p. 168)

In contrast, the light that shines over the doll and the woman's hand might represent Janet Jagan's beneficial contributions to Guyana, in spite of the unhappiness expressed by many Guyanese people. The nation could no longer tolerate the lies and exploitation, so even if Jagan was the light they needed in 1997, the people could not see it, especially given the experiences they had already lived through with both the PPP and the PNC.)

The male figure wields the hammer in his hand in the same way that a judge holds a gavel which is commonly used to emphasize a point and to accentuate judgements. The working people of Guyana cry out for justice. The circular form of the votive table can also be understood as a call for unity and equality. When standing in a circle, everyone is the same as there is no highest or lowest point nor does anyone have to stand behind someone else. The circle also allows for Foucault's idea of the circularity of power, often cited by Hall, to resurface in the analysis of Greaves's collection. Power

doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but ... it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be thought of as a productive network which runs through the whole social body. (Foucault, 1980, p. 119)

Hence, *Political protest*, is a call for power of the collective in which neither race, gender, nor ideologies divide, but rather work together.



**Conclusion to the Analysis of a Selection of Greaves's Paintings from *There is a meeting here tonight*)**

Finally, it is important to stress that “at the heart of Greaves’s critique of political behavior is the politician-trickster, the wily one...[but] is it all bleakness and desolation?” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 166 & 171) Greaves's work shows the false optimism politicians instill in the public and the electorate's lack of faith. However, as Greaves himself stated when assessing Burrowes’s *Guyana, Land of the dolorous guard* as cited by Roopnaraine (2005), “while it is presenting a message of total despair it is paradoxically also saying that one should recognize what is taking place and do something positive about the situation” (p. 172). Greaves's paintings expose political corruption, calling on the people of Guyana to remember their history, wake up, and act if they have fallen asleep to or have become numb to what Martin Carter, as cited by Roopnaraine (2005), calls the politics that “emerge from the bowels of capitalistic and colonial society where the binding tie of human relations is the profit motive, the exploitation of man by man in economic, moral and social life” (p. 167). Greaves, much like the biblical text in Revelations 3:2, summons his people to “Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die [,] for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.”

## **Chapter 5 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

This final chapter will conclude the analysis by connecting the preceding chapters and restating the main research concepts with regard to the power of discourse and the visual imagination in Caribbean resistance by juxtaposing Fonseca's and Greaves's works despite their differences in age, geography, profession, etc. A summary of the analysis done of Fonseca's discourse and Greaves's aesthetics (signs, symbols), particularly their use of religious references to resist the discursive power of the ruling classes will be included in an effort to review the findings and conclusions of the investigation. The original research questions will be revisited and an explicit response will be provided for each. (What role does religious language and symbolism play in the contestatory work of Fonseca and Greaves? How does the incorporation of religious language and symbolism by Fonseca and Greaves impact their audiences?)

Moreover, this last part will highlight the contributions that this dissertation will have made to the field of discourse analysis in particular and linguistics in general in relation to Puerto Rico and Guyana. A brief discussion of the theories presented will also be included. The limitations of the present study will be identified and alternatives for future studies will be proposed.

### **The Research Study, Its Theoretical Framework, and Methodology**

This dissertation explored the power of discourse and the visual imagination and their functions as mechanisms of resistance. The methodology used for analyzing Fonseca's work was mainly the critical discourse studies/critical discourse analysis (CDS/CDA) framework, as formulated by linguist Teun A. van Dijk who states that:

Critical discourse analysis is about power and power abuse and how these are produced and reproduced by text and talk. It focuses on dominant groups and institutions and how these create and maintain social inequality through communication and the use of language,

and on the ways dominated groups also discursively resist and oppose such domination.  
(2004, p. 3)

This approach focused on the effects of religious discourse as manifested in the language used by Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte in Puerto Rico.

The methodology used for analyzing Greaves’s work was primarily Stuart Hall’s representation theory. Hall interlaces culture and language proving that “any sound, word, image or object which functions as a sign, and is organized with other signs into a system which is capable of carrying and expressing meaning is, from this point of a view, a language” (1997, p. 19). This insight is also captured to some extent in the theories of Ferdinand de Saussure (1983), Charles Sanders Peirce (1902) and Irving Goffman presented in the theoretical framework and methodology section of this dissertation. In that section, the relevant concepts of intertextuality, resistance, and the indivisible relationship between religion and politics were defined and expounded upon as well, citing the works of Julia Kristeva (1966), Michel Foucault (1978, 1980), Katharine Gerbner (2018), and Noel Erskine (2014).

All in all, given that many of the most commonly shared mental models in the Caribbean have been deeply impacted by religious discourse, this research project evaluated how the religious rhetoric of a political analyst and the religious symbols or imagery of an artist could be utilized to manipulate, persuade, convince or reconstruct the thought process of the people of a region. Attention was given to notions of language and power in areas such as public discourse and interpersonal communication.

## Summary of Key Findings

This study aimed to investigate the intertextual relationship between the political discourse of Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte (Puerto Rico) and the paintings of Stanley Joseph Greaves (Guyana) specifically his collection, *There is a meeting here tonight*, highlighting the religious imprints present in both of their works and how the latter serve as mediums of resistance. Fonseca and Greaves both incorporate biblical words, passages and symbols in their works, adopting a discursive strategy that resonates effectively with their Caribbean audiences, given the extent to which the colonization of the Americas has been justified and couched in religious rhetoric. In this way, they expose how politicians have perverted the Bible (Christianity), warn their audiences of the self-serving, often masked intentions of governing officials, and prompt the common citizen to rise in opposition. Our findings also revealed how the humble upbringings of both public figures have inspired a strong interest on their part in the working classes of their countries as well as motivating the educational and dialogical characteristics present in their works.

## Research Questions

**What role does religious language and symbolism play in the contestatory work of Fonseca and Greaves?**

For both Fonseca and Greaves, using religious language and symbolism comes naturally, given the pervasiveness of religious discourse in the politics and history of the colonial and neo-colonial Caribbean. Fonseca stated during the in-person interview conducted for the present study that verbalizing biblical passages is a natural characteristic of his discourse and it is not a strategy to market himself. He described this aspect of his work as impromptu, especially since he is not one to read from the teleprompter when on TV. Additionally, he mentioned that he uses the gospel because he has biblical beliefs and because of the disparity that is evident between what people

say and what people do, especially among those individuals who claim to be Christians. Similarly, Greaves spoke to Anne Walmsley from *Bomb Magazine* in an interview published online on January 1, 2004 and stated the following:

I didn't set out to do a series, or even to speak about the ills of politics. I did three individual paintings and they began to resonate. ... That's my usual thing: having seen or conceived of an image I make it do the job I want it to do, so that the prosaic takes on functions of a more determined or symbolic nature. (Greaves as cited by Walmsley, 2004)

The function of the religious language and symbolism in Fonseca's contestatory work is primarily to serve as a reminder of the following underlying message: Every individual has the right to choose. Because everyone has that freedom and because many times it is obvious that political leaders make decisions that are unfair, unethical, and egocentric, Fonseca's work is like a sign of caution. His purpose is also to provoke his audience to react to his work. Correspondingly, this is one of the functions behind Greaves's use of religious imagery. He, as much as Fonseca, wants his audience to interact with his art. Both are interested in their audiences' responses, feedback and levels of interest. They are eager to have a dialogue with their audiences. The religious language and the symbolism are triggers for audiences to engage with their work, to disagree or agree with them, to start thinking, and to take action.

Another function is to encourage people from other Caribbean countries and beyond to connect with the history and culture of Puerto Rico and Guyana. The use of religious language and symbolism serves as an opportunity to educate. For example, Greaves's exhibition gives attention to obeah which can be linked to enslavement in the Caribbean. He also establishes a timeline of political events in Guyana. Similarly, Fonseca's work emphasizes how religion and politics cannot be disassociated. The two public figures may use religious language and symbolism organically,

but what they achieve is greater because whether positive or negative, their work influences audiences and can inspire and trigger shifts in societal, cultural, and political behaviors.

**How does the incorporation of religious language and symbolism by Fonseca and Greaves impact their audiences?**

Due to the religious historical background of the Americas as outlined in Chapter 1 of the present work, religious beliefs and practices are quite salient among the populations in Puerto Rico and Guyana as well other countries in the Caribbean. For this reason, Fonseca's and Greaves's incorporation of religious language and symbolism is quite conventional. Likewise, there will be spectators and/or observers who have a fondness for their styles, others who do not, and a group that may be indifferent. Those who are non-believers may be apathetic towards Fonseca's and Greaves's use of religious allusions and find them to be absurd or merely fanciful. Some may be simply unconcerned. However, those who claim to be followers of Christ, yet their actions show otherwise, may hear, read, or observe the work of these two public figures and feel that it is speaking directly to their conscience. Nevertheless, there is a possibility that they also may react to it in an indifferent manner. All things considered, just like religion is an individual decision, because everyone's experience is personal, so is the way people react to Fonseca's and Greaves's works.

Regardless of how the audiences react, what is indeed certain is that it has an effect on them. Some respond favorably and others unfavorably. In spite of this, what matters is that they are responding. For instance, occasionally, Fonseca receives negative comments on social media from those who are typically referred to as haters. A hater is a person who shows strong dislike toward another person and often criticizes him or her. Haters, on the other hand, frequently

unknowingly propagate the discourse of the person they criticize by sharing their content even if the intention is to argue against it.

Therefore, the main impact that the incorporation of religious language and symbolism by Fonseca and Greaves has on audiences is that whether in favor or against them, people consider their works more carefully. It is almost as if it causes the audiences to “look twice”. When they hear the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand or they see a recreation of the latter, they know it is something they have heard before; it is familiar too them. Hence, they question what the story has to do with the modern-day political issue being discussed or the art exhibited. Then, based on their personal experiences with religion, they typically tend to react. Overall, Fonseca and Greaves aim at initiating a conversation with their audiences and religious language and symbolism helps them to do just that. In colloquial terms, it gets people talking!

### **Contributions**

This dissertation achieved the following research outputs. The first is the creation of two explanatory figures that serve as visual aids that facilitate the understanding of the complex theories by Teun A van Dijk (1998) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1902). Figure 2 is part of Chapter 2 and it illustrates van Dijk’s Macro Analysis from his Ideological Square Model in a metaphorical manner. The comparison establishes that the positive self-representation and negative other-representation are similar to escalators. Figure 7 is part of Chapter 4 and it entwines Peirce’s Theory of Signs to Greaves’s painting, *Ballot boxes*, and photographs of Puerto Rico’s and Guyana’s current government leaders with the object of a microphone as the focal point.

Another research output achieved is the transcription of the in person interview held with Josué “Jay” Fonseca Aponte. Not only is the transcription provided in both English and Spanish, but there is also an audio of the interview available. It is very likely that this is the first interview

done with Fonseca that has been transcribed in both languages as well as the first to underscore his use of language and his overall style. Most interviews with Fonseca that are available for public viewing provide content related to Fonseca's career achievements and goals, in addition to some details about his personal life. It is very probable that this is the first interview and dissertation overall that analyzes Fonseca's discourse and its influence as a voice of resistance and power.

### **Limitations**

Critically reflecting on the shortcomings of this research, it is evident that not interviewing Stanley Joseph Greaves creates an imbalance in my treatment of the two public figures. If first-hand information from Greaves would have been provided about the paintings selected for analysis, the interpretations may have varied. Greaves may have provided some insights that would have altered the researcher's perspective on his pieces. Additionally, since the researcher has never visited Guyana, an interview with Greaves would have been beneficial to better comprehend and discuss Guyana's cultural, and religious, political, and colonial context.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The two key recommendations for future research related to this topic are:

- 1) Coordinate and carry out an interview with Stanley Joseph Greaves.
- 2) Integrate quantitative results by surveying audiences that know of and potentially follow one or both of these public figures.

The first recommendation will allow for Greaves's voice to be heard first-hand. Although several previously published interviews were cited in this dissertation, an interview held with questions directly connected to this investigation could strongly influence the analysis of the art pieces and the findings in general. The second recommendation will permit for audiences' thoughts, opinions, and feelings to be assessed.



The data retrieved from implementing both of these recommendations may provide open and honest feedback, especially if the survey or questionnaire is conducted using a method such as an online platform in which the demographic information requested is minimal (age, gender, etc.). Additionally, reaching out to Greaves as well as to his audiences may result in new ideas to consider. Furthermore, if some of the same questions asked of Fonseca are asked of Greaves, a comparative analysis of their responses can be performed. Similarly, a comparison between the attitudes and behaviors of the audiences can be measured. Visiting Guyana to do field work would also contribute to further developing this line of research.

Lastly, as a general recommendation, it is of extreme importance and urgency that more cross-cultural and cross-linguistic Caribbean studies be undertaken, especially research in which Puerto Rico is linked other Caribbean nations. Just as is the case with so many territories in the region, academic ties and interests are often much stronger and more in evidence with the former or present colonizing power, than they are with neighboring nations who have experienced a different colonial trajectory. For example, Puerto Rico generally focuses on its ties to the United States and Spain as a result of its colonial history and its current political status but is missing out on potential social, economic, and cultural opportunities with its Caribbean neighbors. Would current mental models among Puerto Ricans change if Puerto Rico could envision itself more as a part of CARICOM and less as a dependency of the United States?

### **Concluding Reflection**

Language is power. As long we are expressing ourselves, whether it be through speech, drawings, music, inaudible movements, or other ways, we are using language. Fonseca and Greaves use language to resist and to encourage others to do the same. This dissertation analyzes the work of these two Caribbean public figures by placing their work into intertextual dialog, as

they both integrate religious allusions, expose political corruption, and encourage their audiences to oppose dominating forces. As stated in 2001 by Vandana Shiva, an Indian scholar, author, and advocate for social justice, for those in power, there is a deep fear of everything that is alive and free. Both Fonseca and Greaves remind us that as long as we can breathe, we can resist.

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## Appendix A

### Selected Full Texts by Jay Fonseca

This appendix consists of full text of three articles written by Jay Fonseca. The first is a relatively recent newspaper article written in August 2021 for *El Nuevo Día*. Religious references are not incorporated in this text. The main topic is the danger of a dynamic within public discourse whereby people only speak and listen to others who agree with their opinions and ideologies. Fonseca explains and warns his readers about echo chambers. The second and third newspaper articles were published within five years of each other in *Primera Hora* yet could be seen as strongly linked. Fonseca cites the Bible repeatedly throughout both and questions the Church, specifically those who consider themselves Christians, about what he suggests is the Church's stance against the LGBTQIA+ community. The articles were originally written in Spanish; therefore, this appendix includes an English translation for each. Brief commentary that associates Fonseca's works to the methodology used in this dissertation is also included. All in all, this supplementary material provides a more comprehensive representation of Fonseca's writings.

#### Article Transcription A1

**Titular:** “¿Quién es el bruto?: caja de ecos”

**Fecha:** 30 de agosto de 2021

**Periódico:** *El Nuevo Día*

El efecto “echo chamber” o caja de ecos ocurre cuando un ser humano cree que está bien porque todos le dicen que está bien y, cuando habla, quienes le responden parecen estar de acuerdo con su posición. Con las redes sociales se han creado “silos” o círculos cerrados de información en los que, cuando una persona habla, recibe mucha información de productos o datos sobre el tema del que habló. Por ejemplo, se publica algo sobre Adamari López y haces como el famoso

ingeniero Jorge Bracero, que le escribe un comentario a la noticia, aunque sea para criticarla. Entonces le salen todas las noticias del mundo sobre Adamari. Lo que quieren TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram y Twitter no es que hables bien de la noticia; quieren que sigas usando y dando “clicks” a sus productos para facturar más por anuncios.

Antes eso solo pasaba con emperadores. Como el que se quedó sin ropa, pero nadie le dijo que estaba desnudo. En la política siempre han existido focas que le dicen a la jefa que se la está comiendo, cuando en realidad hace el ridículo. Nada más peligroso que un jefe que no tolera la disidencia. **Con las redes sociales, cada vez más estamos en la posición del jefe que no aguanta crítica.** (All bolded passages here and elsewhere in these appendices were also bolded in the original) No nos damos cuenta porque es alta tecnología diseñada por científicos que gastan billones en crear algoritmos imperceptibles que te vuelven adicto a su producto, el que llevas en el bolsillo. Nunca habíamos estado en tan alto peligro de embrutecer sin percatarnos.

**Según un estudio de la Universidad de Chicago, la inmensa mayoría solo escucha y lee las cosas con las que está de acuerdo.** En vez de retar tu intelecto, empiezas a bunkerizarte y atrincherarte: solo escuchas al analista con el que estás de acuerdo, o lees las noticias del medio que más las ajusta a tu gusto. Las redes se dan cuenta y te ofrecen más de eso con lo que concuerdas. Descartan la información contraria a tus creencias y, como hay mucha información a tu favor, solo reafirmas tus creencias. Esto pasa más fuerte que nunca con el tema de la vacunación. No hay nada más importante para defenderse de una enfermedad que el propio sistema inmune y una vida holística. **Pero los datos a favor de la vacunación son irrefutables. Ahora, si estás en una caja de ecos, esa información se te presenta con críticas y escepticismo en lugar de datos.**

Cuando The Economist publicó la caja de ecos que las redes sociales venían provocando desde hace años, nadie entendía el nivel de penetración que esto tenía. Con el escándalo de Cambridge Analytica, nos dimos cuenta de que el nivel de adicción y “echo chamber” de las redes sociales eran la amenaza global número uno porque existía corroboración de que esto puede derrotar hasta a la democracia y el conocimiento occidental, por más exagerado que suene.

**Las redes sociales provocan un espacio similar a la escuela superior donde todos se separan en el almuerzo: los cristianos de la confr, el grupo lgbttiq+, el grupo de muchach@s guap@s, el club de “nerds”.** Hacemos lo que el grupo quiera porque el ser humano, como detalla el libro Sapiens, quiere sentirse parte de un grupo. El concepto del individualismo es nuevo en la evolución humana. Sin ser parte de un grupo, antes no podíamos comer, ni criar, ni crecer. La tecnología nos desconecta de eso, pero nuestro cerebro está atado a la idea de pertenecer. Por eso, tantos casos de salud mental siguen surgiendo. Yubal Harari escribe extensamente sobre este asunto.

Lo dice Punished del sociólogo de Stanford, Víctor Ríos. Los muchachos de Oakland terminan en las gangas violentas por su necesidad de sentirse parte de un grupo, no porque hayan nacido violentos. **Y los policías no denuncian al colega que se comporta mal, en defensa de su grupo.** Y nunca termina la guerra de gangas contra policías. Normalizas lo que siempre has visto, no quieres ser sacado del grupo y como todos hacen lo mismo, estás en una caja de ecos. Esto se ha disparado ahora a todos los temas con los algoritmos de las redes sociales. **Si le gritas bruto a alguien que no quiere vacunarse es muy probable que, en vez de educarlo para bien de todos, lo que logres es radicalizarlo** y pertrecharlo en su esquina donde no escuche argumentos que retan su posición. Solo queda su voz escuchándose a sí mismo y a los que piensan como él porque



está dentro de una caja de ecos. Lo importante es siempre recordar al entrar en la plaza pública es que todos tenemos derecho a nuestra opinión, pero que los datos son los datos.

*Translation*

**Headline:** Who's the Ignorant One? Echo Chamber

**Date:** August 30, 2021

**Newspaper:** *El Nuevo Día*

The "echo chamber" effect occurs when a person believes he/she is right because everyone says that he/she is right and, when the person speaks, those who respond seem to agree with the person's position. Social media have generated a closed system of communication so that when a person speaks, they receive a large amount of product information or data on the issue he/she spoke about. For example, something is published about Puerto Rican actress Adamari López and you react to it like the famous engineer Jorge Bracero, who writes a comment on the news post, even if it is to criticize it. Then he gets all the news in the world about Adamari. What TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter want is not for you to necessarily comment in favor of the news; instead they want you to keep using and clicking on their products in order to get more money for ads.

This used to only happen with emperors. For example, this happened to the emperor who had no clothes on, but no one told him he was naked. In politics, there have always been lemmings who tell their boss "great job," when in fact their boss is making a fool of him/herself. There is nothing more dangerous than a boss who does not tolerate dissent. **When we are active on social networks, we are increasingly in the position of acting like that boss who does not tolerate criticism.** We do not realize it because it is high technology designed by scientists who spend billions in creating imperceptible algorithms that make you addicted to their product, the one you

carry in your pocket. We have never been at such a high risk of becoming stupefied without realizing it.

**According to a study done by the University of Chicago, the vast majority of individuals only listen to and read things they agree with.** Instead of challenging your intellect, you start to bunker down and entrench yourself: you only listen to the analyst you agree with, or read the news of the media that best suits your taste. The networks realize this and offer you even more access to information you agree with. They discard information contrary to your beliefs and, since there is a lot of information in your favor, you simply continue to reaffirm your beliefs. This has happened even more so than ever with the vaccination issue. Nothing is more crucial in the fight against sickness than one's own immune system and a balanced lifestyle. But the data in favor of vaccination is irrefutable. **Now, if you're in an echo chamber, that information is presented to you with criticism and skepticism rather than data.**

No one realized the extent of the echo chamber created by social media until The Economist, a British weekly journal focusing on current affairs, worldwide commerce, politics, technology, and culture, published it. With the Cambridge Analytica scandal, we realized that the degree of addiction and "echo chamber" of social networks was the number one global threat since there was evidence that this might undermine even democracy and Western knowledge, as dramatic as it may sound. **Social media creates a space similar to high school where everyone splits up at lunch: Christians, the LGBTQIA+ group, the cool kids group, the “nerd” club, etc.** We do whatever the group wants because, as the book Sapiens explains, humans like to feel like they are part of a group. The concept of individualism is new in human evolution. Years before, we could not eat, nor reproduce, nor grow, etc. without being part of a group. Technology

disconnects us from that, but our brain is tied to the idea of belonging. That is why there are so many mental health cases. Yubal Harari has written extensively on this issue.

Stanford sociologist, Victor Ríos, asserts this in his book *Punished*. Oakland kids end up in violent gangs because of their need to feel part of a group, not because they were born violent. **And police officers don't denounce the misbehaving cop, to protect their group.** The war between gangs and cops never ends. You normalize what you've always seen because you don't want to be excluded from the group, and because everyone else does the same thing, you're trapped in an echo chamber. This has now spread across all social media algorithms. **If you shout “ignorant” at someone who refuses to get vaccinated instead of educating them for everybody’s welfare, what you will achieve is to trap the person in his/her own little world where he/she won't listen to arguments that challenge his/her position.** Because that person will be in an echo chamber, he/she will only listen to his/her voice and the voices of other people who think alike. The important thing to always remember when in public is that we are all entitled to our opinion, but facts are facts.

### **Commentary.**

Fonseca’s article warns his readers of social polarization and extremism. Those in control of social media networks obtain statistical data from their users’ online interactions that allows them to continue reinforcing the users’ existing opinions and eventually even causes those opinions to become more extreme, thereby eliminating opportunities to enhance critical thinking skills through conversation and engagement in healthy debate or guided discussion. Users who become trapped in an echo chamber willingly and at times, unknowingly, surrender their power to the elite groups and institutions that run and/or fund social media platforms. If this continues, diversity will

be lost. Thus, sooner or later, echo chambers will paralyze the ability of political systems to correctly identify, analyze and solve problems that affect society at large.

Van Dijk (1993) states

this social, political and cultural organization of dominance also implies a hierarchy of power: some members of dominant groups and organizations have a special role in planning, decision-making and control over the relations and processes of the enactment of power (p. 255).

Fonseca's article gives an example of the Puerto Rican actress Adamari López and this may seem trivial, but when something similar happens with citizens interacting to social media posts about politicians, political parties, political propaganda, hate speech, violence, discrimination, etc. strong ideological differences can lead to a lack of tolerance, conflicts, and a difficulty to reach compromises. Hence, a social media user could potentially support an extremist cause, organization, leader, etc. and then be led to performing acts that are self-harming or detrimental to others.

Power and dominance of groups are measured by their control over (access to) discourse.

The crucial implication of this correlation is not merely that discourse control is a form of social action control, but also and primarily that it implies the conditions of control over the minds of other people, that is, the management of social representations. More control over properties of text and context, involving more people, is thus generally (though not always) associated with more influence, and hence with hegemony. (van Dijk 1993, p. 257)

## **Article Transcription A2**

**Titular:** *“Alexa, los trans y la Biblia de Jesús”*

**Subtítulo:** “El caso de Alexa pone nuevamente de relieve lo que ninguno de nosotros realmente sabe: ¿quién será salvo y cuál debe ser el rol de la iglesia en este mundo?”

**Fecha:** 26 de febrero de 2020

**Periódico:** *Primera Hora*

Mucho se dice de la comunidad transgénero, mucho se dice de la comunidad LGBTTIQ, mucho se plantea de su pecado y, en específico, se usa el primer capítulo de Romanos para condenarlos a muerte en el infierno. También se utiliza a Sodoma y a Gomorra, del Génesis; y en particular textos que hablan en contra de echarse con personas del mismo sexo. La misma Biblia tiene textos igualmente contundentes contra la lascivia y el sexo fuera del matrimonio (1 Corintios 6:19). Sin embargo, a eso no se le da el mismo énfasis y nuestras iglesias están repletas de pecados ocultos. La Biblia, además, condena y dice que no entrarán al reino de los cielos, los que comen demasiado... la gula (Romanos 13:13). A ese texto no se le da mucho énfasis, y la obesidad y deseo de comer descontrolado está choreto en el templo.

La Biblia también tiene textos que condenan prácticas tradicionales, como las compras excesivas, utilizar prendas, utilizar atuendos ostentosos (1 Pedro 3:3). Sin embargo, vemos personas predicando el Evangelio que continuamente se visten de forma ostentosa y utilizan prendas de alto costo. El Evangelio de la Prosperidad, la Nueva Era, le llaman algunos. Aquellos que defienden el comer en exceso buscan alguna justificación diciendo que eran los alimentos ofrecidos en sacrificio a los dioses o los banquetes del rey idólatra. Igualmente, los que utilizan prendas dicen que se refería a una época distinta a la nuestra, o que no se refería a todas las prendas. Para eso siempre hay una justificación o una interpretación acomodaticia. Pero no para la comunidad LGBTTIQ, para ellos el infierno es el futuro si no se arrepienten, alegan muchos.

El caso de Alexa pone nuevamente de relieve lo que ninguno de nosotros realmente sabe:

¿quién será salvo y cuál debe ser el rol de la iglesia en este mundo? Como creyente, nunca me he llamado cristiano, porque cristianos son los que se parecían a Cristo y yo estoy muy lejos de parecerme al Maestro. Pero, como creyente en su segunda venida, enfatizo más en lo que nos dijo el Maestro en Mateo 25:39, cuando habla de que cuando regrese el Rey, vendrá a buscar a los que llevaron pan al hambriento, abrigo al desnudo, los que visitaron al preso, no a los que alegaban que hacían milagros en su nombre, que cuando le reclamaron al rey “nosotros hicimos milagros en tu nombre”, el rey les dirá: “Apartaos de mí, nunca os conocí, obradores de maldad, por cuanto no llevaron pan al hambriento, agua al sediento, abrigo al desnudo”.

Nuevamente, ¿de verdad deberíamos tener tantos templos ostentosos, torres, bancos cómodos, exenciones contributivas a la Iglesia, mientras hay tanta necesidad y tanta pobreza y cerca de 5,000 personas todos los días, según el censo más reciente, duermen en las calles y deberíamos causar el coraje social contra los gays que promueve la homofobia y la transfobia? ¿Deberíamos oponernos a la educación de perspectiva de género? Recuerden, el múltiplo típicamente es siete, así que si sabemos que hay entre 5,000 personas que duermen en las calles, muy probablemente el número sea siete veces mayor. Si usted lee la Biblia encontrará que el dedo de Dios escribió en tres ocasiones: la primera, en Éxodo 20, cuando Dios dio los 10 mandamientos, nos dio las instrucciones de lo que deberíamos hacer. La segunda ocasión fue cuando apareció la mano de Dios en Daniel 5, el profeta, y allí condenó al pueblo porque se apartó de Dios; y la tercera ocasión fue cuando lanzaron una mujer adúltera ante Jesús y todos lo que llevaron a la mujer para ser apedreada se fueron cuando él dijo: “el que esté libre de pecado, que tire la primera piedra”, mientras Jesús escribía en el suelo los pecados de los que allí estaban frente condenando a la mujer, pero no se miraban ellos mismos.

Por tanto, Dios nos dio la guía en sus mandamientos de Éxodo 20, nos señaló con su mano lo que estaba mal, pero escribió con su dedo en el polvo del que nos formó para mirarnos a los ojos y tener misericordia de nosotros, porque el que esté libre de pecado, que tire la primera piedra.

***Translation***

**Headline:** *Alexa, Trans People and Jesus's Bible*

**Subheading:** "Alexa's case highlights once again what none of us really know: who will be saved and what should be the role of the church in this world?"

**Date:** February 26, 2020

**Newspaper:** *Primera Hora*

Much is said about the transgender community, much is said about the LGBTQIA+ community, much is said about their sin and, specifically, the first chapter of Romans is used to condemn them to death in hell. Sodom and Gomorrah, from the biblical book of Genesis, are also used and in particular texts that disapprove same-sex sexual relations. The Bible itself has equally stringent texts against lewdness and sex before marriage (1 Corinthians 6:19). However, these are not given the same emphasis and churches are full of hidden sins. The Bible also condemns and indicates that those who eat too much will not enter the kingdom of heaven ... gluttony (Romans 13:13). This text is not given much emphasis, and obesity and the desire to eat out of control is unrestrained in the temple.

The Bible also has texts that condemn traditional practices, such as excessive shopping, wearing jewelry, and using ostentatious attire (1 Peter 3:3). However, we see people who preach the Gospel continually dressed ostentatiously and wearing expensive jewelry. Some call it the New Age Prosperity Gospel. Those who defend overeating seek justification by saying that it was the food offered in sacrifice to the gods or the banquets of the idolatrous king. Likewise, those who

use jewelry say that it referred to a different era than ours, or that it did not refer to all jewelry. There is always a justification or an accommodating interpretation. But not for the LGBTQIA+ community, many allege that hell awaits them if they do not repent.

Alexa's case highlights once again what none of us really know: who will be saved and what should be the role of the church in this world? As a believer, I have never called myself a Christian because Christians are those who resemble Christ and I am far from resembling the Lord. But, as a believer in his second coming, I emphasize most on what the Lord told us in Matthew 25:39, when the King returns, he will come to look for those who brought bread to the hungry, shelter to the naked, those who visited prisoners, not those who claimed to do miracles in his name, who when they claimed to the King "we did miracles in your name," the King will say to them: "Depart from me, I never knew you, evildoers, because you did not bring bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, shelter to the naked."

Again, should we really have so many ostentatious temples, towers, comfortable pews, tax exemptions to the Church, while there is so much need and so much poverty and about 5,000 people every day, according to the most recent census, sleep on the streets and should we manifest social anger that promotes homophobia and transphobia against gays? Should we oppose gender perspective education? Remember, if we know that there are among 5,000 people sleeping on the streets, most likely the number is seven times greater. If you read the Bible you will find that the finger of God wrote on three occasions. The first, in Exodus 20, when God gave the 10 commandments, He gave us instructions of what we should do. The second occasion was when the hand of God appeared in Daniel 5, the prophet, and he condemned the people because they turned away from God; and the third occasion was when an adulterous woman was brought before Jesus and all those who took the woman to be stoned left when he said: "He who is without sin, let



him cast the first stone," while Jesus wrote on the ground the sins of those who were condemning the woman, yet they did not recognize their own sins.

Therefore, God gave us guidance in his commandments in Exodus 20, he used his own hand to point out what was wrong, but he wrote with his finger in the dust from which he formed us to look us in the eye and have mercy on us, for he who is without sin, let him cast the first stone.

### **Article Transcription A3**

**Titular:** *La Iglesia ganó el caso ante el Supremo*

**Fecha:** 12 de julio de 2015

**Periódico:** *Primera Hora*

Creo que a los cristianos alguien les miente. En la decisión de la Corte Suprema de EE.UU. sobre el matrimonio gay nuevamente la Iglesia ganó, no al contrario como mucha gente ha hecho creer. Muchos religiosos no comprenden que el tiempo les ha dado la razón. Si se estudia un poquitito se entiende. Los peregrinos que fundaron Estados Unidos venían huyendo de la unión de Iglesia y Estado. Salieron despavoridos de países donde la Iglesia tenía la autoridad del gobierno como si fueran lo mismo. Un obispo y un sacerdote tenían tanto o más poder que los gobernantes. Y es que el origen de la frase “separación de Iglesia y Estado” proviene de la preocupación de los cristianos para evitar los abusos contra la “iglesia de Dios”. Huyeron de eso porque cuando así era la iglesia-estado les mataba, perseguía y arrestaba por sus creencias.

Fue tan “nasty” la apatía que dejó en los fundadores de Estados Unidos la unión de Iglesia y Estado que se aseguraron que en su nueva nación esto jamás ocurriera prohibiéndolo en su Constitución. En Puerto Rico las palabras fueron más contundentes. Aquí fue hace poco, en el siglo 20, que comenzó la separación de Iglesia y Estado. Con el recuerdo fresco de lo que pasó antes, fue que la Iglesia Bautista (representada por su pastor Genaro Ayala y su secretaria Cristina

López) fue a la Convención Constituyente “urgiendo completa libertad religiosa y separación de la Iglesia y el Estado”. Si usted busca cómo llegó a la Constitución esa frase, fue la Iglesia quien la pidió. Lea el Diario de Sesiones y verá que casi toda la iglesia protestante solicitó esas palabras específicas. Comparecieron el reverendo José Molina, de la Iglesia Alianza Cristiana y Misionera; José L. Quiñones, presidente de la Asociación Iglesia Evangélica Unida; el reverendo Josué López, de la Sociedad Discípulos de Cristo; el reverendo Ángel Berganzo; el reverendo Luis Maldonado Soltero; los Caballeros Evangélicos de Puerto Rico; la Fraternidad de Jóvenes Metodistas; la Asociación Ministerial, etc. Así fue como llegó a nuestra Constitución la Sección 3 del Artículo II que dice: “Habrá completa separación de la Iglesia y el Estado”.

Cuando no había separación entre Iglesia y Estado la iglesia cristiana fue perseguida por la religión estatal. Bajo el imperio romano, bajo la Inquisición y demás. Si no me cree, lea el Libro de los Mártires de John Foxe, la historia del sacerdote Martín Lutero, o la de Juan Hus, Calvino, Wesley y tantos más. Pero parece que muchos no han estudiado la propia muerte del Mesías a manos de un estado a solicitud de la Iglesia de la época. Mire si la Iglesia fue perseguida que cuando los protestantes crearon su nación en EE.UU. no quisieron elegir a alguien que fuera católico por los primeros 200 años de su historia. El único presidente católico ha sido John F. Kennedy, elegido en 1960. Una de las razones por las que se pensó que jamás ganaría Kennedy fue porque se temía que un presidente católico daría más atención al papa que a la Constitución. Lea cualquier biografía de Kennedy (le recomiendo la escrita por Chris Matthews, que es bastante amena) donde se habla ampliamente de eso.

Si seguimos las palabras: “Dad, pues, a César lo que es del César, y a Dios lo que es de Dios” (Mateo 22:21), los cristianos ganaron el caso. Lo contrario a eso es lo que hoy tenemos en Arabia Saudita y Afganistán, donde hay unión de Iglesia y Estado. Piense que mañana se mudaran

los 40,000 adventistas del Séptimo Día a San Lorenzo y deciden poner una ley municipal para que los comercios tengan que cerrar el sábado sino pena de multas y arrestos. Si te suena loco, busca lo que fueron las “leyes azules” (blue laws), donde así ocurrió por mucho tiempo solo que para obligar a “guardar” el domingo. Por eso es absurdo el argumento de que “la mayoría manda”. La mayoría escoge quién administre, pero con límites. Para eso lo pusimos en la Constitución. Porque si mañana en Culebra se muda una mayoría de mormones, ¿pueden prohibir tomar café allí? O si se mudan musulmanes a Cayey, ¿pueden prohibir comer cerdo y que se chive Guavate? Por eso nunca he entendido la lucha antigay. Si dos adultos del mismo sexo quieren firmar un papel donde unen sus vidas para que en caso de herencia, de planillas y contratos sea igual que si lo firman dos adultos de diferente sexo, ¿por qué eso te afecta?

El Gobierno puede sacar la palabra matrimonio del Código Civil y no por eso usted deja de estar “casado” ante los ojos de Dios. Frente al Gobierno el papel que usted llena cuando se casa tiene el mismo valor que el papel para sacar su celular o hipoteca. Se llama contrato. ¿No cree que todo esto del matrimonio gay se ha sacado de proporción por las religiones? Si en su iglesia quieren seguir pensando que el matrimonio es solo entre hombre y mujer, nadie puede impedir ese pensamiento. Si usted cree que esto es una señal del final de los tiempos y la Segunda Venida, pues... Maranata. El argumento de que la lucha contra los gays es la lucha a favor de la familia y el hogar tampoco tiene sentido. ¿De verdad a tu hogar lo afecta que dos hombres se acuesten, llenen planillas y hagan contratos juntos? ¿De verdad tu familia está en peligro porque dos mujeres hereden?

¿De verdad te afecta más si los gays se casan que la falta de tiempo para compartir con tus hijos e hijas, que los impuestos, que la falta de empleo por la corrupción? ¿De verdad tu hogar se afecta si dos personas del mismo sexo se aman o se afecta más por tener que salir de tu casa a las

5:00 a.m. y regresar a las 7:00 p.m. por el tapón gracias a la mala planificación que creó un caos, rompiendo la pasión de pareja, poder ir al cine, a un picnic en familia tras un día de trabajo? ¿No te afecta más no poder ir a la playa, al campo, al río, por la contaminación o por el miedo de que te asalten?

Sin que existiera el matrimonio gay ya siete de cada 10 matrimonios terminan en divorcio. Obviamente el matrimonio gay no provocó la crisis en el matrimonio actual. No sé, el Jesús que yo leí en la Biblia dijo que seríamos salvos si cumplíamos con dar pan al hambriento, ropa al desnudo y agua al sediento (Mateo 25). La Biblia tiene más textos condenando la obesidad como pecado que el homosexualismo. ¿Cuánto usted pesa? También condena utilizar prendas (¿usted las usa?). ¿Comes cerdo? ¿Juegas lotería? ¿Lees el horóscopo? El capítulo 2 de Santiago dice que si violas un mandamiento los violas todos... ¿por qué ponemos uno sobre otro?

Iglesia, ganaste. La demanda de la representante María M. “Tata” Charbonier la van a desestimar de inmediato pues no tiene sentido jurídico. Hacen eso porque creen que votas por el “show” y no por la sustancia. Ah, ¿no se dan cuenta de que si usan a la Policía para los “bloqueos de fe” para orar tienen que dejar que haya bloqueos para promover creencias como el satanismo, el islamismo y hasta la religión del spaghetti volador? ¿Te imaginas que te detenga la Policía para hablarte “voluntariamente” de la religión del spaghetti volador o que lo hagan para orarle a Satanás? Esas prácticas son una derrota a lo que tanto lucharon tener. La Iglesia luchó por siglos y por fin logró LIBERTAD PARA ORAR Y ADORAR COMO QUIERA sin interrupciones del Estado y sin usarlo para ello tampoco. Dios es tan caballeroso que nos dejó escoger libremente lo que queramos. ¿Somos nosotros más grandes que Dios que podemos exigir lo contrario?

### ***Translation***

**Headline:** The Church Won the Case Before the Supreme Court

**Date:** July 12, 2015

**Newspaper:** *Primera Hora*

I think Christians are being lied to. In the U.S. Supreme Court decision on gay marriage, the Church won again, not the other way around as many people have led many to believe. Many religious people do not understand that time has proven them right. If you study a little bit, you will understand. The pilgrims who founded the United States were fleeing from the union of Church and State. They left in terror from countries where the Church had the authority of the government as if they were one and the same. A bishop and a priest had as much or more power than the government officials. And the origin of the phrase "separation of Church and State" comes from the concern of Christians to avoid abuse against the "Church of God." They fled because when there was a union between church and state, they were killed, persecuted and arrested for their beliefs.

The apathy among the founders of the United States by the union of Church and State was so "nasty" that they made sure that in their new nation this would never happen by prohibiting it in their Constitution. In Puerto Rico, the words were more forceful. The separation of Church and State began in Puerto Rico in the 20th century which is quite recently. The Baptist Church (represented by its pastor Genaro Ayala and his secretary Cristina López) went to the Constitutional Convention "urging complete religious freedom and separation of Church and State" because they had not forgotten what had happened before. If you look up how that phrase got into the Constitution, it was the Church who asked for it. Read the record of congressional proceedings and you will see that almost the entire Protestant church requested those specific words. José Molina, of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church; José L. Quiñones, President of the United Evangelical Church Association; Reverend Josué López, of the Disciples of Christ

Society; Reverend Ángel Berganzo; Reverend Luis Maldonado Soltero; the Evangelical Knights of Puerto Rico; the Methodist Youth Fraternity; the Ministerial Association, etc., appeared. This is how Section 3 of Article II of our Constitution came to be: "There shall be complete separation of Church and State."

When there was no separation of Church and State, the Christian church was persecuted by the state religion. This was under the Roman Empire, under the Inquisition and so on. If you don't believe me, read John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, the story of the priest Martin Luther, or that of John Hus, Calvin, Wesley and so many more. But it seems that many have not studied the Messiah's own death at the hands of a state at the request of the Church of the era. The Church was persecuted at such length that when the Protestants founded their nation in the USA, they did not want to elect someone who was Catholic for the first 200 years of their history. The only Catholic president has been John F. Kennedy, elected in 1960. One of the reasons it was thought that Kennedy would never win was because it was feared that a Catholic president would give more attention to the pope than to the Constitution. Read any biography about Kennedy (I recommend the one written by Chris Matthews, which is quite enjoyable) where that is discussed at length.

If we follow the words: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21), the Christians won the case. The opposite of that is what we have today in Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, where there is union of Church and State. Imagine that tomorrow 40,000 Seventh Day Adventists move to San Lorenzo and decide to put a municipal law in place so that businesses have to close on Saturday under penalty of fines and arrests. If that sounds crazy to you, look up what the "blue laws" were, where this happened for a long time only to force "keeping" Sunday holy. That is why the argument that "the majority rules" is absurd. The majority chooses who administers, but with limits. That is why we put protections

in the Constitution. Because if tomorrow a majority of Mormons move to Culebra, can they prohibit drinking coffee there? Or if Muslims move to Cayey, can they prohibit eating pork and close down Guavate (a part of the municipality of Cayey known by locals and tourists as the Pork Highway because of the many businesses that sell slow-roasted pork)? That is why I have never understood the anti-gay fight. If two adults of the same sex want to sign a paper where they unite their lives so that in case of inheritance, taxes and contracts it will be the same as if two adults of different sexes sign it, why does that affect you?

The Government can take the word "marriage" out of the Civil Code and that does not mean that you are no longer "married" in the eyes of God. In the eyes of the Government, the paper you fill out when you get married has the same value as the paper to activate your cell phone or acquire a mortgage. It's called a contract. Don't you think this whole gay marriage thing has been blown out of proportion by religions? If in your church you want to continue thinking that marriage is only between man and woman, no one can prevent that thought. If you believe that this is a sign of the end of time and the Second Coming, well... Maranatha. The argument that the fight against gays is the fight for a better family life doesn't make sense either. Does it really affect your home if two men sleep together, fill out taxes and sign contracts together? Is your family really in danger because two women inherit?

Does it really affect you more if gays get married than the lack of time you have to spend with your children, than taxes, than the lack of employment due to corruption? Is your home really affected if two people of the same sex love each other or is it affected more by having to leave your home at 5:00 a.m. and not return until 7:00 p.m. because of a traffic jam causing chaos due to poor structural planning? That lost time could have been spent with your partner going to the

movies or enjoying a family picnic. Does it not affect you more not being able to go to the beach, to the countryside, to the river, because of pollution or because of the fear of being assaulted?

Even if gay marriage did not exist, seven out of 10 marriages end in divorce. Obviously gay marriage did not cause the crisis in marriage today. I don't know, the Jesus I read in the Bible said we would be saved if we gave bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked and water to the thirsty (Matthew 25). The Bible has more texts condemning obesity as a sin than homosexuality. How much do you weigh? It also condemns wearing jewelry (Do you wear jewelry?) Do you eat pork? Do you play the lottery? Do you read horoscopes? Book 2 of James says that if you violate one commandment you violate them all...why do we put one above the other?

Dear Church, you won. Maria M. "Tata" Charbonier's lawsuit will be dismissed immediately because it makes no legal sense. They do that because they think you vote depending on what you see and not on the candidates' credentials. Ah, don't they realize that if they use the Police for "faith blockades" to pray they have to let there be blockades to promote beliefs like Satanism, Islam and even the flying spaghetti religion? Can you imagine being stopped by the Police to "voluntarily" talk to you about the flying spaghetti religion or to pray to Satan?

Those practices defeat what they fought so hard to have. The Church fought for centuries and finally achieved FREEDOM TO PRAY AND WORSHIP AS THEY WANT WITHOUT INTERRUPTIONS FROM THE STATE. God is so chivalrous that He let us freely choose what we want. Are we greater than God that we can demand otherwise?

### **Commentary.**

Both of Fonseca's articles about the Church and the LGBTQIA+ community criticize the sometimes contradictory and harmful discourse of the Church. Although religious organizations proclaim to obey the ten commandments, at times, some of them sometimes seem to forget the



greatest commandment of all found in Matthew 22:37-38: Love your neighbor as yourself. As explained by Fonseca, for years the Church experienced persecution and fought for freedom of religion yet now they persecute and condemn others. Fonseca proposes that there are social issues such as poverty, environmental destruction, and criminal activity that greatly affect communities for which the Church should sustain civic engagement and be an agent of change rather than promoting laws that discriminate against LGBTQIA+ people.

Power involves control, namely by (members of) one group over (those of) other groups. Such control may pertain to action and cognition: that is a powerful group may limit the freedom of action of others, but also influence their minds. Besides the elementary recourse to force directly control action, ‘modern’ and often more effective power is mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation, among other strategic ways to change the mind of others in one’s own interests. (van Dijk 1993, 254)

The Church uses the Bible to point their finger at the LGBTQIA+ community and attempt to persuade legislators to deny them rights. Fonseca questions the Church’s constant discourse calling homosexuality a transgression against God, yet at times ignoring or justifying the Church-goer who loves money, acts pretentious, does not practice abstinence, possesses a gluttonous appetite, etc. He strategically uses their own discourse, biblical verses, to refute their claims against the LGBTQIA+ community. In other words, he says as is written in Luke 6:42

How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye...

## Appendix B

### Solutions Proposed by Jay Fonseca from His Book

In the seventh chapter of his book, *Banquete Total: Cuando la corrupción dejó de ser ilegal* [Total Banquet: When corruption stopped being illegal], Fonseca proposes 74 solutions to improve political, economic, and social conditions in Puerto Rico. The 75<sup>th</sup> recommendation is left unwritten. Fonseca provides blank lines as an invitation to his readers to write a solution of their own. This appendix includes seven of Fonseca's propositions as they were originally published in Spanish and an English translation for each. Commentary is added after each proposed solution. This supplementary material shows how Fonseca's political analysis does not only expose corruption but also suggests remedies for the crises caused by politicians.

#### Solution Transcription B1

**Cambiar la papeleta legislativa para que no sea por columnas de partidos, sino que se elija a cada persona por sus características y cualidades individuales.** En otras palabras, que no aparezcan en la papeleta las insignias de los partidos sino solo los nombres de los candidatos, por sorteo. En el Estado de Nebraska así funciona y no se le ha caído un brazo a nadie. (p. 182)

#### *Translation*

**Change the legislative ballot so that it is not formatted by political parties, so that each person is elected according to his or her individual characteristics and qualities.** In other words, party insignias should not appear on the ballot, but rather only the names of the candidates randomly. In the State of Nebraska this is the way it works and it hasn't been the end of the world.

### **Commentary.**

Fonseca recognizes how family tradition and loyalty to parties have created a situation where qualified candidates are not considered by voters because of their mechanical partisan bias. Nonpartisan elections may encourage voters to pay closer attention to the election process by studying the candidates, getting informed about their credentials, and reading their policy statements. Fonseca would like fair elections that are not overshadowed by Puerto Rico's political status. Removing party insignias could potentially reduce the stigmas toward candidates that are members of a party that supports statehood, independence, or the current commonwealth affiliation to the United States. This solution is also a step toward dismantling the two-party system which is a zero-sum dynamic because it makes it close to impossible for third parties to gain electoral traction.

### **Solution Transcription B2**

**Igualar la educación pública a la privada.** Creo en ponerle un impuesto sumamente elevado a las instituciones de educación privada para que se use ese dinero en igualar las escuelas públicas a los colegios privados de mayor prestigio en Puerto Rico. Desagraciadamente, no hay otra forma de igualar el acceso a oportunidades y no veo razón alguna por la cual si en la Constitución prohibimos el discrimen por origen social no veamos la realidad de que automáticamente en el sistema educativo estamos discriminando cuando sabemos que en nuestras escuelas no se enseña al nivel de competitividad global que se requiere. De alguna forma tenemos que dar equidad en oportunidades, y de esta forma nos aseguramos de que la mayor parte de las personas pudientes o envían a sus hijos e hijas a escuelas públicas, o pagarían un alto nivel de impuestos. No tengo duda de que

cuando los hijos e hijas de los sectores privilegiados vayan a las mismas escuelas y que estas tengan que ser relativamente iguales, la educación mejorará sustancialmente. (p.184)

***Translation***

**Regulate equal public and private education.** I support levying a high tax on private educational institutions and using the money acquired from the tax to fund public schools alongside the most elite private schools in Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, there is no other way to regulate equal educational opportunities on the island. Since, the Constitution prohibits discrimination based on social classes, I see no reason why, we are ignoring the reality that we are automatically discriminating in the educational system when we know that our schools do not teach at the required level of global competitiveness. We must be fair and offer equal access to education, so that the majority of affluent individuals either send their children to public schools or they will have to pay a lot of taxes. I have no doubt that when the children of the wealthier sectors attend the same schools as the majority of the population and if those schools are commensurate in academic offerings as the elite private schools, education will improve significantly.

**Commentary.**

Education can liberate a nation from domination. Fonseca identifies the need to provide quality education in the Puerto Rican public school system so that the children of low and middle class families can compete in the workforce once they graduate. Unequal educational opportunities lead to unequal power relations. If only the children of privileged families receive appropriate skills development, provision of relevant school infrastructure, technological equipment, materials and resources at school, etc. it is very likely that the upper social classes will remain in control.

Limiting people's education only benefits those in power as it is a lot easier to manipulate ignorant citizens than well-educated professionals who know their rights.

### **Solution Transcription B3**

**Eliminar la partidocracia.** Facilitar la inscripción de partidos para diluir el poder que tienen los dos partidos tradicionales. A la misma vez, crear un sistema para que las decisiones en la Comisión Estatal de Elecciones (CEE) no las tomen exclusivamente los partidos inscritos, sino que puedan participar también ciudadanos representantes del interés público. Además, las vistas de la CEE deberán ser públicas. (p. 185)

### ***Translation***

**Eliminate partocracy.** Allow parties to register in order to weaken the dominance of the two established parties. Establish policies so that decisions in the State Elections Commission are not made exclusively by registered parties, but so that citizens representing public interest can also participate. In addition, the commission hearings should be open to the public.

### **Commentary.**

The current two-party system hinders democracy. Thus, the power and will of the people has been co-opted by two elite groups. Although Fonseca published his book approximately nine years ago and since then other parties have been established and voting percentages have significantly changed, the two main parties on the island continue to have the most governmental control and corruption is more pervasive than ever. When citizens have more power than political parties, they also have a greater sense of responsibility. This will bring about more citizen participation and greater governmental transparency and accountability.

### **Solution Transcription B4**

**Convertir cada escuela en un centro de desarrollo comunitario y a las 3:00 p.m. transformarla.** Convertirla en un lugar donde cada persona en la comunidad tenga una labor social y que sirva como motor de búsqueda de alternativas cognoscitivas para adiestrar a nuestra gente desempleada para que pueda hacer por sí un nuevo taller. A las 3:30 p.m., personas desempleadas de la comunidad irían allí a aprender nuevos oficios técnicos con alta demanda, como energía renovable, enfermería práctica, etc. Estudiantes de la UPR, como parte de los requisitos de graduación en su último año de clases, tendrían que sacar tres horas a la semana para dar talleres prácticos en nuestras escuelas de la comunidad. Para enseñarle a nuestra gente oficios y disciplinas. Los fines de semana irían a la escuela para dar talleres de derechos civiles, clínicas de salud, inversiones y llevarían obras de teatro y artes para estimular la sensibilidad como nunca antes. Mientras, unos universitarios darían los talleres a padres y madres bajo supervisión de la academia, otros darían tutorías a menores en las materias básicas de 3:00 a 4:20 p.m. y de 4:30 p.m. a 6:00 p.m. se ofrecerían talleres de artes, teatro, música, y deportes de forma entretenida. Una vez a la semana, luego de las 7:00 p.m., se declamaría, se harían obras comunitarias, noches de talento y bisemanalmente se harían reuniones sociales para discutir planes anticrimen comunitarios, ayuda a los menos afortunados y se tendría contacto constante entre padres y madres con los maestros. (pp. 196-197)

### ***Translation***

**Order all schools to serve as community development centers every day after 3:00 p.m.** The centers will require every community member to hold a social responsibility geared towards identifying and establishing cognitive alternatives to educate and train unemployed

citizens. Unemployed community members would go there around 3:30 p.m. to study new technical trades in high demand, such as renewable energy, practical nursing, and so on. As part of their graduation requirements in their final year of coursework, UPR students would be required to devote three hours per week at the schools to conduct practical workshops about a variety of trades and disciplines. While some university students would offer workshops to community parents under the supervision of the UPR, others would tutor elementary, middle, and high school students in core subjects from 3:00 to 4:20 p.m. and from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. art, theater, music, and sports would be offered. On weekends, university students would go to the school to offer health clinics and additional workshops on topics like civil rights and investing. They would also showcase theatrical plays and offer art classes to foster emotional intelligence and sensibility. Once a week, after 7:00 p.m., community members would meet to recite poetry or prose, host community plays or talent shows as well as hold bi-weekly meetings to discuss anti-crime initiatives and brainstorm ideas to help support those who are less fortunate. Parents and teachers would be in continual communication with each other.

### **Commentary.**

Fonseca wants to put an end to the marginalization of our own people by erasing the social dividing lines being drawn between those who form part of the workforce and those who do not. He believes in civic solidarity and building alliances among common citizens to eliminate the “us” versus “them” discourse. Fonseca recommends working cooperatively. This type of unity can eventually lead to counteracting negative trends put in place by corrupt political leaders. All inequalities and exclusions correspond to asymmetries of power. The idea of schools becoming community development centers is a way of sharing power and working toward creating a more equitable social order.

## **Solution Transcription B5**

**Multar empresas, personas y todo ente social que no recicle.** Fiscalizar por la Autoridad de Desperdicios Sólidos y por una persona puesta allí, en representación de organizaciones ambientalistas como Sierra Club. La multa deberá ser a base del volumen de negocios, ingresos y se impondrá también pena de cárcel a quien tenga repetidas violaciones. Algún día, no tengo duda, será un delito grave no reciclar. Las penas tienen que ser severas pues, desde 1993 se aprobó por ley, reciclar el 35% para el 2000 y ya estamos en el 2013 y la tasa está en el 12%. Probablemente tengamos que aprobar tarde o temprano un sistema de imputación de responsabilidad absoluta a los productores y distribuidores para que tengan que asegurarse de que su producto una vez se genera se tiene que reciclar y/o disponer por ellos mismos. (pp. 201-202)

## ***Translation***

**Fine companies, individuals and any social entity that does not recycle.** This project will be see overseen by the Solid Waste Management Authority who could appoint a representative on behalf of environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club. The fine should be based on the volume and revenue of each business. A prison sentence will also be imposed on those who have repeated violations. Someday, I have no doubt, it will be a serious crime not to recycle. The penalties have to be severe because, since 1993 it was approved by law, to recycle 35% by 2000 and we are already in 2013 and the recycling rate is only at 12%. We will almost certainly have to eventually implement a system of absolute responsibility imputation to producers and distributors, requiring them to ensure that their product is recycled and/or disposed.



### **Commentary.**

Recycling leads to social change, healthier living, and community building. Fonseca encourages conserving natural resources, holding businesses accountable, strengthening the economy, and creating jobs. All of these can occur when recycling is adequately enforced and supervised. Given that legislation has been passed to require recycling on the island, why have so many years passed without any substantial results? Fonseca urges the government to pursue the best interests of citizens. Inefficiency must be exposed and failure to implement policies must be swiftly corrected.

### **Solution Transcription B6**

**Enfatizar enormemente el bilingüismo en la educación.** Ejemplo, cambiar nuestro sistema educativo en ciencias para que tenga que ser en inglés o leer las obras literarias en su lenguaje de origen. Francamente, este debate es ridículo. El idioma comercial global es el inglés y no tiene nada, absolutamente nada que ver con si somos o no colonia. Obvio, que si tenemos relación con EEUU más apremiante aún es dominar su idioma, pero tenemos que aprender eficientemente ese idioma. Inglaterra conquistó 2/3 partes del mundo hace mucho tiempo, haciendo del inglés el idioma internacional. Aprender mandarín, francés, y alemán debería estar en la lista también, pero por lo menos asegurémonos del inglés y español. Si algo me ha sido personalmente un impedimento en mis estudios, ha sido el poco dominio del inglés en contraste con algunos compañeros/as quienes su nivel de dominio me ha hecho saber lo rezagado que estamos en general porque yo estoy muy por encima del boricua promedio en cuanto inglés se refiere sobre todo porque nací en Chicago, Illinois y para nada tuvo que ver con que en la escuela de Jaguar me enseñaron. (pp. 205-206)

### ***Translation***

**Integrate bilingualism into the public school curriculum.** For example, science classes can be taught in English and students can be required to study literary works in the language they were originally published. To be honest, this discussion is ludicrous. The worldwide business language is English, and it has nothing to do with whether or not we are a colony. Of course, if we have a relationship with the United States, mastering their language becomes much more important, but we must study and learn English effectively. Long ago, England conquered two-thirds of the world, making English the international language. Learning Mandarin, French, and German should also be on our to-do list, but let's start with English and Spanish. If anything has hampered my studies, it has been my poor command of English in comparison to some classmates whose level of proficiency has shown me how far behind we are in general because I am far above the average Boricua in terms of English, especially since I was born in Chicago, Illinois, and it has nothing to do with being taught English at the public school I attended in Jagual, San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico.

### **Commentary.**

Fonseca's advocacy for bilingualism and multilingualism is intended to be for both the collective and individual good. A society whose members speak more than one language will appreciate cultural awareness and therefore, will be less susceptible to xenophobia. Communication will become more effective as citizens will become more receptive to and empathetic of others. Additionally, an individual who speaks more than one language has an academic advantage and will eventually do better on the job market. Learning more than one language is a win-win situation.

### **Solution Transcription B7**

**Ordenar la rotulación inmediata de todo alimento que haya sido genéticamente modificado.** Francamente, no entiendo por qué esto siquiera hay que discutirlo. Aun en un sistema capitalista, la base es tener la información y hacerla disponible para que la competencia sea leal. No comprendo cómo esto en California perdió en una consulta al electorado. Obvio, el cabildeo y la desinformación que metieron las empresas distribuidoras de alimentos fue enorme, pero bueno. (p. 213)

### ***Translation***

Mandate the prompt labeling of all genetically modified (GMO) foods. Frankly, I'm not sure why this is even being debated. Even in a capitalist economy, the premise for fair competition is to have all information available. I'm not sure how this lost among voters in California. Of course, the food distribution industries' lobbying and misinformation were massive, but oh well.

### **Commentary.**

Fonseca has an ancestral memory of subsistence, which he uses to maintain life in a death seeking system. His father is a farmer, so he knows first-hand the economic loss that non-GMO and organic farmers experience because of GMO crops which deprive them of access to markets and oblige them to make costly investments in questionable and sometimes dangerous farming practices. Although a complete prohibition of genetically modified food might be a better solution, Fonseca uses the power of his discourse at least to advocate for the proper labeling of GMO foods and to draw critical attention to the dishonest and deceptive practices of agribusiness. Shiva (2001) calls the industries' production and use of genetically modified food "deliberate blindness." Fonseca's proposal for transparency will help for both farmers and consumers not to be misled.

## Appendix C

### **Paintings Not Mentioned in Dissertation Chapters from *There is a meeting here tonight***

The nine paintings from Greaves's *There is a meeting here tonight* that were not included in Chapter 4 are in this appendix. Each figure is followed by an explanatory paragraph. Roopnaraine's *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves* is the source used to compose the short, descriptive accounts. The purpose of this supplementary material is to provide readers with information that will encourage them to further study Greaves's series and to research his other works of art, as well as the work of other Caribbean artists.

## Figure C1

### *The annunciation*



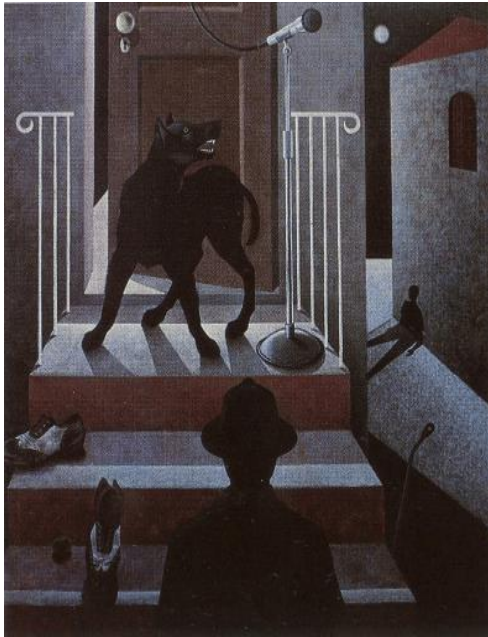
*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1993, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 174), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

*The annunciation* is the first painting of the first trilogy. In this piece, Greaves incorporates many small details with great meaning. For example, the man in the garbage bin who represents a politician has one of the lenses of his dark glasses missing. Roopnaraine describes him as “the one-eyed king in blind man’s country” (2005, p. 163). Also, the politician’s cap has stars and stripes; hence, “he is a normal Caribbean politician in his allegiance, not to say subservience to the United States” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 163). Nevertheless, even though he has two microphones in his hands to exemplify his control of public discourse, Roopnaraine does not consider him to be the protagonist. Instead, he identifies the woman “in the work-clothes of the cane-field worker” who is pushing the politician in a trolley as “the figure of authority, looking

boldly out of the picture at the viewer” (2005, p. 163). The common citizen has power, but the politicians have co-opted it.

## Figure C2

### *The presentation*

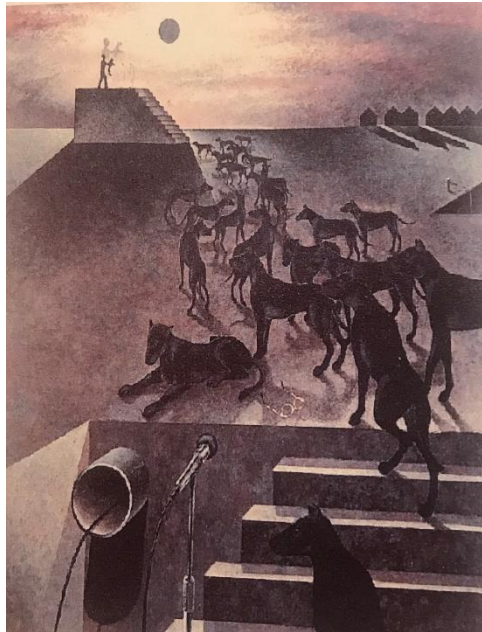


*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1992, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 175), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

Although not positioned as the focal point of the painting, “the discarded worn-out shoes on the concrete steps” are significant and connected to the biblical book of Ecclesiastes (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 169). Ecclesiastes 1:2 states: Vanity of vanities ... all is vanity. The shoes are *vanitas* objects. In a still life artwork, *vanitas* are symbolic objects “chosen and arranged to remind the spectator of the transience of mortal life” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 169). Greaves integrates these throughout the entire collection. Shoes may signify one’s passing through life and how one can be at the top of the stairs (the dominating class) and quickly fall to the bottom (the dominated). Greaves “gives expression to his existential concerns ... and the finality of things [:] it is also an act of appropriation that establishes an art-historical connection”(p. 169).

### Figure C3

#### *The apotheosis*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1993, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 176), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

The title of this painting means to be elevated to the status of a god. Greaves composes this artwork in such a manner that “the eye moves up the sculptural stone steps, follows the line of the dogs towards the pyramid top and beyond, out to the horizon and the sky” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 170). At the top of the distanced pyramid there appears to be a human figure holding a child and showing him to the world much like is done at a baptism. The suggested message may be that governments have proclaimed their power dominance and demand obedience from all those subordinate to them. Therefore, they have situated themselves in a “god-like” position, yet do not tend to believe in free will as they impose their authority and beliefs onto others. The microphone is at the beginning of the steps as to imply that power begins with the word. John 1:1 states: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.



## Figure C4

### *The candidate*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1996, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 177), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

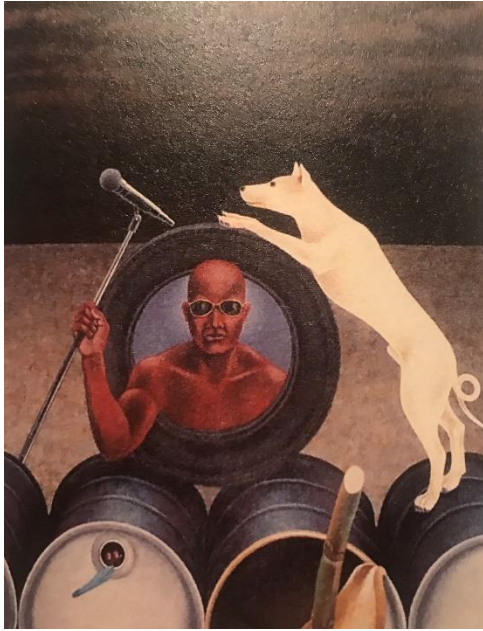
The contrast between the dark and light shades in the painting denote “the issue of race [as] the central theme” like Guyana’s political historical accounts of racialized division (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 165). However, this painting alludes to the Dominican Republic.

In 1996, when the trilogy was exhibited in the Santo Domingo III Bienale, the white president of the Republic, with the backing of the octogenarian Balaguér, had defeated the black hopeful born of Haitian parents, Peña Gómez, who would have won the presidency of the republic had the white ruling class not concoted a reconciliation of convenience among themselves, closing ranks against the upstart from below. (2005, p. 165)

*The candidate* is a reminder of pompous politicians having “nothing to offer but the contents of a rubbish bin and the trappings of political ambitions” (p. 165).

## Figure C5

### *Party supporters*

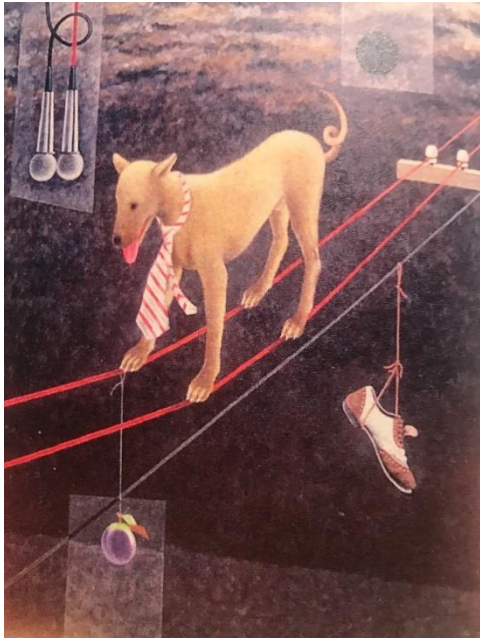


*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1996, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 179), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

*Party supporters* is featured in the same trilogy at *The candidate*; thus, the subject of race is portrayed. Greaves shows how “those who should be fighting the white candidate are his henchmen” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 166). The man holds the microphone for the dog to speak. Power has been surrendered to politicians. Their manipulative discourse has accomplished blind allegiance. Greaves may have painted the man with dark shades over his eyes to communicate the unquestioning regard some citizens have toward politicians to the extent that they are willing to defend them even if their actions are misguided. Van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis identifies this as social power abuse, mind control, and discursive interaction. The foundation (underlying principles of corruption, greed, and inequality) on which the man and the dog rest is garbage yet this does not disturb their composure.

## Figure C6

### *Party political broadcast*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 1997, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 180), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

*Party political broadcast* conveys the use of trickery in politics. The dog on the tightrope must keep its balance similar to a politician that often struggles to reconcoile contradictory and hypocritical discourse and actions.

The mulatto dog steps on to the stage. His old school tie tells the electorate that he is a respectable member of society. ... The general demeanour is that of a charlatan willing to take risks, like walking on electrical wires, for personal advancement. He exudes self-confidence, presenting himself as someone in control of the situation. ... Promises and more Promises...(Roopnaraine 2005, p. 167)

The microphones, the shoes, and the fruit dangle. The dog could reach for all of them, but then it may fall from the tightrope (lose control). If the three items are hanging loosely, then anyone can grab them, but who will be brave enough to do so?

## Figure C7

### *Electoral boundary*

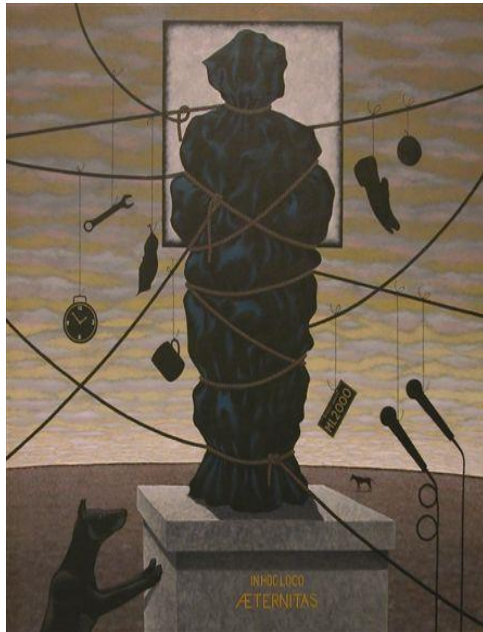


*Note.* By S. Greaves, 2004, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 183), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

Divisions occur in political activity when differences of opinions shift the intentions behind decision-making from working toward a collective good to working toward an individual good. Greaves personifies the concept of boundaries in this painting.

...the seawall of coastal Guyana inspired the concrete steps in *Electoral boundary*, the most geometrically designed landscape of them all, where the picture is divided into triangular segments marked by lines that converge at a single point on the horizon. (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 170)

Greaves also emphasizes the notion of inaccessibility by painting a horizon for ‘...we can see – and cannot reach – between the ocean and the sky’ (Greaves 1993, as cited by Roopnaraine 2005, p. 171). Likewise, during elections a glimmer of hope seems to shine, but is never quite in reach.

**Figure C8***Political hero*

*Note.* By S. Greaves, 2000, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 184), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

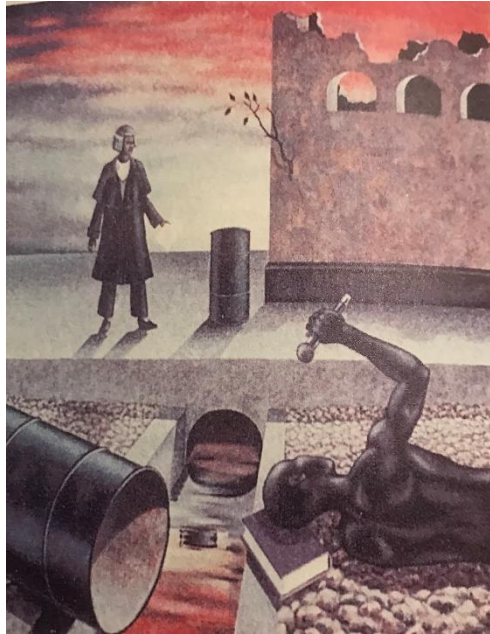
Roopnaraine (2005) cites journal entries written by Greaves himself that offer insight into his thought process when deciding to name this painting, *Political hero*. “Greaves reflected on the possibility or rather the impossibility of the heroic in the modern Caribbean” (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 161) Greaves writes

In a sense I am perhaps seeking aspects of the heroic in a society where the heroic with its concomitant glory or disaster on a grand or tragic scale does not exist in the present or immediate past of the psyche of the people. ...Heroes of/in the Caribbean are really two few. What we have in abundance are parodies – any number of individuals passing for heroes. (as cited by Roopnaraine 2005, p. 162)

For this reason, we should not look to a politician to save us but rather rise up and save ourselves.

## Figure C9

### *Epilogue*



*Note.* By S. Greaves, 2001, painting, acrylic on canvas. From *Primacy of the eye: The art of Stanley Greaves*, by Rupert Roopnaraine (p. 186), 2005, Peepal Tree Press.

*Epilogue*, by definition, is the final painting. The election process has ended.

...from the announcement and introduction of the candidates to the declaration of the results and the aftermath, moving through the launching of the campaign, the presentation of the party manifesto, the political meetings, the demarcation of electoral boundaries, the casting of the ballot and the fate of the ballot papers, the announcement of the results, the enthronement of the victor, the protests... (Roopnaraine 2005, p. 162)

And, it all culminates with the final decision. In a biblical context, it is the final judgment. *Epilogue* is like *Prologue* as both illustrate contrasting spaces. Some of the contrasts are: the man standing and the man lying on the ground, a destroyed building with a sprouting branch, and the Bible (“truth”) under the lying man’s head and the microphone (political “lies”) lifted above his head.