THE JOURNAL OF TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES

12, no. 1 (Summer 2021)

HEIDELBERG
UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING

THE JOURNAL OF
TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES
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EDITORIAL NOTE

ARTICLES

***The Journal of Transcultural Studies* 12, no. 1 (Summer 2021)**

The Journal of Transcultural Studies is edited at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) and published by Heidelberg University Publishing. The journal is freely available at http://heiup.uni-heidelberg.de/ (open access).

ISSN: 2191-6411

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Editorial Note

This issue of our journal, which was prepared from start to finish during the pandemic crisis, comes with a rather predictable delay, yet once again includes papers that provide fresh insights into diverse fields of transcultural theory and action. The reader will have the opportunity to follow the stunning trajectory of a medieval clothing item through space and time, as it underwent several creative processes of appropriation and acquired various symbolic meanings; to track the transcultural encounters of the legendary tradition of glass making in Renaissance Venice through the itineraries of its materials and artefacts; to embark on a delightful and thought-provoking culinary journey on the pathways of diasporic cuisine through a remarkable piece of memoir literature; and finally, to acknowledge that transculturality is not only a theoretical tool, but also has stunning potential for educational strategy.

In a contribution that investigates a case study going back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during a time pre-dating the advent of global capital and modern communication technologies, Vladimir Aleksić and Mariachiara Gasparini underline the importance of analyzing historical forms of transculturation. Their article takes as its starting point two portraits of the fourteenth-century nobleman John Oliver preserved in the monastery of Lesnovo in present-day Serbia, both of which depicting him wearing a cloud collar. Drawing on visual sources, the authors trace the early history and meanings of this vestimentary accessory to Central Asia and China as far back as the first millennium CE, where it featured in representations of the Buddha as *cakravartin* (universal ruler, literally "he who turns the wheel"). Faced with a fragmentary corpus of written sources, the authors draw primarily on material objects, remnants of textiles, and of course, images to chart the pathways of the cloud collar across the Eurasian expanse since the ninth century. They use this biography of a single object/image to reconstruct processes of transculturation that revitalized insignia of power and ritual practice, as well as propelled the production and consumption of luxury objects, all plausibly facilitated by trade routes and the Mongol conquest of territories across Asia and Europe. This richly detailed, carefully reconstructed investigation throws fresh light on the seminal role of objects and their visual replication, their re-historicization and re-signification within a transcultural constitution of politics and its symbols across vast distances. This study further sensitizes us to the theoretical importance of attending to the ambivalences or contradictions built into long-term processes of transculturation, by highlighting how warfare and conquest, as in the case of the Mongol occupation of vast expanses of Eurasia, brought with them innumerable acts of violence, forceful appropriation, and a rhetoric of enmity. At the same time, this history of the cloud collar also demonstrates that what

is now referred to as Turko-Mongol civilization was constituted, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, through myriad processes of cosmopolitan exchange and a transcultured language of rulership and consumption that encompassed large parts of Europe and Asia.

Emily Hyatt's contribution to this issue problematizes a key trope of art history: the labels attached to objects. Such labels are simultaneously ascriptions of identities and myths of origins, and end up suppressing the transcultural lives of things. Her account of the history of glass making in the workshops of the Venetian island of Murano draws our attention to processes of "Venetianization" of these coveted objects: a conflation of matter and meaning cemented the prestige of glass objects produced there, as the fabled material qualities of finished glass came to be equated with a single locality, Venice, perceived as self-contained. Hyatt instead takes us through a fine-tuned investigation of the multi-scalar and trans-temporal journeys that reveals glass production as a practice distributed across places and times, a story of materials in motion. Raw materials—pebbles, plant ashes, silica, and sodium carbonate—became in the words of the author "a conduit for transculturation" as the course of their journeys resulted in encounters between collectors, buyers, traders across the Italian Peninsula, the Mediterranean and North Africa. Her search for a more precise vocabulary to render the processes of transculturation underway leads her to reject often-used metaphors such as "object biographies," which suggest a linear lifespan, or that of "travelling things," which imply that movement is uninterrupted and universal. Instead, she privileges the notion of an itinerary that attends to shifts and contingencies. Hyatt tells a story of glass making and its valorization in Renaissance Venice, when objects were singled out and appreciated for the artfulness of the final product, wherein the humble origins of its raw materials, of glass before it was glass, as well as the agency of several actors involved as co-producers, were subsumed within the totality of a single aesthetic work. The story is not a univocal one, however. The account recuperates voices—artisanal treatises for example, but also the accounts of merchants and clerical elites—registering a clear awareness of the transcultural transactions that negated the dominant narrative of cultural belonging ascribed to early modern Muranese glass. Hyatt's analysis points towards the potential instability that a transcultural object introduces to the ordered world of museum labels, which conventionally seek to allow a visitor to read "culture" from a thing in a glass case. Such research is valuable for the pathways it proposes for art historical scholarship and curation to tackle the question of how matter shapes culture.

Emilio Amideo presents a sensitive, careful, and multi-faceted exploration of the way Barbadian diasporic food culture is reflected in the "culinary memoir" of Austin Clarke. As Amideo reminds us, we are heirs

to a rich body of scholarship and thought that makes us aware that food is not merely a biological necessity, but also sustains the soul and its worlds of meaning, collectively, culturally, and historically. In the perspective of such work, the diasporic foodways Clarke portrays emerge as a complex site for the (re)construction and maintenance of individual and collective memory, community and belonging, nostalgia and identity, and the negotiation of migrant experience. The case treated by Amideo vividly reminds us that food is a key domain of transculturation. This dynamic is perhaps especially obvious in the foodways of diasporas, but also in domains like the adoption, adaption, and conspicuous consumption of "exotic" cuisines. Reflection on these salient instances, which lie so ready at hand, might also prompt us to think about the ways transculturation gatecrashes the most sacrosanct domains of cultural essentialization, and the illusions they so sedulously maintain—illustrated, for example, by accounts of the "original" emergence and construction of "national" dishes. Amideo's close reading offers several springboards from which we might launch more general lines of thought. Diasporas are not just subjects or vectors of transculturation, but might also be considered as transcultural systems in their own right, with their own particular dynamics, generating new "cultures" as their products—often, in a telling "irony of the transcultural," precisely in the name of nostalgic fidelity to an imagined "authentic" culture of the remote, imagined homeland. Food and foodways themselves, despite their obvious potential, represent a barely tapped, complex domain for theorizing transculturation. As for other domains or facets of culture, a key task for transcultural theory is to ask whether foodways support or facilitate particular species of transculturation, distinct from those that obtain or prevail in other domains (politics, literature, technology... the list is long). Amideo also emphasizes the role played by taste, touch, and visceral experience in the production, consumption, and perceived meaning of food. This points us to broader questions about whether transculturation processes and effects might also differ by sensory domain (is there a domain-specific "transculturation of/by taste," for example?), and prompts us to question the ways that our theories of transculturation—like other domains—might be subject to a kind of hegemony of sight or hearing, and could be enriched by considered extension to the domains of other senses. Furthermore, Amideo's evocation of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Touching Feeling*, *apropos* the close connection of physical touch and the emotions, prompts the reflection that we have barely scratched the surface of the problem of the transculturation of emotions. Amideo also attends to the importance, in the history of Barbadian foodways, of the experiences of subjugation (Clarke writes pointedly of slave cuisines) and "privilege" (a word that emerges with a delightful double meaning in Clarke's work—but no spoilers!). This is yet another domain in which transcultural theory still largely

awaits considered extension: the ways that class, privilege (or denial of it), and other dimensions of social position might also impact transculturation—facilitating certain transcultural processes, while perhaps dampening or repressing others. In short (and succumbing to the obvious pun), in our larger project of constructing general understandings of transculturation, Amideo offers us ample "food for thought."

In the concluding essay of this issue, the conventional model of national cultures, with its deep impact on cross-cultural studies, becomes the object of thoughtful criticism that revolves not only around its theoretical core but also around its applicability beyond academia. Thor-André Skrefsrud's compelling attempt to problematize previous research—and action—in this field begins with an evaluation of Geert Hofstede's premise that each member of a community carries a distinctive mindset heavily determined by its national culture. Hofstede's idea of a "cultural programming" that dictates thinking, feeling, and acting was implemented in a six-dimensional model (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, long/short-term orientation, and indulgence/restraint), which became a widely accepted analytical framework for examining—and coping with—cultural difference on the basis of nations and national affiliation. The author exposes the weaknesses of this monolithic concept, with its overemphasis on national borders and its pigeonholing of individuals within fixed schemata of cultural beliefs and practices. A serious consequence of this line of thought is that cultural diversity has been regarded as an obstacle that prevents the progression of cooperation and partnerships in different societal fields. The alternative to this static and stereotypical understanding of individuals and societies, the author argues, is a transcultural approach that highlights the transversal and transformative character of cultures as constantly developing, restructuring, and changing entities. Drawing on the work of Wolfgang Welsch, who revived the notion of transculturality, Skrefsrud calls for the necessity to disentangle cultural traditions from their national straitjackets, and reminds us that in our increasingly globalized world, individuals and groups can retain multiple forms of affiliations and/or identities. Therefore, it is not the fixation on the alleged "essence" of a national culture, but rather the plural and dynamic understanding of cross-border relationships and experiences that facilitates the most appropriate tool for cross-cultural research in the twenty-first century. In the final and very intriguing part of his paper, the author suggests that these theoretical insights may be beneficial in an educational context, as a framework that more effectively copes with the problems that many young migrant people face with regard to issues of identity, origin, and belonging. The transcultural model encourages teachers to recognize each student's wide range of cultural and linguistic expertise rather than to impose restrictions on their identities. Hence, it treats those who differ from the mainstream not as

a problem, but as a challenge, fostering pedagogical practices and discourses that welcome cultural complexity.

As always, we hope you will enjoy reading this issue, and look forward to your comments, critiques, and further submissions.

Monica Juneja and Diamantis Panagiotopoulos

Language, Memory, and Affect in Diasporic Food Discourse: Austin Clarke's Barbadian Culinary Memoir

Emilio Amideo

"Food looks like an object but is actually a relationship."[1]

"The new cultural demographies of the African Diaspora, as we slowly, patiently map them, must always drop by the table, for here the interarticulatory logic of the *material* and the *symbolic* blends the universal and the particular at the same place—*inside* the one in the all."[2]

Touching memories: A visceral approach to diasporic food narratives

Food occupies a pivotal place in every society, not just for the sustenance it provides our bodies as the material basis of our very existence, but also as a form of communication, in the way it conveys meaning and plays a role in constructing identities and regulating social roles. As Claude Fischler states: "Any given human individual is constructed, biologically, psychologically and socially by the food he/she chooses to incorporate."[3] When dealing with food, the material and the symbolic form two sides of the same coin—so much so that a simple expression like "thinking with food" both recalls the fact that consuming food is essential for thinking (as a bodily function of the brain), and indicates the possibility of thinking (as critically engaging) with food in order to express meaning as a semiotic practice.

Numerous theorists have considered the potential that food has for meaning-making and have often compared its use in society and culture to

1 Terry Eagleton, "Edible Ecriture," *Times Higher Education*, October 24, 1997, accessed June 25, 2021, https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/edible-ecriture/104281.article.

2 Hortense Spillers, "Introduction. Peter's Pans: Eating in the Diaspora," in *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 1–64; 64.

3 Claude Fischler, "Food, Self and Identity," *Social Science Information* 27, no. 2 (June 1988): 275–292; 275, https://doi.org/10.1177/053901888027002005.

that of language. Roland Barthes, for example, has emphasized how the use of food (its manipulation, incorporation, commodification, etc.) does not only act as a medium for the exchange of information, but also represents and transmits specific situations and, more generally, enables signification.[4] Similarly, Claude Lévi-Strauss has discussed how food can be considered a language capable of expressing social structures and cultural systems,[5] while Arjun Appadurai and Pierre Bourdieu, among others, have highlighted the way that food creates and structures social relations. Bourdieu points to food's function here especially in terms of social class stratification and its connection to taste,[6] while Appadurai notes that food may signal either solidarity and intimacy, or individuality and distance, depending on the context.[7] Food plays a role in structuring our perception of self, especially if we think about body image representation or eating disorders,[8] but it also defines the way we perceive others.[9] This is reflected in the creation of national identities, where food is accounted for as the result of historical processes defining eating habits or fashions. As such, food and its related practices map processes of colonialism, migration, exclusion, and both individual and social boundary marking.[10]

The centrality of food in the dialectical construction of the self and the other is particularly evident in diasporic contexts, where migrants are confronted with an imperative to construct and reconstruct their sense of personal identity and cultural belonging. Here, food often acts as a symbolic means by which to create "a feeling of home away from home,"[11] thus producing a connection to a (more or less imaginary) homeland; something that may provide migrants with

4 Roland Barthes, "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption," in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 2013), 23–30; 24.

5 Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Culinary Triangle," in Counihan and Esterik, *Food and Culture*, 40–47.

6 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

7 Arjun Appadurai, "Gastro-Politics in Hindu South Asia," *American Ethnologist* 8, no. 3 (1981): 494–511; 496, https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1981.8.3.02a00050.

8 Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

9 Wenying Xu, *Eating Identities: Reading Food in Asian American Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 2.

10 David Bell and Gill Valentine, *Consuming Geographies: We Are What We Eat* (London: Routledge, 1997), 168.

11 Mustafa Koç and Jennifer Welsh, "Food, Identity, and Immigrant Experience," *Canadian Diversity* 1, no. 1 (2002): 46–48; 47.

a level of stability as they adapt to a new place and lifestyle.[12] This feeling of home can also be registered as a "taste of home," reflecting the way a visceral experience of food—that is, an experience that pays attention to appearance, taste, smell, sound, and texture—enables an emotional and affective relation or attachment to a place to emerge.[13] A visceral approach, as Robyn Longhurst et al. explain, takes into account our sensory engagement with both the material and the discursive environments we inhabit. It therefore structures the way we perceive and make sense of our experiences and surroundings—something that becomes intensified with the experience of migration. In fact, in a diasporic or migratory context, an individual's awareness of their mental and physical engagement with their surroundings becomes more acute as they adapt to, contest, or maneuver around a new material and discursive environment:[14]

12 My use of the term "diaspora" is aligned with the view Stuart Hall expresses in "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." Hall delineates a diasporic experience that is peculiarly Caribbean in nature (though parts of it resonate across the whole Black diaspora) and implies the production and reproduction of one's identity anew through transformation and difference. He writes: "I use this term here metaphorically, not literally: diaspora does not refer us to those scattered tribes whose identity can only be secured in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return … This is the old, the imperialising, the hegemonising, form of 'ethnicity' … The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*." Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 222–237; 235 [italics in the original]. On cultural models that rethink the hybridity of diaspora, see also Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993); Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). Also, on the difference and overlap between the terms "diaspora" and "transnationalism," see Thomas Faist, "Diaspora and Transnationalism: What Kind of Dance Partners?" in *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*, ed. Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 9–34; Ato Quayson and Girish Daswani, "Introduction—Diaspora and Transnationalism: Scapes, Scales, and Scopes," in *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism*, ed. Ato Quayson and Girish Daswani (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 1–26.

13 Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston, and Elsie Ho, "A Visceral Approach: Cooking 'at Home' with Migrant Women in Hamilton, New Zealand," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34, no. 3 (July 2009): 333–345; 333, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2009.00349.x.

14 I owe this reflection to Sara Ahmed's discussion of the feeling of comfort. Ahmed describes comfort as the fit between body and object, or individual body and environment, and uses this to describe the feeling of "out-of-place-ness" or discomfort. Though Ahmed focuses especially on the experiences of queer people in a society that is socially shaped by heteronormativity, this can also aptly express the experience of the migrant. Both instances are associated with a more acute awareness of the body in relation to the place it occupies. Ahmed writes: "Discomfort is a feeling of disorientation: one's body feels out of place, awkward, unsettled … the sense of out-of-place-ness and estrangement involves an acute awareness of the surface of one's body, which appears as surface, when one cannot inhabit the social skin, which is shaped by some bodies, and not others." Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 148.

> Migrating involves developing an understanding of different social, cultural, economic and political systems, but it also involves coming to a sensual and visceral understanding of different micro-geographies of the body, such as different languages, gestures, textures, sounds, smells, tastes and culinary practices.[15]

A visceral engagement with our environment might involve the synesthetic experience of smelling, handling, and tasting food, and is likewise responsible for creating and triggering cultural memories.[16] In fact, memories often emerge through a number of embodied practices or sensory experiences that are repeated, almost ritually, in the process of cooking and of handling food.[17] This particularly applies to smells, which, as David Sutton explains by drawing on Piet Vroon,[18] "more easily connect with 'episodic' than 'semantic' memories (i.e., life-history memories as opposed to 'recognition of a phenomenon' memories), and also because of the tendency for smell memories to be emotionally charged."[19] Similarly, a sort of "remembrance in the hands" enables us to think about the possibility of touching memories—"touching" here in both the sense of the verb and the adjective.[20] We may therefore think about the possibility of both reaching out to (almost touch) memories, and of experiencing them in an emotionally charged way. Taste, too, is laced with emotional memories: a famous literary example is Marcel Proust's description of the way the taste of a madeleine dipped in tea enables the protagonist's memories of both his aunt Léonie and the village of Combray to resurface.[21]

A blend of food, memory, and emotion is at the basis of the narrative language that structures the subgenre of culinary memoir, to which Barbadian Canadian writer Austin Clarke's *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit* belongs. The peculiar affective, visceral language that Clarke employs to write about the food of his Barbadian origin from his North American (mainly in Canada and the US)

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15 Longhurst, Johnston, and Ho, "A Visceral Approach," 334–335.

16 Allison Hayes-Conroy and Jessica Hayes-Conroy, "Taking Back Taste: Feminism, Food and Visceral Politics," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 15, no. 5 (2008): 461–473; 463, https://doi.org/10.1080/09663690802300803.

17 David E. Sutton, "Cooking Skills, the Senses, and Memory: The Fate of Practical Knowledge," in Counihan and Esterik, *Food and Culture*, 299–319; 302.

18 Piet Vroon, *Smell, the Secret Seducer*, trans. Paul Vincent (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1997).

19 David E. Sutton, *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 89.

20 For more on the concept "remembrance in the hands," see Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 93.

21 Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, rev. D. J. Enright, vol. 1, Swann's Way (New York: The Modern Library, 1992 [1981]), 60–65.

diaspora reflects the need to incite change in hitherto monolithic conceptions of national and cultural affiliations by way of introducing a new diasporic sensibility to Canadian cultural belonging.[22]

Cooking food with feeling: A Barbadian culinary memoir in the North American diaspora

Austin Clarke's *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit* was published in Canada in 1999 and was followed by a United States edition in the same year. These two editions have slightly different titles—a quirk that often occurs when a work of art crosses the Canada/US border. Nonetheless, both editions underline the fact that Clarke's text is a memoir. While the Canadian edition's subtitle, "Rituals of Slave Food, A Barbadian Memoir," additionally emphasizes the connection between the text, slave food, and the Barbadian tradition,[23] the subtitle of the US edition focuses more specifically on the text's subgenre: "A Culinary Memoir."[24]

As a type of memoir, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit* narrates memories of specific moments or events in the author's life. In fact, its selective narrative distinguishes it from the genre of autobiography, as it does not relate the entire life story of an individual. Similarly, although it cannot be considered a work of fiction, the book not only incorporates several invented or enhanced elements, but also makes use of narrative techniques that are typical of the novel as a genre.[25] Specifically, it belongs to the subgenre of culinary memoir, since the memories narrated are interspersed with descriptions of cooking or eating certain types of food.[26]

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22 Clarke moved from Barbados to Canada in 1955, though he also spent some time living and working in the US (especially between 1968–1973, when he was appointed visiting lecturer at different universities before his designation as Cultural Attaché of Barbados in Washington).

23 Austin Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit: Rituals of Slave Food, A Barbadian Memoir* (Toronto: Random House, 1999).

24 Austin Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit: A Culinary Memoir* (New York: The New Press, 1999). All further references are to this edition. The use of a different title in the US is reminiscent of a similar event involving the Afro-Canadian writer Lawrence Hill, whose novel *The Book of Negroes*, as it was originally published in Canada, entered the US publishing market with the title *Someone Knows My Name*. The reason behind that change, as Hill explains, resided in the different resonance that the term "negro" had in Canada (where it was slightly more neutral, if outdated) and in the US (where the longer evolution of the term burdened it with deeply ingrained and violent racialized connotations). See Lawrence Hill, "Why I Am Not Allowed My Book Title," *The Guardian*, May 20, 2008, accessed October 15, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2008/may/20/whyimnotallowedmybooktit. Perhaps the use of the term "slave" in the Canadian title raised similar concerns about the possibility of alienating part of the US readership.

25 G. Thomas Couser, *Memoir: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15.

26 Vivian Nun Halloran, *The Immigrant Kitchen: Food, Ethnicity, and Diaspora* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2016), 12.

Each chapter is named after a specific Barbadian or diasporic food/recipe, which in turn provides the starting point for Clarke's memories to resurface. It is around these memories that Clarke constructs his narrative. Alongside stories of his life, then, the reader can, for example, learn something more about "Pelau" or the origins of "Pepperpot"; discover Clarke's special method of preparing a chicken-based dish in the chapter titled "Chicken Austintatious"; or make use of the recipe for "Breadfruit Cou-Cou with Braising Beef." As Vivian Halloran observes, the recipes presented make no claims to originality or replicability, and as such are not as rigorous as those that can be found in cookbooks.[27] Rather, they are meant to engender forms of identification between the reader and the author through the embodied experience of taste.[28] In other words, although food plays a central role in the text, it is its narrativization that particularly interests Clarke. This plays on what James Beard refers to as "taste memory,"[29] or the ability to recall the exact taste of the ingredients. As a shareable experience between the writer and their audience, taste memory functions in two important ways. On the one hand, it enables a fuller appreciation of the narrative through the phenomenological experience it engenders; that is to say, the narrative is amplified by the bodily experience of the food and related memories through actual touch, smell, and taste. On the other, it allows a sense of relationality to develop in the (figurative or material) act of preparing and sharing a meal, inasmuch as the audience is figuratively invited to dinner in a domestic environment—one that is intimate, or at least informal, making them an intimate confidant/e.

The performative gesture of figuratively inviting readers to dinner assumes even greater relevance in a diasporic context, where food enables the creation of a sort of "imagined community" that unites people relationally across the diaspora.[30] In this sense, Clarke's narrative representations of food memories serve as snapshots of his childhood and pivotal life experiences—and, by extension, of experiences shared by the Caribbean immigrant community in Canada—that both he and his readers can savor as part of a Canadian "imagined commensality."[31] In fact, Clarke's narrative emphasizes the experience of immigration and focuses on home cooking not only in Canada[32] but also in the US. In this way, the experience of cooking and eating food

27 Halloran, *The Immigrant Kitchen*, 12–13.

28 Halloran, *The Immigrant Kitchen*, 12–13.

29 James Beard, *Delights and Prejudices* (Philadelphia, PA: Running Press, 2001), 4.

30 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016 [1983]).

31 Bell and Valentine, *Consuming Geographies*, 169.

32 Halloran, *The Immigrant Kitchen*, 13.

becomes a way of recreating a "taste of home" in the different other homes that he inhabits.

The taste of home that Clarke recreates in his narrative is almost tangible. Its viscerality is granted by the linguistic and affective images he evokes from the very first pages, where, concerning the Barbadian culinary tradition that he inherited from his mother and aunts, he writes:

> Taste is the thing. And touch. Tasting and touching. So, we are talking about cooking food with feeling. Feeling is stretched to include "feeling up" the food: touching the fish; pulling out the entrails of a chicken with your fingers; peeling potatoes and slicing them with a knife while holding them in your hand—not using a gadget that ensures precision of cut and duplication of each slice.[33]

The continuous references to taste and touch underscore the focus of this passage on the sensory realm. What Clarke refers to here is exactly the affective relationality that the experience of cooking and eating engenders, as well as the way this sense of relationality enables the emergence of memories and emotions. It is precisely the materiality of food, the visceral experience of it through taste, touch, and smell, that triggers memories. This is particularly evident in the way Clarke stretches the semantic implications of the word "feeling" to connect the emotional with the material and the corporeal. In other words, his narrative highlights how the materiality of the tastes, textures, and aromas of the food he prepares reveal his emotional or affective attachment to people and places, thus demonstrating "how belonging and not-belonging" to a specific place, culture, or community are indeed "*felt.*"[34]

The touch and smell of food provoke Clarke's memories to resurface and facilitate their articulation, bringing to the fore the close relationship between touch and affect/emotion that structures the whole narrative. In *Touching Feeling,* Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick reflects on the enlightening correspondence between touch and affect/emotion with these words:

> A particular intimacy seems to subsist between textures and emotions. But the same double meaning, tactile plus emotional, is

33 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 3.

34 Emma-Jayne Abbots, *The Agency of Eating: Mediation, Food and the Body* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 63 [italics in the original]. In refusing to separate affect and emotion, I join Sara Ahmed in rejecting a gendered dichotomy that considers emotions to be a result of rendering unconscious knowing cognizant. Many affect theorists subscribe to this division, from Brian Massumi to Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth. However, as Ahmed suggests, it risks reproducing a Cartesian dualism that splits body from mind, hierarchically privileging reason over passion and mind over body in terms of perception. Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 206–208; Brian Massumi, *Politics of Affect* (Cambridge, MA: Polity, 2015); Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

> already there in the single word "touching"; equally it's internal to the word "feeling". I am also encouraged in this association by the dubious epithet "touchy-feely", with its implication that even to talk about affect virtually amounts to cutaneous contact.[35]

To touch is not only an emotional and tactile gesture but also a relational one, since to touch is always to be touched in return, both materially and emotionally.[36] It is precisely this multi-layered perspective—textual, textural, affective—that structures Clarke's memoir. Far from representing a mere abstraction in the form of figurative language, his way of narrating "cooking food with feeling" brings deep affective connections to the surface. These connections not only form part of his own story but are also part of the collective experiential knowledge of the Black diaspora and its culinary tradition. Largely originating from slave food, this tradition represents a "cuisine born from poverty and necessity that transforms into nourishment parts of animals considered undesirable or filthy."[37] This can be seen, for example, in Clarke's description of black pudding and souse, which he defines as "the food of the gods and the slaves of Barbados."[38]

Clarke explains how, through skillful handling, black pudding and souse—the latter a national symbol of Barbados—were transformed from "parts of the pig that nobody else wanted or had the heart to eat" into "the sweetest thing handed down by our ancestors, African slaves, to each and every one of us present-day Wessindians."[39] Throughout the narrative, he uses Bajan or Barbadian Creole—here highlighted by the term "Wessindians," meaning "West Indians" and referring to Caribbean people—and the plural personal pronoun "we." This reflects his attempt to create a sense of relationality that unites modern-day Bajans and their slave ancestors, as well as his efforts to retrieve both personal and collective memories.[40]

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35 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 17.

36 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 14.

37 Xu, *Eating Identities*, 7.

38 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 162.

39 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 162.

40 Vivian Nun Halloran, "Recipes as Memory Work: Slave Food," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 53, no. 2 (2012): 147–161; 156, https://doi.org/10.1080/14735784.2012.682791. The term "Bajan" denotes both the inhabitants of Barbados and the language (i.e., Barbadian Creole, an English-based creole language with African and British influences that is spoken on the Caribbean island of Barbados). See, among others, Frederic G. Cassidy, "Barbadian Creole: Possibility and Probability," *American Speech* 61, no. 3 (1986): 195–205, https://doi.org/10.2307/454663.

Elements of Bajan structure the whole narrative, and its use is most evident in the chapter titled "Privilege." The chapter begins with the memory of a phone call that Clarke received from Errol Walton Barrow, then prime minister of Barbados, for whom he worked as an advisor on internal political affairs. Clarke is alarmed by the formal way the prime minister addresses him—calling him "Mr. Clarke" rather than the usual "Austin" or "Tom"—and Barrow's insistent questions about the nature of privilege. Fearing the seemingly inevitable approach of some kind of serious political trouble, Clarke stutters as he tentatively tries to define privilege as something connected with some sort of advantage or immunity. However, Barrow soon interrupts him, telling him, "I shall show you real 'privilege!'"[41] and demanding Clarke meet him at his house. Clarke writes:

> My knowledge of Barbadian language, with all its diplomatic nuances of ambivalence, *double entendre* and duplicity, prompted me in my frantic moment of arrival to interpret the Prime Minister's words to mean that he was about to strip me of my rank, take away my diplomatic passport and privilege, and show me the real power of a prime minister, the girth of *his* privilege.[42]

Upon his arrival at the prime minister's house, Clarke is presented to a crowd of powerful men, mainly senior ministers, and is soon admonished by the prime minister for not knowing what privilege is. Barrow claims that this ignorance—from a professor working in an Ivy League university, no less—must mean that Clarke has forgotten his cultural roots, perhaps as a result of his life abroad.[43] He then turns to Clarke himself: "'Tom,' he then said, 'Privilege is slave food, man. I just cooked this. We're having privilege for dinner.'"[44] As the threat of being deprived of his own privileges turns into an invitation to dinner, the chapter continues with a description of how the dish known as "privilege"—made from simple, poor ingredients such as okra, white rice, pig tails, salt beef, and lard or cheap lard oil for cooking—originated in the days of slavery. Clarke introduces the reader to the recipe for and origins of privilege using the "native language of the people who invented it: the Bajan language,"[45] and explaining the deep relationship that slaves developed with food.

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41 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 55.

42 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 56 [italics in the original].

43 From 1968 to 1970, Clarke taught literature at Yale, where he co-founded the university's Black Studies program.

44 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 59.

45 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 60.

As a matter of fact, scarcity caused slaves to develop a deep connection with food, even a yearning for it. This scarcity was a result of the economic machinery of the plantation; the practice of keeping slaves in a constant state of hunger and feeding them just enough to keep them productive was encoded in law, such as the infamous *Code noir*.[46] Their proximity to starvation was not only figuratively transposed into folktales, in which hulking starving figures abounded, but was also materially translated into a desire to possess food: to touch and cherish it. Clarke writes:

> One thing about cooking that comes from the slave days is that you have to feel-up everything and put your two hands in everything and on everything that you are cooking. You have to touch-up the food and love-up the food. Rub your two hands over the pig tails and the salt beef, together with the seasoning. If you do not touch-up and love-up the meats and the ingreasements, your food is not going-respond and taste sweet when it done.[47]

Bajan appears here in the syntactical structure (e.g., "not going-respond," "when it done") and through the terms "ingreasements" (for "ingredients") and "sweet" (for "good," as in tasting good). These elements represent Clarke's attempt to create a sense of relationality and belonging across the Caribbean and African diaspora through the use of "nation language": a term coined by Clarke's compatriot and fellow writer Edward Kamau Brathwaite. Brathwaite used this term to indicate the evolution of "the kind of English spoken by the people who were brought to the Caribbean, not the official English now, but the language of slaves and laborers, the servants who were brought in."[48] These days, this language is reflected in the work of writers from the Caribbean and the African diaspora in their use of non-standard English. As a language that voluntarily remains, at least in part, opaque to outsiders, the use of nation language reflects a number of discursive practices of resistance that developed during the colonial period and have survived until today. These practices originally included the encoding of secret messages in spirituals sung on the plantation to plan escapes or revolts, as well as different actions meant to sabotage the mechanics of slavery (e.g., lying to the masters; pretending to misunderstand their orders; stealing from them; and even maiming or killing

46 Valérie Loichot, "The Ethics of Eating Together: The Case of French Postcolonial Literature," in *Food and Literature,* ed. Gitanjali G. Shahani (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 169–185; 173.

47 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 64.

48 Edward Kamau Brathwaite, "From *History of the Voice: The Development of Nation Language in Anglophone Caribbean Poetry*," in *Rotten English: A Literary Anthology*, ed. Dohra Ahmad (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 459–468; 464.

oneself). All of these are examples of ways in which slaves strategically redirected colonial power dynamics through "circumlocutionary styles of speech, story, and action"—tactics that developed "partly [in] an effort to avoid confronting colonizers in unwinnable head-on conflicts."[49]

In a manner similar to other creoles, Bajan's relative simplification allows ambiguity and misdirection to proliferate.[50] Clarke's use of Bajan, then, as well as his account of the irony surrounding the name "privilege"—used for a dish made from the waste of the plantation owner's kitchen—reflect exactly these strategies of indirection, namely the capacity to play with language to create new meanings and produce a counter-discourse. The text abounds with examples of the semantic proliferation of Bajan terms related to food, often with amusing outcomes. The term "pork chop" (a type of food that is held in high regard in Barbados) can, for example, be used to indicate the female anatomy;[51] similarly, "cou-cou," made of finely ground corn cooked in water with okra boiled in it, also refers to a woman who is "good in bed."[52] Clarke's discussion of "dryfood" offers another example of the collective memories associated with certain dishes and the strategies of resistance formed in the slave period. As he writes, collecting the requisite ground provisions involved an "exercise in piracy, a midnight bivouac, a secret mission behind enemy lines" at a time when penetrating the enemy lines "was nothing more than stealing from the Plantation."[53]

Clarke's narrative reflects a deep connection between the Black diaspora's traditional relationship with food and the use of nation language inasmuch as they are both capable of creating a feeling of home, even in the dislocated space of the diaspora. The simplicity of the ingredients and the special tactile and affective connection to food during its preparation, but also the capacity to improvise (a skill linked to the scarcity of food in the days of slavery) and the creolization of cooking practices are in fact all aspects that recall the ability of nation language to b(l)end the English language to incorporate different linguistic and cultural elements, to "feel" in a different way, and to produce new meanings from the available materials.[54] The way of "cooking food with

49 Monique Allewaert, *Ariel's Ecology: Plantations, Personhood, and Colonialism in the American Tropics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 107.

50 Allewaert, *Ariel's Ecology*, 107.

51 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 126.

52 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 104.

53 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 68–69.

54 The term "creolization" was originally used in linguistics to refer to the development of the creole language through the contact (and subsequent mixing and simplification) of different languages. In a broader sociocultural context, the term refers to the development of new cultural formations as a result of the contact between societies and relocated people, especially in the Caribbean. In the

feeling" that Clarke recalls thus appears to be an attempt to approximate the natural, environmental, and bodily experience of nation language. Of this, Brathwaite writes:

> This total expression comes about because people be in the open air, because people live in conditions of poverty ("unhouselled") because they come from a historical experience where they had to rely on their very breath rather than on paraphernalia like books and museums and machines. They had to depend on immanence, the power within themselves, rather than the technology outside themselves.[55]

Nation language relies heavily on orality and sound, and so on the corporeal and performative dimension. The immanent experience of nation language and the way it combines elements of existing languages to create something new are similarly expressed through the textural/emotional relationship between the body and food, and the peculiar history of improvisation, syncretism, and creolization of cooking practices in the Black diaspora. It is precisely this immanent experience that enables memories to resurface and contributes to the development of affective relationalities across the Black diaspora.

European colonialism and the slave trade were not only responsible for the transplantation of people, but also of animals and different types of crops—not to mention the pathogens that contributed to the decimation of indigenous populations.[56] More specifically, the transfer of food from Africa and Europe to the Americas enabled the creation of a culinary "contact zone"[57] within which

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Caribbean in particular, it reflects, as Edward Kamau Brathwaite suggests, "the way the four main culture-carriers of the region: Amerindian, European, African and East Indian: interacted with each other and with their environment to create the new societies of the New World." Edward Kamau Brathwaite, "Timehri," in *The Routledge Reader in Caribbean Literature*, ed. Alison Donnell and Sarah Lawson Welsh (London: Routledge, 1996 [1970]), 274–279; 274. As Robin Cohen explains, creolization "describes a position interposed between two or more cultures, selectively appropriating some elements, rejecting others, and creating new possibilities that transgress and supersede parent cultures, which themselves are increasingly recognised as fluid." Creolization manifests itself in a number of cultural productions, ranging from religion, to music, to, as discussed in this essay, food. Robin Cohen, "Creolization and Cultural Globalization: The Soft Sounds of Fugitive Power," *Globalizations* 4, no. 3 (2007), 369–384; 381, https://doi.org/10.1080/14747730701532492. For a detailed explanation of creolization as a linguistic phenomenon, see John H. McWhorter, *Defining Creole* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

55 Brathwaite, "From *History of the Voice*," 467.

56 As Sidney Mintz emphasizes, one of the results of European colonialism was that "the islands and nearby shores became one of the most ethnically diverse regions of the globe, exposed to a modernization that had rested on genocide, slavery, large-scale acculturation, early and forced industrialization, and then, revolution." "Caribbean," *Sidney Mintz*, accessed July 24, 2021, https://www.sidneymintz.net/caribbean.php/.

57 Spillers, "Introduction," 50.

"French, English, Spanish, African, and native had ample opportunities to begin tasting and experimenting with one another's food."[58] As a consequence, new meanings began to arise around the social aspects of food. The Caribbean islands, in particular, became the testing grounds for European imperialism, modern-day slavery, and innovative capitalist experiments that were meant to supply European metropoles with products such as spices (e.g., ginger, nutmeg, allspice, and mace), beverage bases (e.g., coffee and chocolate), dyes (e.g., indigo, annatto, and fustic), various starches, essential oils, fruits, and, above all, sugar and rum.[59]

As culinary historian Jessica Harris stresses, "slavery was about economics."[60] Since feeding the African slaves the same food that European settlers were eating was not cost-effective, slave traders began to learn about the dietary habits of African people and started to introduce inexpensive crops that would grow in American soil. This practice was so widespread that, she explains, "what happened agriculturally over here [in America] was basically African in a sense, especially in the Caribbean and the tropics."[61] Introduced as a source of food for slaves, inexpensive breadfruit began to spread throughout the Caribbean, as did yam, which continues to bear a strong religious connection to West African traditions,[62] and a number of other foods now common in the English Caribbean and that have retained their African sonorities, such as *fufu*, *cucu*, *callaloo*, or *benne* (Wolof for "sesame").[63] Different culinary traditions met and crossed in the Caribbean, giving rise to a creolized way of cooking characterized by improvisation and adaptation. Together with people, their stories, and the meanings attached to them,[64] this way of cooking migrated to other places, enriching

58 Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 25.

59 Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking-Penguin, 1985), xvi.

60 Jessica Harris, Baltasar Fra-Molinero, and Charles I. Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan: The Creole Fusion of Diaspora Cuisine. An Interview with Jessica B. Harris," *Callaloo* 30, no. 1 (2007): 287–303; 295, https://doi.org/10.1353/cal.2007.0128.

61 Harris, Fra-Molinero, and Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan."

62 Yam is used in religious ceremonies in Ghana and Nigeria, and also across Atlantic religions, such as the Afro-Brazilian candomblé. See Harris, Fra-Molinero, and Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan," 296.

63 See Harris, Fra-Molinero, and Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan," 296.

64 Emma-Jayne Abbots, "Approaches to Food and Migration: Rootedness, Belonging and Exchange," in *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*, ed. Jacob Klein and James Watson (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 115–132; 120. See also Sidney Mintz, "Food and Diaspora," *Food, Culture & Society* 11, no. 4 (2008), 509–523; 518–520, https://doi.org/10.2752/175174408X389157.

itself at every step in the process. Discussing the element of improvisation that characterizes the Afro-diasporic culinary tradition, Harris, like Clarke, draws attention to the fact that this tradition does not rely on cookbooks or exact measurements. Rather, it involves a process of improvisation through trial and error, since, as she says, "we cook with our mouths."[65] In a manner that recalls the characteristics of nation language mentioned above, she continues: "We don't use recipes. It's the orality of it. It's the improvisation of it. We do the same thing with food that we do with music. We make jazz. And that's what we do. It's what we do with all art forms. We make quilts. We take things and improvise."[66]

Syncretism and creolization are especially present in the chapters titled "Pepperpot" and "Pelau." Pepperpot is the name of a stewed meat dish strongly flavored with spices. Originally invented by Amerindians, it was later adopted by Guyanese people. Since, as Clarke writes, "Barbadian immigrants … helped populate most o' Guyana" under the British rule,[67] Barbadians assert that they too contributed to the creation of the dish. Within the text, pepperpot acts as a means by which a collective memory of a country like Guyana—as an emblem of Caribbean syncretism—may resurface. In fact, Guyana endured both Dutch and English colonialism and is now mainly populated by Indo-descendant and Afro-descendant people—groups that are often framed as historical opponents. Clarke writes:

> So, when you talk 'bout pepperpot, a dish of great national-cultural significance … you talking about revolution, Communism, social and racial dislocation, political strife, and the Indians, Africans and British that make up the Guyanese population. Only a nice plate o' Guyanese pepperpot can bring these two factions, these fractious factions, together, make them siddown at the same political table, or the same dining table on a Sunday afternoon to eat lunch. There's no other kind o' cement that could stick these two warring factions o' Indians and Africans together.[68]

Similarly, the chapter "Pelau" recalls food that symbolically represents a creolized Caribbean culture. Pelau, Clarke reminds us, is slave food prepared using the "less desirable" parts of a chicken (e.g., necks, wings, feet, backs), rice, tomatoes, and different spices. With the witticism that characterizes his writing, Clarke—who maintains that Trinidadians are "tricky" with regard to

65 Harris, Fra-Molinero, and Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan," 302.

66 Harris, Fra-Molinero, and Nero, "When Food Tastes Cosmopolitan," 302.

67 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 174.

68 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 183–184.

hot cuisine—writes: "The Trickidadians invent it. We'll give them *that* much. But we in Barbados perfect it!"[69] One of the most important aspects of pelau is precisely the fact that it represents the creolization of multiple cultures:

> Trinidad's population is made of people with many different cultural backgrounds: Africans, Indians, Chinese people from Hong Kong and Jamaica, Pottogee people from Portugal and Guayana, and others thrown in and mix up. "Outta many, one people." And outta all these various tribes comes the dish, pelau.[70]

Using the national motto of Jamaica ("out of many, one people"), Clarke reflects on the creolization that characterizes both the cultures and the culinary traditions of the Caribbean. In doing so, he simultaneously emphasizes the relational sense of cultural belonging that emerges from their collective memory around food and its preparation. This sense of cultural belonging is not enclosed within national borders, but overflows them. Retained in the Caribbean and African diasporas, it enables the creation of a discourse that rethinks the effective meaning of belonging to a place or a culture.

Conclusions: Peppering Canadian identity with a diasporic sensibility

Food is both influenced by and constitutive of multiple identities, which in turn are catalyzed around the intersections of gender, ethnicity, class, age, and transnational attachments.[71] Starting with a consideration of the close relationship between food and identity, I have explored the way Austin Clarke articulates a sense of relational cultural belonging in his affective narration of various memories, all of which are connected to eating or preparing certain types of food. In drawing greater attention to the senses, Clarke's narrative provides a deeper understanding of how food and eating situate an individual in their material and discursive environment.[72] In other words, if affect is an embodied practice in the form of a visceral, vital force "that drive[s] us toward movement, toward thought and extension,"[73] we might think of food discourse along the same lines. In this sense, food discourse has the potential to "increase the political understanding of how people can be moved or mobilized either

69 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 193 [italics in the original].

70 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit,* 192.

71 Abbots, *The Agency of Eating*, 61.

72 Abbots, *The Agency of Eating*, 63.

73 Gregg and Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader*, 1.

as individuals or as groups of social actors."[74] In fact, as Katherine McKittrick suggests, "Social practices create landscapes and contribute to how we organize, build, and imagine our surroundings."[75] Clarke's narrativization of his memories and experiences thus restores the Black presence as a constituent of Canadianness, despite numerous attempts to inscribe the history of the nation as Euro-white.[76] Instances of this reinscription abound within the text: from the multiple times Clarke mentions having to source alternative ingredients to reproduce these recipes from Canada or the US; to when he recalls the flavorless food he used to eat in the 1950s at Trinity College in the University of Toronto until a dish similar to pelau was added to the menu;[77] or even as he describes fighting the extreme cold to visit Toronto's Kensington Market to buy oxtails.[78] These experiences demonstrate that Blackness must not always be thought of in diasporic terms. Rather, Blackness possesses a Canadian dimension, just as Canada possesses a Black history.[79]

This symbiotic relationship is also evident in other works by Clarke, most notably his 2008 novel, *More*, in which Kensington Market is also a haunt of its protagonist, Idora Morrison. Already unconcerned that the way she cooks cornmeal in Toronto for her friend Josephine does not reflect the "traditional way of stirring meal-corn cou-cou" in Barbados,[80] it is Idora's experience of visiting Kensington Market that particularly enables her to situate West Indianness within Toronto. Describing her arrival in the market, Clarke writes:

> And Idora was just as cheerful, and changed her personality, and behaved like a West Indian, pronouncing words with an Island lilt and cadence, and adding, as if in increments, more West Indian words and inflections than before. … "[W]henever I go to the Jewish market—which is what we called it years ago—I become more West

74 Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, "Taking Back Taste," 469.

75 Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), xiv.

76 Rinaldo Walcott mentions countless examples of the erasure of Blackness in Canada, including the renaming of streets and places; the destruction of whole towns and slave cemeteries; and police brutality. See Rinaldo Walcott, *Black Like Who? Writing Black Canada*, 2nd rev. ed. (Toronto: Insomniac Press, 2003), 136; Rinaldo Walcott and Idil Abdillahi, *BlackLife: Post-BLM and the Struggle for Freedom* (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2019), 63–64.

77 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 192.

78 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 198.

79 Paul Barrett, *Blackening Canada: Diaspora, Race, Multiculturalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 16.

80 Austin Clarke, *More* (New York: Amistad, 2010 [2008]), 206.

> Indian than when I left my apartment. You know what I mean? And I stop behaving like a Canadian…"
>
> "Like going home, you mean? Like going back to your culture?" Josephine said.
>
> "Nothing so serious, girl. Is just the *smells* and the things. And the *taste* of things that I intend buying," Idora said. "I know these ingreasements in *this* Kensington Market …"[81]

Through the smell and her anticipation of the taste of the food she intends to buy, Idora is able to affectively connect with her life back in Barbados, yet she redefines this experience as a Canadian one. As a matter of fact, when her friend Josephine asks her if visiting the market makes her feel like "going home," Idora responds that she knows those "ingreasements" (meaning the taste and smell of the ingredients from the Caribbean, an affective surplus that can only be rendered via the use of nation language) in "this" Kensington Market, in Canada: not somewhere else. Becoming "more" West Indian and less Canadian (i.e., Euro-white Canadian) does not reflect a refusal of Canadianness. Rather, it serves as a way of redefining what it means to be Canadian from a position of absence and elsewhere (i.e., the experience of being Black or Caribbean in Canada) that nevertheless firmly exists *within* the nation and that enables, as McKittrick emphasizes, a critique of the nation by "expos[ing] its social, political, racial, and sexual limitations."[82]

It is exactly this awareness of living simultaneously "within and without the nation"[83] that enables Clarke to express a new way of conceiving cultural identity, bringing a diasporic or transnational sensibility to Canadian cultural belonging. From his place in the Canadian diaspora, he affirms: "I consider myself as much a Southerner as a Barbadian,"[84] thus bringing together his sense of multiple belonging to the Caribbean, to Canada, and to the US. Clarke's narrative draws on the experiential knowledge of the Black diaspora, a knowledge that remains rooted in the flesh and that unfailingly recognizes the imbrication of the discursive and the symbolic with the material and the lived.[85] As Barbara Christian emphasizes, the Black cultural tradition does not separate art from life, nor ethics from politics, and it opposes the distinction between theory and praxis:

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81 Clarke, *More*, 196 [italics mine].

82 McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, 103.

83 Barrett, *Blackening Canada*, 12.

84 Clarke, *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit*, 230.

85 Darieck Scott, *Extravagant Abjections: Blackness, Power, and Sexuality in the African American Literary Imagination* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 3.

> People of color have always theorized—but in forms quite different from the western form of abstract logic. I am inclined to say that our theorizing (and I intentionally use the verb rather than the noun) is often in narrative forms, in the stories we create, in riddles, and proverbs, in the play with language, since dynamic rather than fixed ideas seem more to our liking.[86]

Through the food stories that he passes on to his readers and by playing with language, often enhanced by the use of Bajan, Clarke theorizes the possibility of a diasporic cultural belonging. This belonging is not rooted in mythical tales of origin or purity, but rather celebrates the potential of inhabiting multiple homes at the same time, thus unfixing Canadian identity from a Eurocentric perspective. If Canadian heritage food and Canadian culinary history often fail to recognize or mention the influence of Black diasporic culinary practices upon Canadian food discourse,[87] thus making Blackness once again an "absented presence" in Canada,[88] Clarke demonstrates that this tradition is indeed a constitutive component of the Canadian identity. Through his attention to the senses—the texture, taste, and smell of food—and the memories they awaken in our body, Clarke offers us an insight into the fluidity of identity. Looking in, we see how resistance and change constantly redraw and shift cultural boundaries, opening up space for a diasporic or transnational approach to Canadian cultural belonging.

86 Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory," in *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Angelyn Mitchell (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 348–359; 349.

87 See for example Dorothy Duncan, *Nothing More Comforting: Canada's Heritage Food* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2003); Dorothy Duncan, *Canadians at Table: Food, Fellowship, and Folklore. A Culinary History of Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2011).

88 Walcott, *Black Like Who?*, 27.