

TWO

JAMAICA KINCAID, CARIBBEAN SPACE AND LIVING DISLOCATIONS

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Abstract

This essay brings together two recent intellectual concerns: The first the core of my *Caribbean Spaces* (2013) which defined Caribbean Space as encompassing island spaces, the circum-Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora. The second, "Dislocations and Diaspora" which puts the statistical reality of increasing millions of displaced people in conversation with the earlier critical theories of displacement. I argue that these are also areas of intense engagement in the writings of Jamaica Kincaid.

On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object. (Fanon)

My relationship to the Caribbean was one of dislocation, of displacement, literally or figuratively (Stuart Hall)

I am in a state of constant discomfort and I like this state so much I would like to share it.
(Jamaica Kincaid)

For this essay¹ I thought it would be useful to bring together two of my most recent intellectual concerns: one the core of my most recent book *Caribbean Spaces* (2013) and the second a recent paper I did on “Dislocations and Diaspora” for a conference on The Politics of Location in Manchester, UK. In the former, I was deliberately working with an expanded definition of Caribbean Space as encompassing island spaces, the circum-Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora within a range of theories on space and place. The latter was a study which brought together actual human displacement as revealed in UNHCR *Global Trends*,² in order to allow the statistical reality of increasing millions of displaced people to be read against or with the earlier critical theories of displacement. I see both of these (Caribbean Spaces and human displacement) coming together in the writings of Jamaica Kincaid.

Looking back over the body of work contributed by this writer, I see four or five overlapping tendencies operating:

- The family/autobiographical narrative
- The critique of European colonialism – its antecedent, coloniality, and continuing permutations arising with Western modernity
- The reading of Caribbean “small space” political, cultural and social practices and systems including the critique of tourism
- The impetus for and implications of the conditions of migration
- The Creole Garden/Private Garden vs Colonial botanic experiments.

I should say as well, prefatorily, that returning to Kincaid’s work, I am amazed, but not surprised, by the amassing of a vast bibliography on all aspects of this writer, way beyond the first tentative essays included in *Out of the Kumbia. Caribbean Women and Literature* (1990). There, the single essay by then-grad student Giovanna Covi, “Jamaica Kincaid and the Resistance to Canons,” actually foreshadowed a body of writing on what was seen then as perhaps the most experimental writer in a new generation of writers. My own essay for that collection, “Writing Home: Gender and Heritage in the Works of Afro-Caribbean/American Women Writers” actually

addressed the issue of psychological dislocation in *Annie John* in particular as the girl seeks to identify herself first in relation to and then subsequently in opposition to her mother (p. 65).

A stark increase in literary attention to Caribbean women writers was the intent of conferences of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars, designed precisely for the purpose of providing a body of critical writing on the growing number of Caribbean women writers. Recent literary companions to Kincaid's work such as Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Jamaica Kincaid: A Critical Companion* (1999) and more recently Mary Ellen Snodgrass's *Jamaica Kincaid. A Literary Companion* (2008) provide good overviews of the scholarship on and scholarly themes which have engaged critics of this writer. Single-authored texts and numerous essays and, of course, individual conferences on her work indicate the extent to which Jamaica Kincaid has achieved the level of attention that most writers desire.

In the first epigraph to this paper, taken from *Black Skin White Masks*, Franz Fanon talked about the dislocation he felt as a black man in relation to the way he was/is racially interpellated by the white world and its racial constructions:

On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object. (p. 112)

In "The Lived Experience of Blackness," Fanon works through the various processes of objectification, still ending though with the famous waiting for himself as the discussion ends: "I wait for me. In the interval, just before the film starts, I wait for me" (p. 140). Perhaps he should have read Hurston's "How it Feels to be Colored Me" and that classic line: "No I do not weep at the world. I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife" (p. 153). It would take Fanon several years to find himself through that inherited dislocation in what he defines as "the corporeal schema," ending with his determination to question everything. And it would come through a hard critique of colonialism and his own commitment to activism as a response.

I want to suggest at the outset that Jamaica Kincaid's entire self-articulation, represented well by the third epigraph, is more along the lines of the fighting back of a Zora Neale Hurston. Hers is an assertive response, as she experiences dislocation within family; within her community; in relation to Caribbean colonial manners; in her small place Caribbean landscape; but also subsequently as a black woman from the Caribbean living in a world which already constructs one in a particular set of narratives; and above all as a creative artist. Her response is always to return the gaze, re-narrativize the experience. She is not waiting for herself to appear as early Fanon does. She unfolds the self through multiple avenues. I want to suggest also that she embraces this

dislocation in much the way that the Hall epigraph suggests but takes it a step further. So, let us examine what some of these dislocations and the ability to “take space,” which is a hallmark of Caribbean cultural self-presentation, mean in three movements:

I. Kincaid’s Rejection of Spatial Containment

At the end of the magical *At the Bottom of the River*, there is a wonderfully evocative construction of a world that our author sees/imagines, in which nature is alive with beauty and transformation. But there is also a self in which the conjunction of land and sea is transformational: “I looked at this world as it revealed itself to me—how new, how new—and I longed to go there” (78). Clearly a re-fashioning of a limited world, to an imagined world with a parallel quest for an elsewhere, fundamental to diaspora, fundamental to the creative artist. This, it seems to me, is what typifies the entire journey of Jamaica Kincaid and captures the dissatisfaction she feels with enforced containment to smallness and the inability for many to see or imagine beyond specific localities. Hers, then, is a rejection of spatial confinement and a desire for a consistently expanding space—an argument I also make in *Caribbean Spaces*.

In many ways, my work as a scholar of Caribbean origin who migrated to the United States for educational advancement occupies the same temporal and geographical spaces as does Kincaid’s. As such, her process is fully intelligible to me, as it is also the experience of friends and family. Coming of age as colonialism ended and new nations began to work out themselves in the Caribbean without resources, migration loomed consistently as the pathway to a more advanced life experience. We know from recent works like Hilary Beckles’s *Britain’s Black Debt. Reparations for Slavery and Native Genocide* (2013) and the discourse of Caribbean reparations this story: three-to-four hundred years of slavery and extractive colonialism left the Caribbean with little in terms of institutions, infrastructure and resources, except with the open possibility of migration to Europe for some, to North America for others, as one way of accessing education or getting back some of those economic resources. But we also know that those migrations, in either context, did not necessarily produce uniformly the promises of “a better life” or the full belonging that was often assumed on departure. This takes us back to the Fanon example above or Selvon’s *Lonely Londoners* or Donald Hinds’s *Journey to an Illusion* narratives for the UK. The US then was more hopeful than it is today for the activism and promise of challenges to racial subordination by Civil Rights/Black Power movements, ushered in new possibilities, ironically being curtailed under a president who in his campaign and election in 2016, created explicit white nationalist alliances. For many of us now this is another realization of that difficult location of migration—being displaced from home but also displaced in this new location. This reminds us that dislocation was/is, we can conclude, always a parallel experience of that diaspora creation.

Examining the trajectory of diaspora and migration discourses in order to situate our discussion we can say briefly that while the discourse of diaspora has become a popular academic consideration in the late 20th century and into the 21st century, the histories of transatlantic slavery and forced migration and the consequent diaspora creation have always remained significantly central to the definitions of black subjectivity in the Americas. Kincaid explores these well in *Annie John* (1983), particularly in the section on “Columbus in Chains” in which Annie is punished for offering a critique of false discovery, European domination and colonialism. In other portions of that text she provides the girl’s angle on colonial schooling geared to constructing compliant natives, and clearly she would not be one of those. By the time we get to *A Small Place* (1988), we are fully into a heightened critique of the entire process of the collaborative exploitation of the Caribbean by a variety of world powers.

I develop some of these issues more fully in previous work but there are two relevant essays I want to identify, largely because they were co-written with a political economist and therefore are delicately balanced between literary and cultural analysis and actual socio-economic data: “Imperial Geographies and Caribbean Nationalism: At the Border between a Dying Colonialism and US Hegemony” (*New Centennial Review*, 2003) and “Migrations, Diasporas, Nations: The Re-making of Caribbean Identities” (2009).³ The argument in the latter was that the Caribbean navigates between the longer historical diaspora and the more recent Caribbean Diaspora created in the pre- and post-independence migrations; and in the former, that we are caught between contending colonial/imperial impulses.

In this context, Caribbean political and intellectual identity have moved consistently towards a critique of that difficult legacy of slavery and its related structural inequalities and the ongoing oppression created by extractive colonialism and its aftermath, which created intra-migrations and also precipitated new migrations and diasporas.

It is important to say here that in my *Migrations of the Subject* published in 1994, I signaled the beginning of a certain set of inquiries on migration. Still, it was a theoretical contribution more directly to discourses of subjectivity—arguing that the subject has migratory capability depending on a range of factors—age, race, place, geography, national identity, language, sexuality and so on. In many ways, Jamaica Kincaid’s work, which up until then included *At the Bottom of the River* (1978), *Annie John* (1985), *Lucy* (1990), and *A Small Place* (1988), would be highly illustrative of my arguments. Generally, I have found her work as always providing amazing confirmations and additional revelations that were missing in the largely male corpus of literature of the writers developed in London, still writing back to empire. For example, she is one of the first to offer an intense detailing of North American migration. And when she does do England, as

in “On Seeing England for the First Time,” it is a scathing critique of all that hyped and perfect seat of empire. Much as it did for the character Antoinette/Bertha in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*, England fell short and was therefore way less than what was created in the colonial imagination. Some called this essay bitter or angry. But Audre Lorde and Kincaid have great responses to that charge, insisting always on the creative use of anger.

Still, Jamaica Kincaid never idealizes or accepts idyllic Caribbean narratives uncritically. In fact, as *A Small Place* shows, she rejects almost everything that had negatively shaped this Caribbean home place and its people: colonization, corrupt neo-colonial politics, neglect, pettiness. But it is the rejection and hard critique of a critical insider/outsider, who sees with an eye for detail the many idiosyncrasies, anomalies and perversions wrought on a Caribbean slave society and their legacy on today’s people.

Significantly as well, we have perhaps for the first time, the exploration of sexuality in a context in which Caribbean literary masculinity had prevailed for so long. Thus “the relationships between girls as they encounter Caribbean worlds” (Boyce Davies, 1994, p. 125)— the Red Girl, of course, and wildness and perhaps the first statement of another possibility of love: “Now I am a girl, but one day I will marry a woman—a red skin woman with Black bramble bush hair and brown eyes, who wears skirts that are so big I can easily bury my head in them” (Kincaid, 1992, p. 11). Sensuous writing in every way and, also critical of all those colonial manners and the ways that the mothers sought to enforce these is captured marvelously and succinctly in “Girl.”

Once migrated, one sees in the representative *Lucy* (1990) of 1960s and 1970s generation, a critical thinker who can write almost anthropologically about the white family with which she works as the writer herself moves from au pair girl to writer and becomes in some ways representative of the generation of women who would strike out from the Caribbean, as her character does at the end of the novel *Annie John* (1985), determined to make a life abroad for themselves. And it is urban and suburban New York, sexuality and family life that concern her, tracing the pathway of the Caribbean migrating subject.

But here it is important to jump ahead to *Talk Stories* (2001), because, although published together as a group, they represent the microscopic detail that became her hallmark and which both provided the minutiae of American living and set the tone for subsequent writing. Here we see a kind of reverse anthropology with which she studies the idiosyncrasies of North American domestic and public life between 1974 and 1983. It is significant that the first talk story is on the Brooklyn carnival called Labor Day and which she titles “West Indian Weekend.” The exportation of Caribbean carnivals we know has become one of the prime signifiers in the claiming of expanding Caribbean Spaces, and Jamaica Kincaid documents this in the *New Yorker*. Along the

way in detailing this New York it is almost like having a lab at her disposal, as she encounters a range of popular culture figures and we witness that meticulous cataloging of American follies, waste and excess.

Interspersed throughout is her own self-writing, and identification of important elements in the Caribbean cultural history and manners, the remnants of plantation culture: “The Ground” (Kincaid, 2001, p. 88), for example, is the same “Provision Grounds” that Sylvia Wynter describes as fundamental to the creation of African belonging in the Caribbean landscape. And here the leap:

I grew up on an island in the West Indies which has an area of a hundred and eight square miles. On the island were many sugarcane fields and a sugar making factory and a factory where both white and dark rum were made. There were cotton fields, but there were not as many cotton fields as there were sugar cane fields. There were arrowroot fields and tobacco fields, too, but there were not as many arrowroot fields as there were cotton fields. Some of the fifty-four thousand people who lived on the island grew bananas and mangoes and eddoes and dasheen and christophine and sweet potatoes and white potatoes and plums and guavas and grapes and papaws and limes and lemons and oranges and grapefruits, and every Saturday they would bring them to the market which was on Market street and they would sell the things they had grown. ... I now live in Manhattan. The only thing it has in common with the island where I grew up is a geographical definition (Kincaid, 2001, pp. 87-91).

After that, she proceeds to talk (definitely shortsightedly) about the difference in sleeping hours and the absence of the necessity for most people on an urban island to awake early to make a living from selling produce under difficult farm to market conditions. It is shortsighted because there are many laborers who work as early as do Caribbean farmers, in order to prepare the city streets, and public transportation for the masses who will traverse them.

Stuart Hall, as we have indicated, concluded that “dislocation and disjuncture” are fundamental to being located in diaspora. But that same dislocation and disjuncture also marked his experience of being at home...in other words both embody versions of dislocation, particularly for the non-conforming individual. This is perhaps what Kincaid articulates best. For both Fanon and Hall describe a double or triple dislocation but also, particularly for Hall, an assumption of dislocation perhaps which is fundamental to the modern human condition. CLR James had already argued that Caribbean subjects are among the earliest to experience this modern condition of displacement and dislocation. Dislocation is also a hallmark of the modern condition.

II. Living Dislocation and Diaspora

My more recent project defined *Caribbean Spaces* beyond the limitations to islands, seas and ocean scapes, and it evoked Guyanese writer Wilson Harris's *The Womb of Space*, in which he described concentric horizons to talk about space in more advanced ways. I was also fascinated by the idea of circulations of ideas, people, cultural forms, politics rather than simply diasporic movement from one location to the other, but a series of circulations of people in a kind of desire for a global relation or world space. In other words, the vision was not for me simply Atlanticist but a Caribbean Space that is recognizable beyond the Atlantic, a kind of larger unbounded mobile Caribbean trans-nation.

The assumption of a series of homes, then, is what is suggested for the Caribbean diasporic activist, whether it is a Fanon or a Claudia Jones; but also for everyday people. Caribbean identity, according to Dionne Brand, is one which has to be ready for continuous self-invention. "After the Door of No Return, a map was only a set of impossibilities, a set of changing locations ... A map, then, is only a life of conversations about a forgotten list of irretrievable selves," Dionne Brand says repeatedly in her work by that name (p. 224).

The logic of circulations, I argued in *Caribbean Spaces*, captures best the spatially-expanding movements of people, ideas, politics, cultural forms that come from the Caribbean and circulate internationally through a series of global migratory processes which continued throughout the 20th century to create new identities and parallel histories. These identities—sexual, religious, ethnic, class, gender—operate tectonically. Still, as I have argued before, beyond the theoretics of post-colonialism, we need new vocabularies that describe the various encounters between the different 'worlds' ushered in by a variety of forces.

So, what are some of these issues of location and dis/location particularly for the modern subject? In "Other Tongues. Gender, Language, Sexuality and the Politics of Location," the final chapter of *Migrations of the Subject*, I argued the following, which still actually works now:

The politics of location brings forward a whole host of identifications and associations around concepts of place, placement; location, dis-location; memberment, dis-memberment; citizenship, alienness; boundaries, barriers, transportations; peripheries, cores and centers. It is about positionality in geographic, historical, social, economic, educational terms. It is about positionality in society based on class, gender, sexuality, age, income. It is also about relationality and the ways in which one is able to access, mediate or reposition oneself, or pass into other spaces given certain other circumstances. (p. 153)

Diaspora, then, carries with it always a sense of “dislocation” or removal from any sense of fixity in a given location. And for those living in the now defined Caribbean Diaspora, this **double dislocation** is captured in the historical but ongoing movement of peoples, first from originary geographic and cultural fields (Africa, India etc.) and then the subsequent economically-generated movements to the centers of colonial-administrative policy in the British sense (Hall) but later to the North American context. The distant homeland (say, Africa or India or China) recedes further into the realm of ancestral memory and the imaginary; the more recent homeland, also a site of dislocation, is then layered onto that meaning.

Historians can demonstrate that similar movements have taken place in the past, with time and place providing additional markers of migration. Thus, Hall was able to use his location in Britain, himself doubly or triply diasporized, to comment on this developing phenomenon: “My relationship to the Caribbean was one of dislocation, of displacement, literally or figuratively,” he says (p. 272). In other words, a colonized subject is already dislocated, already spoken for in someone else’s terms, subjected then and therefore always, then migrating to the “centre” (physically or emotionally) of that same colonizing world which had already displaced you to be further displaced or dislocated both from home and from the people and conditions around one (p. 272). Here is Hall’s prophetic conclusion to what is perhaps his final major essay:

The disruption of people from their settled places, from their homes, from their familiar surroundings, their roots in the land and landscape, from their traditional ways of life, from their religions, from their familial connections – the uprooting has become the history of modern “global” society ... The fact of the homeless, of people who only survive by buying a ticket from some person who is trading in bodies, hanging out on the bottom of a train, crossing boundaries at the depth of night, running the gauntlet of surveillance cameras and border controls and disappearing into the depths of the cities. The economic migrants and the asylum seekers, the illegal immigrants, the ‘*sans papiers*’ — the ones without proper papers. The ones driven into the camps across the borders by famine, civil war, environmental devastation or pandemic ... We were the forerunners (p. 287)

So, in this view, there is always a dark side or the “underbelly of the contemporary globalization system.” But note also that, for Hall, it is out of that dislocation and displacement that something new emerges. For the Caribbean intellectual, the geography of the fragmented island or archipelagoes and their relation to the sea has been a conduit and repository for histories and becomes a consistent trope for Caribbean writers: Benítez-Rojo’s historico-economic sea; Walcott’s socio-historical sea; Brathwaite’s “tidelectics”; Glissant’s archipelagization.

Interesting readings such as Edwidge Danticat's "Children of the Sea" which actually takes one into the boat itself capturing in two voices the separation, pain, loss and impending doom for those who take on the sea as precarious escape—the boat about to be engulfed by the sea itself.

III. Landed: The Creole Garden/Private Garden and the Colonial Botanist

But let us try to land then, and finally, landed, let us come back to and simultaneously go forward to, the Private Garden. Even as she creates a garden and writes *My Garden (Book)*: (1999) in Vermont, the author realizes that her garden "resembled a map of the Caribbean and the sea that surrounds it ... I only marveled at the way the garden is for me an exercise in memory, a way of remembering my own immediate past, a way of getting to a past that is my own (the Caribbean Sea) and the past, as it is indirectly related to me (the conquest of Mexico and its surroundings)" (p. 8). And even here, as she details and critiques some aspects of American culture, the past intervenes, as she compares her present house with the house she grew up in and the assorted punishments associated with that era of Caribbean parenting (p. 44). Kincaid admits that, much as she detested the work and meanings of her mother's Creole Garden, it nevertheless has influenced her own "private garden." In fact, the entire gardening experience, we learn, is an attempt to bring riotous Caribbean color into the otherwise winter white and seemingly dead landscapes of Vermont:

It is winter and so my garden does not exist; in its place are these mounds of white, the raised beds covered with snow, like a graveyard, but not a graveyard in New England, with its orderliness and neatness and sense of that's-that, but more like a graveyard in a place where I am from, a warm place where the grave is topped off with a huge mound of loose earth, because death is just another way of being ... The snow covers the ground in the garden with the determination of death, an unyielding grip, and the whiteness of it is an eraser, so that I am almost in a state of disbelief. (p. 69)

She contrasts this winter garden with color in the Caribbean and her garden in its bloom, a certain kind of creative disorder and definitely color. In an interesting essay titled "Mobility and Anxious Cosmopolitanism: Jamaica Kincaid's *Among Flowers*," scholar Pramod Nayar describes Kincaid's travel in search of seeds with a botanist in the Himalayas as exhibiting a dual neocolonial travel paradigm: "simultaneously abrogating the cultural authority to control and name which the colonial traveler embodied as well as the 'individualized leisure travel of the privileged Black First worlder here.' It is significant that her travel is under the auspices of National Geographic but it is

also an experience of displacement ... a kind of disorientation in space" (7). He cites another essay by Zoran Pecic, "Floral Diaspora in Jamaica Kincaid's Travel Writing" which also concludes that "The ambiguity of being aware of her own colonial legacy of exploitation and gardening and her sense of dislocation and alienation ... locates her in an uncanny space between the familiar role of gardener and the unfamiliar position of world traveler" (p. 11).

My sense is that this dislocation is precisely familiar space for Kincaid, a kind of ultimate dislocation which the essay gets at:

Her anxiety resides in the forced detachments he practices and exhibits from all her legacies: as Caribbean (with its fraught history of plantation and slavery), as a diasporic migrant in the USA with its history of racism, as a First Worlder embarked on a journey to a Third World region where the two regions are connected in an iniquitous relationship. (Nayar, p. 11)

A similar essay is Jeanne Ewert's "Great Plant Appropriators and Acquisitive Gardeners: Jamaica Kincaid's Ambivalent *Garden (Book)*:" in *Jamaica Kincaid and Caribbean Double Crossings* (2006), which comments on Jamaica's travels to China and to various other locations in Europe precisely to get seeds of exotic plants for her garden suggesting that Kincaid had "joined the class of botanical explorers and conquerors" (p. 117). She concludes after all that Kincaid is in some ways re-enacting transplantation, "the unhomeliness of the de-territorialized subject" (p. 123).

For her part, Jamaica Kincaid is well able to make these distinctions in terms of her own migrating subject position and the possibility of more than one identity or subject position in operation. In an interview with Marina Warner "Among Flowers: Jamaica Kincaid in Conversation," published in *Wasafiri* 21:2 (2006) she says:

... the book I wrote about tourism was talking about the continued exploitation of a group of people, but in this other form. Now was I exploiting, was I an eco-tourist, a new concept? Usually the tourist seems to go somewhere and have a good time, generally speaking. I don't think there is much of a good time to be had by a botanist-tourist in this part of the world. (p. 56)

In a journey which carried a level of pain, including having to remove leeches, difficult bridges and unending hiking, we have again the series of overlapping locations I want to suggest between the kind of Creole Garden/Private Garden that her mother cultivated, the Provision Grounds that African people in the Americas cultivated during and following plantation slavery to

make a living and the ability of a Caribbean girl to finally have enough resources to acquire beautiful flowers, to visit another location in search of beauty or whatever exists there, to search for the horizon as Hurston also did. All of these desires had been launched by that imagined world we began with from *At the Bottom of the River*.

Sylvia Wynter has interesting discussions about Provision Grounds, planting and cultivating not for profit but for putting one's markers in an environment as providing the basis for the indigenization of Africans into the Caribbean landscape, which I include in an essay "From Masquerade to Maskarade. Caribbean Cultural Resistance and the Re-humanizing Project" (2015). We can also read Jamaica's Vermont garden as her own expansion of Caribbean Space; her own creation of a grounded space, if you will, and with the same impetus as West Indian Weekend—to create a certain chaos and insertion of color in otherwise bleak and uninviting North American and European landscapes.

The power imbalance between the colonial botanist with the imperative to rename, possess and control everything and a Jamaica Kincaid trying to understand the world has no symmetry. The power, of course, was evident/is still evident in the same system that she has critiqued in the ways that the colonials labeled everything, moved things, people and plants around the world, created different landscapes for profit and control.

An interesting contrast is that today at "Farm to Plate" conferences—one held recently in the heart of the Finger Lakes (May 11-13, 2017), others in other locations in the U.S.—people describe the need for food security, encourage gardening for sustenance and survival and beauty in urban locations and comment on the absence of the black gardener even in more progressively liberal communities.

In "Imperial Geographies and Caribbean Nationalism" we had argued that anti-colonial agency has for a long time remained the exclusive property of the black male who remained culturally bound to Europe in time and place. For Kincaid, it is always the tension between the drives of encapsulation into small places and drives of transcendence; safety and willful travel pushing the boundaries of the possible, that permeate her version of Caribbean discourse. For Kincaid, then, dislocation and its discomforts at every level possible remain always:

I am in a state of constant discomfort and I like this state so much I would like to share it.
(Kincaid, 1999, p. 229)

But also

How bound up I am to all that is human endeavor, to all that is past and to all that shall be, to all that shall be lost and leave no trace. (Kincaid, 1992, p. 82)

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Endnotes

¹ This was the keynote address to the conference, "The Art and Craft of Grafting in Jamaica Kincaid's Works" held in Paris in May 19-20, 2017.

² *Global Trends* is the annual documentation of human migration and displacement published by UNHCR and available on their website.

³ Both written with Monica Jardine from two angles, from the literary/cultural and the socio-economic.