

## Caribbean National Identity & Politics

### The Contribution of the Concepts of “Political Religion” and “Generic Fascism” to an Interpretation of Pedro Albizu Campos’ Nationalism in 1930s Puerto Rico

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The subject of my research is an interpretation of the ideological foundations of the Partido Nacionalista de Puerto Rico under the leadership of Pedro Albizu Campos during the early 1930s. To this end, I applied two concepts that fascist studies scholars elaborated during the 1990s in order to analyze doctrines and movements which emerged in different times and places, but showed important similarities. The first notion is that of “political religion”, which Emilio Gentile successfully applied to Italian fascism: this theory refers to the process of sacralization that politics undertook during the modern era, because of the progressive pretension by political actors to offering and imposing the sole authentic worldviews and values. A second model is that of “generic fascism”, as it was defined by the British historian Roger Griffin: fascism could be conceived as a “palingenetic populist ultra-nationalism”, i.e. an ideology that proposes a spiritual and material “rebirth” of the humankind under the leadership of a charismatic leader and within the borders of a specific national community. Those two interpretational tools permitted to formulate a new reading of Albizu’s thought through the analysis of his most relevant speeches and articles, and to locate his philosophy of history and conception of the human being, the society and the state in the broader Latin American and international political and intellectual context of the time.

### ‘You will have only yourselves to blame’: On the Collision of Risk, Fear, Race, Belonging and Class in Contemporary Trinidadian Politics

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In this paper, I examine the ways in which the United National Congress (UNC) party of Trinidad and Tobago utilized explicit and implicit tropes of fear, class and race in an attempt to shore up support for their bid in the 2007 national election. Drawing from my own field research, I argue that the party’s discourse attempted to capitalize on the ways in which Trinidadians currently place an emphasis on mitigating risk in order avoid becoming victim to crime. In Trinidad, the political spectrum has rarely been separated by left and right, but Afro vs. Indo-Trinidadian. During this election, long standing political cleavages in Trinidad and Tobago were upset by the introduction of a strong third political party. The threat of this third party prompted the UNC to incorporate class as a second cleavage within a particular ethnic group in order to retain support and link the notion in a novel way with tropes of risk and blame. In this past election the Indo-Trinidadian supported UNC-A party reinforced their position vis a vis this third party by highlighting in media and their election campaign, class issues and tying them to notions of race and safety from threat of

violence and inclusion as authentic Indo-Trinidadians. I consider the effectiveness of these tropes and also detail the way they were understood and perceived by people who were the seeming target of the discourse.

Adventures in Broadcasting the Bahamian National Identity 1970 – 1974

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The Bahamas is an archipelago of islands that stretch from Florida to Haiti. As a colony of Britain, the country was ruled by a white minority until the black-led Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) won the general election in 1967. With majority rule the population, which was 80% Black, was in an exuberant mood. Despite their newfound pride though, blacks were still working to serve whites because of the country's economic dependence on the tourism industry. Reports of Tourist harassment were soon on the increase and the new government worried that low levels of Tourist satisfaction would have dire economic circumstances.

Enter "The Ferguson's of Farm Road." This radio soap-opera was designed to educate Bahamians on the importance of Tourism to the economy and to thus encourage them to improve their attitudes. The show started in 1970 and became immensely popular. The show exists on the cross-roads between Tourism, economic policy, national identity and cultural production, and as such is worthy of study. The show sheds light on the tensions existing in Bahamian society in this crucial phase of its history. Tensions between the government and the governed, between blacks and whites, and between the tourist and the native, issues of gender, race and the potential for Black leadership are all there in the surviving episode scripts. The show also raises questions about the media as a form of social control.