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Masculinity, a Hallucination: An Exploration of Michael Kaufman's 'Triad of Violence' in selected works of Pro-feminist Caribbean Literature.

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Introduction

1.1 Background.

Sex and gender have both occupied pivotal positions in the distribution of power across societies globally. While sex is determined by phenotypic qualities, gender is mostly a social construct: “gender is a race in which some of the runners compete only for the bronze medal,” as one’s place is often predetermined by one’s” sex (Harari 2011, 171). As such concepts of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ are defined solely by that which others perceive the roles of men and women to be, thus these oppressive and limiting concepts can be further considered figments of society's imagination which inhibit the freedom of expression and individuality. These hallucinations of masculinity and femininity are only treated as valid due to wider societies’ acceptance of these gender roles, as Kufman states, “masculinity (like femininity) is a collective hallucination. It’s as if we’ve all taken the same drug and walk around imagining that masculinity is real. We might assume it is biological, we might think it comes from being male or female, but in truth, each culture makes it up” (2012). Bourdieu has pointed out that: “being included as man or woman in the object that we are trying to comprehend, we have embodied the historical structure of perception and appreciation. When we tried to understand masculine domination, we are therefore likely to resort to modes of thought that are the products of domination.” (Bourdieu 1998, 7). Male dominance can even be traced back as early as the Agricultural Revolution possibly because of men’s physical strength being an indicating factor of power and authority which progressed along generations (Bourdieu 1998, 172). In the Caribbean and South America, “the division between male and female tasks was clear and determined during childhood. Boys were raised to be hunters and warriors. Girls were raised for other [types of work]. It all started symbolically. The pride of a father was to mount by his son’s hammock a miniature bow and arrow

to show he would grow up to be a warrior, a hunter. By the daughter's hammock they would put up a tiny thong to show she would grow up to weave and work at home" (Ribeiro 1995); this illustrates that the debut of gender-based socialization and male favoritism in the Caribbean region was not introduced by European colonizers but has been part of the membrane of Caribbean societies for centuries .

The 'gendering socialization' of Caribbean people can be considered an institution that is both omnipresent and omnipotent as its norms have penetrated and influenced almost all other social institutions. This 'gendering' has created not only systems of oppression such as patriarchy which confines individuals to set roles, positions and behaviors but created stereotypes which can either consciously or subconsciously influence social interactions. As powerful as they are, the concepts of *masculinity* and *femininity* are solely rooted upon the uninhibited repetition of behaviors, qualities and roles performed by members of a society. Similarly, it would be irresponsible not to acknowledge the Caribbean's history of violence, which is a grim element, which permeates across the economic, cultural, and social structures of Caribbean region. Kaufman points out the fact that "violence has long been institutionalized as an accepted means of solving conflict" (Kaufman 1987, 5). As a result of shared processes such as colonization, genocide, enslavement and indentureship, the effects of violence outrival the geographic and linguistic divisions of the Caribbean. Violence in contemporary Caribbean society is, often, considered a phenomenon linked to socio-economic difficulties. While this notion is just, the correlation between violence and gender often always emanates as a display of dominance.

"[Pro-]feminism is a social movement that seeks equality of opportunity for all regardless of gender…[seeking] to make room for all of us to explore who we are, separate from gender constraints" (Tarrant 2009, 3), aiming at defining the duality of patriarchy as a social foundation

of oppression for women but as well as men. As Harari (2016, 268-9) writes, “modern artists seek to get in touch with themselves and their feelings […] No wonder then that when we come to evaluate art we no longer believe in any objective yardsticks. Instead, we again turn to our subjective feelings” since art often reflects reality an analysis of works by pro-feminist Caribbean writers are an exponentially useful medium to investigate the manifestations of violence in Caribbean societies.

The concept of masculinity evokes images of strength, assertiveness, and brutality; the Aries-like qualities termed as “hegemonic masculinity.” According to Abbott, “men are constructed as rational, logical, truth-seeking, strong, powerful and ‘naturally’ authoritative. ‘Real’ men are also seen as being able to gratify their sexual needs.” (2000, 1312) As centuries progressed, however, these qualities, which defined masculinity, were, also, responsible for the confinement of those living under its influence. The structure of masculinity is a rigid, prejudicial system, which condemns qualities outside the bars of masculinity as feminine, “men fear failure, weakness and loss of control which may be perceived as ‘feminine’ qualities” (Abbott 2000, 1312). As such, masculinity can be deemed a collective hallucination, “we think of manhood as a thing that one either [has] or does not have. We think of manhood as and in it residing in the particular biological composition of the human meal [...] In the words of poet Robert Bly (1990) ‘the structure at the bottom of the meal psyche is still as firm as it was twenty thousand years ago’ (230)…” (Kimmel 1994, 33). Male dominance is founded solely on the sexist ideology that femininity is inferior to masculinity; this widely accepted notion has no valid basis outside of the minds of its believers.

Consequently, in patriarchal societies, a man can be easily considered effeminate and as such, considered to embody elements of subordinate masculinity. Men who found themselves

marginalized due to their traits of subordinate masculinity, often, still subscribe to traits associated with “hegemonic masculinity” including aggression, suppression of emotions and the display of physical strength. However, because of their disenfranchisement from the luxuries of male privilege due to their intersectionality, they, often, feel pressured to prove their masculinity, power, or dominance. This is, often, manifested initially as surplus repression, which, in turn, results in acts of surplus aggression or violence. Michael Kaufman identifies a “Triad of Violence” of environments and situations in which men may attempt to illustrate their dominance through surplus aggression, stemming from surplus repression. Kaufman deduces that violence can manifest itself in three major forms, which occupy the corners of the “Triad of Violence” illustrating that “violence against women is only one corner of the triad of men’s violence. The other two corners are violence against other men and violence against oneself… The three corners of the triad reinforce one another. The first corner- violence against women- cannot be confronted successfully without simultaneously stimulating the other two corners” (Kaufman 1987, 2.)

Through this investigation, a bilingual approach will be taken to critique literary works of prose and poetry from the Hispanophone and Anglophone Caribbean by pro-feminist writers as a means of testifying of the legitimacy and prevalence of Michael Kaufman’s “Triad of Violence” as a common regional concept resulting, primarily, from our shared colonial past.

1.2 Rationale.

This paper is an investigation into the manifestations of violence as a common theme in works of literature within the Caribbean region. Through comparison amongst the different plots and their respective portrayal of violent acts and the “corners" of Kaufman’s “Triad of Violence”, the examination of patriarchy as a system of oppression for both women and men will be evident. Furthermore, this study, through the medium of literary works, will assist in the comprehension of

the social and psychological pressures which men who commit these acts of violence may be subjected to. It is necessary to underline that this research is, in no way, attempting to justify violence in any form but intends to highlight the role of patriarchy's oppressive nature as a catalyst of violence by subordinate men to reinforce their masculinity. These findings will be useful not only to persons in fields of Sociology, Psychology and even Criminology but also to marginalized persons in society including men, members of the LGBTQ+ community and especially to artists whose works often blossoms out of social maladies.

1.3 Objectives.

Through this research, an in-depth exploration of the prevalence of violence as part of the Caribbean image through works of literature will be evaluated. Exploring works from a variety of Caribbean territories will additionally underscore the link between history, society and art. Finally, the role of patriarchy with regards to male oppression and acts of violence will be examined.

1.4 Parameters.

Literary works used in this research will, solely, be sourced from the Caribbean region, in order to better analyse the rifeness of violence in pro-feminist works of literature from varying linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, across the Hispanophone and Anglophone Caribbean. The majority of gender theories will be based on the philosophies of regional academics on this field. Moreover, many of the preferred authors chosen are self-proclaimed feminists whose perspective will be most valued in providing a blend of accurate and artistic portrayals of Caribbean gender and sex identities. This study in no way attempts to justify male violence but instead is rooted solely on illustrating one possible source of violence in the Caribbean.

1.5 Methodology.

This research has been conducted by employing qualitative analysis of works of literature from across the Caribbean by pro-feminist writers. Qualitative research by nature is unquantifiable and this was most suitable for literary analysis as it easily facilitated the investigation of the manifestations of male violence through the analysis of literary elements employed by writers such as themes, language and most importantly, socio-cultural realism to the Caribbean. As previously mentioned, a pro-feminist perspective was employed in this investigation as "feminism is a political perspective that uses gender to cryptically analyze power who has it who doesn't hazard who abuse it and why… Some of these issues [with feminism] take place behind the privacy of closed doors; others confront us in the public arena" (Tarrant 2009, 3). As such, an investigation through these lenses would not only identify aspects of gender inequalities and instances of dominance but also attempt to understand the root causes of male suppression, which may be manifest through violent acts.

The expression of male violence is not only a complex and controversial topic but is a well-known and recorded phenomenon in the Caribbean. Violence is very well rooted in Caribbean history and its effects are not limited by the passage of time but progresses with it. Harari argues that "the most common theory points to the fact that men are stronger than women, and that they have used their greater physical power to force women into submission [however] another theory explains that masculine dominance results not from strength but from power. Millions of years of evolution have made men far more violent than women." (172-174). This phenomenon is supported by Bourdieu who instigates that gendering is almost a 'heirloom' which is instilled and passed down with the progression of each generation. "The social order functions as an immense symbolic machine tending to ratify the masculine dominations on which it is founded, it is the sexual division of labor, a very strict distribution of the activities assigned to each sex, of their

place, time and instruments; it is the structure of space, with the opposition between the place of assembly or the market, reserved for men, and the house reserved for women" (Bourdieu 1998, 10-11).

The history of colonization in the Caribbean as promoting acts of violence as a result of surplus repression, is an undeniable link :"European [masculinity] is deeply implicated in the worldwide violence through which European culture became dominant" (Connell 1995, 186). This system of cultural dominance resulted in the social colonization of the region. As other ethnic matrices were introduced (and suppressed), these interactions developed the dimensions of patricidal suppression. Nurse posits that: "the hegemonic white male ideal/myth serves a politico-cultural purpose. The white male is positioned at the apex of the pyramid of social hierarchy. All others are subordinate, including women indicating that the intersectionality of being a person of colour and 'effeminate' in the Caribbean results in further oppression in this system of male privileging" (2004, 16).

The post-colonial movement attempted to not only reformulate socio-political institutions, which were rooted in imperialism, but also reinforced affected regional pride, through cultural movements. Ashcroft et al (1989, 8) stipulate: "a major feature of post-colonial literatures in the concern with placement and displacement. It is here that the special that the post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development and recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place", further underlining the subsequent battle between the established and the new which post-colonialism attempts to ignite. As such the post-colonial literary movement voices the concerns and conditions of the subaltern in Caribbean society, hence the exploration of violence because hegemonic, patriarchal rigidity can easily be explored in tandem with Caribbean, pro-feminist literature.

Reddock reinforces Harari's theory of masculine dominance stemming from physical strength, "[on plantations] men monopolized the jobs of banking, draining, pruning and carting in the fields [while] women did mainly weeding, some forking and cane-cutting. These were the lowest tasks" (1989, 56) and from this, Reddock deduces that, "at an ideological level, the sexual division of labour (SDL) can therefore be defined as the division of tasks and responsibilities between women and men where those performed by women are consequently ascribed as lower value than those performed by men" (48). This concept not only illustrates the institutionalized oppression of women in the world of work as a result of patriarchal ideologies but also warps the masculine point of view of women as vulnerable. This renders women as an easier prey on an ideological level as "for Third World women, subordination is not a simple arithmetic (sex+race+class) but a combination of all three" (Bolles 1989, 98).

Regrettably, Bolles fails to acknowledge that "the establishment of the modern slave trade and enslavement of Africans, the importation of bonded labour of Asians and other nationalities were all justified by a Eurocentric discourse of natural racial and cultural superiority." (Reddock 2007, 3). "The writing of Caribbean history has been, for the most part, a white fiction under the guise of a positivistic interpretation of events […] Novelists and poets have been writing the history of the Caribbean since Aimé Césaire; they have given a voice to the man and the woman in the fields […] Literature is a performative act: it creates history as it enunciates it" (Praeger 2004, 30-31). Many works of Caribbean literature not only shifts the perspective from the oppressor to the oppressed but equally highlights the catharsis of built up oppression through acts of male violence.

Consequently, this history of violence has left trauma embedded in contemporary society. As Walkerdine states, "the intergenerational transmission of historical trauma in a way that does not separate historical experience from family processes and offers a radical refusal to separate the

social and the individual" (2013) thus arguing that like genes, trauma is rooted in the genetics of the Caribbean and can be inherited. Like gendering, one can be conditioned to accept traumatic experiences as part of one's cultural identity, after having been exposed to it for decades. "Childhood trauma impacts children to different extents. Some people are more vulnerable, whereas, others show the characteristic of "resilience," with the ability to "bounce back" even after adversity. According to a neural diathesis-stress model, genetic predisposition and environmental factors contribute synergistically to the development of mental disorders. The magnitude of the heritability of a phenotype is one way of estimating the relative magnitude of the genetic contribution. In the case of ACE-associated psychiatric disorders such as PTSD, the heritability is in fact low to moderate. Similarly, the heritability of resilience is low to moderate, varying in research reports from 25% to 60%. These heritability values suggest that there may be other mechanisms contributing to these phenotypes, such as gene by gene interaction and gene by environment interactions, and epigenetic mechanisms" (Jiang et. al. 2019, 1). The effects of genocide, enslavement, forced migration and indentureship have all left marks on the Caribbean genotype where we are all conjoined by trauma. As such, it is necessary to investigate whether the root of male violence in post-colonial society is linked to inherited trauma.

By exploring the effect of inherited trauma and biased gendering, he links between surplus repression and surplus aggression as a result of patriarchy across selected works of literature will be analysed. Gender theorist Michael Kaufman states, "acts of men's violence and violent aggression are celebrated in sport and cinema, in literature and warfare. Not only is violence permitted, it is glamorized and rewarded. The very historic roots of patriarchal societies are the use of violence as a key means of solving disputes and differences, whether among individuals, groups of men, or, later, between nations" (1999, 2). Kaufman later highlights that patriarchy

pressures men into filling into these desired attributes, “the suppression of emotions, and needs [are imperative] to manhood especially for younger men. The personal insecurities conferred by a failure to make the masculine grade, or simply, the threat of failure, is enough to propel many men, particularly when they are young, into a vortex of fear, isolation, anger, self-punishment, self-hatred, and aggression” (1999, 2). Kaufman theorizes that this aggression may manifest itself in one of the three forms of his ‘Triad of Violence’: “violence against women is only one corner of the triad of men’s violence. The other two corners are violence against other men and violence against oneself […] The three corners of the triad reinforce one another. The first corner- violence against women-cannot be confronted successfully without simultaneously stimulating the other two corners” (Kaufman 1987, 2.) The works of literature investigated will illustrate not only the phenomenon of violence stemming from surplus repression but also reinforce Kaufman’s ‘Triad of Violence.’

1.6 Chapter Outline.

Following the structure of each “corner” of Kaufman’s “Triad of Violence”, this investigation will consist of three (3) chapters, each dedicated to the investigation of one corner of the “Triad.” In Chapter 1 entitled ‘Violence Against Women- Indicator of Manliness’ an analysis of male-on-female violence will be undertaken, exploring this form of violence as a means for some subordinate men to reinforce their masculinity by inflicting violence on their societal inferior (women). The primary texts used in this chapter are Myra Santos-Febres’ short-story *Broken Strand* (*Hebra Rota,* 1997) and Seepersad Naipaul book *The Adventure of Gurudeva* (1976). In Chapter 2 in tandem with Kaufman’s “second corner” entitled ‘Violence Against Other Men - Intrapersonal Turmoil to Interpersonal Conflict’ an investigation of male-on-male violence will be

done by studying Mitra Yáñez's short story *Kid Bururú and the cannibals* (*Kid Bururú y los caníbales*, 2002). This chapter will underline the violent effect internal conflicts (such as insecurities) men may face as a result of patriarchy. Additionally, this second chapter will shine light on the prevalence of homophobia in Caribbean society through the poetry of Colin Robinson in his collection *You Have Your Father Hard Head,* as a means of policing other men and maintaining hegemonic dominance. Finally the third chapter, 'Violence Against Oneself- Freedom from Hegemony' explores the third "corner" of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence," focuses on the self-harm one may inflict on one self as a result of rigid gender roles. By analysing Rhyan Shah's novel, *A Silent Life* (2005), the character Pa Nazeer's suicide stems directly from his failure to meet the social requirements of hegemonic masculinity. Exploring escape as a form of freedom, this chapter further illustrates the social context which result in Guyana's high suicide rate.

Literature Review

2.1 Primary Literary Works.

The works of literature chosen for this analysis were selected primarily for their presentation of male violence, while simultaneously emphasizing a pro-feminist perspective to the literature. In considering the first 'corner' of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence", the following works portraying violence inflicted by men upon women, were chosen. The internationally recognized, award-winning, Puerto Rican writer Mayra Santos-Febres employs her works to highlight the role of history, trauma and violence as it echoes into Caribbean Society. In Santos Febres' short story *Broken Strand*, (*Hebra Rota*, 1997) the author illustrates black, female oppression and male dominance through the guise of cultural identity. Using symbolism and imagery, Santos Febres illustrates the violence and ferocity that both women and men face due to the constraints of patriarchal ideologies. Similarly, Trinidadian writer Seepersad Naipaul's piece, *The Adventures of Gurudeva and Other stories* (1976) highlights the oppressive system of Indo-Caribbean patriarchy which women are subjected to as well as the perception of women in this system, and the role of religion as an institution, which fosters patriarchal ideologies and continuation of violence.

However, taking into account Kaufman's second "corner" of the 'Triad of Violence', violence against other men, it is necessary to consider the short story written by Cuban author Mitra Yáñez entitled *Kid Bururú and the cannibals* (*Kid Bururú y los caníbales*, 2002) which identifies the pressure felt by men to resort to violence to prove their masculinity to other men. Yáñez, further, illustrates the social benchmarks of masculinity through her depiction of *Machismo culture* in Latin American society. Analogously, in the Nobel Laureate, Sir V.S Naipaul's piece *Miguel Street*, the chapter *The Coward* points out to the admiration of hegemonic masculinity but simultaneously illustrates its frailty by highlighting its high maintenance. Expanding on this,

Trinidadian poet Colin Robinson's collection of poems *You Have You Father Hard Head* (2016) equally illustrates the role hegemonic ideals occupy in reinforcing homophobia in Caribbean society. This is primarily explored through the analysis of his poem *Unfinished Work*.

Finally, in considering Kaufman's final "corner" of the 'Triad of Violence', (violence against oneself), as it is manifested in Caribbean Society, the novel *A Silent Life* (2005) by Indo-Guyanese author Ryhaan Shah was selected. Shah highlights the self-destructive nature of patriarchy. The plot is centred around the suicide of the protagonist's grandfather. Shah simultaneously, underscores the long-term effect these scars can have on successive generations.

The above-described works illustrate the theoretical and literary works employed in this research. These works were specifically chosen to provide the basis upon which the investigation will follow, while defining the key concepts, which may be unearthed as societal issues arising from patriarchal ideologies. Similarly, each of the pro-feminist literary work highlights aspects of Caribbean society because of rigid, ancient ideologies, while their portrayal of gender-based violence directly complements the corners of the "Triad of Violence" by Michael Kaufman.

Chapter 1

Violence against Women- Indicator of Manliness.

> "The body of the slave becomes, in addition to being the possession of the master from which he uses and abuses, a source of pain and bears the marks of the violence of the colonial system. On the body of the slave is written the history of the West Indies, true writing of blood." (Jégousso 2014, 65)

Violence as a tool of human suppression has, systematically, been ingrained in the Caribbean. Its presence throughout the centuries has drastically transformed from becoming a tool to inflict control in master-servant relationships to a method of enhancing one's masculinity. Mayra Santos Febres' piece Short story *Broken Strand* recounts the generational abuse of *afro-latinas* in Puerto Rican society. The author explores, through the use of a third person omniscient narration, the links between the environment and the female body. In considering the first 'corner' of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence", it is essential to underline the surplus male repression in post-colonial Puerto Rican society. Santos Febres' powerful use of symbolism directly illustrates the physical violence women are subjected to by repressed Black males in Puerto Rican society. Underlining the first corner of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence", violence against women, can be explored through the author's use of symbolism in her story *Broken Strand*.

The motif of the broken nose occupies a central role in highlighting the abuse of women by repressed men as it exemplifies one of the expressions of male-on-female violence. In considering this, it is first necessary to reference the social stratification of Black males in post-colonial society. According to Nurse, "the white male is positioned at the apex of the pyramid of social hierarchy… all others are subordinate, including women" (2004, 14) illustrating that the black male, despite sex, is positioned below all other racial groups lighter than him, even women, thus highlighting the repressed state this racial group is subjected to in these societies. The innate link of masculinity

to dominance and power in post-colonial society dictates that black males are denied the male privilege (unethically) attributed to those in patriarchal societies. The story is set in Barrio Trastalleres – an unfavourable neighbourhood located on the outskirts of San Juan (Puerto Rico), indicating that besides social barriers, these men were subjected to economic barriers which limited their freedom. As such, violent acts of surplus aggression were inflicted onto women to reinforce their fleeting masculinity. The narrator expresses, "she insists to the father who arrives from the street stumbling, who yells at her […] who grabs her by her neck, who makes Mama cry and grabs her nose just in case he throws a fist" (1997, 4). Thus, Santos Febres highlights the gender socialization of the society, illustrating the man's place as in the street and the woman's place indoors. However, the author simultaneously alludes to the man's drunkenness as described by his "stumbling" to illustrate his possible need to escape his oppressive reality. This normative condition is explored through Santos Febres' deliberate mentioning of "like the other women in the neighbourhood, her nose is broken by a fist." (1997, 3). This indicates that patriarchy condones the mass brutalization of black women by suppressed black men in post-colonial Puerto Rico.

The punishment of black women in both social and physical contexts is directly linked, by Santos Febres to the ideals of white patriarchy. Although Torres-Garcia declares, "*Santos Febres reclama el cuerpo de la mujer negra a través de la parodia y así ofrece una nueva definición del erotismo* [Santos Febres claims the body of the black woman through parody and offers a new definition of eroticism]" it can be argued that this 'new eroticism' is solely rooted in socially ingrained colourism (2015, 2). The author highlights the necessity of conforming to white-phenotypic beauty standards in this society, such as "to straighten their hair so they won't be so black, and so ugly and so low-class"; *negras* occupied one of the lowest stratifications in this society; as such the act of straightening their hair to resemble the valued, white aesthetic is directly

linked to self-preservation in these oppressive conditions (1997, 2). The protagonist, Yetsaida's first words can be interpreted as a dedication, not only of the following work but also a dedication of beauty to be blessed by Goddess Venus, "Oh, goddess of healthy hair, holy protector of follicles' shine and moisture […] keep me from sweating, because dreams end there. If I sweat, the waves will flow again into their original curls" (1997, 2). This allusion and prayer to the Greco-Roman Goddess to bless her with beauty directly illustrates the 'brainwashing' of *afro-latinos* to interpret the Eurocentric phenotype as the ideal beauty standard due to centuries of oppression. This appreciation simultaneously highlights the rejection of African phenotype and tradition, through the invocation of Venus rather than the West African Goddess, Oshun. The act of straightening one's hair illustrates the sacrifice women choose to undergo to avoid the systematic racism and patriarchy they face. Miss Kety occupies the symbolic role as the transformer and protector via her hair dressing, recognizing the abuse women face through "the branding ritual that will return the dream that [they] are beautiful", Kety lessens chances of domestic violence *afro-latinas* face in this society; through her hair straightening even to her own physical detriment "[testifying] to her bravery and sacrifice" (1997, 3). The allusion of branding reinforces the concept of modern-day enslavement through patriarchy and the violence women must undergo and conform to for their survival.

Santos Febres' powerful use of symbolism directly illustrates the physical violence women are subjected to by the repressed Black males in Puerto Rican society. Underlining the first corner of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence", violence against women can be explored through the author's use of symbolism in her short story *Broken Strand*. The broken nose occupies a central role in highlighting the abuse of women by repressed men as it exemplifies one of the expressions of male-on-female violence. In considering this, it is first necessary to reference the social

stratification of Black males in post-colonial society, illustrating that the black male, despite sex, is positioned below all other racial groups based on his skintone (regardless of his sex and gender); this highlights the repressed state this racial group faces in these societies. Masculinity's innate link to dominance and power in post-colonial society dictates that black males are denied the male privilege (unethically) awarded to those in patriarchal societies.

Similarly, Naipaul's novel, *The Adventures of Gurudeva* highlights the role religion and culture may occupy in justifying violence against women. The book explores the life of the protagonist Gurudeva, and it is recounted from a third person perspective while underlining elements of East Indian culture in the Caribbean. The third chapter of the work, entitled *The Beating of Ratni* illustrates female oppression within the Indo-Caribbean community.

Femininity is regarded as inferior to masculinity whether it be hegemonic or subordinate masculinity; as such, the act of men inflicting violence on women is not only rooted in malice but also rooted in their expression of power and domination. The core tenants of patriarchy, (the preference of masculinity over femininity) is, in many cases, directly responsible for this violence, especially when manifested in cases such as wife battering or rape. Inferior men, in order to reinforce their masculinity, often resorts to violence against other inferior groups, in this case, women. The subsequent beating of Ratni is, directly, linked to Gurudeva's inferiority and is meant to illustrate his dominance. "He pounced upon her even as if he had pounced upon a puppy. Artfully he entwined her long hair around his fist and dragged her in a circle over the rough ground as though she were a sack of potatoes. And when she neither wailed nor wept, he disengaged his hands [...] he cuffed and kicked her frantically" (1976, 31); the narrator describes the unfair dominance Gurudeva expressed over Ratni, while simultaneously noting the art of wife beating, skill involved in enacting this display of dominion, learned through repetition. It can be argued

that it is as a result of Gurudeva being regarded as an inferior male in a colonial, surplus-repressive society, his expression of violence towards Ratni was a means for him to reinforce his masculinity not only in the household but to himself. The familial environment "is one of the only places where men feel safe enough to express emotions ... [a] place where the violence suffered by individuals in their work life is discharged" and this concept is exemplified by Gurudeva's behavior (Kaufman 1987, 16). Male violence against women reflects the effect of violence, surplus aggression being derived from the surplus repression of men in patriarchal societies.

However, Naipaul further highlights the role of religion in reinforcing female oppression in East Indian culture. The novelist explores the foundational tenets of Hinduism of *karma* and *samsara* as these justify the brutality with which wives face from their husbands. The Pundit points out that "it is neither the doings of Gurudeva, nor mine … but Ratni's herself. She is simply repaying what she had shown in her previous life; just how I and you reaping whatever we had sown. Only a fool will try to stop the working of karma" (1976, 34) illustrating that men will not be held accountable for the abuse they enact; the Pundit who is the embodiment of religious teachings simultaneously represents the patriarchal ideologies, through his reductive perspective towards female trauma. Paradoxically, Naipaul underlines the hypocrisy within East Indian culture. The Hindu pantheon comprises of many Goddesses, illustrating their supposed high regard for the divine feminine, these goddesses embody a variety of roles: from healers; to wealth and even warriors alluding to Hinduism's duality. However, the social disregard of women and the cultural inferiority of womankind is inversely proportional to the religious regard of females and by extension femininity. It can be concluded that culture is directly responsible for female oppression among East Indian communities in the Caribbean.

Kaufman's first 'corner' of the "Triad of Violence" highlights the victimization of women by men in order to reinforce their masculinity through the exploration of female abuse in Mayra Santos Febres' *Broken Strand,* the abuse of ***afro-latinas*** in post-colonial Puerto Rican society was explored along with the possible defenses against further maltreatment. Seepersad Naipaul's chapter *The Beating of Ratni* in his book *Adventures of Gurudeva* explores the 'culture' of wife beating in East Indian communities to emphasize the dominance of men. Ultimately, in considering this initial 'corner', it can be concluded that while both writers explore female abuse as a 'generational curse' passed on with the gender socialization of each successive generation, it can be concluded that the fragility of masculinity, in conjunction with its societal role of dominance is responsible for the continuation of the suppression of women in Caribbean society through violence.

Chapter 2.

Violence Against Other Men – Intrapersonal Turmoil to Interpersonal Conflict.

Victory, conformation, and dominance are all concepts associated with colonization, however, as generations progressed, they became parts of the identity of Caribbean masculinity. Today, the act of male-on-male violence may not only be linked to socio-economic pressures (manifesting as robberies and murders) but may be directly tied to the desire to be perceived as more masculine by both ones' victims and other men in society. The Cuban writer, Mitra Yáñez explores this phenomenon in her short story, *Kid Bururú and the cannibals* (2002). The story is written from the first-person, subjective point of view, by a forty-year-old, female protagonist recounting her journey as she travels on a bus around Havana. In so doing, the author easily explores the correlation between violence and subordinate masculinity as explored by the second 'corner' of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence." Yáñez's narrator provides the piece with a 'white, female (*blanca*) perspective' exploring the suppression of white femininity under the *machismo* of Cuban society while simultaneously identifying the rigidity of white, hegemonic masculinity; this is primarily done through the exploration of the narrator's ex-husband, Enriquito. The story describes Enriquito as an embodiment of hegemonic masculinity: "he was dressed very elegantly in a suit and tie […] Brains and beauty […] He had always had the body of a wrestler and as for his face, don't even mention it. His voice could be heard above the noise in the bus," (2012, 246); the tone of admiration in narrator's detail of Enriquito suggests that he physically appears as the ideal man in a society which values the brawn of masculinity. The comparison of his body as being that of a wrestler also illustrates Cuban society's adoration of physical violence as a symbol of status. Furthermore, it is learned that Enriquito is a wrestler. This suggests that due to his phenotypic mien, he felt that his place was in such a profession, as Cuban patriarchy views

"masculinity [as] the mold of citizenship […] it is important to note that Latina/o culture is neither monolithic nor homogeneous, but rather is comprised of a pan-ethnic group within which exists a hugely diverse population in terms of race, religion, education, and economic standing" these socio-cultural elements are intern affected heavily by patriarchy which interns polices the individuals' freedom of expression. (Hernández-Truylo 2017, 183).

Nevertheless, Yanez's purposeful characterization of Enriquito explores the disenfranchisement some men may face in these patriarchal societies due to their body. The narrator continues, "the annoying part was that sometimes those girls would make comments on how well-endowed he was. For some reason unknown to me he couldn't perform. Almost never. His aggressive nature, his endless visits to doctors, his unfulfilling affairs" (2012, 246). Here, the narrator alludes to the most primal element of masculinity in this society, which is sexual performance, further hammering the concept that patriarchy views gender and sex interchangeable. The narrator underscores that *machismo* has in inherent link to one's sexual prowess as "pretending that he was cheating on me with twenty women at a time was the only thing that gave him a bit of self-confidence" however, the unrealistic expectations of masculinity leads to insecurities, self-hatred and when in surplus, rage and violence. Despite being described as a "serial adulterer" (Hamilton 2012, 92), this links Enriquito's wrestling and aggression to his internalized need to prove his manliness not only to other men in society or previous sexual partners but more importantly, to himself.

At this point, it is necessary to consider the etymology of the name *Enriquito*, translating to 'little or lil' Henry/ Enrique in English. The use of the Spanish diminutive suffix *-itio* derogatorily alludes to his erectile dysfunction. As such, the character and by extension men suffering with erectile dysfunction or having small penises are immediately viewed as less of a

man (or even as a boy) due to societies rigid barriers around masculinity, despite Enriquito meeting all other physical attributes which should deem him the epitome of *machismo*. His inability to achieve this leads to his surplus aggression; which he subsequently attempts to channel in his boxing to reinforce his self/societal worth as a *cubano*. As Girman posits, "according to Ilán Stavan (1996) 'The Latin man and his penis are at the center of the universe' (p. 148), an assertion [...] that cleverly equated the Latin phallus with the sun itself, both acting as agencies of power" (2004)" power which grants men freedom from ridicule from those socially below and above him in the hierarchy.

The author further alludes to the malevolence of patriarchal ideologies and its creation of racial stereotypes as suggested by the justification of Enriquito's divorce from the narrator, "when [she] was chosen to go to Tanzania to work for two years Enriquito showed one face in public and when we were home he declared 'I don't feel like letting you go. I'm the boss here, I'm the man of the house.' When I got back from the trip Enriquito had filed for a divorce. In spite of everything, we both wept." (12, 246). Considering this quote, it is necessary to investigate the link between white and black patriarchy and stereotypes specific to Enriquito's insecurities, "the Black man's penis was often the center of the racist scientific research, revealing its value as the fulcrum of White desire, curiosity, and fear […] many physicians during the nineteenth century agreed about the Black man's "massive proportions," "virile organs," and "[excess] in size" compared to White men (Saint-Aubin, 2005, 260) […]. Additionally, researchers at the time remarked on the 'naturally destructive capabilities' of the Black man's penis if he attempted to have sex with a White woman" (Young 2018, 38). This illustrates definitive racism in 'scientific' studies to preserve segregation and white hierarchy through the limitation of female sexuality. It can be deduced that the stereotype of the *afro-latinos* having larger penises than *blancos*, rivals

Enriquito's masculinity, his subsequent divorce from the narrator can be associated with the fear of his wife deriving sexual pleasure from a black African in Tanzania; societally his inferior. As such the breakdown of their marital life stems not solely from Enriquito's phallic insecurities but the innate racism of *machismo cubano*. Enriquito's masculinity literally takes a further beating by Kid Bururú an *afro-cubano* boxer, "the black man pounced on Enriquito and aimed at his jaw with a left jab that went flying" (2012, 248). Spotlighting that despite Enriquito's attempts to strengthen his grasp on the hegemonic ideal of *machismo*, his subsequent defeat by Kid Bururú (his inferior) proves that the hierarchy of patriarchy is invalid.

Trinidadian born writer V. S Naipaul examines male-on-male violence in (the seventh chapter of) his book *Miguel Street*. Masculinity is explored through the characterization of Big Foot. Like Yáñez's short story, Naipaul highlights the motif of boxing as a means of portraying one's manliness. The physically Big Foot is introduced as, "really big and really black" (1964, 66) illustrating the vilification of black men in Trinidadian society. However, the narrator further elaborates that it is, in fact, Big Foot's silence which made him seem dangerous, "like [a] terrible dog that never bark but just look at you from the corner of their eyes" immediately readers are reminded of the subconscious link of masculinity and stoicism. Nevertheless, Big Foot is certainly presented as a violent individual who uses his physical appearance to intimidate (bully) persons as well as resort to acts of violence due to his quick temper. The narrator recounts, "[we] went to the cinema. We were sitting in a row, laughing, talking all during the film and having a good time. A voice from behind us, very quietly said, 'Shut up.' We turned around and saw Big Foot. He lazily pulled out a knife from his trousers pockets, […] and stuck it in the back of my chair" (1967, 68) illustrating that Big Foot's intimidation is inherently linked to his need to be violent. Throughout this chapter, Big Foot preyed on the weak, like the *modus operandi* of the patriarchy his oppression

is based on his unrivaled dominance, “there was a time he got a job driving one of the diesel-buses. He drove the bus […] to Carenage […] and told passengers to get out and bathe. He stood by to see that they did” (1967, 67). While the author explains that most of Trinidad thought of Big Foot as a comedian, Big Foot’s actions never illustrated that he derived laughter form his actions, instead his constant policing of those oppressed by him instead reinforced his need to be tyrannical in his bullying.

However, like Enriquito, Big Foot’s masculinity is toppled in a boxing match. “An Englishman came to Trinidad […] the man said he was a boxer and champion of the Royal Air Force […] the headlines said, ‘*Who will fight this man*?’ And Trinidad replied Big Foot will fight this man” Naipaul underscored the prestige conformers of the hegemonic ideal receive because of Trinidadian male privilege; while simultaneously underlining that one’s masculinity must be challenged in order for it to be socially viewed as valid (1967, 75). This is, further, illustrated by the narrator’s mentioning of how proud Miguel Street was to claim him (Big Foot) because of his infamy; consequently, the ensuing boxing match between these men was well anticipated, an anticipation to see who was the more manly of the two. Johnson states that “patriarchy encourages men to […] identify being in control as both their best defense against humiliation and the surest route to what they need and desire” thus winning the match was heavy on Big Foots once unrivaled reputation (2001, 95). Unfortunately, Big Foot’s subsequent defeat in the boxing match left him “in tears. He was like a boy, and the more he cried, the louder he cried, and the more painful it sounded” leaving Big Foot emasculated not only by his defeat but his portrayal of emotions, a vulnerability which he was mocked for by persons who once were afraid of him; “What he crying for? laughed Hat […] and all of Miguel Street laughed at Big Foot […] the papers next morning said, Pugilist sobs in the ring” (1967, 77). Naipaul illustrates the feebleness of masculinity through

the emasculation of Big Foot; as such, it can be further supported that the concept of masculinity is indeed a delusion who's ever changing, impossible standards resides solely in the human consciousness

Considering this, it is thus necessary to analyse the effect of transgenerational trauma on the perception and portrayal of gender. Kaufman posits, “the individual experience of a man who commits violence may not revolve around his desire to maintain power” as such, by analyzing the portrayal of Big Foot’s dominance in this chapter, it is possible to explore male-on-male violence as a by-product of childhood trauma manifesting in adulthood (1999, 2). Naipaul illustrates this through his contemplations on the corporal punishment Big Foot was subjected to as a child, as Boysee and Hat explains, “the blows we get is nothing compared to what Big Foot used to get from his father […] Every day Big Foot Father, the policeman, giving Big Foot blows […] Three times a day after meals” (1967, 68). While the beating of younger men by elders are, often, seen as a means of ‘toughening them up’ the act is inherently linked to eradicating ‘effeminate’ human qualities, whether that may be hand gestures, range of voice, favorite colours or simply emotional expression as such it is necessary to question whether Big Foot’s aggression is solely linked to societal gendering” (Jouriles et al., 1991, 191). Being the son of a policeman the ‘policing ‘of Big Foot’s masculinity was instilled both metaphorically and literally. Surely, Big Foot was expected not only to be militant in his comportment but he was, also, equally expected to adhere to the hegemonic masculine stereotypes associated with the executive branches of government.

Reexamining Kaufman’s second corner of his ‘Triad of Violence’ it is possible to further underscore not only Big Foot’s reasoning to resort to male-on-male violence, it is equally possible to view Big Foot’s father’s tyranny stemming from his own need to reinstate his manliness. As Hat explains, “Big Foot didn’t have any mother. His father never married”. Naipaul indicates that

Big Foot's father was incapable of reaching the hegemonic ideal of having a wife, as wives in these societies are, often, viewed as extensions and properties of husbands, the father's inability to marry may have resulted in his desire to express his dominance over his son in order to reignite his personal sense of manliness. Additionally, the contrast between the father's profession and his actions draws into question the honor of masculinity; as a police officer, representing not only the brawn of the masculine ideal but also the ideologies of honor, justice and servitude to the disenfranchised Big Foot's father's abuse towards his son ultimately contradicts his duty to the Trinidadian people. Thus, it is easily observed that the central tenants of the masculine are indisputably tainted by the ideologies and constraints of patriarchy; leading men to resort to tyranny to maintain power and self-empowerment.

Kaufman's second corner of the 'Triad of Violence' explores the expression of violence against other men as a potential method of reinforcing one's masculinity and self-worth. Yáñez's short story *Kid Bururú and the cannibals* illustrates the fragility of white (*blanco*) hegemonic masculinity in Cuban society, and simultaneously highlights racism as not solely a means of oppression of groups but equally stemming from a source of insecurity. Yáñez reinforces the common misconception that there is a link between gender sex, and sexuality, a similar triad which may lead 'subordinate' men to resort to violence. Similarly, Naipaul's chapter "The Coward" in *Miguel Street*, not only explores male-on-male violence as a form of oppression but also as a part of the gendering process in the Caribbean. Through the investigation of two hyper-masculine characters Enriquito and Big Foot's experiences, patriarchy has been observed to have corrupted the once noble qualities of the Masculine, indicating that male privilege is a system rooted on its lust for dominance.

Chapter 2.

Homophobia.

Although Kaufman's second corner in the 'Triad of Violence' is, often, considered to solely explore the conflicts between cisgender, heterosexual males, it can be considered a further injustice to the LGBTQ+ community to neglect the manifestation of male-on-male violence as homophobia. Although gender theorists, such as Kimmel (1994, 188) posits "homophobia is the effort to suppress desires to purify all relationships with men […] and to ensure that no one can possibly mistake one for a homosexual," Hosein (2014, 4:57 to 5:10) adds that homophobia polices elements of life which are completely unrelated to a person's sexuality, adding "like sexism, homophobia polices our gender that is [to say] it imposes narrow, rigid and often harmful rules and regulation about what it means to be a man or a woman." The Trinidadian activist and poet Collin Robinson explore this corner of Kaufman's 'Triad of Violence' by exploring the presence of homophobia in Trinidadian society in the poetry of his collection *You Have You Father Hard Head* (2016). In the poem *Unfinished Work*, Robinson highlights the discrimination that 'effeminate'/subordinate men face in these hypermasculine societies.

The poem commences with a dedication and quote by Hilaire Belloc alluding to the self-exile members of the LGBT community may be subjected to, for their safety. Immediately following this, Robinson writes, "*¡Maricon!"* (51, 1) presents to readers the social intolerance and alienation of homosexuals in Trinidad. The persona continues, 'I remember Michael dropping crusty to *Buller* crossing St. Mary's schoolyard (St. Fairy's was the other name) […] neutering insults […] we've both survived we're still alive" (51, 8-18) underlining that living in this society is a matter of survival for gay men but further reinforcing institutionalized homophobia in the education system. Circhlow best describes his schooling as a "crucial phase for [him] in dealing

with sexuality and manhood […] as a teenager [he] frequently witnessed verbal or physical harassment of bullers or effeminate men in Trinidad […] witnessing these acts provoked the type of psychological and emotional fear [he] lived through as a teenager in Trinidad" further validating the persona's experience (2004, 197-8). However, the emasculation of St. Mary's as "St. Fairy's" underscores the patriarchy's perception of education and better still *male education* as effeminate as such the deformation of the 'prestige schools' alludes to societies perception as unmanly institutions, linking male-social mobility, through education as homosexual.

The theme of exile as a result of violence is additionally explored in this poem (*Unfinished Work*), the personna states, "llamaron maricones oimos cimarrones y viviendo at this quilombo, then use italics we arrived from different places other countries, cities, villages […] from strange lands […] we carried tongues like oil and […] the darkness of past wounds" (51, 29-37) the persona highlights the violence gay men are subjected to as a result of homophobia, resulting in their forced migration. The poet suggests that these manifestations of homophobic, male-on-male violence are both verbal as well as physical.

Structurally, the page lay-out of Robinson's poem reflects the passage of time, as the disposition of the text has only a few punctuation marks, is left-justified and is comprised of several breaks. The poem explores the stop-and-go stream of the persona, thus the slurs towards the young men suggest that the perpetrators may have been their peers, as Circhlow (2004, 198) recounts, during fights with his brother he was often called a *she* or a *Reginald* (a man who was a suspected homosexual) "[his name] substituted for heterosexist oppressive language, induced guilt and encourage shame and emasculation" carrying similar to "*buller batty baby faggot maricon adodi* " related by the persona (52, 44-5). Considering Kaufman's 'second corner', it is possible to interpret homophobia as a means of reinforcing one's (inter/intrapersonal) masculinity, "gay-

bashing' is committed by groups of young men in a period of their life when they experience the greatest insecurity about making the masculine grade." (Kaufman 1999, 3).

Male-on-male violence as explored through the presentation of homophobia in Colin Robinson's poem *Unfinished Work* further solidifies the perception of masculinity as a form of "citizenship", in Trinidadian society. This notion of manliness is directly linked to the subsequent oppression of homosexuality not only as a disdain for the unconventional and the Othered but as a route to proving and paving one's masculinity through bullying and attacking those deemed inferior. Once more, the core principles of masculinity are contradicted, the encouragement of homophobic ideologies infinges on the nature to protect and defend the inferior, consequently it can be concluded that masculinity is a hallucination which seeks solely to benefit its courtiers through hypocritical injustices.

Chapter 3.

Violence Against Oneself-
Freedom from Hegemony.

> "The ego, which to begin with is still feeble, becomes aware of object-cathexes, and either acquiesces in them or tries to fend them off through the process of repression. When it happens that a person has to give up […] there is quite often an alteration in his ego, which can only be described as a setting up of an object inside the ego as it occurs in melancholia" (Freud 1927, 17).

The 'final corner' of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence" explores self-harm as a manifestation of violence due to surplus repression. Kaufman further develops this 'corner' in tandem with the male ego, stating: "The formation of an ego on an edifice of surplus repression and surplus aggression is the building of a precarious structure of internalized violence" (1987, 13). Though there are great differences between suicide and parasuicide, Ryhaan Shah's book "A Silent Life" is an in-depth exploration of the effect of patriarchal rigidity on the feeble male ego. Through the novel, the effects of the suicide of the protagonist, Aleyah Hassan's grandfather (Papa Nazeer) in Guyana are documented about; Shah simultaneously illustrates the stigmatization of suicide, religious ideologies as well as the strength of gender roles intertwined in Guyanese society. The employment of a first person, female narrator of East Indian descent whose ignorance to her family's past, not only sets the basis of the plot but underlines the transgenerational effects of patriarchal oppression.

The arrival of East Indian labourers to Guyana in 1838, under the indentureship system impacted not only the racial and genetic diversity of the nation but contributed simultaneously to the socio-cultural medley of the Guyanese society. However, Persaud (2019, 01:13 to 01:20) describes the East Indian condition as "never enough to be considered Indian and [one is] never enough to be considered a Caribbean person" solidifying the alienation some East Indians may

feel in the Caribbean; a social alienation with which Papa Nazeer is well familiar to. Shah explores this alienation by means of gender roles through the presentation of Nazeer as an effeminate man because of his inability to meet hegemonic ideals. The narrator recounts, “all Nazeer ever wanted to do was dance, poor boy. Nazeer [used to be] on stage, dancing, his feet twinkling like diamonds to the music and setting all the little bells around his ankles jingling” illustrating Nazeer’s effeminate qualities, not only being referred to as a ‘boy’ but also discriminated for his passion of dancing” (2005, 18). It is important to underline that these elements of East Indian culture of dance and dress are associated with femininity in Guyanese society further exploring the malleability of gender roles; the narrator continues this reductive, effeminate description of East Indian culture stating, “his chest was bare and he wore billowing pyjamas held by sequined braids at his waist and ankles [….] he had an easy grace and audience loved him” (2005, 19). The conflict which subsequently arises from his incapacity to provide for his family leads him to give up his passion for entertainment, adapting his financial pursuits to a more pragmatic career, first as a politician which was tailored for him by his wife Baby (Aleyah’s grandmother) and later as a salesman. The rigidity of patriarchal ideologies confine men’s creativity, thus forcing them to submit or be subdued. This becomes a contributing factor to Nazeer’s depression and ensuing suicide.

Shah, further, underlines Nazeer’s femininity through the juxtaposition of Nazeer and Baby’s political career. The socialist movement during the 1960s of Guyana and its impact on the Guyanese people are shown alongside the notion of sexual division of labor underscored by Reddox (1989, 56). The author presents politics (especially during these times) as a male dominated field which Nazeer’s feminine qualities deems him unsuitable for. Masculinity in Shah’s book and by extension, within the Guyanese society is inherently linked to one’s education level and leadership skills, this completely contrasts with Robinson’s presentation of education (in

his poem *Unfinished Works)* as an effeminate means of social mobility. The protagonist's mother explains, "[Baby] helped them arrange strikes and marches and [Nazeer] was out there at the head […] He liked the crowds; he thought it was all a stage, a real-life dance to the chants of the workers […] People expected him to know about all the things that [Baby] knew. When they found out he didn't, they'd watch [him] stumble and mumble and try to duck from the questions […] then they stopped clapping back their laughter in their bellies" further justifying Nazeer's depressive state as a result of the public humiliation he faced not solely from other men but also from his academic inadequacy to his wife's (2005, 24). Continuing the narrator states, "[Baby] whips the microphone from her husband's hands and breathes fire into it. She takes the sale words that Nazeer had mouthed and lifts them high into the night sky where they burn with a hard brilliance. The crowd is dazzled and they cheer" (2005, 26). Kaufman (1987, 13) argues "men become pressure cookers. The failure to find safe avenues of emotional expression and discharge means that a whole range of emotions is transformed into anger and hostility. Part of the anger is directed at oneself in the form of guilt, self-hate, and various physiological and psychological symptoms" in the case of Nazeer, suicide can be considered as the catharsis of his depressive state, which he soon falls victim to after conforming to the patriarchy's ideal. The narrator recounts: "I [watched] my grandfather's hair go white! It starts at the roots and creeps slowly upwards, up each shaft of his thick hair until the whiteness reaches the very tips and flies off into the night" (2005, 27). Nazeer's premature old age follows the effect of his depression while the symbolism of the colour white acts as allegory for Nazeer's surrender to societal pressures and further reinforces his ensuing death as a result of his humiliation and isolation. Shah's presentation of Indo-Caribbean patriarchy shines light on the mental and emotional effect these ideologies may have on subordinate men. By examining the 'final corner' of Kaufman's "Triad of Violence", it is possible to better view the

impact of patriarchy as it is linked to male suicide. Through the analysis of Nazeer's 'femininity' such as his inability to provide financially, his lack of education and academic inferiority to his wife's along with the suppression of his personal desires, freedom and emotions, the author illustrates that although masculinity ensures socio-political and financial security in patriarchal societies, the neglect of one's identity remains pivotal in the assurance of one's holistic self-preservation.

Additionally, the role of religious ideologies in reinforcing the patriarchy and ostracization of male, mental health issues are,, also, explored by Shah. Similar to Naipaul's *Adventures of Gurudeva*, the exploration of hegemonic ideals in Indo-Caribbean communities are interwoven with religious dogma however, while Naipaul explores the oppressive doctrines disguised as Hinduism, Shah highlights the effect of Islam on reinforcing the suppression of the male condition. Surah Nisa (4:29) of the Quran states, "O believers! Do not devour one another's wealth illegally, but rather trade by mutual consent. And do not kill ⌜?each other or⌝ yourselves. Surely Allah is ever Merciful to you" - this ultimately prohibits suicide deeming the act a sin, this doctrine remains the same for all other Abrahamic religions, as such, one is condemned to endure either earthly or infernal suffering regardless of one's quality of life, thus mental health issues are not treated as an ailment but rather an act against the will God or as the Shah writes, "people say the devil came down and put the rope in Pa Nazeer's hands. But other people say that the devil put the rope in your Nani's hands, and she handed it to Pa Nazeer and watched him throw it up over the beam and wrap it around his throat" (2005, 36). These conditions are directly responsible for the suppression of men across the world, Nazeer's alienation was not solely rooted on his isolation from his family and humiliation but also from his lack of support from his religious community as well. Upon his death, Nazeer's body was treated with no humanity, becoming an object of awe and dismay to

those who viewed him as a victim to eternal damnation “the house was full of people, god knows who. They had come to stare at the hanged man” explains Aleyah’s great aunt (2005, 50). The reduction of Nazeer to a corpse not only illustrates his objectification by others but furthermore solidifies his loss of manhood and identity in the eyes of society as his suicide indicated that he was not manly enough to face his insecurities. Shah’s fictional novel holds great value when considering Guyana’s high suicide rate, “according to PAHO’s 2017 Adolescent and Youth Health Report suicide was cited as the leading cause of death amongst persons within the age range 15 to 24 years, an alarming number that accounts for more than half of the deaths in persons between 20 and 24. However, once delved into, the report revealed that the higher percentage of these suicides was found in males” in contemporary Guyana, it is theorized that the stigma concerning mental health, the lack of education and funding on the subject, superstitious beliefs as well as some pesticides used may promote suicidal tendencies (Kaieteur News, 2018, n.p).

Kaufman’s ‘final corner’ of the “Triad of Violence” explores violence against oneself as an outcome due to male suppression, Shah’s novel *A Silent Life* explores not only the transgenerational effects of suicide but underlines the contributing societal factors which may promote men to resort to self-harm as an escape from the confines of Guyanese society. The need to conform to the mold of masculinity in patriarchal societies may not only result in acts of male violence against others as a means to prove their manliness as previously explored but may become a double-edged sword inflicting harm on those completely incapable of expressing themselves under the dictatorship of patriarchy.

Conclusion.

The findings of this investigation have illustrated that the term ‘Caribbean masculinity’ cannot encapsulate the depth of factors which affect the region’s gendering inclusive of cultural, religious, racial and linguistic contributing elements. It has, indeed, been observed through the analysis of these literary works that male privilege does not solely confine women but also requires men to contort to set hegemonic roles. Masculinity has indeed proven to be a hallucination of the societal stream of consciousness, a delusion which has led to the oppression of individuality and subsequently the suppression of women, other men and even oneself through violence.

Through the analysis of the theme of violence in the discussed works, which complemented the three “corners” of Michael Kaufman’s “Triad of Violence”, it was, further, deduced that surplus male suppression due to hegemony, indeed, was manifested as violent acts against others or even against oneself. As such it can additionally be concluded that the system of patriarchy which Caribbean people have been conditioned to, is a system which contradicts not only the tenets of democracy but even hegemony itself in its pursuit of male dominance through suppression of those subordinates.

Although the eradication of certain types of patriarchy is not impossible, it is a tremendously difficult system to fight. Nevertheless, through improvements on the judiciary and legislative levels, greater pro-feminist advancements on the socio-cultural level can begin which will eliminate the negative effects of gender socialization in the Caribbean. Programs specifically targeted at school students (the region’s future) and aimed at educating them on the dangers of male privilege and homophobia will certainly cauterize the wounds caused by surplus repression and ultimately inhibit the infection known as patriarchy.

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