

Conclusion

The Mothers of the church are a living bridge between an African-Caribbean past and an African-Canadian present and future in the lives of Spiritual Baptist Church women. Church mothers encompass spiritual figures like Mother St. Ann as well as ancestral figures in a series of relationships which move backwards and forwards in time and space encompassing dreams and family separation and reunification through migration. The experiences recounted here point to one of the ways in which meaning is constructed in the context of a history in which motherhood though fraught with contradictory tensions has been the fulcrum of self-defined personal and community-based identities and relationships.

Carol B. Duncan teaches in the Department of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario.

References

- Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Davis, Kortright. *Emancipation Still Comin': Explorations in Caribbean Emancipatory Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990.
- Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. "Sanctified Church." *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*. Eds. Darlene Clark Hine, Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, and Elso Barkley Brown. Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Company, 1993. 1005.
- Gilkes, Cheryl Townsend. "The Roles of Church and Community Mothers: Ambivalent American Sexism or Fragmented African Familyhood." *African-American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1997. 365-388.
- hooks, bell. "Homeplace." *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Toronto: Between-the-Lines, 1990. 41-49.
- Houk, James T. *Spirits, Blood, and Drums: The Orisha Religion in Trinidad*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995.
- Marshall, Paule. *Praisesong for the Widow*. New York: Penguin Books, 1983.
- Queen Mother Ruby. Personal interview. (Movant, Trinidad, West Indies) 29 Aug. 1995.
- Silvera, Makeda. *Silenced: Makeda Silvera Talks with Working Class Caribbean Women about Their Lives and Struggles as Domestic Workers in Canada*. Toronto: Sister Vision Press, 1989.
- Sister Asha. Personal interview. (Toronto) 15 Sept. 1994.
- Sister Maria. Personal interview. (Toronto) 10 Aug. 1995.

DELORES J. LALONDE

Love

Dedicated to Eunice

Her beauty did not
cover the pain in her eyes

Her laughter and smiles
did not cover her insecurities
you could see it in her shyness

Her anger spit out like fire
unintentionally burning
the hearts around her

Doing the best she knew how
truly unsure if it was wrong or right

Her love always there
but not knowing how to express it

Her heart began to heal
Her eyes showed only
love and understanding

Her smiles and laughter
were from pure joy
and her anger
no longer burns

Growing stronger and stronger
through life's experiences
and past mistakes

Expressing her love with
everything she is
with everyone she meets

She is gentle, she is kind
she is to me love
she is my Mother

Delores J. Lalonde is an Aboriginal woman from Sagamok First Nation.