

## **Endorsing an Additive Pluricultural Identity Formation for Socio-ethnic Integration in Diasporic Caribbean Societies: An Insightful Culturometric Philosophical Re-examination of Trinidad Ethnic Diversity**

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**Abstract.** This paper looks at Caribbean social spaces and their plasticity within an ontological perspective and how emergent Caribbean identities are arbitrarily constructed, interrogated and restructured at the individual level, artificially fashioned at the collective level and covertly created at the national level. From an ethno-national standpoint, the paper critically explores the process of identity formation from an original ethno-cultural deconstruction segregating ethnic groups by phenotypes to a cultural *bricolage* of culturally diverse fragments from which emerge the modern pluricultural Caribbean individual, pluricultural ethnicities and the competing cultural allegiances that can threaten to shatter the family unity of the nation state. The paper first explains the additive process of pluricultural identity formation then highlights subtractive multicultural socio-political threats to achieving national unity within a pluricultural Caribbean. This position is discussed here using the results of a survey assessing multicultural allegiances in the predominantly bi-ethnic African/Indian Trinidadian population.

**Keywords:** *Culturometrics, diaspora, ethnic identity, pluriculturalism, Caribbean identities*

### **Introduction**

Ethnic diversity residual from past slavery, indenture ship or contemporary economic migration characterizes the Caribbean and contributes to its unique ethno-cultural richness. These economically-driven colonization movements of the past and globalization policies of the present shape the ever-changing social make-up of Caribbean societies which is evinced in the continual attempt at reassembling ethnically diverse cultural fragments of inherited migration identities. While ethnicity in diasporic Caribbean societies is somehow overtly exhibited through rituals and ancestral ties to some elusive mythical space of epic memory (Alexander

1997; Bell 2003; Walcott 1993) it is no longer a distinct nominal cultural marker in ethnically heterogeneous communities in which inherent ethno-cultural mixing has engendered new cultural allegiances expressing the multiple cultural influences on individuals' increasingly complex cultural identities (Boufoy-Bastick 2003; 2009; 2010; Clifford 1994; Ghorashi 2004; Gregg 2006; Huat 2009; Ignacio 2005; Ortiz 2005; Premdas 1996; Puri 2004; Tarling & Gomez 2008). These emergent idiographic cultural identities are the quintessential groupings of cultural fragments strewn throughout modern Caribbean societies in which each fragment potentiates an embryonic cultural composite brought into being from both its individual and collective historical legacy and within a context of social need for identity completion " The result is an extremely pregnable Caribbean, constantly penetrated, while struggling to maintain its own sense of integrity and the notion of a definitive character" (Hintzen 2002: 475). The reassembling of these fragments, through an inescapable on-going cross-fertilizing enculturation, fabricates shifting multi-layered, multi-faceted Caribbean identities.

The paper first explains the additive process of pluricultural identity formation then highlights subtractive multicultural socio-political threats to achieving national unity within a pluricultural Caribbean. This position is discussed here using the results of a survey assessing multicultural allegiances in the predominantly bi-ethnic African/Indian Trinidadian population.

## Background

Caribbean island states, like Trinidad and Tobago, are often characterised by ethnically fragmented diasporic communities. Trinidad is a nation in which higher value is proudly placed through prominently claiming African or Indian ethnic membership. While "nationalism can... be considered to have developed out of existing ethnicities" (Edwards 2009, 163) national unity in bi-ethnic Trinidad expresses itself through a *re-assemblage* of African and Indian ethnic fragments metaphorically portrayed by Walcott in his Nobel prize address (1997): "Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the pieces is the sealing of its original shape." While endorsing Walcott's cultural deconstruction process, we argue that the sealing of the pieces is the *assemblage* of pluricultural fragments - rather than mono-cultural fragments or multi-cultural fragments - producing new unique shapes, embodying what makes Caribbean individuals

*pluricultural* rather than mono-cultural or multi-cultural individuals. Notwithstanding the naïve romantic commitment to 'sealing' the fragments together, recreating the original shape is evidently unattainable and it would seem futile to suggest that an original ethnic shape could be recovered given the initial disparity of the cultural fragments within and between each ethnic Trinidadian substrate. Ostensibly, both African and Indian ethnicities in Trinidad are cultural constructions emerging from an attempt to create unifying ethnic memberships associated with an indeterminate African or Indian ethnic phenotype. These cultural ethnicity (re)creations are part of group identities grounded in naïve eternal myths of ancestry (Bell 2003; Boufoy-Bastick 2010a) which have the potential to trap individuals into ethnically bounded groupings and ignore the emergent cultural plurality of Trinidadian identities.

Now, the use of ethnicity as the 'glue' for sealing fragments into some visionary original shape can be disputed as not only being adverse to recognising the pluriculturality of Afro/Indo Trinidadian identities but as being dangerously inimical to Trinidadian bi-ethnic national identity formation through inducing stronger allegiance to ethnic fragments. So in order to support pluri-ethnic societal construction and national unity this paper proposes to revalue the sealing of fragments by giving an additive rather than subtractive process interpretation to Walcott's (1992)<sup>1</sup> selective poetic associations of cultural identity construction.

### **Processes of identity formation – Building nations from fragments**

From the perspective of Culturometrics, Cultural Identity is 'Values in context' (Boufoy-Bastick 2007, 20020a, 2010b, 2011, 2012). A person's identity is displayed by his/her behaviours which are generated to serve their values in the context. Observers infer the person's cultural identity through their own value-laden interpretation of the behaviours. The observer's interpretation can result in an accurate communication where both share a common culture

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<sup>1</sup>"And here they are, all in a single Caribbean city, Port of Spain, the sum of history, Trollope's "non-people". A downtown babel of shop signs and streets, mongrelized, polyglot, a ferment without a history, like heaven. Because that is what such a city is, in the New World, a writer's heaven. A culture, we all know, is made by its cities." (p. 64)

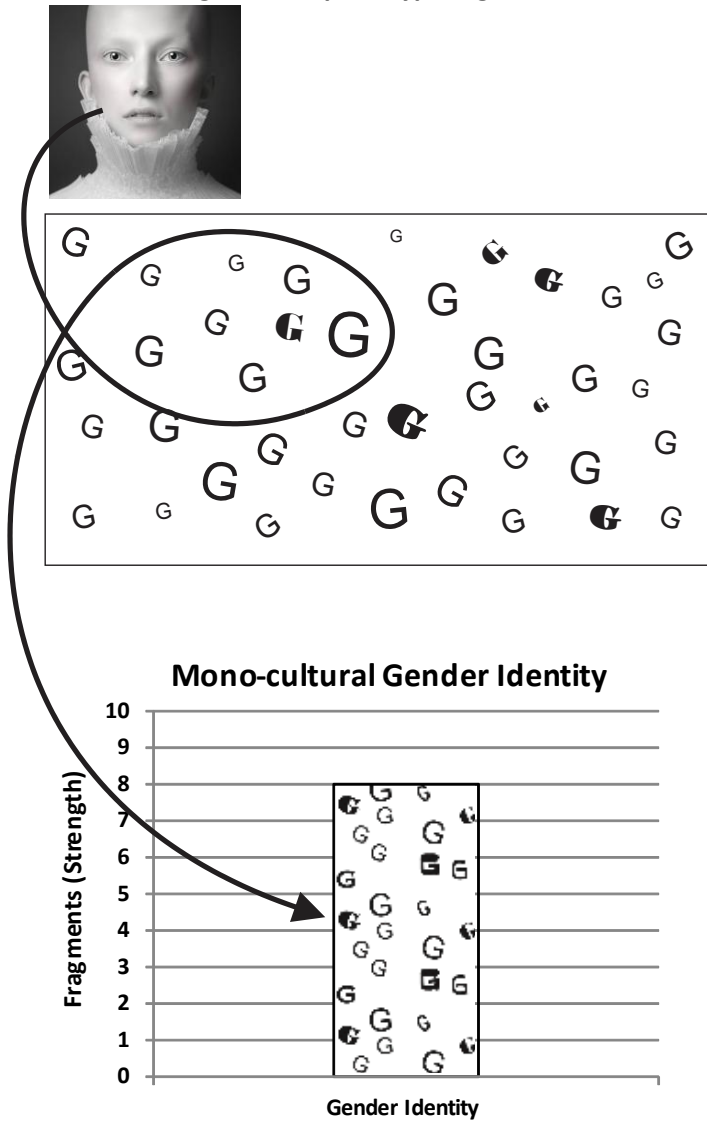
bound by common values because the person and the observer would associate the same shared values as the meaning of the behaviour. Normative enculturation is the lifelong learning process of incorporating experiences into one's changing components of identities. These changing developing identity components are roles that each person negotiates with their society through alignment of shared values served by behaviours in common.

Enculturation is nothing more than developing component roles which are sets of values/intentions/attitudes that can be reliably communicated through their negotiated association with behaviours aligned to shared values. A mono-cultural ethnic identity (e.g. African, Indian) is a major role, itself comprising minor roles (e.g., mother, teacher) recognised (by aligned behaviour and shared values) within the society of that ethnic culture. In established pluricultural societies, comprising peoples with different inherited cultures, each person's cultural identity is a meta-role that can be compartmentalise into the roles of citizen and other ethnic identities, each with their own strength of allegiance and contextually appropriate aligned values and behaviours. In mature pluri-cultural societies, the differences between some fragments of the mix have outgrown their social and personal value and amalgamated, thus their ethnic cultural ancestry is no longer tracked but assimilated.

We start at the individual child. Each experience is a fragment of a possible role. Let us consider, for example, the gender component of identity comprising fragmentary experiences of proto gender roles.

The gender component of your identity can strengthen or weaken depending on the fragmentary experiences you continue to incorporate into it. Another person might have a stronger or a weaker gender identity than you depending on the fragments of gender experiences each incorporates into their changing gender identity. If we could measure the strength of gender identity, we could compare two groups of people to see which group has the stronger gender identity – e.g. We could answer questions such as *'Who are, on average, more feminine, (i) male secondary school teachers or (ii) male primary school teachers?'*

**Figure 1: Mono-cultural enculturation of gender identity - incorporating experience fragments of prototypical gender roles**



Identity has many components. Let us consider the academic component of identity comprising fragmentary experiences of possible academic roles.

**Figure 2: Mono-cultural enculturation of academic identity - incorporating experience fragments of prototypical academic roles**

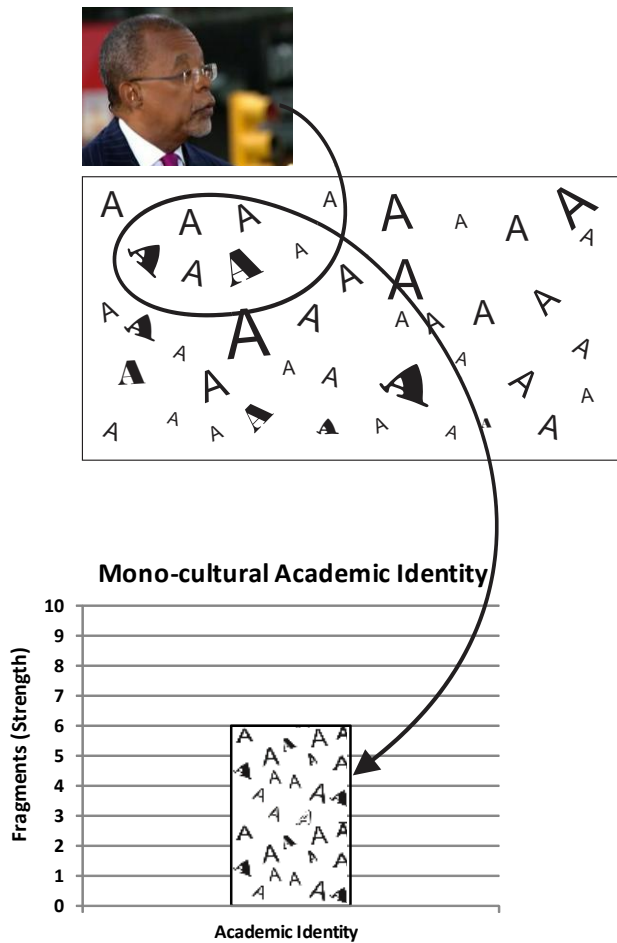
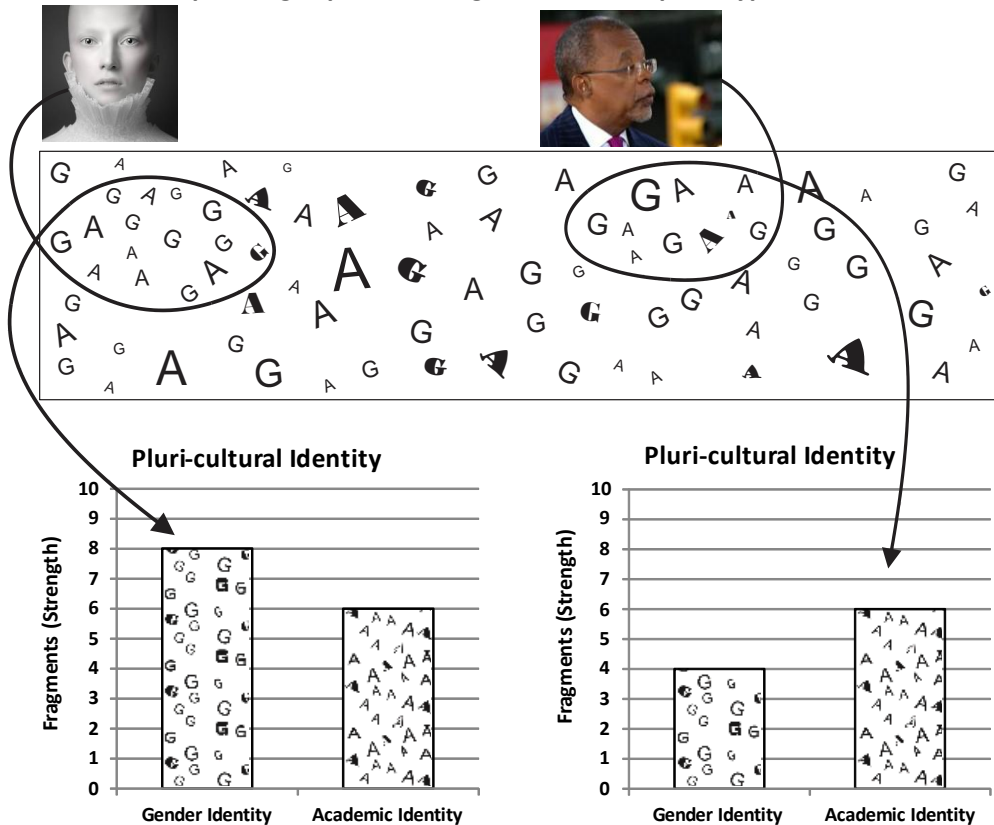


Fig. 2 has the same structure as Fig. 1 because the enculturation process is the same. In this parallel example, which is chosen to endorse the common process of normative enculturation, the academic component of your identity can strengthen or weaken depending on the fragmentary experiences you continue to incorporate into it. Another person might have a stronger or a weaker academic identity than you. If we could measure the strength of academic identity we could compare two groups of people to see which group has the stronger academic identity, e.g. we could answer questions such as 'Who are, on average, more academic, (i) male secondary school teachers or (ii) male primary school teachers?'

However, modern globalised societies offer fragments of both experiences to the individual's lifelong process of enculturation and so the individual's cultural identity can include both of these identity components.

**Figure 3: Pluri-cultural enculturations of gender and academic identities - incorporating experience fragments of both prototypical roles**



To the extent that these components are socially defined as being mutually independent one component can strengthen or weaken independently of the other. For example, both components can strengthen without one taking its strength for the other. This is the additive model, in which it should not be the case that if you have a stronger academic identity, then this will correspondingly weaken your gender identity. That would be the subtractive model. These two models were once common in language learning. Some teachers ascribed to the subtractive model, thinking that learning a second language would interfere with first language learning and so to prevent this subtractive effect children should only be taught

one language at a time. Other teachers ascribed to the additive model of language learning (Cummins 1984; 2000). They thought that the skills learnt in learning one language would transfer to the learning of a second language making it easier if both languages were learnt at the same time. So which is the better model? Some people can speak many languages. It is clear that learning a new language does not detract from knowing other languages they have learnt (Adesope 2010; Bialystok 1988; Cenoz 2003; Cook 1992; Cummins 1984; 2000; Rothmans 2011). In fact, the more languages one has learnt then the more language learning ability one can apply to learning the next language so, all things being equal, it is generally easier for a multilingual speaker to learn a new language than it is for a mono-language speaker to learn a new language (Tremblay 2006; Vaid 1986). It is a matter of 'optimum chunking'. Culturometrics ascribes to the additive model of identity because normative enculturation requires larger chunks of time than does skill training.

## **Hypotheses**

We now use the Culturometric conception of additive identity components to distinguish between mono-cultural, multicultural, pluri-cultural and nominal ethnicities. These are mostly semantic hierarchy definitions. That is the definition given as the structure between its parts, but, in any one specific case is semantically dependent on the hierarchy of exemplars included in the parts. For example, some ethnicities might include other ethnicities. Nominal ethnicity is a label used to categorise visible minorities based on an observable stereotypical phenotype. A pertinent example is the self-labelling of Trinidadians into Afro, Indo or Mixed categories depending mainly on hair and facial features matching those of an assumed stereotypical African or stereotypical East Indian phenotype. A lay term for these category labels used in this context is 'race'. Mono-cultural ethnicity is an ethnicity defined by only one ethnic identity component. It is the result of unrestricted enculturation in a society defined as only having that one ethnic culture. Pluri-cultural ethnicities result from unrestricted enculturation in culturally diverse societies. It is an identity comprising all the ethnic components of society in varying strengths. This is a hierarchical conception of identity, a role which is fragmented into mono-ethnic cultural component roles, which are themselves enculturations of fragments of their own experience. Because pluri-cultural identities are additive they lead to cooperation based on self-interest between nominal ethnic groups, as each person has a stake in benefiting all ethnic groups of which his or her identity is comprised.



Multicultural ethnicity is pluri-cultural ethnicity in which each person is restricted to the expression of only one of their ethnic identity components. The other 'fragments' of their identity have been devalued and eradicated. A pertinent example of this restriction would be 'first-past-the-post' voting for ethnically based political parties. In this case, each person usually aligns their allegiance to their strongest ethnic identity component, which mostly matches their nominal ethnicity label. Thus, multiculturalism further fragments the Nation (Barry 2002; Deosaran 1981; Fulford 2006; Goodhart 2008; Gregg 2006; Jagland 2011) keeping citizens apart by forcing them to relinquish any cultural component of their national identity that does not match their nominal ethnic categorisation. This subtractive conception of fragmented identity results in competition for scarce resources between nominal ethnicities which undermines National unity. It is subtractive because if one nominal ethnic category receives a scarce resource then that resource is subtracted from the potential resource benefits of the other nominal ethnic category. An example might be if the government could finance the building of only one secondary school in either an Afro-Trinidadian area or in an Indo-Trinidadian area. Competition based on self-interest arises because one's gain is the other's loss.

The life experiences we incorporate into the enculturation of our changing identities are always fragments of possibly more developed roles. Our personal enculturation is our radical construction of those possible roles which we continually socially negotiate as our membership of society.

### **The Fragments: Walcott's contribution to building Afro-Caribbean cultural identity**

The 'Fragments' from Walcott's 48 minute Nobel Lecture on December 7, 1992 *"The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory"*<sup>2</sup> has become an icon poetically

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<sup>2</sup>Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the pieces is the sealing of its original shape. It is such a love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirlooms whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent.

summarising the Zeitgeist of Caribbean identity from the previous three decades as non-functional remnants of a mythic culture potentially symbolising a sense of loss and a search for completeness through the cultural artefact of a vase which is now in fragments.

Walcott's earlier work significantly contributed to this Zeitgeist of fragmented Caribbean identity – particularly articulation of fragmented allegiance to his 'African blood' and his 'English culture' in his poem 'A Far Cry from Africa' on the 1950s Mau Mau uprising in Kenya:

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,  
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?  
I who have cursed  
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose  
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?  
Betray them both, or give back what they gave?  
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?  
How can I turn from Africa and live? (Walcott 1962, p.18)

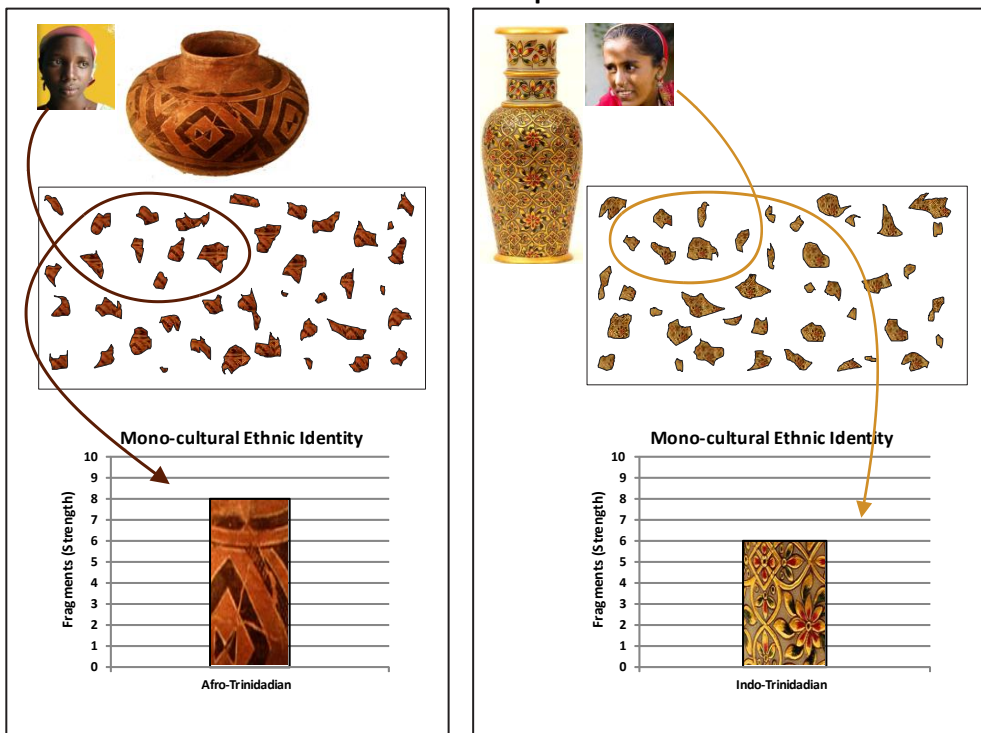
This work is quoted 15 years prior to Walcott's *'The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory'* in Jack Alexander's excellent ethnography of 'The Culture of Race in Middle-Class Kingston, Jamaica' (Alexander 1977) which Alexander himself summarises as:

This contribution to the understanding of race as a cultural phenomenon in the Caribbean analyzes the reality created by a racial terminology that has bewildered observers by its many terms and their uses. The analysis shows that race symbolizes mythological time and thereby anchors in the past a belief in the fragmented nature of society. (Alexander 1977, 413)

So here, we already see the Caribbean constructed as a fragmented society (Fragments) anchored in a past mythological time (in Epic Memory). We explained that all life experiences we incorporate into the enculturation of our changing identities are fragments of possibly more developed roles – proto-roles. The contribution of Walcott's iconic fragmented vase is to potentiate enculturation into epic culture by identifying the fragmented experiences of possible ethnic proto-roles as inherited fragments of a once existent epic ancestral culture; thus giving a motivated role-modelling direction to what was

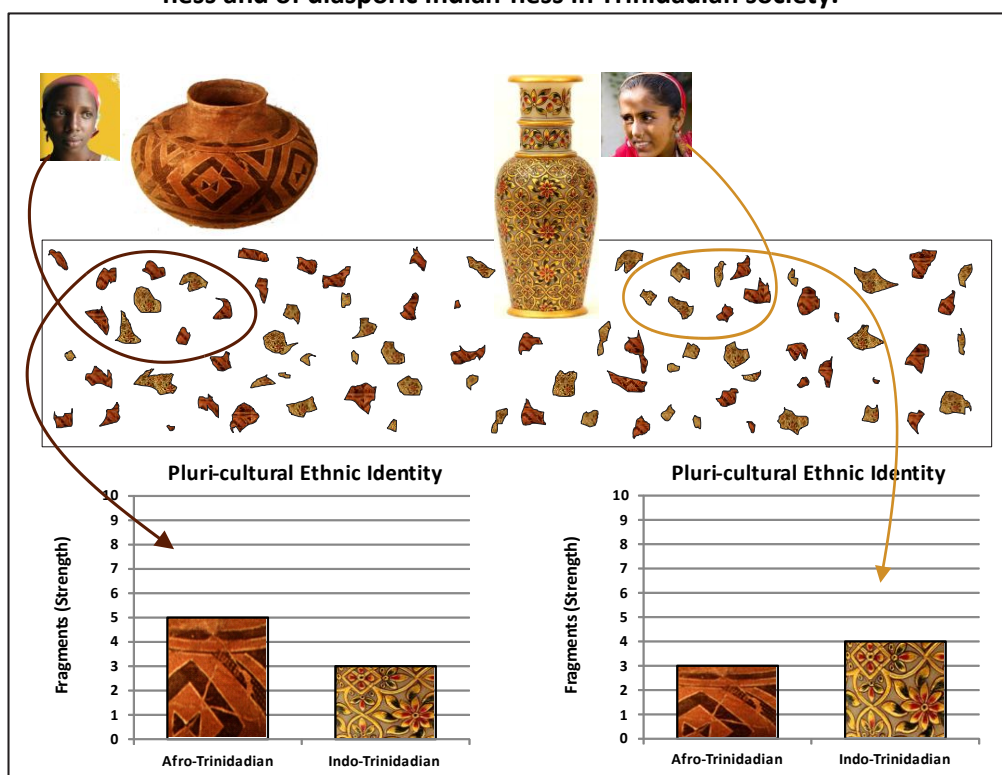
only open vague possibilities of emergence. Most of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora are Christian and so, would have already found solace and motivation for identity development in the similarly purposed Christian concept of 'The Kingdom of Heaven'. A germane parallel is that Christians want to return to a mythic garden of heaven and diasporic Africans want to return to a mythic garden of Africa (Crowder 1984; Walters 1993). Christian devotees build their religious identity by also incorporating experiences which are fragments of epic biblical memory—the shattered fragments of the perfect Eden. Defining the pre-existence of this ancestral 'Kingdom of heaven' gives needed security of its certainty and describing it as 'Epic' motivates the identity change that ensures its attainment. Hence, a possible explanation for the successful acceptance of Walcott's icon is that it resonates with the common purpose of an already well accepted Christian concept in the same demographic.

**Figure 4: Walcott's iconic fragmented vase of epic memory illustrating directed radical constructivist mono-cultural (separated) ethnic enculturations of diasporic African-ness and of diasporic Indian-ness.**



Figures 4 to 6, parallel for the construction of ethnic identity, the same nominal enculturation process that was illustrated for gender and academic identity construction in Figures 1 to 3. The major difference is the use of Walcott's icon for attributing the source of the fragments as an agent directing the enculturation process towards a role emulating the source rather than towards the construction of a vague emergent role. Figure 4 represents mono-cultural ethnic enculturation of diasporic African-ness and of diasporic Indian-ness, respectively, from the fragments of experience identified with Walcott's iconic fragmented vase of epic memory. However, Trinidad is a pluri-cultural society where we can build both Indo-Trinidadian and Afro-Trinidadian components of ethnic identity from conjoint experiences of fragments from both cultures.

**Figure 5: Walcott's iconic fragmented vase of epic memory illustrating the radical constructivist pluri-cultural (conjoint) ethnic enculturation of diasporic African-ness and of diasporic Indian-ness in Trinidadian society.**

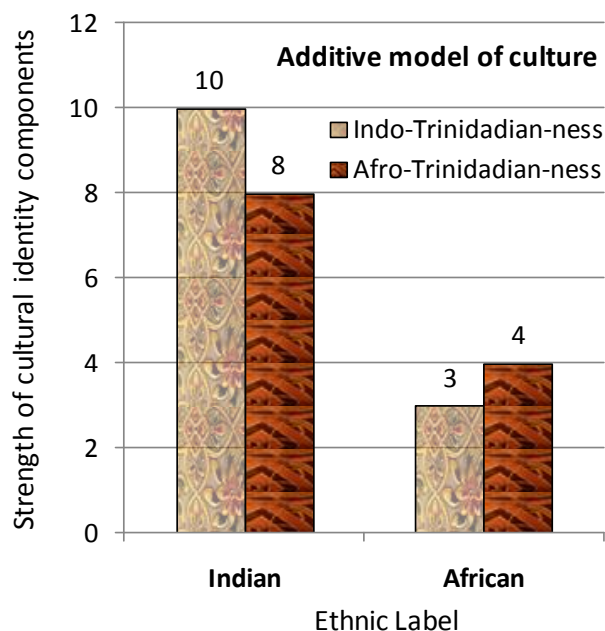


From the perspective of this Culturometric deconstruction of ethnic identity, Walcott's major contribution to the building of Afro-Caribbean identity

was to identify the source of the inherited fragments of migration culture as part of a pre-existing epic African culture.

Enculturation is the socially negotiated building of hierarchical roles that emerge by incorporating fragments of their own experience. The icon of Walcott's fragmented vase of epic ancestral culture potentiates Afro-Caribbean enculturation motivating its emergence, giving solace and closure by defining experiences of inherited fragmentary migration culture as fragments of a pre-existing and therefore more possible epic African culture.

In the additive model of culture, the strength of identity components within each individual, regardless of nominal ethnic self-labelling, can increase or decrease independently of each other. In the subtractive model, an increase in one component is matched by a decrease in the other component(s). So, as illustrated below, in the additive model the Afro-Trinidadian identity component of a highly dual-cultured Trinidadian (8) with Nominal Indian ethnicity could be more strongly Afro-Trinidadian than the Afro-Trinidadian identity component of a weakly cultured Trinidadian (4) who has a Nominal African ethnicity. In other words, ethnicity as a nominal category no longer serves as a major determinant marker of identity.

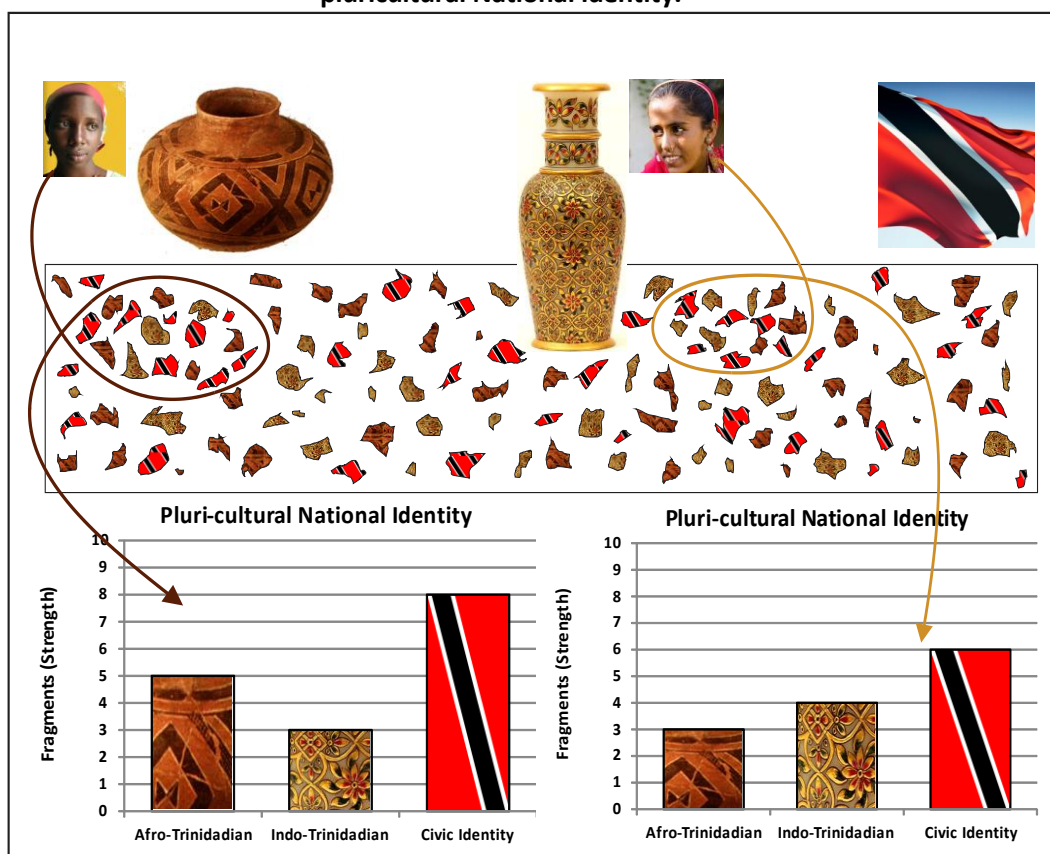


The strength of one's identity components are of practical importance in determining the priority of one's cultural allegiances. This brings us to the important practical issue of the family unity of the nation state.

### Family unity of the nation state

Walcott's icon identifies the sources of the two major cultural identity components of pluricultural ethnicity in Trinidad. However, beyond ethnic identities there is also civic identity the source of which is the state. The fragmented experiences of ethnic identity and civic identity together enculturate one's National identity. We extend figure 5 to include this third component of Trinidadian National Identity.

**Figure 6: Sources of three components of enculturation into Trinidadian pluricultural National identity.**



The relative strength of identity components indicates the priority of a person's cultural allegiances. However, under the limiting social conditions defining multi-cultural societies each person is restricted to the expression of only one of their ethnic identity components, which is reasonably the strongest and most probably, in the restricted enculturation of inter-culturally complete of multicultural societies, this single strongest identity component is likely to match the mono-ethnic culture of people's nominal ethnic label. So, for example, in 'first-past-the-post' Trinidadian elections the electorate reverts to voting along ethnic lines, with the equality of civic identity being associated with 'mixed race' nominal ethnicity.

Culturometrics allows us to measure and objectively compare the strength of identity components for respondents and for groups. Thus, we can anticipate effects of relative cultural allegiances for nominal groups in multicultural societies. This includes measuring threats to National Unity.

## **Method**

The key to assessing national unity lies in measuring the cultural fragmentation of ethnic identity.

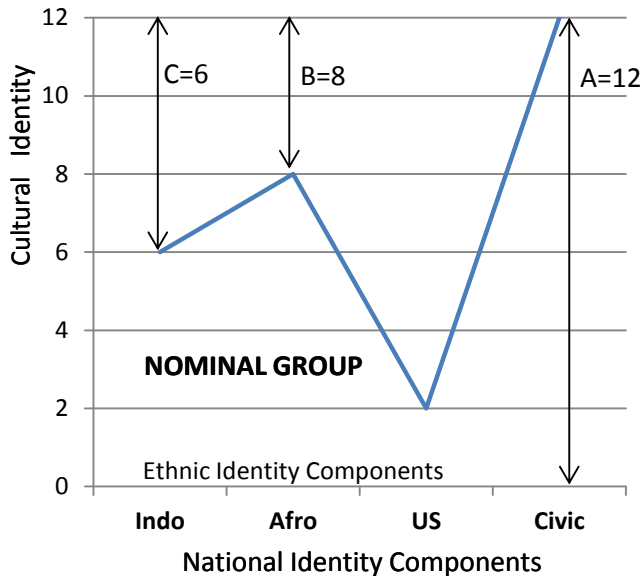
We can determine the support for national unity in nominal groups from the relative strengths of their aggregated cultural allegiances. In this research, we compared the national unity in Trinidad of the three main nominal ethnic groups (Afro-Trinidadians, Indo-Trinidadians and Mixed-Trinidadians). We also compared the National unity of the two main nominal religious groups. The planned religious group comparison was Christian (Protestant + Roman Catholic) 61.3% vs. Non-Christian (Muslim/ Islam + Hindu+ Jewish+ no religion) 38.7%, not all of whom responded to all comparison questions. However, there were no Jewish respondents (0.0%) and only 7 respondents with no religion (2.7%), so these two categories were removed from the Non-Christian religious group which was then precisely labelled as the Hindu/Muslim religious group (36.0%).

## ***Assessing a group's support to National Unity***

The following fictional figure displays supposed strengths of the three main cultural components of national identity for some nominal population

group – it could be for Teachers or for Elderly Indo-Trinidadians or it could be for all Afro-Trinidadians.

**Figure 7: Assessing national unity of a population sub-group**



National unity is represented by the superiority of allegiance to the Civic component of their identity ( $A=12$ ). Under Multiculturalism the group must choose allegiance to only one identity component. We can assess the group's support for national unity by comparing their Civic identity allegiance with their strongest competing allegiance ( $B=8$ ). We do this by comparing the two highest points of the graph – Civic ( $A=12$ ) and Afro ( $B=8$ ).

It is clear that Civic allegiance= $12$  is the strongest. Hence, the single choice for this group will be Civic allegiance i.e. to support National Unity. To assess degree of their support to National Unity we compare this  $12$  with the strongest competing allegiance which is Afro= $8$ . The percentage difference gives the group's support to National Unity;  $(12-8)/12=+4/12=+33\%$ . A negative outcome would result if their strongest allegiance was not to their Civic identity component. A negative outcome indicates a threat to National unity. We can also assess the greater support to National Unity that would also have been afforded from their Indo Identity component ( $C=6$ ) if pluri-culturalism had been maintained vis.  $(A-C)/C=(12-6)/12=+6/12=+50\%$



Support to National Unity = (Civic allegiance-strongest competing allegiance)/Civic allegiance x 100%

### ***Assessing the fragmentation of Ethnic identity***

Respondents are able to report the fragmentation of their ethnic identity. Psychologically, the cultural groupings of one's mixed fragments are recognised because their differences are maintained through a sense of social and historical tracking of fragments. These fragments are "mixed without amalgamating" (Alexander 1977, 432). When the components of identity are assimilated it is because those fragments are amalgamated so their differences are no longer discernable or groupable by stereotypical mono-cultural origins. Alexander reports a Chinese respondent, Chung, quantifying the fragmentation of his identity while distinguishing between Nominal Ethnic Labelling and Ethnic Cultural Identity:

The identity established for my informants more commonly focuses on their group membership, as in Walcott's poem (*'A Far Cry from Africa'*). A typical observation is the following by Chung:

I: I'm considered Chinese. I am really in a sense three-quarter Chinese. Am I? Yes, three-quarter I am. Of course, our physical features stamp us Chinese. (Alexander 1977, 246)

And so, we simply asked our respondents – a representative sample of 348 Trinidadian households - to similarly quantify the fragmentation of their national identities on a scale 0 to 10 as follows:

How Trinidadian do you feel?

How Indo-Trinidadian do you feel?

How Afro-Trinidadian do you feel?

How American-Trinidadian do you feel?

We also asked respondents to endorse one category of nominal ethnicity and one category of religion so that we could aggregate their responses by these nominal labelled groups to make group comparisons of National unity.

Now, there is a very complex problem that prevents these subjective ratings from being compared in the normal way. This is the confounding of respondent's expectations with their judgements. For example Chung (above) reported that he was  $\frac{3}{4}$  Chinese. To arrive at this judgement he would have compared his Chinese fragments to all the Chinese fragments needed to be completely Chinese. Now, if he expected this to be a high number then his few

fragments would represent a smaller fraction. If however, he expected there were only a few fragments needed to be completely Chinese then his fragments would represent a much larger fraction. The complex problem is to quantify his expectation, and everyone else's expectations, and use these expectations to 'regulate' each response so that the responses can be turned into indices which are all fractions of a common expectation. Then these indices could be objectively compared, which was not possible using the original responses. This is a problem that has plagued the ubiquitous use of Likert type questions since Likert devised the method for his PhD in 1932. However, Culturometrics has found the simple solution of using a common 'public object' as a common scale to remove the confounding personal expectation biases from the responses. It is called the Cultural Index Regulator and this is how it works. Not only is each respondent asked to quantify how Afro-Trinidadian he or she is, but the respondent is also asked to rate on the same scale the Afro-Trinidadian-ness of a public object such as a famous person with whom all respondents are familiar e.g.:

Q1 How Afro-Trinidadian are you, and on the same scale ..

Q2 How Afro-Trinidadian is 'George Maxwell Richards', the President of Trinidad and Tobago.

So the Q1/Q2 gives each respondent's Afro-Trinidadian-ness as a fraction of how Afro-Trinidadian George Maxwell Richards happens to be. To find the consensus value of that we simply take the average of all the Q2 questions (average of all Q2s).

Each respondent's Cultural Index of Afro-Trinidadian-ness (CIAf) is given by their answers to:  $CIAf = Q1/Q2 \times (\text{average of all Q2s})$ .

In a similar way, we can calculate the CI for each component of each respondent's Cultural Identity. We can aggregate these for all the respondents in a nominal group to quantify the cultural allegiances of the group. We can then assess the groups support to National Unity as shown above. There are many new Culturometric methods that resolve similar cultural research problems that are now exacerbated by the importance of cultural diversity. More detailed accounts of this method, the Cultural Index Regulator, are given in Boufoy-Bastick 2007, 2010b and 2012. Other Culturometric methods for solving other fundamental cultural research problems are made available at [www.Culturometrics.com](http://www.Culturometrics.com) as they are discovered and tested.

## Participants

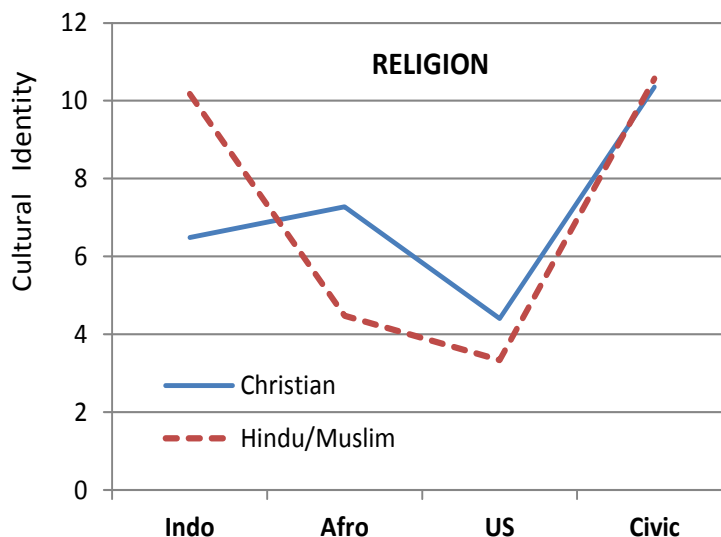
The sample which was representative of the adult population of Trinidad was a random selection of 348 Trinidadian households stratified by population density and ethnicity from 10 major Trinidadian constituencies across the island. The sample comprised 152 males and 196 females whose age ranged from 13.99 years to 91.75 years with a mean of 46.15 years. 56% (195) of the sample were heads of households. The households were contacted by telephone and survey was read to the respondents by 33 trained interviewers. The interviews took a total of 195 hours 27 minutes.

## Results

The results are presented in two sections; first for two nominal religious groupings and then for three nominal ethnic groupings. Firstly in each section, the cultural allegiances of the Nominal groups will be compared. Then the comparison of these allegiances to their group's Civic allegiance will be interpreted in terms of their group support of National Unity.

### National Unity and Religion

Figure 8: Civic and cultural allegiances for the two main religious groups in Trinidad



There are large and statistically significant differences in the ethnic identities components of Christian and Hindu/Muslim followers. Hindu/Muslim followers have much higher Indo-Trinidadian identities than do Christian followers at the level of medium effect size. The strength of Afro-Trinidadian identity is significantly stronger for Christians than for Hindu/Muslims. However, the Civic identity of both religious groups is equally strong.

	Indo	Afro	US	Civic
Christian	6.487	7.278	4.402	10.350
Hindu/Muslim	10.174	4.473	3.332	10.571
n1	125	141	147	151
n2	73	81	88	84
difference	3.688	2.805	1.069	0.221
sig of differences	?. ?	?. ?	?. ?	?
	0.000	0.000	0.019	0.609
effect size	0.414	0.338	0.154	0.034

#### SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL UNITY

	Indo	Afro	US
Christian	37%	30%	57%
Hindu/Muslim	4%	58%	68%

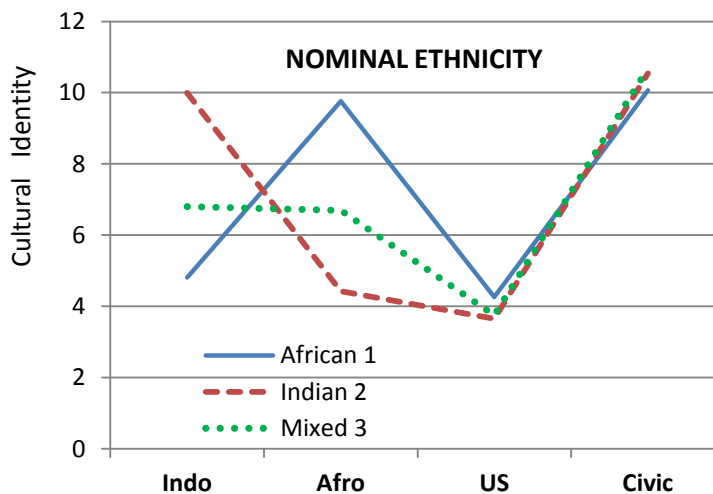
The most noticeable result is the lack of support for National Unity from the Hindu/Muslim community at only 4%. This means that the Hindu/Muslim community, particularly the Indo-Trinidadian Hindu/Muslims, give almost as much support to their own ethnic and religious interests as they do to those of the nation; the difference being only 4%. This is not the case for the Christian community who has a much higher support for National Unity of 30%.

There is only 6% advantage in mean allegiance of Hindu/Muslims over Christians. The problem is in the uneven distribution of Hindu/Muslims between the two main nominal ethnic groups (Indo and Afro), whereas Christianity is more evenly distributed among the two main nominal ethnicities. The greatest immediate impact on National Unity would result from lowering the Indo-Trinidadian-ness of the Hindu/Muslim group. For example, if the Indo-Trinidadian-ness of Hindu/Muslims was lowered by only 2 points from 10.174 to 8.174, then the National Unity for the whole country would increase from 4% to 27%. If it was lowered to the same level as the Afro-

Trinidadian-ness of the Christians, i.e. to 7.278, then support for National Unity would increase to the maximum possible for this single change effect to 31%. Alternatively much greater Civic support could be given to both religious groups, raising their Civic allegiances way above the Indo-Trinidadian-ness of the Hindu/Muslim group which would require many more resources for lesser effect.

### ***National Unity and Nominal Ethnicity***

**Figure 9: Civic and cultural allegiances for the main nominal ethnic groups in Trinidad**



These results show the Ethnic Cultural Identity components of the three main self-labelled Nominal Ethnic groups. The Indo-Trinidadians are slightly more Indian than the Afro-Trinidadians are African (9.996 vs. 9.761). The Ethnic cultural identities components of both these self-labelled ethnic groups are only very slightly less than the common civic identity of the sub-groups. Except for the mixed group, that comes mid-way between the other two groups, but highest on Civic allegiance.

Interestingly, in terms of valuing each other's culture, the Africans embrace Indo-Trinidadian culture (4.805) slightly more than the Indians embrace Afro-Trinidadian (4.420) culture. All three ethnic groups have very low American-Trinidadian-ness, although they all share a similarly high Civic identity component.

The most striking result here is the very low, but just positive, support of National Unity from the two nominal ethnic groups, at 5% for the Indians and only 3% for the Africans. However, the Mixed group has a much stronger support for National Unity

of  $(10.681-6.801)/10.681=36\%$ . The direct solution to this low national cohesion is not to revalue each other's culture, as this will lift the lower points and not lower the higher ethnic cultural identities components that compete with allegiance to Civic identity. The solution is to raise the Trinidadian-ness of all three groups. For example, increasing the Civic identity component of the Africans and the Indians by only 2 points to 12.067 and 12.545 respectively will lift their support for National Unity from 3% and 5% to 19% and 20% respectively.

	Indo	Afro	US	Civic
African 1	4.805	9.761	4.261	10.067
Indian 2	9.996	4.420	3.652	10.545
Mixed 3	6.801	6.690	3.746	10.681
n1	92	101	105	108
n2	108	128	133	130
n3	53	61	65	66
sig of differences	2 2	2 2	2	2
	0.000	0.000	0.307	0.358
effect size	0.541	0.567	0.089	0.082

SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL UNITY				
	Indo	Afro	US	
African 1	52%	3%	58%	
Indian 2	5%	58%	65%	
Mixed 3	36%	37%	65%	

However, revaluing each other's cultures might be an indirect solution as it might contribute to each group's civic identity without strengthening their own Ethnic cultural identity component. It was found as an adjunct to this study that the sex by age by ethnic group that most valued the other culture was elderly Indo-Trinidadian women. This may be related to the sense of oppression these women feel within their ethnic group (Barriteau 2011; Mohammed and Shepherd 1999). Hence, these ladies would be the best emissaries for increasing civic cohesion by encouraging the revaluing of the other groups' cultures.

## Conclusions

This paper presented a culturometric deconstruction of ethnic identity using the symbolism of Walcott's *Fragments of Epic Memory*. It then used the

symbolism as an agent of normative enculturation to reconstruct the concept of Caribbean pluri-culturalism from which our notions of mono-culturalism, multi-culturalism and nominal ethnicity were then derived. This process of deconstruction and reconstruction distinguished Walcott's contribution to the construction of Afro-Caribbean identity, highlighted the dangers to national unity of promoting multi-culturalism and applied the insights to an empirical study of National Unity in the predominantly bi-ethnic society of Trinidad. In particular, it showed how multi-culturalism reduces National Unity by deselecting and devaluing aspects of ethnic identity. It measured support for National Unity at only 3% and 5% from Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians respectively, compared to 36% support for National Unity from ethnically 'mixed' Trinidadians. Government policies were suggested that would enhance support for National Unity through actions targeted to differential cultural and civic allegiances. Results from this study of cultural allegiance warn that Trinidad could revert to a fundamentalist religious state if people started to vote on religious allegiances as they now vote on ethnic lines. In other words, should there be a two-party choice between a Hindu/Muslim or a Christian party, the Hindu/Muslim party would win. Any additional Afro Muslims would add to this result by voting for the Hindu/Muslim party although this majority would be reduced should more Indo Christians vote for the Christian party. Further, if we postulated a four-party choice based on a religious and an ethnic splits, then the Hindu/Muslim party would again win because the ethnic parties would remain evenly split.

The paper showed how the fragmented identities of Walcott's imagery that are dangerously devalued by muticulturalism can be revalued by practices promoting pluriculturalism – such as alternative voting in Trinidad – and that these also increase National Unity. A pertinent conclusion from this Culturometric deconstruction of ethnic identity was that Walcott's major contribution to the building of Afro-Caribbean identity was to identify the source of the inherited fragments of migration culture as part of a pre-existing epic African culture. Enculturation is the socially negotiated building of hierarchal proto-roles that emerge by incorporating fragments of their own experience. The icon of Walcott's fragmented vase of epic ancestral culture and object of unrequited love potentiates Afro-Caribbean enculturation motivating its emergence, giving solace and closure by defining experiences of inherited fragmentary migration culture as fragments of a pre-existing and therefore more possible and achievable epic African culture.

Walcott's statement "*either I am a nobody or I am a nation*" which he vividly proclaimed in "The Schooner Flight in the Star-Apple Kindgdom" (1979) poetically, although imprecisely, expresses the richness of his constructed identity. His statement does not distinguish between multiculturalism and pluriculturalism, or their subtractive and additive identity enculturation processes. Nor does Walcott mention multiple vases that are fragmented. In contrast, this paper takes Walcott's symbolism further by bringing an important new structure to identity construction through defining and applying the concepts and enculturation processes of multiculturalism and pluri-culturalism to the re-building of fragmented identity. These important distinctions between multicultural and pluri-cultural identity have thus far been ignored as have their implications for an individual's national identity - such as when Walcott refers to himself as being a 'nation'.

A lesson we can generalise from this paper is that to classify Walcott under a single multicultural category as Dutch because of his blue eyes, or as English because of his education, or as African because of his hair, or St. Lucian because he was born there, is to deselect, devalue and destroy most of the fragments of his identity. To describe him as a pluri-cultural poet and philosopher is to revalue the many and shared fragments that became Walcott.

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