Travel Request Proposal.

Conference:
Radical Caribbeans/Los caribes radicales: Reimagining Caribbean Life
Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana
October 3-5, 2013

Presentation:
La mirada del pelícano: Hacia una política de lo sensible en Tuntún de pasa y grifería de Luis Palés Matos. [The pelican’s gaze: Towards a politics of the sensible in Luis Palés Matos’ Tuntún de pasa y grifería]

Abstract:
Nowadays the body appears as one of the most worn-out categories not only in philosophy but also social sciences and literary theory. Apparently everything has been said about it, and yet it keeps coming back as an unresolved, stinging task. As Jean Luc Nancy stated, the body is cluttered by inscriptions to the point of total saturation. The task would not be to write about or on the body, but to make the body regain a knowledge of its own weight and limits as a consequence of exscription. Decades before the works of Nancy, Puerto Rican poet Luis Palés Matos thought with his Tuntún de pasa y grifería (1937), ways in which rhythmic procedures—both in dancing and eating—could work as an escape valve so bodies could expel and free themselves from over determination. Following Rubén Ríos Ávila analysis on Palés, I will study the “space of rhythm and waste, the rhythm of waste, the excremental space, where the idea always finds its escape valve, its eventual exit” [espacio del gasto y del ritmo, del ritmo del gasto, el lugar excrementicio, por donde la idea encuentra siempre su válvula de escape, su eventual salida]. To achieve my goal, I begin with a series of questions: Which bodies are made visible/tangible by Pales’ poems? And from that, which are their gestures, productivities, and outlays? For this task I will carefully analyze the continuum created between ingestion, productivity, and outlay. I consider that is through the analysis of these key topics that we could reach a more in depth understanding of Pales’ sensible politics and views on languages and bodies.

Research Statement:
The presentation I will give at this conference is drawn from a paper in progress on Luis Palés Matos’s poetry as a way to rethink 20th Century philosophical and aesthetic theories on the body and the sensible. The hypotheses on this presentation also were key in my 20th Century Latin American poetry comprehensive exam that I took last summer with professor Quintero-Herencia. Furthermore, many of the points that I’m working with in Palaes’s work are fundamental for the writing of my thesis proposal, so this conference will be the perfect place to test them out and present them for discussion with colleagues and renowned professors in the field. More importantly, with this opportunity I will share the panel with well-established researchers in the field, and I hope they will help me enrich my ideas and gain new perspectives to continue researching the topics of the body, sensible politics, and 20th Century Latin American poetry. I cannot think of a more apt opportunity to test my hypotheses and continue working on my proposal and future thesis than the Radical Caribbeans held by Tulane University.