

Suzanne C. Persard
Haiku; *Elegy*:1838; 2012

calling indians
all aboard s.s. maidstone
price of land: your soul

1838
kidnapped misguided free will
blood on british hands

kala pani crossed
ships stealing blood black waters
yet white we will bleed

colonization
welcomes you with cutlass cane
and hegemony

last stop: old harbor
bodies assigned to barracks
children now orphaned

nani, twelve-years-old
abducted by british guards
at the marketplace

engineer, she said
her brahmin father had been
in books they'll write '*slaves*'

sugarcane raw sweet
machete shattered his soul
rum to drown the pain

wives beaten to death
glistening blood sweet cane trash
plantation cutlass

hindi bolti ho?
patois creole twang and slang
speak english: lose all

hindus muslims sikhs
shall forever be branded
cockburn pen coolies

on ashoka road
metal street signs pawned for bread
hindu town: no more

jamaican sunsets
burned souls of forlorn bodies
long before tourists

for 200 years
chutney tassa sarangi
echo as remnants

gorakphur lucknow
pulses nostalgia through veins
scarcely found on maps

francis williams brown
from prasad singh ramghulam
is there more to lose?

in brooklyn cafes
sugar in the raw for chai
i mourn history

calling ancestors:
all aboard (indenture)ship
one-stop to exile.

Suzanne C. Persard is a Bronx-born and raised, Indo-Jamaican writer. She has studied literature at Binghamton University, George Mason University, and the University of Oxford. Her work centralizes experiences of fractured identities, exploring the shifting of memory, nostalgia, and exile. Much of her writing has been informed by the post-colonial Caribbean, as well as notions of patriotism in diaspora communities. Suzanne is co-founder of Jahajee Sisters, the first organization in the country committed to addressing social justice issues affecting Indo-Caribbean women. Writing has been her love for as long as she can remember.