

From April to September 2004, I conducted fieldwork in the Seychelles. Prior to my arrival, no comprehensive anthropological research had been carried out in the islands for three decades. Despite the archipelago's success in marketing the Seychelles as paradise to the outside world, life for the ordinary Seychellois corresponds less to the myth of paradise since the 1977 *coup d'état*. Under the guise of a security discourse, the Government was omnipresent in virtually every aspect of the lives of the Seychellois. The manipulation of Seychellois history and culture served as cornerstone for the justification of Government policy. This leads to a two-fold query: How do the Seychellois form their sense of security and community in an environment where daily encounters either with police, Government agents or fellow citizens are fuelled with distrust, fear and risk of being unmasked as a non-partisan of the ruling party? Secondly, how do people construct their own stories of the past in the context of the Government's attempt to tailor Seychellois history and culture to fit its own agenda?