Definitions starting with J

Junkanoo, John Canoe

/jóngkanu/ [W Car.; cf. Krio Jokunu a fool KED (= DJE John Canoe 4.); "by folk-etym. from some such form as Ewe dzono sorcerer + kunu something deadly" DJE; cf. also Ewe kunu funeral ceremony WES; MCC jaangkunu was formerly a dance performed at a memorial feast for the dead, later at Christmas (Holm 1978:212); cf. also Krio jankoniko to shame publicly, from Yoruba Jan-koliko one elevated as a figure of fun or disgrace KED, and Cam. dodokido masked dancing figures which play or perform during December (Ibo) CCD]

n. 1. a festival between Christmas and New Years with groups of participants in fantastic crepe-paper costumes on a common theme dancing in rhythm to their group's drummer, blowing whistles and shaking cowbells. In Nassau the groups gather around 3 a.m. on December 26 and January 1 to parade down the main street, competing for a cash prize offered by the Ministry of Tourism; smaller celebrations take place on the outer islands (see Bethel 1978). (Gen.)

2. a participant in this parade, especially a leading figure: 1849 "John Canoe" came forth on stilts (Nassau Guardian, Dec. 26). 1928 Those taking part in the ceremonies are known correctly as Johnny Canoes and colloquially as Junkanoos (Curry 60). Everybody does get up early to see the Junkanoo-dem (Andros). (Gen)

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