

**The
Journal
of Caribbean
History**



The Journal of Caribbean History

VOLUME 39: 1

2005

Special Issue

A selection of papers from the Thirty-Sixth Annual Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians, held in Barbados under the auspices of the Department of History and Philosophy, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados, 17–21 May 2004

Published by the
Department of History
The University of the West Indies

ISSN 0047-2263

Published by the Departments of History
The University of the West Indies

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The University of the West Indies

ISSN 0047-2263

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Prices for the journal are as follows:

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single issues: US\$20 each

Caribbean: US\$25 per volume, plus US\$5 shipping

single issues: US\$20 each

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All subscriptions and orders should be directed to:

The University of the West Indies Press

1A Aqueduct Flats

Mona, Kingston 7

Jamaica, West Indies

www.uwipress.com

Payments should be made by cheque, international money order or credit card (Visa, MasterCard or American Express) to The University of the West Indies Press.

Set in Axiomatic 9/13 x 24

Page composition: Robert Harris, Kingston, Jamaica

Printed by Stephenson's Litho Press, Jamaica

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Belonging and Unbelonging:

The Impact of Migration on Discourses of Identity in Jamaican History¹

VERENE A. SHEPHERD

Abstract

This article rehearses the recurrent and problematic subject of the impact of the migration and settlement of different ethnicities in colonial Jamaica. More specifically, it explores interethnic interaction, as manifested in "ranking", and the discourses that surrounded the issue of identity, that is, who was truly "Creole" or "Jamaican"; who "belonged" and who did not. The article also engages with twentieth-century discussions in Jamaica about who had the right to appropriate social space and to benefit from the material resources of that space; who had cultural legitimacy in a multicultural society that rested on the ideology of racial and ethnic inequality. Clearly, while "Creole" in the sense of being "Jamaican" could imply unity and solidarity, "Creole" could also be inserted into a discourse of exclusion. This was manifested in the relations between Indian newcomers and settled Africans and their descendants in Jamaica, a relationship determined by the legacies of the colonizers' divide-and-rule tactics.

Introduction

The birth of the Atlantic World as an integrated and expanding capitalist economy has increasingly engaged the attention of scholars, many of whom are now involved in the dedicated academic field of Atlantic Studies. Integral aspects of such studies are the themes of migration and global population movements, including the forced relocation of Africans through the transatlantic trade. The centrality of slavery to the Atlantic World is evidenced by the fact that it was that factor which transformed the Atlantic into a complex trading area, turning it into the

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centre of the international economy, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Slavery also transformed the Caribbean into a plantation complex in the South Atlantic System that subsequently contributed to industrial development in the North Atlantic. Not only were over fifteen million Africans transported forcefully to the Americas, but white immigration from Europe was also a vital feature of the Caribbean colonial system, which required settlers, managers, artisans and a governing elite. When slavery was abolished in Haiti in 1794 and in the rest of the Caribbean between 1834 and 1886, Caribbean landholders mined many areas, mostly Asia, for additional plantation labourers in order to perpetuate the mentalities and practices of the slave relations of production.

These historical processes that gave rise to waves of forced and voluntary migration starting in the fifteenth century have resulted in Caribbean populations that are invariably multi-ethnic. But migration is not only confined to the historical past. The current preoccupation with the spate of refugee migration, in particular the flight of Haitian refugees to other parts of the Caribbean and to the United States, the continuing global debates over immigrant communities, transnational identities, the mythologies of citizenship and mobility, new and stringent immigration rules and the relationship of so-called resident and non-resident aliens to border security, are all indications that migration (or its politics) does not only lie at the centre of modernity, but continues to characterize the post-modern age.

This article revisits the topic of the social impact of the migration and settlement of different ethnicities in Jamaica in slavery and freedom. More specifically, it aims to explore the issue of interethnic interaction as manifested in "ranking" and the discourses that developed around the issue of identity, that is, who was truly "Creole" or "Jamaican"; who "belonged" and who did not. In its simplest definition, *ranking* is a metaphor for social ordering, social and cultural hierarchizing. But ranking should not be seen simply as a euphemism for the static social stratification model of sociologist M.G. Smith, in which the racial, cultural and class categories are conflated into a simple social hierarchy.² Within the Jamaican context ranking represents the linguistic, oral and literary aspects of social culture that are the ritualized and politicized codes and consciousness of difference. Stuart Hall is correct to assert that the persistence of such colonial creations as ranking contradicts the cultural desire of post-modern mentalities for the celebration of difference in an egalitarian fashion rather than hierarchically.³

The Early Discourse of Belonging and Unbelonging

The debate over who belonged to Jamaica and who did not was clearly evident in the post-slavery era. For example, on 3 February 1950 the *Jamaica Times* published a letter from the Organizer-General of the Afro-West Indian League (AWIL), formed in 1940, in which he stated that "simply being born in Jamaica does not make one a Jamaican, in the same way that a chicken hatched in an oven cannot be called a bread".⁴ This was a complexly constructed metaphor for the claims and rights of citizenship, to be read as a distinctive production of antagonistic cultural designs in mid-twentieth-century Jamaica. It spoke to who had the right to appropriate social space and to benefit from the material resources of that space; who had cultural legitimacy in a multicultural society that rested on the ideology of racial and ethnic inequality. It also showed clearly that while "Creole" in the sense of being "Jamaican" could imply unity and solidarity, "Creole", as Percy Hintzen has observed, could also be inserted into a discourse on exclusion.⁵

The socio-economic context of this declaration by the Organizer-General of the AWIL was the charged racial environment of the mid-twentieth century, the result of the 1930s labour protests, and the economic and social dislocations caused by the two World Wars and the resultant world depression. In Jamaica, this was manifested in massive unemployment, a problem that escalated as workers who had sought outlets for jobs in Cuba and Central America were subjected to forced repatriation, sugar estates were reorganized to increase labour productivity and reduce the estate labour force, and the market for peasant output contracted. The situation that resulted was favourable for employers. They now had what they had always wanted out of migration and post-slavery labour relations: a competitive labour market, a reserve army of labourers, with, according to Ken Post, as many as three people competing for the same job.⁶ They could not only lower wages as a consequence, but they could (and did) pick and choose labourers. Their stated preference in the post-slavery period was for male African-Jamaicans and they reorganized the labour force to satisfy this preference, thereby alienating women and also Indians, as an ethnic group⁷ imported since 1845 to replace or supplement the African-Jamaican labourers or to augment the wage labour force. Many of the Indian/Indian-Jamaican plantation workers had not taken any active part in the labour rebellions of 1938, believing, erroneously, that non-

involvement would guarantee them continued employment after the protests ended.

During the 1940s, the colonial government created a system of Relief Work, administered through the Public Works Department of rural parishes and the Kingston Employment Bureau, to help solve the problems of rising unemployment and impoverishment of workers. Soon, the unemployed from all ethnicities were joining long queues at the Kingston Bureau in search of jobs. As only about 20 percent of those who registered at the Bureau ever managed to secure jobs,⁸ African-Jamaicans in Kingston and St Andrew reportedly resorted to "elbowing" those considered non-Jamaicans out of the queues to increase their own chances of securing jobs. African-Jamaicans were understandably resentful of labourers imported to undermine their economic welfare, and so demonstrated their frustration by denying Indians and Indian-Jamaicans a space in the unemployment lines. Many disliked the tendency of some Indians/Indian-Jamaicans to display ethnic exclusiveness and express explicitly an Indian diasporic consciousness; and some charged that many Indians had remained aloof from the labour movement of the late 1930s.⁹ For these reasons, Indians were not considered to be entitled to scarce material resources in Jamaica. Above all, they regarded both Indians and Indian-Jamaicans as "aliens" (albeit resident aliens), who did not truly "belong" to Jamaica and used the term "Indian" (as did the state) to refer to even those who were at least Creole-born. Job ticket distributors also allegedly discriminated against Indians/Indian-Jamaicans, facilitating very few of them who managed to stay in the lines and register for relief work. By the end of 1940, 95 percent of the Indians/Indian-Jamaicans in Kingston and St Andrew seeking jobs were still unemployed, including most of the 247 who had registered for jobs at the Bureau.¹⁰ But unemployment was not the preserve of Indians/Indian-Jamaicans; working class African-Jamaicans also experienced a high unemployment rate in this period.

This intensely charged episode between Indians/Indian-Jamaicans and African-Jamaicans that gave rise to debates in the period 1930–1950 over the definition of "Jamaican",¹¹ is emblematic of the post-slavery and twentieth-century disputes over "belonging", "citizenship" and the contested category of "Jamaican". It spoke to the criteria for "belonging", "unbelonging" and ranking in a multi-ethnic society where some cultures were deemed superior and others inferior, but where those African-Jamaicans (even those calling for a return to Africa), were struggling to reassemble the fragments of African identity, reassert

Africanness as part of Jamaican citizenship and exclude "aliens" (post-slavery newcomers) from assuming the designation of "Jamaican" – a designation that they, understandably, appropriated based on their demographic dominance, prior arrival and overwhelming Creole status.

Although there was no widespread consensus among the island's several classes and ethnicities on all the criteria that could transform an immigrant from "alien" to "citizen", it was clear that local birth alone could not render all Creoles "Jamaican". Therefore, Dr Douglas, the Organizer-General of the AWIL, was sending a not so cleverly telegraphed message to those Indians born in Jamaica who were under the mistaken impression that they were Jamaicans, that being Jamaican was more than just "I man born ya."

Some obvious questions at this juncture are: when did Jamaica become a preferred place for residence? How deeply embedded in the island's historical past was this attempt to construct citizenship within the discursive space of Creole? Of related interest is the question of how early did an articulated black consciousness (as displayed, for example by the AWIL) emerge that would attach itself to an anti-alien "native" consciousness? The answers must be sought by historicizing the political struggles for identity and status ordering.

During the seventeenth century, there were discourses over the rights of Englishmen in Jamaica; but those discourses revolved around the claim for the same constitutional rights of England's citizens – rights that were no different from those accorded to English citizens residing in England. It was related more to the opposition of the white male elites in the colonial government to political interference from England and was not a reflection of a self-conscious commitment to Creole society. On the contrary, research into the slavery period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries indicates that being born in Jamaica was sufficient reason for low ranking within the context of a society where top ranking went to those who were white, metropolitan born, the owners of large sugar plantations, able to live as absentee proprietors, or, if in the island, as members of the elite class of whites who controlled the socio-economic and political life of the island, and lived grandly in great houses staffed by a large army of enslaved domestics. This elite was usually Anglican, married, and adherent to the Western European culture which it elevated above African, Euro-Creole and Afro-Creole cultures.

The complex relationship between the sugar and the pen-keeping sectors in Jamaica during slavery can usefully illustrate the ways in

which ranking was manifested: how status mobility was attached to factors that did not include being "native" or "belonging" to Jamaica. Even those Creoles, such as locally born pen-keepers, whose livelihood depended on "native" enterprises, maintained a colonial mentality that devalued their Creole origins, rendering them "Creole colonials". Part of this social attitude was linked to the fact that during slavery land use was an important factor that ascribed social position; and status mobility was therefore fundamentally related to the type of economic activities in which settlers and colonizers engaged. It was within this context that sugar planters were ranked above those involved in other economic enterprises and, on the basis of the higher status of sugar planters, the primarily Creole pen-keepers struggled to acquire the trappings to enable them to become a part of the English elite.

As a result of the high percentage of pen-keepers who were born and continued to reside in Jamaica, with inferior social status accorded those who could not afford to live abroad,¹² relations of super-ordination and subordination defined the relations between colonials and Creoles.¹³ The absentee sugar planters had global ranking. Many of them sat in the British Parliament, had knighthoods and London offices, and lived in grandeur among the British elite. Pen-keepers, not surprisingly, aspired to re-ranking through the medium of absenteeism. In a letter to his brother Peter in 1811, George Forbes of Thatchfield Pen in St Elizabeth stated that as soon as his financial circumstances permitted he would return to live in Britain.¹⁴ Even Free-Coloured pen-keepers shared this preference for metropolitan residence, Robert Hilton Anguin expressing a similar desire to live in Britain.¹⁵ So, despite their lower social ranking and general lack of political power, the pen-keepers maintained an ideology that closely paralleled that of the sugar planters. The Free-Coloured Creole pen-keepers were as colonial in their mentality as the whites.

The only exception to this rule of devaluing local, Creole birth applied to those of African descent who were born in the island and placed in a dialectical relationship with the devalored African culture. In other words, Creoles, especially those who were Coloureds, were ranked above their black, Africa-born kin. By the nineteenth century when planters had a choice, these Coloured Creoles were given tasks suited to their alleged "superior Creole status" – domestic, supervisory and artisan work, for example. Not all of the enslaved persons accepted the negative attitudes towards Africa and many of them always wanted to return "home". While resistance to enslavement was endemic the lib-

eration struggles were not necessarily always linked to a desire on the part of Africans and Afro-Creoles to live as free people in Jamaica.

So, even though Jamaican society of the slavery period was described by Kamau Brathwaite as a Creole society (that is, a society in which a certain "Jamaicanness" developed at the interstices between the cultures of Europe and Africa,¹⁶ and where the creolization process defined the process of cultural change and resulted in a tentative cultural norm),¹⁷ such localization or "indigenization" as occurred did not have unanimous support from the various classes and ethnic groups in the island's social structure. Jamaican identity, like wider Caribbean identity, currently occurs within the discursive space of Creole, but during slavery "Creole" was mostly associated with "inferior" and "local", and was always "alternative" to the so-called pure culture of the European elite or aspiring Euro-Creole elite.

Proto-Citizenship in Pre-Independence Jamaica

In the post-slavery period, the elite Coloureds used local birth to claim priority over metropolitan and even Creole whites who could legally claim to be English. Their struggles with the colonial white elite were mainly over constitutional and political rights to chart their own political future. The black intelligentsia fought its own separate war for identity and social space within the context of a society where material and intellectual progress did not confer equality with the white and coloured elite; but, like the Coloureds, their intervention into the discourses of belonging was often framed within the context of distancing themselves from Africa and things African. Rather than claim the designation of African, they claimed "Jamaican", though in its Euro-Creole cultural manifestation. Several letters to newspaper editors in the first half of the twentieth century attest to this tendency. One citizen who wrote to the editor of the *Daily Gleaner* to oppose any ethnic identification with Africa was certain that "the only race we belong to is the Human Race and our nationality is Jamaican, not African".¹⁸ Another individual, as Colin Palmer notes, looked sceptically on any attempt to de-emphasize links with England and strengthen those with Africa.¹⁹

The black masses, struggling against the efforts to achieve cultural homogeneity that implied a removal of Africanisms and the African worldview from the Jamaican culture, also intervened in these discourses. They too were preoccupied with the question of who mapped the terrain of citizenship or the criteria for belonging in a society emerg-

ing from slavery. This preoccupation was demonstrated in several ways; however, this article will review only their relationship with "equal subordinates", in particular with the Indians/Indian-Jamaicans. In their conflicts with this ethnic group, "newcomers" to the island, African-Jamaicans used cultural difference (as opposed to cultural diversity in Homi K. Bhabha's terms²⁰) to authorize and construct their own meaning of cultural identification.

African-Jamaicans and Indians/Indian-Jamaicans were able to observe each other's culture and to form their opinions because they lived in close proximity. There was virtually no residential separation between Indians and African-Jamaicans. Inevitably, the juxtaposition of the two groups led to some social contact and perceptions about the ethnic "other". These perceptions, which took on a racially stereotyped form, themselves played a part in the formation of an Indian ethnic identity. This identity came about both in terms of how Indians felt they were perceived by others and sometimes in an enlarged sense of difference from their Afro-Creole neighbours.

As cultural difference was viewed hierarchically in post-slavery Jamaica, it was not surprising that acculturized African-Jamaicans, after observing the non-Europeanized culture of the Indians, considered themselves superior. Then as now, Western culture was elevated over Eastern culture. This was despite the fact that fair-skinned Indians and Indian-Jamaicans, whose origins were North Indian and who claimed affinity with the Aryan race, looked down on black-skinned African-Jamaicans. However, this racism, expressed through the medium of skin colour, did not seem to have had much impact on African-Jamaicans who still ranked Indians and their descendants unfavourably on the social scale. The criteria by which they did so and deemed them "alien" were not Afrocentric norms, but those that had some degree of consensus among most social groups in Creole society. In other words, Indians and Indian-Jamaicans were not considered socially inferior because they could not speak African languages or because they did not dress African and practice Myal and Kumina. The descendants of enslaved peoples had increasingly become creolized, participating in the locally evolved habits, language, customs, cuisine and popular culture of the Caribbean,²¹ while Indians/Indian-Jamaicans (whose anatomy was firmly Creole, according to George Lamming),²² still viewed Creole as something negative, especially where it occurred as a result of interracial sex,²³ and tried to resist the acculturative forces of Creole society. Consequently, like the colonial government, the imperial government,

the churches/missionary societies and other sections of Afro- and Euro-Creole society, African-Jamaicans ranked Indians/Indian-Jamaicans lower down on the social scale because they did not practice the Christian religion, spoke supposedly "bad English", dressed "indecently"²⁴ and had "strange" habits and customs. In addition, unlike the practice during slavery, "foreign" birth was used as a basis for exclusion.

The Presbyterian perhaps best reflected the host society's attitude towards the languages spoken by the Hindu and Muslim Indians when they said that Indians spoke in "different tongues". The implication was that this was due to backwardness, Indian society failing to achieve the supposed linguistic uniformity of a country like England. Even when, by the 1890s, many Indians/Indian-Jamaicans spoke the "accepted language", the Presbyterians described this as "bad English", "the badness of which is a different badness from that spoken by Jamaicans of the same class".²⁵ Also, even before Indians had arrived in Jamaica, the Baptists had built up suspicion about their culture in the minds of their African-Jamaican flock. Fearful of the impact that Indians might have on the African-Jamaican population, they had opposed the import of so-called "pagan" Indians, noting in 1845 that, "the importation of a number of heathen and pagan foreigners with their religious superstitions, idolatry and wickedness, will act most injuriously on the morals of the [black] population and hinder the efforts that are now in operation for their moral and religious improvement."²⁶

In a similar vein, a letter appearing under the name of "Publicola", sent to the editor of the 1847 *Morning Journal* (a newspaper that openly supported white and African immigration but opposed Indian immigration), lamented: "better for Jamaica if her soil had never been pressed by the foot of a Coolie – it appears to be of little advantage to them – [for] they show little disposition to imitate us and will never make a material progress in our customs".²⁷

The Scottish Presbyterians and Quakers, in particular, tried to ensure that such "imitation" would eventually take place by setting out to convert Indians to Christianity and socialize them along Euro-Creole lines. They shared Alfred Caldecott's view that the Indian presence was a "serious addition to the responsibilities of the Church",²⁸ and their culture was another challenge to a society where "English Law was but striving with African-rooted habits among Jamaicans".²⁹ They considered religious customs such as the Shi'ite Muslim Hussay, as "strange"; and were appalled at the Indian custom of marrying young children,

considered minors in the Jamaican society. Their mission to the Indians was therefore designed to achieve both conversion and cultural assimilation. Their success was measured by the fact that whereas in 1912 only 29 percent of the Indians were categorized as Christians, by 1943 only 20 percent of them identified openly with religions apart from Christianity. In addition, by 1950 very few parishes in which the Quakers and Presbyterians were active, including Westmoreland, which had a large Indian/Indian-Jamaican population, still observed the Hussay festival.

Indians/Indo-Creoles responded in different ways to the low ranking of their culture by Afro- and Euro-Creole society. Like the pen-keepers almost a century earlier, many tried to seek re-ranking and acceptance through a process of selective creolization. Many intermarried with other ethnic groups (though not with the elite as in the case of the pen-keepers), converted to Christianity, adopted Western dress and language and discontinued certain social practices like ethnic-specific marriage customs. While some changes would have come about through the natural process of interculturalization, this deliberate effort to conform to the norms of Afro- and Euro-Creole society caused a creolized Indian/Indian-Jamaican society to emerge by the 1950s.

However, some Indians and the Indo-Creole elite sought a different route, pressing for the recognition of their distinctive culture. They had realized that "Jamaicans" made little class or caste distinction, referring to all Indians and Indian-Jamaicans as "coolies". They therefore set out to win recognition for their ancient and allegedly "superior" customs and change the low evaluation of their culture. They established communal organizations such as the East Indian Association of Jamaica (1930), the East Indian National Union (1937) and the East Indian Progressive Society (1940), and sought to promote Indian culture. But they also began to press for ethnic-specific rights and benefits (special schools, special consideration for land and poor relief benefits, cremation of the dead by the pyre system, customary marriage and divorce practices, ethnic representation in the legislature and repatriation). The larger society protested these approaches, interpreting the action of the Indian organizations as an attempt on the part of people of Indian descent to maintain ethnic exclusivism and reject Jamaica and "Jamaican culture". This interpretation was strengthened by the ways in which some Indians/Indo-Creoles articulated their views about belonging. For example, even though the East Indian Progressive Society had stated that one of its aims was to instruct Indian-Jamaicans on their

rights as citizens of Jamaica, it and other communal associations made statements that indicated a contrary tendency. For example, Mr Coy, the East Indian National Union's Solicitor-General, is reported to have said to the Royal Commission: "the majority of Indians regard themselves as a separate community. Only a very minor proportion . . . feel that they are Jamaicans."³⁰

This feeling that India was home was reflected in the calls for repatriation despite the imposition of the requirement in 1909 that returnees should contribute a portion of the passage money. Poiri, who came to Jamaica on the ship *Dahomey* in 1903, summed up the views of many Indians/Indian-Jamaicans towards continued residence in Jamaica when he wrote as follows to the Protector of Immigrants in the 1920s: "I am very much desirous to go home and I shall be very gratitude [*sic*] if you kindly send me away to India by the next ship. I feel very sad in Jamaica. I am willing to pay passage and clear off from this island."³¹

In 1930, the year in which the colonial government's legal obligation to repatriate ex-indentured Indians and their family ended unilaterally, 1,300 Indians and Indian-Jamaicans requested repatriation.³² Calls for repatriation continued into the 1940s, and these calls did not come only from Indian nationals. Fifty percent of the calls in 1941 came from Jamaican-born Indians, many of whom harboured the view that the colonial government was responsible for their migration to Jamaica and continued to hold them responsible for their "entrapment" in the island.

As part of the project of forcing settlement and creolization on Indians and Indo-Creoles, the colonial government reversed or refused to entertain ethnic-specific benefits and claims. Instead, the government pushed for civic assimilation in nonarticulating sectors of subordinate minority cultures as a way of achieving "social order". It insisted that Indians who married according to their customary rites had to register such marriages before they could be recognized and deemed legal, a regulation that Indians considered unnecessary. The colonial government also outlawed Muslim divorce procedures and Hindu practices for disposal of the dead that involved cremation by the pyre system. Except for the twenty-year period between 1910 and 1930, the government also ruled against Asian-specific schools and curricula. In justifying the closure of these schools in 1930, Mr Tucker, Acting Director of Education, stressed: "there is no distinction made in elementary education for the separation of East Indian or Chinese children from the remainder, the desire being that if these children remain in Jamaica, they should become its citizens."³³

The lobby for ethnic representation in the legislature by the Indian organizations and the colonial government in India was also not entertained. The colonial government in India had requested that seats be reserved for Indians in both houses of the legislature after 1944 on the basis that the Indian population was not "numerous enough or sufficiently organized in any electoral area to succeed in returning its own representatives to either House under a system of universal adult suffrage".³⁴ However, Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, dismissed the request, arguing that the colonial government could not possibly single out any ethnic group for special favours.³⁵

The colonial and imperial government's injunction to "creolize" was reinforced by the Moyne Commission whose view was that, with 90 percent of the Indians in Jamaica in 1939 being locally born, "there are grave objections to treating the Indian Community separately from all others". The Commission's Report went on to stress that "any measures which cause the East Indians to look upon themselves or to be looked upon as a people apart will at once pave the way for inter-racial rivalries and jealousies, and at the same time prejudice the handling of the many problems involving all the peoples of the West Indies".³⁶

However, colonial policy was one thing; the reactions and perceptions of the larger society was another. Clearly, given the socio-economic climate, the 1930s and 1940s were not the right years for an all-embracing attitude to people whom African-Jamaicans categorized as "aliens". Their attitude to these "aliens" was translated into violent conflicts in the early to mid-twentieth century. It would seem, however, that it was economic competition rather than social ranking specifically that explains the conflicts that developed. According to Pierre van den Berghe's typology of competitive race relations, economic competition determines race relations in capitalist societies where equal subordinates compete for scarce resources. Such competition usually manifested itself in racial prejudice, expressed in such ways as aggression and the treatment of the newcomers as "alien".³⁷

But why were these conflicts delayed until the mid-twentieth century, although Indians had been imported since 1845? The answer is that it was only then that "Indians" were perceived as posing a real economic threat to African-Jamaicans. This late development of economic competition between African-Jamaicans and Indians might seem surprising in light of the reasons Indian labourers were relocated to the colonial Caribbean. Emancipation had resulted in a contraction of the plantation labour force as the newly freed sought alternatives to estate

wage labour or were forced to leave because of the poor labour relations and planters' coercive strategies. The planter-class had responded by importing additional workers to flood the labour market, depress wages and defeat the attempt by the newly freed persons to actualize their freedom in meaningful economic ways. The importation of additional labourers, mostly from Asia, was perceived by the African-Jamaican working class as a deliberate strategy to defeat emancipation. Swithin Wilmot's research indicates that Samuel Clarke, an African-Jamaican carpenter and outspoken vestryman from the parish of St David bordering St Thomas-in-the-East and who was executed in 1865 in the repression following the Morant Bay Rebellion, captured blacks' views on such a coercive strategy at one of his public meetings in St David between 1853 and 1865. He reminded his audience that it was the newly freed people's assertion of their freedom from estate labour that had caused the planters to tax the labouring population "for the purpose of bringing out competitors [Indians]".³⁸ In addition, Indians received certain benefits within the context of African-Jamaicans' struggle for improved conditions in the post-slavery period: free or assisted repatriation up to 1930, £12 cash or 10 acres of Crown land in lieu of repatriation up to 1910; free medical care and housing; guaranteed agricultural wage labour and a Protector of Immigrants to watch over their welfare.

However, only 38,000 Indians were ever imported to Jamaica, representing a mere seven percent of the 500,000 relocated to the post-slavery Caribbean; and at no time did Indians form more than two to three percent of the Jamaican population. Indians were not imported when the economy was depressed and repatriation kept their numbers small. The fact that they formed a significant portion of the agricultural labour force by the early twentieth century was also not an indication that Indians/Indian-Jamaicans were displacing African-Jamaicans, many of whom emigrated or sought non-plantation avenues to upward social mobility. Therefore, the landholders' expectation that Indians and their descendants would contribute to the building up of a large pool of reserve labourers and create intense economic competition with the local labouring population was not realized in the nineteenth century.

The situation changed in the 1930s and 1940s. By then, the end of government-assisted Indian repatriation and the (mostly forced) return of African-Jamaican migrants from Cuba, Honduras and Panama caused the build up of a pool of reserve labour. For the first time, there was real competition for scarce agricultural jobs between Indians/Indian-Jamaicans and African-Jamaicans. Conflicts were inevitable within this

economic context. The events of the 1940s and 1950s must be seen, then, as delayed effects of the coercive post-slavery labour strategy when Indians were imported into Jamaica as indentured persons to compete with the newly freed persons for plantation labour. The statement of the Afro-West Indian League and the various manifestations of interethnic rivalries and hostility were thus episodes deeply embedded in colonial strategies to control African-Jamaican labour in the post-slavery period, using Asian relocation to the island as a punitive and coercive strategy. It was economic competition that reinscribed this discourse on "alienism".

The Chinese were even more affected than the Indians/Indian-Jamaicans in the early to mid-twentieth century. Patrick Bryan reminds us that the Chinese, emigrating to Jamaica since the 1850s and even earlier to Cuba, colonial Guyana and Trinidad, were also objects of the mid-twentieth-century nativist assertion and the articulated anti-Asian views of groups such as the AWIL, and the anti-alien Native Defenders Committee (NDC). The NDC was established in 1930, years before the AWIL, ostensibly to protect the interests of "natives" (read "African-Jamaicans") against foreigners (Indians and Chinese in particular, but also whites), manifested in their slogan "Jamaica for Jamaicans".³⁹ As in the case of the AWIL, many of the NDC's leaders and activists, like Benjamin Wilson and one Mr Ricketts, were returnees from Cuba, Honduras and Panama, where they had experienced racial discrimination and forced repatriation, and had returned home to a situation where "foreigners" seemed favoured.⁴⁰ NDC members, such as the Rastafarians and the Ethiopian Salvation Society, among other groups in the 1930s,⁴¹ were unambiguously black conscious. While not all of them supported Garvey's and the Rastafarians' back-to-Africa ideology, they were committed to black empowerment in an increasingly anti-black masses environment.

The strong economic position of the Chinese, who had largely displaced other ethnic groups in the retail trade by the mid-twentieth century, caused them to be increasingly viewed by black Jamaicans as "economic oppressors".⁴² They maintained a strong sense of group cohesiveness based on a distinct racial and cultural identity, and though by the 1950s many had been born in Jamaica, they were still identified as "Chinese", much as Indian-Jamaicans were perceived as "Indians". In the strained economic climate of the mid- to late twentieth century, the Chinese, not surprisingly, became the targets of xenophobic racism that was clearly linked to competitive racism in Pierre van den Berghe's

terms. It was within this context that the NDC established a Native Cooperative Traders and Consumers Society to further the cause of "native" support for "native" small business people against the Chinese.

The "Indians" probably escaped equal attention by the NDC because they were not as dominant in the retail trade by the 1930s and 1940s. Their participation had declined from 415 (264 men and 151 women) in 1891 to 204 by 1921, with a corresponding reduction in the number of trade and spirit licenses that they held – from 416 in 1903 to 290 in 1933. The Protector of Immigrants attributed these reductions to "the invasion of the Chinese who control practically all the small retail trade of the country".⁴³

Conclusion

Clearly, then, discourses over "belonging", "citizenship", and the meaning of "Creole", as opposed to colonial, present in the period of slavery, intensified in the post-slavery and modern periods. There were increasing discussions over what it meant to be a Jamaican in an increasingly segmented, multi-ethnic and culturally plural context where each ethnic group sought to create definitive ethnocentric enclaves.⁴⁴ These discourses were not confined to Creole elites and the black intelligentsia, and the focus was not totally on the kind of Creole nationalism that was, in Partha Chatterjee's formulation, "built upon the ambitions of classes whose economic interests were ranged against the metropole; that drew upon the liberal and enlightened ideas from Europe, which provided ideological criticisms of imperialism and *anciens régimes*".⁴⁵ While the main participants in the ranking game and in the Creole discourses of the slavery period were the white and Free-Coloured property-owners, Asians and African-Jamaicans became central players in the post-slavery period. But wherever the debates were located, they demonstrated, in a way observed by post-modernists, that the collective identity of homeland and nation was a constantly changing set of cultural interactions that fundamentally questioned the idea of "home".

NOTES

1. This article emerged out of Verene A. Shepherd's "The Ranking Game: Discourses of Belonging in Jamaican History" (Inaugural Professorial Lecture, 12 April 2002). This version (edited slightly) was originally presented as a paper entitled "Migration, the Ranking Game and Discourses of Belonging in Jamaican History" at the 36th Annual Conference of the Association of Caribbean History, Barbados, 17–21 May 2004.
2. M.G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (1965; Kingston: Sangsters Book Store, 1974).
3. Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity", in Anthony King, ed., *Culture, Globalization and the World System* (Binghamton, New York: Department of Art and History, SUNY, 1991), 19–41.
4. *Jamaica Times*, 3 February 1950.
5. For an elaboration of this idea, see Percy C. Hintzen, "Race and Creole Ethnicity in the Caribbean", in Verene A. Shepherd and Glen Richards, eds., *Questioning Creole: Creolization Discourses in Caribbean History* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2002), 92–110.
6. Ken Post, *Arise Ye Starvelings* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1938), 119.
7. The 1943 population census used "Indians" to refer to people born in India or those born in Jamaica whose parents were of Indian ancestry. The mixed group was called "East Indian Coloured". Currently, the term "Indo-Jamaicans" is widely used to describe people of Indian ancestry born in Jamaica. The use of "Indian-Jamaicans" in the period covered by this article is entirely my own construction. Interestingly, "African" was (and is still) reserved for those born in Africa.
8. Verene A. Shepherd, *Transients to Settlers: The Experience of Indians in Jamaica, 1845–1950* (Leeds & Warwick: Peepal Tree Press & Warwick University, 1994), 143.
9. For an elaboration on the 1938 labour rebellion in Jamaica, see O. Nigel Bolland, *On the March: Labour Rebellions in the British Caribbean, 1934–39* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995), chapter 11; Richard Hart, *Rise and Organize: The Birth of the Workers' and National Movements in Jamaica, 1936–1939* (London: Karia Press, 1989). See also *Jamaica Times*, 4 March 1950, 1 for a perspective on economic conditions in the period after the labour rebellions.
10. Shepherd, *Transients to Settlers*, 143.
11. There were several letters to the editors of the major newspapers of the day from people who competed with each other to give the "correct" definition of a "Jamaican". Some supported the view that local birth was not enough.
12. With 90 percent of them resident in Jamaica in 1800, only the coffee farmers had a higher residency status than the pen-keepers, about 70 percent of whom were residents by 1834 (see Verene A. Shepherd and Kathleen E.A. Monteith, "Non-Sugar Proprietors in a Sugar Plantation Society", *Plantation Society in the Americas* 5, no. 2–3 (1998): 205–25.

13. Smith, *Plural Society*.
14. Jamaica Archives, Private Deposits, 4/110/17, George Forbes to Peter Forbes, 12 January 1811.
15. Verene A. Shepherd, "Pens and Pen-Keepers in a Plantation Society" (PhD thesis, Cambridge University, 1988), chapter 5.
16. Edward [Kamau] Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
17. Kamau Brathwaite defines "creolization" as a process of cultural interaction and synthesis, with its twin components of acculturation and interculturalization (see his *Contradictory Omens: Cultural Diversity and Integration in the Caribbean* [Mona: Savacou Publications, 1974]), 6.
18. *Daily Gleaner*, 10 January 1957, 8, quoted in Colin Palmer, "Identity, Race and Black Power in Independent Jamaica", in Franklin Knight and Colin Palmer, eds., *The Modern Caribbean* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 113.
19. *Daily Gleaner*, 6 August 1963, 21.
20. Homi K. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), 206-9.
21. See Richard Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).
22. Speech delivered at the Cheddi Jagan Memorial Lecture, Toronto, Canada, March 2002.
23. For more on this theme of "Indians" and "Creole" as negative, see Veronica Gregg, "'Yuh Know Bout Coo-Coo? Where Yuh Know Bout Coo-Coo?': Language and Representation, Creolization and Confusion in Indian Cuisine", in Shepherd and Richards, eds., *Questioning Creole*, 148-64; Patricia Mohammed, "The 'Creolization' of Indian Women in Trinidad", in *ibid.*, 130-47.
24. Indian men wore a *dhoti* that covered the lower part of their bodies only, leaving the rest of the body "exposed", according to the Presbyterians.
25. *The Presbyterian* 27 (1935): 261.
26. Great Britain, Reports and Papers, Colonial Office. P.P. Vol. XVI: *Papers Relating to the West Indian Colonies and Mauritius*, Pt. 1, 1859. Enc. signed by Baptist minister J.E. Henderson in Gov. Darling to Lord Stanley, 29 March 1858.
27. Public Record Office, London British Colonial Office, 142/7, *Morning Journal*, 14-15 April 1847, 3.
28. Alfred Caldecott, *The Church in the West Indies* (London: Frank Cass, 1970), 206-7.
29. *The Presbyterian* 27 (1935): 261.
30. *Daily Gleaner*, 1 December 1938.
31. Shepherd, *Transients to Settlers*, 99.
32. India Office Records, London, IOR/L/P & J/8/184/108D, "Review of Important Events Concerning Indians Abroad, 1938-39".

33. Education Departmental Report, *Jamaica Annual*, 1930, 236.
34. India Office Records, London, L/P & J/8/108/17, G.S. Bozman to the Undersecretary of State for India, 10 September 1941.
35. India Office Records, London, L/P & J/8/184//108/1D, "Review of Important Events Relating to or Affecting Indians in Different Parts of the British Empire, 1943-1944", Pol. 5820.
36. India Office Records, London, L/P & J 8/179/108/4, Extract from J.D. Tyson, *The Conditions of Indians in Jamaica, British Guiana and Trinidad 1938-1939* (Simla: Government of India, 1939).
37. Pierre van den Berghe, *Race and Ethnicity: Essays in Comparative Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); see also Verene A. Shepherd, "Indians and Blacks in Jamaica in the 19th and early 20th Centuries: A Micro-Study of the Foundations of Race Antagonisms", in Howard Johnson, ed., *After the Crossing: Immigrants and Minorities in Caribbean Creole Society* (London: Frank Cass, 1988), 95-112.
38. See Swithin Wilmot, "The Politics of Samuel Clarke: Black Political Martyr in Jamaica, 1851-1865", *Jamaica Historical Review* 19 (1996): 27.
39. See Patrick Bryan, "The Creolization of the Chinese Community in Jamaica", in Rhoda Reddock, ed., *Ethnic Minorities in Caribbean Society* (Trinidad & Tobago: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1996), 173-271. An article on page one of the *Jamaica Times* of 1 May 1930 also indicated that there had been a move in Panama to repatriate even the insane on the basis that the Panamanian government was spending a lot of money on their maintenance in the asylum.
40. Bryan, "The Creolization of the Chinese", 210-11.
41. See Howard Johnson, "The Anti-Chinese Riots of 1918 in Jamaica", *Immigrants and Minorities* 11, no. 1 (1983), and Bryan, "The Creolization of the Chinese".
42. *Daily Gleaner*, 5 September 1930.
43. Kingston, Immigration Office, Annual Report of the Protector of Immigrants, 1933.
44. M.G. Smith, *Plural Society*; Rex Nettleford, *Caribbean Cultural Identity: The Case of Jamaica* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1978).
45. Partha Chatterjee, "Nationalism as a Problem", in Bill Ashcroft et al., eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 164-65.

Exploring the Marine Plantation: An Historical Investigation of the Barbados Fishing Industry

PEDRO L.V. WELCH

Abstract

This article examines the historical factors underlying the development of a fishing industry in Barbados, from the time of European settlement to the 1890s. The discussion notes that in general Caribbean historiography has paid inadequate attention to the non-plantation aspects of social and economic life in the Caribbean colonies. In particular, the fishing industry has not been the subject of many scholarly enquiries – a lacuna that is all the more surprising when one notes that for some Caribbean territories the main economic activities centred on the sea rather than on agriculture, particularly sugarcane agriculture. One of the areas of discussion with which the article is concerned is the place of fishing in the economic and social lives of the formerly enslaved people. In that context, the argument is made that for freed persons in Barbados fishing provided the most significant alternative to plantation labour; in much the same way that the development of a peasantry did for freed persons in other Caribbean territories endowed with greater land resources. For that reason and others raised in the article the fishing industry represents another research frontier that will expand our contact with the way pre- and post-emancipation Caribbean societies functioned.

Introduction

In general, Caribbean historiography has whispered quietly on the non-plantation aspects of pre-emancipation society. Professor Verene Shepherd has noted, with reference to Jamaica, that “among students of rural history, enquiry into class and race dynamics outside of the sugar plantation per se has been consigned to a position of secondary signifi-

cance. Similarly, the study of the sugar plantation elite has been considered more socially significant than the study of other producers."¹ Shepherd was not speaking specifically about the question of the fishing industry as an aspect of scholarly study but her comments are equally applicable to this aspect of the social and economic history of Caribbean societies. In fact, one area of the non-plantation experience that has received less than a whisper is that of the fishing trade.

We may note that in several small island communities in the Caribbean, farming the marine environment, not sugar, represented the main economic activity, yet one can count the works devoted to this area on one hand. One work that has pointed to the fishing trade as an important factor in the settlement of New World societies by Europeans is that of K.G. Davies, who observes that among the push and pull forces that led to European colonization, "the first pull and the longest and steadiest in the sixteenth century was fish".² While Davies's examination does not touch on the industry in the Lesser Antilles, the value of its citation here rests in the fact that it provides a strong reminder that the New World experience was not all about sugar or bullion.

Of particular relevance to our investigation of the fishing industry in Barbados is the pioneering article of Richard Price, "Caribbean Fishing and Fishermen: A Historical Sketch". Price recognizes the importance of the fishing industry to a fuller understanding of Caribbean social history. He observes that

Caribbean fishermen – at first Indians and then Africans – were from the beginning a privileged slave subgroup within the plantation system, and their special socioeconomic role permitted a particularly smooth transformation to a life as free fishermen, whether this came about before or after general emancipation. The plantation system in spite of its generally repressive character, incidentally endowed fishing slaves with valuable economic skills as well as with considerable self-reliance and independence.³

While it is my contention that Price accords a centrality to the plantation system that might not paint a fully accurate picture of the workings of the fishing industry, his is a vital contribution that enters a veritable no-man's land and forces us to consider the importance of fishing as a non-plantation aspect of Caribbean social and economic history.

Professor Bonham Richardson also wrote about the fishing industry. He noted that the ruling classes left most of the day-to-day activities in the fishing industry in the hands of "natives". Indeed, he suggests that the involvement of "natives" in fishing in the Anglophone Caribbean represented the understanding of the ruling classes that the seasonal

nature of fishing and the low level of preservation technologies used in the region precluded them from making any major economic capital from the fishing industry. Moreover, indigenous peoples could be relied on to provide fish in season and to "absorb the risk associated with fishing".⁴ While this might well speak to the factors influencing the nature of the labour systems in the fishing trade, it misses the other side of the coin – the perceptions of those indigenous peoples on whom the industry relied for labour. In particular, one ought to note that after emancipation, when some choices were permitted the former enslaved persons, the same issues of risk and seasonality could well preclude any choice to enter the industry. We will assert, in the case of Barbados, that the analysis of the African fishermen was more sophisticated than is conceded by Richardson, and their well-represented place in the labour market statistics suggests that their expectations of social and economic freedom might be considered in analysing their involvement in the industry. In any case, Richardson's coverage opens a window to the importance of the fishing industry as it operated in Barbados and the Windward Islands.

The contributions, then, of Davies, Price and Richardson provide a foundation for the discussion that follows. From the earliest period of colonization several writers on the Caribbean described scenes relating to the fishing industry. Indeed, for Barbados, this industry is one of the common themes in its early literature. It is surprising, therefore, that historians have paid so little attention to it. This article, therefore, seeks to uncover the early evidence for a fishing industry in Barbados and to explore how it impacted on the post-emancipation socio-economic scene up to the end of the nineteenth century.

Pre-Emancipation Sketches

The earliest extant references to the settlement of Barbados by the British identify the development of a fishing tradition among the residents. For example, in comparing Barbados with St Christopher (St Kitts), Henry Colt, who visited the island in 1632, observes that the former had "more fish and better fishing".⁵ Colt's observations are those of a practitioner and are firsthand. He informs us that he used nets to catch fish and that "the sea is well furnished with fish and excellent places to fish in". We may note, too, that Richard Ligon, who published *The True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* in 1657, describes scenes that suggest that a fishing industry was well established on the

island within the first thirty years or so of European settlement. Ligon refers to a Colonel Humphrey Walrond who had a "Sain [boat with a seine net] to catch fish withal, which his own servants and slaves put out to sea, and twice or thrice a week, bring home all sorts of small and great fishes".⁶

John Atkins, a surgeon in the British Royal Navy, who arrived off Barbados on 3 August 1722, recorded that as his ship approached the island there were sightings of flying fish every day. Moreover, he informs us:

The way of feeding such a Multitude, and of providing Necessaries in an island yielding little besides sugar, is principally by their fisheries and importations. The Sea gives them plenty of Flying fish, Dolphins [Dorado or Mahi Mahi], Barracuda, and King-Fish, particularly the first [flying fish]; they bait with their own specie, which thrown about, the fish fly in such numbers to the boats, that they take them up with Dip-nets and sometimes the Dolphins with them; the Season goes off at the autumnal equinox.⁷

Perhaps, one of the boats seen by Atkins was owned by Emmanuel Vigers, who is recorded in a will of 1726 as bequeathing his "sain boat, oars, mast and all the appurtenances to her now belonging", to his son Joseph.⁸ Additionally, Atkins's observations on the fishing industry speak to its importance in an island where most of the available land was planted in sugar cane and the bulk of the food used in feeding the enslaved and free people was imported.

George Pinckard, a British surgeon who visited Barbados in the late eighteenth century, recorded a scene that captured the importance of fishing to the Barbados economy. We reproduce an extract from his description, if only because of its vivid imagery and its historical value:

The novelty of immense multitudes of fish darting from the sea and taking wing in the air, you will believe attracted our attention. To speak of fishes flying might seem to be a traveller's tale; we were, therefore, led to a minute investigation of the fact. We watched them with a skeptical eye, and at many different times, before we admitted even the evidence of our senses we have no hesitation in saying that fishes --- do fly! . . . The fish is about the size of a herring. They are caught, in great numbers, near Barbados, where they are pickled, and salted, and used as a very common food. The day before we made the land we met with shoals of flying fish.⁹

Again, we observe that Pinckard, like Atkins, had picked up, albeit sketchily, the importance of fishing to the diet of Barbadians. It is clear, therefore, that the pioneering example of Barbadian gourmets in developing a fishing industry was well known by the latter half of the

eighteenth century. This aspect of economic life is even documented in a poem written by James Grainger, who visited Barbados in 1764. In his poem, which looks for the most part at rural Barbados, he included a description of a sailing ship making the transatlantic run. He writes:

Each sail is set to catch the favoring gale
 While on the yard-arm the harpooner sits,
 Strikes the boneta, or the shark in snares.
 The fringed *urtica* spreads her purple form
 To catch the gale, and dances o'er the waves:
 Small winged fishes on the shrouds alight;
 And beauteous dolphins gently played around.

In a footnote to his poem, Grainger explains that "this extraordinary species of fish [winged fishes] is only found in the warm latitudes. Being pursued in the water by a fish of prey called Albacores, they betake themselves in shoals to flight, and in the air are often snapt up by the Garayio, a sea fowl. They sometimes fall on the shrouds or decks of ships. They are well tasted [*sic*], and commonly sold at Barbadoes."¹⁰

One of the most comprehensive descriptions of Barbados' natural history in the eighteenth century is that provided by the Reverend Griffith Hughes, a graduate of St John's College, Oxford, who published his book on Barbados in 1750.¹¹ It was illustrated by Georg Dionysius Ehret, a German artist, noted for his work in the field of Botany and his close association with Linnaeus. Hughes had served as a priest at the St Lucy Parish Church and had carried out an extensive survey of the flora and fauna of the island. It is not surprising, therefore, that he would have included a study of the various fish found in the waters off Barbados. Since his focus was on the biology of the fish rather than on their culinary or economic value, we would not expect to see much, if any, on the trade of the fisherman or fish seller. Yet, his descriptions reflect the importance that was attached to fishing at Barbados.

Local persons also recorded aspects of this Barbadian industry in their letters and diaries. In the 1820s Judge Nathan Lucas began to record various vignettes of Barbadian history. The importance of fishing, and in particular the flying fish, to the Barbadian diet was such that Lucas spent considerable time describing the work of fishermen. He even cites a letter from a friend, David Martindale, who wrote to him that

The method of taking them [flying fish] is by Sailing Boats (not decked) from 14 to 18 feet long; and from 7 to 9 feet broad which go occasionally to the S.E. or N.W. about three or four Leagues distance from the shore; when at that distance

they lower down the sails and strike their masts; for if they are allowed to remain standing not a fish will come within reach of the men; five or six who are to take them and who are provided with a Net attached to a hoop about the size of a Sugar Hogshead hoop (about 38 inches in diameter) with which the men lean over the gunwale of the Boats, keeping the hoop up and down the sides of the Boats; which are not brought to an anchor, but drive broadside to the Leeward: a man or boy then throws over Bilge Water mixed with Horse dung and broken fish (Salted Cod in general); which independently of the Boats' bottoms being paid with Slush or Tallow, entice the fish alongside, the men then let down the hoop perpendicularly into the sea, and suddenly turn it horizontally, and by this method repeated take so many fish as often as to sell them at the rate of 6 or 8 for a Penny.¹²

Martindale's commentary conveys a *tableau vivant* of the fisherman's trade. It is very likely that his testimony is that of a practitioner of the trade, probably a boat owner. Indeed, in citing this friend, Lucas tells his readers that "his accuracy and knowledge of the subject demand[ed] the utmost confidence". An examination of the wills register held by the Barbados Department of Archives identifies a David Martindale who lived along Bay Street, at the "Watering Place". It is very likely that he is the author of the letter to Lucas. Bay Street fronted on Carlisle Bay and from any vantage point along its stretch Martindale would have been in a position to observe the activities of the fishing fleet. Additionally, fish would have been sold on the beach along that bay and Martindale would have been quite familiar with the fishermen who plied their trade from the Bay Street base.

It is clear that a fishing industry developed in Barbados very soon after the initial settlement by Europeans. We should also acknowledge that long before Europeans arrived on the coast Amerindian settlers had developed a fishing tradition before they were so rudely expelled by the newcomers.

Influences on the Development of a Barbados Fishing Industry

An answer is not immediately forthcoming as to whether the island's tradition of fishing during the colonial era was heavily influenced by Europeans, enslaved Africans or Amerindians. However, the following comments offer some tentative explanations. As we have noted earlier, seafarers making the transatlantic journey to Barbados frequently recorded sightings of large schools of fish in the vicinity of the island. Some had even eaten fish caught in the local waters during the voyage.

This was the experience of Ligon, who had arrived in the 1650s, and Grainger, who had visited the island in the 1760s and had reported that some of these fish were "well tasted". Given this evidence, it is possible that the development of a fishing industry in the post-1630s might have resulted from the experience of white sailors on the transatlantic run. Ligon's reference to "servants" in the fishing crew of Colonel Walrond's boat might also point to an early involvement of white settlers in the development of the trade.

However, quite apart from the European influence (which might have persisted in early twentieth-century reports of poor whites operating small sail boats), there might have been an Amerindian influence in the development of the industry. Richard Price's influential research on fishing in the Caribbean shows that "mutual borrowing in fishing" was a feature of some European-Amerindian contacts.¹³ The evidence for an Amerindian presence on Barbados at the time of the European settlement is sketchy, although the archaeological data speak to a dense coastal settlement of several thousand persons. Peter Drewett's report on several archaeological digs of Amerindian sites in the island reveals the remains of several species of fish, particularly at coastal sites such as Heywoods and Silver Sands. The Arawaks, he informs us, used gill nets, hooks, line and spears in coastal reef fishing. However, he also records that these aborigines "fishing in pelagic waters, perhaps at least three miles offshore, caught both flying fish and tuna. Such fishing expeditions would have required the use of a canoe."¹⁴

Although most of the Amerindians might have left Barbados before the European arrival in the island, there is some evidence for an Amerindian presence contemporaneous with the settlement of Europeans and Africans in the early period of the sugar revolution. Richard Ligon observes that there were some Indians who had been brought from neighbouring islands and the South American mainland. In particular, he notes that "the men we use for killing of fish which they are good at; with their own bows and arrows they will go out; and in a days time, kill as much fish, as will serve a family of a dozen persons, two or three days, if you can keep fish so long"¹⁵ It is possible, therefore, that there might have been some Amerindian influence in the post-1630s development of a fishing industry.

The observations above should not deny the strong possibility of some African influence on the island's early fishing industry. Several travellers, commenting on the marine life off the West African coast, have noted the presence of large schools of fish. Pieter de Marees, a

Dutchman, sailing in the region of the Gold Coast in 1602, noted that the sailors used to catch tuna.¹⁶ It would not be surprising to find that African fishermen operating off the same coast were quite familiar with the various species of fish, in terms of their use as both bait and food for human consumption. Another traveller, Richard Jobson, sailing in the region of the Gambia River, noted the prevalence of several freshwater species.¹⁷

A French seafarer, Jean Barbot, writing about his experience in West Africa between 1678 and 1712, offers us another perspective from which we might infer a possible African contribution to the development of a flying-fish tradition in Barbados. He writes that off the coast of Senegal and Gambia, "the sea teems with fishes, because the coasts of maritime districts are thinly inhabited and the few people who live there go fishing only when there is nothing to hunt on land. They use little boats hollowed out of a tree-trunk, in which they can go 3-4 leagues out to sea to fish, either with lines or with fish-spears, and sometimes with nets".¹⁸ Another commentator, Paul Isert, writing in the 1780s, noted that fishing was an important aspect of the subsistence economies of the peoples of the Guinea coast, and that "in fishing the Blacks use both hooks and nets. The latter are fashioned out of the fibre of pineapple plants [possibly sisal]".¹⁹

The basis for asserting a strong African influence on the fishing trade at Barbados is also founded on the evidence for fishing skills among peoples of the West African coast, provided by researchers commenting on the economic geography of areas from which enslaved persons had been taken. For example, A.J. Latham identifies a strong fishing culture among the Efik of Southern Nigeria. These peoples fished at the Cross River estuary and sold their catch at up-river markets. Latham refers to the Efik as "specialist fishermen".²⁰ Other researchers have identified an extensive spread of fishing settlements along the West African coasts. Morgan and Pugh refer to three main fishing regions: (a) the Mauritanio-Senegalese, (b) the Rivières du Sud, and (c) the Gulf of Guinea. These regions comprise a continental shelf of some 100,000 square miles, containing over 600 species of fish, of which 200 are considered edible. In these regions both nets and lines were used long before the late nineteenth century, when large herring drift nets and seine nets were introduced.²¹ In yet another commentary on the economic activity of West Africa, Udo notes that in the area of Benin there were persons specializing in sea-fishing. Others fished not only in the sea but also in the lagoons and lakes that lay behind the coastal sandbars.²²

The discussions above run counter to the general conclusions offered by Richard Price in examining the origins of fishing skills among enslaved Africans in the Caribbean. He observes that the techniques used by slave fishermen "would largely seem to have taken place since their arrival in the Caribbean". Indeed, he states that most enslaved persons in the Francophone Caribbean "learned to fish in their new home, and the techniques they practiced indicate that both French and Island Caribs served as teachers". Our findings suggest that this might not have been the case in Barbados. It is highly likely – indeed more than probable – that many enslaved persons in the island, particularly in the early period of the slave trade when the African-born component of the population outnumbered the Creole one, brought with them considerable fishing skills, including the utilization of boats, hooks, lines and nets.

Importantly, we may note Ligon's mention of African crews on Barbadian fishing boats within a few years of the introduction of Africans into the island. A similar reference occurred in 1724, when the crew of a local fishing sloop was accused of stealing the fishing gear of a Martinican boat. The local boat was owned by Benjamin Charnock who, according to Governor Worsley of Barbados, had cleared from the Bridgetown port to fish near Trinidad. Apart from fish, the crew hoped to catch turtles. Governor Worsley had the eight-member African crew detained, while investigating the complaint of the Martinicans, but he soon released them when he discovered that the complainants were fishing in Tobagonian waters at a time when the British were laying claims to that island.²³

William Dickson, who understood the uniqueness of the Barbadian experience, reported that mainly flying fish were "caught chiefly during the crop, and add to the plenty of that season. They are of equal size, being as big as middling herrings. Like the herring too, the flying fish, in some seasons, affords much relief to the poor. I have seen them at all prices, from 6 to 60 for a bit, or 6d. sterling." Moreover, while meat was largely absent from the diet of enslaved persons labouring in the field, fish was an exception, particularly for those who lived near the towns. Indeed, it appears that some enslaved persons used money obtained from trafficking in stolen goods and the sale of horsemeat to purchase fish.

Dickson's account of the fortunes of an enslaved African fisherman named John adds to our understanding of the way the fishing trade operated. In 1760 John was the master of one of the fishing boats belonging to Dickson's father, and had five or six other enslaved persons

under his superintendence. According to Dickson, "He understood his business thoroughly. He knew the art of catching the fish and selling them to advantage." Apparently, this fisherman's skill was so highly valued that his enslaver granted him considerable autonomy in his fishing activity. Like other skilled slaves in the urban maritime environment, once John brought home an expected profit to his owner, he was relatively free to conduct business on his own account. John died, according to Dickson, of consumption occasioned by "staying out whole nights at sea, in his fishing-boats".²⁴

In general, therefore, the evidence points to a multi-sourced origin for the development of a fishing industry in Barbados. The strands of that development rest in a possible convergence of three contributions - European, Amerindian and African. In any event, the historical data point to a widespread involvement in the local fishing trade by enslaved Africans and their manumitted contemporaries, and after emancipation by their freed kin.

Extending the Trade: Enslaved Persons and Freemen in the Local Fishing Trade

Recent studies have shown that urban maritime communities offered greater fluidity than rural plantation ones in social and economic interaction to enslaved persons and their manumitted kin.²⁵ In the urban markets fish vendors and others found some opportunities for recovering a *persona* that had been battered by a system that sought to denigrate them. For example, Frederick Bayleyehinlbntr(inn hiarriy v)18.6ialtl-
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ried about, ready fried, by the Negroes, in trays for sale. Their taste is not unpleasant and one soon becomes fond of them.²⁷

Browne had probably missed the social significance of the sale of the fried fish by the enslaved and free(d) people. They had identified a demand in the market and were going to exploit this in any way that they could. As in the case of John, the fisherman of Dickson's acquaintance, white boat owners became in some instances dependent on their servile charges for income. This dependence could not be lost on these African tradesmen. To that we need to add the other side of the fishing business: the marketing of the fish. Perhaps, the enslaved found in both aspects of the trade room-to-manoeuve options that would inform some of the choices of the freed persons in the post-emancipation period.

If enslaved persons found some advantage from their involvement in the fishing trade, it should not be surprising that their enslavers also looked closely at the potential for financial accumulation offered by the possession of a fishing boat or some other aspect of the trade. Indeed, several references across the period under study point to attempts to "cure" or otherwise preserve fish for sale in the local market. It is probable that the stimulus for the preservation of fish for sale lay in the considerable quantities of dried and salted cod and herring that were imported from Newfoundland and other British Atlantic fishing areas. An Act of 1809 illustrates the extent to which local whites had grasped the potential of the fishing industry. Entitled "An Act for the encouragement of John Gay Goding of Speightstown", the preamble reads *inter alia* as follows:

Whereas John Gay Goding of Speights Town, Merchant, Hath represented that with care, Industry and Attention, he hath contrived and invented a mode or method of salting and curing the [fish] so abundant in the neighbourhood of the coasts of this island, so that they shall continue and remain perfectly wholesome and sound for and during several months after being so salted and cured and by which means the labouring poor both white and black of this Island will derive considerable benefit and advantages.²⁸

The Act specified that any person who salted or cured fish using Goding's methods without a license or permission would be fined £50. If the offender was an enslaved person, a punishment not exceeding twenty-one lashes was to be applied under the order of a Justice of the Peace. Additionally, the fish was to be forfeited "for the use of the poor of the parish where the said John Gay Goding shall reside". There is no evidence that Goding followed through on his patent. Nathan Lucas, who commented on the passing of the Act some fifteen years later, noted

that he had made enquiry and had not discovered any evidence indicating that any attempt had been made to utilize the patent. Nevertheless, the preamble to the Act suggests that Goding envisaged supplying the lucrative rural and urban markets with preserved fish. After emancipation, when the responsibility for their subsistence fell squarely on the shoulders of the freed persons, this motivation to white merchants would largely disappear.

Post-Emancipation Developments in the Fishing Industry

As we have noted earlier, before 1838 the enslaved sought room-to-manoeuvre options in those areas of life that offered relative autonomy of action. Fishing, like self-hire, offered opportunities for acting outside of the direct supervision of enslavers. Julius Scott has noted that throughout the Caribbean enslaved African sailors and fishermen used their knowledge of the maritime environment to effect their escape.²⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, that when freed persons were building on their expectations of freedom gleaned from their life experiences, they would look favourably at the fishing industry. The data are rather patchy but they allow us to reconstruct something of the period after 1838.

One of the first post-slavery references to fishing relates not to Africans but to poor whites who, like their black counterparts, found opportunities that were not widely available elsewhere. Major Colthurst, a stipendiary magistrate, reported that the greater number of the "lower order of whites were born in the colony and are a most idle and good for nothing set – proud, lazy, and consequently miserably poor. They usually live around the coast as fishermen."³⁰ Colthurst also provides statistics for the distribution of employment among the labouring population, shown in Table 1. The headings "Agriculture" and

Table 1 Distribution of the Labouring Population, 1834

Employment	No. of Persons
Domestic	10,734
Sugar	40,962
Cotton or other cultivation	4,825
Agriculture	9,638
None	16,648

Source: Adapted from Marshall, *The Colthurst Journal*, 237.

"None" might represent the failure of the statisticians to capture the non-plantation reality. Later evidence indicates that a significant number of those listed under these categories must have been employed on their own account in the fishing business.

John Bezsins Tyne, a white Barbadian who migrated to the United States in 1868, tells us in his memoirs of his time on the island that

a few of the poorest class of whites 'fish for a living' literally, and get tanned to the color, and it might be said:- almost to the consistency of Russia leather: - but the Negroes, - who are the chief fishermen -, don't care for exposure to the sun and sea air as they don't tan readily, and they catch nearly all of the fish, as well as the turtles, lobsters and other crustacea with which the market is supplied.³¹

Tyne further informs us that the fishing industry gives "employment to hundreds of boats built and equipped for the purpose, each of which is manned with two, to five men, according to its size". He describes "quite a fleet of these fishing smacks, sloop and schooner rigged [boats]" traveling up to fifteen miles from land, with the fishermen using "shallow dip-nets knitted to large hoops" to scoop up the flying fish, which have been attracted by bait thrown overboard. Once the boats reached the shore, hucksters marketed its catch all over the island. He referred to the fishing trade as "this bountiful maritime harvest", that had "great economic value annually; as food for the poor - in particular - that is not only plentiful and cheap, but delicate and nutritive too!" "Huckster women," he noted, "from all parts of the country, buy quantities of the fish which they retail, cooked, to laborers on the sugar plantations, so this boon from the Divine Provider is not confined to the residents of the city and sea coasts alone, but is disseminated throughout the island."³²

Tyne's observations permit us to analyse the importance of the industry to the freed people and poor white population. At a time when other sources of protein - even poor quality protein from salted cod and herring - were priced out of the reach of underpaid labourers and their options were restricted, large numbers of fish, particularly flying fish, at reasonable prices went a long way in mitigating the effects of malnutrition. As in the pre-emancipation period, the trade in cooked (fried) fish provided additional employment for hundreds, if not thousands, of hucksters. Whereas in other territories the development of peasantries helped to mitigate the worst excesses of plantation culture, in Barbados, the fishing industry provided that function. By the late 1890s, when the first official in-depth survey was carried out on the local fishing busi-

ness, the fishermen of Barbados and their huckster allies had already contributed substantially to the development of the industry.

In 1897, when the West India Royal Commission visited Barbados as part of its investigation of social and economic problems facing the British Caribbean, it interviewed persons representing a cross-section of interests. Many of the interviewees had an intimate knowledge of the fishing business and their submissions are particularly valuable to our discussion. One of the prominent persons interviewed was C.J. Lawrance, Inspector of Police. He reported that the labourers were "chiefly vegetarian", subsisting largely on provisions grown on the island (possibly peas, sweet potatoes, yams, other root crops and breadfruit), and "breadstuff imported from the United States". He also commented that they consumed some salted and pickled fish and meat, "but not in large quantities". However, it was the fishing industry that provided the bulk of the labourers' protein intake. According to Lawrance, "while the flying fish season [was] going on . . . fresh fish [was] taken in large quantities and sold at such prices as to be within the reach of everyone".³³

Lawrance's submissions are echoed by the responses of other local officials, such as Reverend John Payne, a Wesleyan minister, and Dr H.J. Wolseley, a medical officer who served in St Lucy. Wolseley noted that catches could be substantial but that there were occasions when there might be scarcity. Thus, outside of the fishing season, which ran from December to June, there could be some shortfall in the availability of fresh protein. These various perspectives provide a comprehensive picture of the industry from the vantage point of local officials who interacted with labourers on a regular basis. Of even greater value to our discussion is a survey carried out by Lawrance and presented as an Appendix to the Commission's report. Table 2 is adapted from Lawrance's survey. It provides estimates of the numbers employed in the industry and indicates the location of the major fishing centres on the island.

In addition to the figures provided by Lawrance, we are also given information on the income persons might have derived from fishing. The average catch of a boat was about 1,250 flying fish, although sometimes the catch could reach as high as 5,000. In a good season the total catch landed at Bridgetown could reach 390,000, with the fish being sold at 150 per dollar (or about 38 per shilling). A third of the catch went to pay the owner, out of which he might defray expenses of \$150 for building and fitting out a boat, and \$30 in annual maintenance coast. The other two-thirds went to the crew of the fishing boat.

Table 2 Districts, Boats and Fishermen in Barbados Fishing Industry, 1897

District	Sail Boats	Oar Boats	Fishermen ³⁴
St Michael	107	107	535
Christ Church	59	25	167
St Philip	17	31	193
St Joseph & St Andrew	13	-	29
St John	14	2	62
St Lucy & St Peter	24	18	134
The Garden	10	17	28
Holetown	24	14	65
Paynes Bay	12	14	36
Fitts Village	1	4	4
Total	281	232	1,253

Source: West India Royal Commission Report 1897.

The statistics and other information provided by Lawrance permit us to estimate the income that might have been earned by the owners and the hands on a fishing boat. The 281 sailboats recorded in 1897 would have caught at least 351,000 flying fish per catch (that is, per trip) in a fair season, although in a very good season they might have caught as many as 1,400,000. The owners would have received between 117,000 and 466,000 fish per catch. If we assume that the boats had a single owner, that person's income might have varied from four to eleven dollars per catch. Usually, it required from fifteen to thirty-five trips to cover the manufacturing cost of a fishing boat, without counting other expenses. The distribution of income and costs might be otherwise when small boats, known locally as "Moses", were employed. These were propelled by oars and used mainly in near-shore fishing, although some might have been involved in the flying fish business when shoals came closer to the island.

If we assume an average crew/boat ratio of 2.5 to 1 (crews ranged from two to five persons per boat), a fisherman might earn two dollars per catch, or about eight dollars per week, about eight times the going rate for plantation labour. This might be offset by the fact that weather conditions were not always favourable and the season lasted for only about seven months. In that case, an income of about five dollars per week does not appear to be an unreasonable assumption. Additionally,

we must note that there was a brisk trade in dolphin (dorado or mahi mahi) and other fish species, and that fishermen might harvest sea-eggs (sea-urchins), a coveted local delicacy, to supplement their income. The higher income of the fisherman in comparison with the plantation labourer might well underlie the view of one interviewee before the Commission that "fishermen here were a separate class". It is also useful to note that many of the fishermen had strategic partnerships with hucksters, some of whom might have been their domestic partners. The sale of fried fish would have been added to family income. Moreover, the psychological value of working on their own account, relatively free of the plantation regime, cannot be discounted.

Other valuable contributions before the Commission came from two representatives of the workers, Washington Harper, a shipwright and fishing boat owner, and Archibald Dowridge, a master tailor.³⁵ Harper was convinced that the fishing industry presented valuable opportunities for improving the fortunes of the labouring classes. Arguing that low wages in the plantation sector left little option but to seek higher wages in other overseas jurisdictions, he also noted that expanding and further capitalizing the fishing industry would increase employment and investment opportunities. In particular, he advocated the expansion of the industrial capacity of the fishing business, by curing the fish for sale at times of shortage.

Dowridge also noted that when from time to time there were shifts in the currents "which caused the fish to go further out to sea, and within a radius of five miles beyond which an ordinary boat could not go, there was little or no fish".³⁶ In his reference to an "ordinary boat", he was probably acknowledging that some boat owners had larger vessels that might sail considerably further into the fishing grounds. He suggested that one answer to the problems would be to invest in a steam ship, which would act as a mother ship, with salting and curing facilities. This ship might also act as a reference point on the seas, which would minimize the possibility of small fishing boats "losing themselves". The chairman responded to his suggestion by pointing out that "fishing by steamers is a very expensive thing unless you can put fish in the market in considerable quantities, particularly where the price is low". Dowridge's response was simple and direct: "We import thousands of pounds of salt fish from Newfoundland each year."³⁷

The tenor of Dowridge's submissions and the response of the chairman suggest that there was some tension between the aspirations of the local fishermen and their artisan allies on the one hand, and the provi-

sion merchants on the other. Any movement in the direction proposed by Dowridge implied a competition with these merchants, who controlled the dried-fish trade. In any case, the evidence of these representatives of the working class shows that they understood clearly the importance of the fishing trade in the struggle with those who sought to retard their progress.

Conclusions

The fishing industry at Barbados represented an aspect of social and economic history that informs our understanding of social life in the island. From the earliest inhabitants, the Amerindians, to the post-emancipation poor white and freed populations, the fishing trade contributed immensely to their diets and livelihood. There can be little doubt that in the pre-emancipation period, fresh fish constituted a major source of protein even when local merchants were importing thousands of pounds of salted cod and herring annually. When we have fully quantified the contribution of that import trade to protein intake, and have set that against the potential of the fishing trade, we will have added another significant chapter to our understanding of slave subsistence in Barbados.

The participation of enslaved and freed persons in the fishing business provided room-to-manoeuvre options from which the worst aspects of the plantation regime might be confronted. Indeed, after emancipation, the local fishing business, in conjunction with the exploitation of other marine resources, provided, for a significant proportion of the freed population, an alternative to the restrictive rural labour market. For these reasons alone, our focus on the fishing industry as an aspect of the non-plantation experience is justified. In fact, the volume of the fishing trade and its vibrancy might well permit us to refer to this aspect of social and economic life in terms of "a marine plantation".

NOTES

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8. Barbados Archives, RB#6/2/265, Will of Emmanuel Vigars, 1826.
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 34. The figures include 48 "boys".
 35. Evidence of Washington Harper and Archibald Dowridge, in *Report from the West India Royal Commission 1877–98* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), 191–92.
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The Colonial Origins of English Wealth: The Harewoods of Yorkshire

JAMES WALVIN

Abstract

The fortunes of the Lascelles/Harewood family of Yorkshire provide an example of wealth creation for the successful (and fortunate) British investors in the Atlantic slave system. But was the Harewood money made from trade, or from plantation ownership, or both? This essay seeks to explain, and to answer the question, "What happens to money made from slavery when returned to Britain?"

I

Harewood House is one of England's great stately homes, a major architectural gem some ten miles north of industrial Leeds, and half-way to the genteel eighteenth-century spa town of Harrogate. This large Palladian building affords panoramic views across parkland and a lake, and is fringed by sweeping lawns and gardens, all landscaped by England's foremost eighteenth-century gardener, Lancelot "Capability Brown". The house (though that word does scant justice to the building) was designed by the eminent architect John Carr of York and renovated by the Scot, Robert Adams, who "tickled it up so as to dazzle the eyes of the squire". The foundations were laid in 1759 and the house was habitable by 1771. Thereafter it rapidly filled with furnishings and fittings crafted by England's greatest furniture-maker, Thomas Chippendale, a local man who, by then, was working from his London workshop in St Martin's Lane.¹ Harewood House was soon home to what most critics accept to be Chippendale's finest work. More gradually, the house also became a treasure trove of paintings, furnishings,

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statuary and tapestries from across Europe, eventually creating one of the finest private art collections in Britain. Today, Harewood House attracts a third of a million visitors in the summer,² part of the extraordinary phenomenon that has converted swathes of historic Britain into museum exhibits.

From the 1770s to the present, Harewood House has been home to the Harewood family; the current Earl of Harewood is first cousin to the Queen. The house and the family share the same name, and form a dynasty that occupies an elevated rank within that distinctive hierarchy of aristocracy and royalty that constitutes the most rarefied elite within the British social system. Yet it was not always so. If we push back the story of the Harewoods a mere century from the apogee of their late-eighteenth-century wealth, that is, if we examine their forebears around the mid-seventeenth century, we discover a very different story and a very different social location. During and after the English Civil War, the forebears of the Harewoods were a relatively humble Yorkshire gentry family called the Lascelles. Yet within the space of a century this unremarkable farming and trading family had been transformed from modest means into aristocrats of staggering wealth and taste. They were not alone, of course, for those were the years of rising material and commercial success for a growing number of British merchants, traders and colonial adventurers. It was also an era characterized by an urge to empire, overseas expansion and settlement, creating an Atlantic economy of enormous consequence for Britain.³

Like others, the Lascelles thrived in the world of the Atlantic trade, their fortunes blossoming especially because of sugar. But who, visiting Harewood House on a cool summer's day in Yorkshire, would even make the connection? Who could imagine today that the splendours of that stately home and its lavish setting derive directly from sugar and, of course, from the sweat of African slaves? Here is an instructive example of how aristocratic wealth and status hinged on the efforts of Africans in distant tropical colonies. However, it is also an example of the complex and confusing historical trajectory traced by the humble Lascelles in the process of becoming the aristocratic Harewoods.

For the past three years a research team at the University of York has been investigating the precise colonial origins of the dynastic wealth of the Harewood family.⁴ A decade ago I had written to Harewood, asking if I could examine whatever papers they held at Harewood House. The initial silence was followed five years ago by a positive (even enthusiastic) encouragement to work in the Harewood papers.⁵ Thanks to the

efforts of my younger colleagues, an initial session in the cold basement of that amazing building led to the rapid evolution of a major research project. The early research in Harewood House itself quickly led to numerous archival holdings on both sides of the Atlantic.⁶ The project expanded at a remarkable rate, soon revealing an extraordinary family/commercial history that has wider implications than previously imagined, both for our understanding of the Harewood family and, more significantly, the nature of colonial trade and wealth. There was, of course, a well-defined scholarly map provided by the extraordinary work of Richard Pares and Richard Sheridan.⁷ It was widely known that the Lascelles/Harewood fortunes had been secured by sugar and the sugar trade. However, what we now know provides a different, more complex and revisionary story of the colonial origins of English wealth. It is a story that runs into areas previously thought marginal, the importance of which only emerged as the project unfolded. This article is a simplified account of our current state of knowledge.

II

The construction of Harewood House in the 1760s and 1770s was made possible by an immense Lascelles family fortune. The head of the English branch of the family business, Henry Lascelles, had died in 1753 leaving a fortune that amounted in modern terms to some £28 million. With such assets to call on, his son Edwin began to build Harewood House. The project was sustained by further expansion of the family fortunes in the West Indies and apparently by the acquisition of sugar plantations, mainly in Barbados and Jamaica (along with their resident enslaved people, of course). The Harewoods spent their first years settling into their new home as absentee planters. A simple calculation of the data about their West Indian possessions reveals that across the whole span of their involvement with the Caribbean they owned wholly or partly, or had a stake in, forty-seven plantations. A similar, admittedly crude, calculation reveals that in their career as West Indian property owners, the Lascelles/Harewoods had also owned *in toto* thousands of enslaved persons.

However, this period of the Lascelles/Harewoods as planters came late, from the 1770s onwards, and serves to confuse the overall picture. It would be natural to assume that they were rich because they were sugar planters. In the last years of the eighteenth century, when the Harewoods had settled into their sumptuous Yorkshire home, they were

significant absentee planters, taking a close interest, via their resident managers and agents, in the commercial management of their Caribbean properties. But the historical formula is more confused than it appears initially. In fact, the Lascelles were planters because they were rich. The transformation of the Lascelles into members of the West Indian plantocracy and English aristocracy (as the Harewoods) had been made possible not by their ownership of plantations, but by their role as sugar merchants and money-lenders. It is at this point that the account begins to bear directly on broader historiographical arguments about the nature and origins of West Indian wealth, and what happens to that wealth when repatriated to Britain itself.⁸

That the Lascelles enriched themselves via the West Indies and sugar is clear enough. But when Henry Lascelles, the founder of the family fortunes, died in 1753 his wealth was not secured by the ownership of plantations and enslaved people. He did, it is true, own some West Indian assets, but his main business concerns were trade and money lending. Henry had settled in Barbados in 1712, to join an older brother as merchants in the sugar trade. Their main concern was to organize and finance the shipping of planters' produce to England, and to arrange the delivery of imported supplies necessary for the plantations. The West Indian sugar plantations could not survive without imports, most notably of course African labourers, but also of a huge variety of goods from Europe, North America and even Asia.⁹ Henry's business had prospered in both Barbados and England (where he was helped by family and business connections to the political world of Walpole). Henry returned permanently to England in 1734 to handle his wider business interests. These were concentrated on a number of key areas.

Alone or with partners, Henry Lascelles had five major areas of commercial activity. First, the simple, general point: his work involved trade between England and the West Indies. Second, between 1729 and 1743 he secured a victualling contract for supplying the Royal Navy in the Caribbean. It was to prove a crucial (and lucrative) business, especially in wartime. Lascelles' victualling was a business that stretched from Barbados to Jamaica, and even onto the Bahamas, tapping into other Lascelles' interests and contacts, providing what Henry himself described as "a Branch of business which through good management (I reckon) I chiefly made my fortune by".¹⁰ A third area of Henry's commercial activity was in slaving, when he joined a consortium of merchants who invested in what they described as a "floating factory". This was a ship anchored off Annamboe Bay, West Africa, to receive and dis-

patch enslaved Africans en route to the Americas.¹¹ Fourth, Henry Lascelles dabbled in the slave trade via investments in a number of slave ships. Although this was never a major part of his commercial activities, at the time of his death he had investments and shares in twenty-one such ships. His was an example of the way investors in that trade spread their risks, rather than invest heavily in one venture.¹² Fifth, the business sector that came to dominate Henry's commercial affairs was making loans and lending mortgages, primarily to West Indian planters. In essence, especially after 1734, he became a banker to the planters. Between 1723 and his death in 1753 Henry Lascelles made loans to the total value of £226,772. Forty-two of those loans were in Barbados, five in Jamaica and two in Antigua. Most took the form of mortgages and bonds on West Indian property.¹³ His ability to lend money clearly derived from his broader commercial activities, and from his credit-worthiness with London bankers who lent him money to finance his own commercial activities.

The engine behind this varied Lascelles commercial activity was the trading house Lascelles and Maxwell, whose papers, though destroyed in the blitz in 1940, had formed the core of Richard Pares' research before the war. Pockets of company papers survive elsewhere, and the research notes transcribed by Pares from the destroyed papers are now kept in Rhodes House, and have been painstakingly re-analysed by Simon Smith to reconstruct Lascelles' financial career. Lascelles and Maxwell, and its successor Wilkinson and Gaviller (which survives as a trading house to the Caribbean to this day), was the agency that undertook most of the financial activities of the Lascelles, later the Harewood, family which eventually settled at Harewood House. Wilkinson and Gaviller continued to act for the Harewoods' West Indian interests until 1954. Simon Smith's remarkable analysis of Richard Pares' research notes and of surviving papers scattered in a number of archives provides an exemplary account of the commercial activities of that successful merchant house in its dealings with West Indian planters.

The Lascelles developed a lucrative trade to and from the Caribbean, in the process allowing Henry Lascelles to establish a substantial hold over a number of planters. This was effected via the planters' increasing indebtedness to him, both for the sale of their sugars in Britain and the vital goods dispatched from Britain to the Caribbean. But this Lascelles emergent commercial success in the first half of the eighteenth century had a vital political context. Both Henry Lascelles and his brother Edward acted as customs collectors in Barbados, Henry between

1714 and 1730, and Edward from 1730 to 1743. It was claimed that this post was the most lucrative in the British customs system. Both Lascelles brothers were accused of embezzlement (to the tune of £3,000 a year), with consequent legal scrutiny and political hostility both in London and Barbados.¹⁴ However, we do not know how much the Lascelles accumulated in their time as customs collectors, but we do know that these were the very years in which the Lascelles, acting both in their own capacity and through their trading house Lascelles and Maxwell, were able to extend massive loans to planters throughout Barbados. Between 1723 and his death in 1753, Henry Lascelles had made seventy-eight loans, a growing proportion of them in the form of mortgages to West Indians.¹⁵

In the years after his move to England Henry Lascelles accelerated his lending: it grew especially in the war years 1739 to 1748, and then even more markedly afterwards. Increasingly, those loans took the form of mortgages to planters, either to buy a plantation or to purchase Africans.¹⁶ This drift towards mortgages seems in part to have been a result of legislation (notably the Colonial Debts Act of 1732). But where did Lascelles himself get so much money? Again, Simon Smith's work suggests that the money lent to West Indians was self-financed: the ploughing back of profits into further loans. But Lascelles own assets, in real estate and securities in England, clearly gave him, and the trading house of Lascelles and Maxwell, a high credit rating among banks, from which they were able to borrow at favourable rates. Henry Lascelles was also able to exercise personal and financial influence over a number of legal/government officials in Barbados, the very men who made important decisions about the payment or deferment of local debts. Some of those officials were themselves in debt to Lascelles. In Barbados, Lascelles clearly had some political clout, enabling him to promote his own financial interests in the islands ahead, or at the expense, of other financial competitors.¹⁷ It would be wrong, however, not to recognize the important element of the successful businessman about this business history. Henry Lascelles made a judgment that, despite the problems of warfare and the inherent risks of oceanic trade, there was a profitable future in the sugar trade (though the planters' future seemed less certain). For all that, Henry Lascelles' success was assisted by political support.

In the thirty years to 1750, Henry Lascelles made a substantial amount of money from his contracts with the Royal Navy. There were two branches of the Admiralty involved, first the Victualling Board and

second the Sick and Hurt Board. This latter was concerned with the well-being of sailors in the Royal Navy and of prisoners of war. In 1729–30 Henry Lascelles (already customs collector in Barbados) was awarded the contract to victual the Navy in Barbados and the Leewards. His influential contacts both in the islands and, more importantly perhaps, in England among Walpole's circle, were undoubtedly useful. With Henry Lascelles in London and his brother Edward in Barbados, together they formed a powerful transatlantic enterprise, able to advance their naval contracts by tweaking their trading networks throughout Britain, North America and the West Indies to secure the necessary goods and services on profitable terms.¹⁸

Stated simply, Lascelles greased the naval machinery, bribing local naval officers, notably ships' captains and pursers, to help the profitable management of the naval contracts. It was, of course, a commercial system from which contractors were expected to profit. But contractors (in this case the Lascelles family) devised their own strategies of enhancing that profitability still further, even at times at the risk of jeopardizing military defences. In addition, the Lascelles family secured a contract to provision Royal Navy ships active in the slave trade on the African coast. Here, again, the interests of the British state went hand-in-hand with the promotion of private commercial enterprise. The British military state saw its interests promoted by private contractors who also (though sometimes illicitly) enabled senior naval officers to profit from the contracting and provisioning system on both sides of the Atlantic.

The naval contracting system was very lucrative for the Lascelles enterprise, especially in wartime, when the number of ships and men increased substantially in the Caribbean (one of the main theatres of war throughout the eighteenth century). However, these profits from Royal Navy contracts need to be placed in a wider commercial context. We know that Henry Lascelles earned rates of more than six percent on his East India stock, some seven percent on his West Indian loans, and he had English investments that reached more than four percent. The evidence is that his profits on victualling outstripped all those levels of profits (not least because Lascelles said they did). Even by the standards of eighteenth-century Atlantic trade, victualling operations were notably complex, with the Lascelles enterprise and its agents having to scour business contacts in Britain, North America and the islands to secure the necessary supplies at appropriate prices. There was, in addition, the difficulty of securing vital shipping, and all this at a time of increased demand among military personnel scattered in a variety of ships and

postings from The Bahamas to the Eastern Caribbean. Despite the profits, the immense difficulties of victualling caused family and commercial frictions of a quite unusual kind in the normally well-oiled Lascelles financial empire. At the very time that Henry Lascelles wrestled with the complex logistics of provisioning (and securing payment from the Admiralty) he was also under scrutiny for his dubious activities as customs collector in Barbados.

It is easy to see why hostile commentators readily thought that here was a man lining his pockets at public expense. However, with Walpole's fall from office in 1742, Lascelles no longer had the necessary political support to maintain his lucrative positions in the Caribbean. Though the charges of corruption brought against him as customs collector were eventually dismissed, it was no surprise that the victualling contracts went elsewhere (in 1744). Thereafter, and very quickly, Lascelles turned to West Indian finance with even greater vigour, making more and more loans to West Indian planters. Of course, the powerful friends and networks that both Lascelles brothers had cultivated in Barbados during their years of office did not harm them when from 1744 onwards their money was borrowed to help planters across the island. Old favours in Barbados may have been especially useful when the repayment of Lascelles' loans jostled with the demands of other claimants. The Lascelles' interests were at the head of the queue for payment when debts were called. Moreover, any legal disputes about what was owed to the Lascelles brothers took place among officials who themselves had friendly (and sometimes commercial) relations with them. Finance, commerce, colonial governance, military politics and metropolitan influence (to say nothing of greased palms) all came together in a complex financial/political brew in the Atlantic dealings of the Lascelles family.

At his death, Henry may have been worth upwards of half a million pounds, which would put him among the richest of his contemporaries. But his was a hugely complex empire that seems to have overwhelmed him: he died by his own hand, slashing his throat, arms and belly. Forty years later, Joseph Farington remarked in his diary that Henry Lascelles had "killed himself by opening the veins in his wrists". The precise details about his death are hard to come by, but the labyrinthine complexities of his financial dealings over so long a period, to say nothing of the earlier political and legal sniping, may have taken their toll on his mental health. Despite the suicide, he was given a lavish church funeral in Yorkshire.¹⁹

III

A key element in the Lascelles commercial success had been the sugar planters. Despite being in the same business, planters faced very different commercial and financial problems from those of the sugar merchants. From the 1770s onwards, when many of them found themselves in straitened circumstances due to their inability to pay their debts, they were exposed to the risk of having these debts (mortgages) called in by bankers and money lenders. Thus it was, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, that the Lascelles family began to acquire plantations, and the descendants of Henry Lascelles became planters in their own right. The Harewood family, in precisely these years, now resident at Harewood House, became the absentee owners of a string of plantations and an army of enslaved persons. The first Lascelles into the Caribbean had, of course, acquired land (and enslaved persons). But West Indian land had remained a small element within the Lascelles business empire. Until the last quarter of the eighteenth century their entrepreneurial attention remained securely fixed on trade and finance. Between 1685 and 1773, for example, the Lascelles had acquired only two plantations in Barbados. Even as late as 1772 they owned only one, in Holetown, Barbados. Yet a mere fifteen years later, they owned eighteen plantations on four islands, with a total of 9,634 acres. Thereafter they set about rationalizing their newly acquired holdings, selling off some properties while retaining the most profitable ones. On the eve of emancipation (1834–38) they still owned ten estates comprising 5,104 acres. Indeed the Harewoods sold their last property in Barbados in 1970.

The Lascelles family became planters via a complex financial and legal process. But the simple upshot was that they came to own, part-own, or have a stake in, no fewer than forty-seven plantations (though not all at once), scattered from Essequibo to Jamaica. The greatest concentration, comprising twenty-nine, was in Barbados (their first and main base of operations in the islands), with another eight in Jamaica. Through all these transactions, the enslaved people who were the source of their wealth are rarely mentioned.

The emergence of the Lascelles/Harewoods as plantation owners was sudden and unplanned. It represented a dramatic change of commercial direction, and seems not to have been a conscious policy: most West Indian properties were inherited as unpaid debts from their previous owners. In less than a decade, the Lascelles acquired 2,293 acres, and

1,089 enslaved persons in Barbados alone, mostly coming their way through the bad debts of three Barbadian families. A similar pattern unfolded in Jamaica, where Lascelles loans had enabled a number of planters and merchants, notably the Scottish Harvie family, to acquire or expand sugar properties. But as debts mounted and became unpayable, those properties quickly slipped through the Harvies' fingers, and in 1777 the Lascelles family became Jamaican planters and pen owners by the acquisition of 4,025 acres and at least 459 enslaved persons. They acquired another property in Jamaica in 1815.²⁰ In the 1770s and 1780s, the Lascelles family also became the owners of recently established plantations in Tobago, again when planters' debts could not be paid.

The outcome of all these transactions was that in a remarkably short period the Lascelles family had become major planters and slave owners. It had not been intended but, as we might expect of a dynasty now steeped in sharp-eyed business traditions, it offered new, if different, commercial opportunities. In keeping with many others, the Lascelles enterprise managed its plantations at a distance by attorneys, overseers and managers. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century the whole operation was overseen from Harewood House itself. A series of dynastic quirks and careful inheritance arrangements had seen the coming together of two distinct family lines (the one, landed and farming in Yorkshire; the other, commercial and international in London) into the single Harewood family based in the newly completed, stately home at Harewood. There, family interests were presided over by Edwin Lascelles, who in 1790 was created Lord Harewood. Business matters now flowed through the house, and hence many of the family and business papers from the late eighteenth century onwards are located there or on deposit in the nearby archives in Leeds. By about 1800, the Harewoods had become classic absentee planters, assessing their commercial transactions from afar through intermediaries in London and the islands. The family fortunes were secure and no sons were henceforth dispatched to the Caribbean to promote old fortunes or stimulate new ones. The Harewoods from this time went to the Caribbean only as tourists.

Edward Lascelles inherited from Edwin, becoming Baron Harewood in 1796 and First Earl in 1812, and set about rationalizing his properties in Barbados, Jamaica and Tobago (though the data on Tobago are scarce), selling and consolidating his acquisition of land and servile workers, and generally seeking the best absentee returns on his inherited prop-

erties.²¹ Urging their managers to run a tight commercial enterprise, the Harewoods expected their properties to yield a good income. This rationalization seems to have been effective, and their surviving West Indian plantations and pens remained profitable until the end of slavery, raising another, broader West Indian historiographical question. On those properties that the Harewoods maintained until the last days of slavery in the 1830s, the signs of overall economic decline were mixed. The Barbadian plantations thrived, but the Jamaican properties were clearly in trouble by the 1820s. Nonetheless, the English owners continued to profit from the labour of their servile charges on tropical export crops until the very last days of slavery.²² Then came the financial wind-fall: slave compensation. At its very death, slavery yielded to slave owners a handsome bonus, a huge sum of money paid for the emancipation of the enslaved people. Lord Harewood received £26,309 4s 4d from the Treasury for the freedom of 1,277 enslaved persons in his possession.²³ At its apogee and at its death, the West Indian slave system yielded ample returns to this Yorkshire family. Slave emancipation proved a lucrative end to what had been a century of profitable involvement in sugar and slavery.

The British state, in the form of state-financed slave compensation, nicely rounded off the Harewood's lucrative dealings with the sugar islands. The state had offered a number of remarkably lucrative deals to the Lascelles/Harewood family fortunes. Government contracts for victualling government offices such as the Customs Collectorship and now, a century later, slave emancipation, provided rich pickings. These form a good example of the way in which the British fiscal/military state was sustained by, and in its turn provided sustenance for, the private interests of Atlantic trade and commerce. It was a key element in a process by which the Lascelles family of the early eighteenth century became the aristocrats and absentee plantocracy of the early nineteenth century.

IV

The history of the Lascelles/Harewood family fortunes is about much more than their dynastic story. The West Indian origins of a major English stately home is fascinating in itself, but it has a significance for our understanding of wider historical issues. The Harewood story lies at the core of the current historiography of the relationship between Britain and her Caribbean sugar colonies. The recent project offers what

is, in effect, a historical descant to Adam Smith's original score in *The Wealth of Nations*: "The prosperity of the English sugar colonies has been, in great measure, owing to the great riches of England, of which a part has overflowed, if one may say so, upon those colonies."²⁴ Smith's account of the rise of the sugar colonies was challenged by Richard Pares, notably in *Merchants and Planters*, with the suggestion that the money required by planters came from the planters themselves: that planters reinvested their profits into their plantations.²⁵ What has been gleaned from the commercial history of the Lascelles is that the truth seems closer to Smith's initial hypothesis than Pares' revision. But it is also clear that it was the long-term credit, in the form of mortgages, which sustained the boom in sugar after 1750, but which ultimately paved the way for the unmanageable indebtedness of planters to their banks, and hence made likely the transfer of those properties to absentee owners, in this case the Lascelles/Harewoods.

There are other provisional conclusions to be drawn from this study. At critical points the Lascelles' material success was greatly assisted by government, or rather by their role as government officials (customs collectors), their contracts to a government department (the Admiralty), and later government money in the form of slave compensation. The first two, added to the Lascelles' success as money lenders, enabled the family to transform themselves from energetic and aspiring merchants into rural aristocrats, related eventually by marriage to royalty itself.

There remains the outstanding question of what the Harewoods did with their slave-based interests in the last phase of slavery, and what light that throws on the continuing debate about slavery and abolition. At this point the historiographical context shifts to Eric Williams and the subsequent arguments about the origins and consequences of abolition.²⁶ When the Harewoods rationalized their newly acquired slave-based properties, admittedly from the comfort of their Yorkshire mansion, there is little sense that they regarded the slave-based economy of the islands as a losing or doomed commercial venture. Quite the reverse. There were, it is true, parts of their slave empire that needed to be pruned, disposed of, or handled by others. The Harewoods approached their West Indian properties and the servile charges who made everything viable as a system that could be run at a profit. They and their managers ran the whole enterprise on a rational basis, and all with an eye to maintaining the profitable parts (and to make them more profitable) for the overall well-being of the Harewoods.

As far as we can tell, the Harewoods were content to maintain their

slave-based properties as part of their overall commercial portfolio, with no hint that their investments, rooted in slavery, were unprofitable overall. There is no sense that they wished to withdraw from slavery, or that they thought slavery was coming to the end of its economically useful life. They provided a perfect illustration of the point made by David Eltis that the economic end of slavery was not in sight.²⁷ Equally, and not surprisingly perhaps, when the political debate about abolition of the slave trade flared in Britain, the Harewoods closed ranks with other interested parties (most vocal, of course, in the House of Lords) to support the continuation of the slave trade against the rising and widely based chorus of abolitionists.²⁸ By the early nineteenth century the Harewoods had become part of the slave lobby: that motley alliance of merchants, traders and planters that formed such dogged rearguard defence of the Atlantic slave trade but was ultimately swept aside by the quite dramatic surge of popular and Parliamentary abolition sentiment.²⁹

Although they had initially become planters by default in the last generation of British colonial slavery, the Harewoods were as staunchly plantocratic as the other plantation owners. After all, the Harewood family fortunes had been secured more than a century before by their humbler ancestors busily scribbling, calculating and gambling about slave-grown produce. We have little to show that Harewood money went into new, more promising industrial ventures close to hand in the industrial West Riding. They had short-lived involvements with a ribbon factory and experimented with coal extraction at Harewood itself. They had clearly invested huge amounts in their home, in its grounds and in its contents. By 1763, within ten years of Henry Lascelles' death, his sons had spent £75,000 on land in Yorkshire, and had begun houses in Plompton and Goldsborough as well as Harewood. They spent £37,000 on Harewood, and paid £6,900 to Capability Brown and the same to Chippendale. They were, at once, improving landlords in their immediate agricultural hinterland and may have ameliorated the living and working habitat for their tenants, many of whom occupied the impressive tied-cottages and homes scattered across the Harewood lands. But they were not industrialists who sought to divert their overseas profits into more easily scrutinized local and regional industrial activities. They seemed happy to remain what the West Indies had made possible: aristocrats of the highest calibre, political defenders of the world of the Tory grandee, and people of refined and cultivated sensibility, moving with ease among their peers in rural England and the capital.

The idea that all this was rooted in sugar and slavery was a concept

that faded with the passage of time. The ending of slavery and the swift collapse of the sugar industry allowed a communal amnesia about Britain's slaving past to seep across the country in general. And so it is with Harewood House. To repeat my initial question: who, today, visiting Harewood House would even imagine that all this was made possible by Africans in the sugar fields of the Caribbean?

NOTES

1. *Harewood, Yorkshire: A Guide* (Leeds: Harewood House Trust, 1995).
2. Figures from Mr Terry Suthers, Director, Harewood Trust: 2002 (235,000), 2001 (315,000), 2002 (296,000).
3. Nuala Zahedieh, "Overseas Expansion and Trade in the Seventeenth Century", in Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol.1, The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century* (Wm. Roger Louis, editor-in-chief; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
4. Funded by the Leverhume Trust (Grant 042R00313), the research has been conducted primarily by Dr Simon Smith, Dr Douglas Hamilton and myself. This article represents our collective findings, but draws especially on the findings of Drs Smith and Hamilton.
5. Harewood House is now run by a Trust, and all major decisions are taken by it, mainly with an eye to enhancing the appeal and hence the commercial viability of the House itself.
6. The major holdings are in West Yorkshire Archives, Sheepscar, Leeds, in Harewood House, The British Library, The Public Record Office, Rhodes House, The National Archives of Scotland, the National Archives in Jamaica and Barbados, The National Maritime Museum Greenwich, and private company papers of Wilkinson and Gaviller in Kent.
7. Richard Pares, *A West India Fortune* (London, 1950); Richard Pares, "Merchants and Planters", *Economic History Review* Supplement No. 4 (Cambridge, 1960); Richard Sheridan, "The Commercial and Financial Organisation of the British Sugar Trade, 1750-1807", *Economic History Review* 2nd series, 11 (1958): 249-63; Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Barbados; Caribbean Universities Press, 1974).
8. The question of repatriated money and its impact upon British economic change was first effectively raised in Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* (London: André Deutsch, 1944). There has been a wealth of literature on that theme in the interim. For the most recent case study see Douglas

- Hamilton, *Across the Atlantic's Roar: Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
9. See list of imported goods on Worthy Park Estate, Jamaica, in Michael Craton and James Walvin, *A Jamaican Plantation: Worthy Park 1670-1970* (London: W.H. Allen, 1970), Appendix 1, 320-27.
 10. Rhodes House Library, Oxford, Henry Lascelles to Edward Lascelles, 20 April 1741, Lascelles and Son, Letter Book, Transcripts of Richard Pares's Notes, quoted in Douglas Hamilton, "Naval Contracting and the Making of a West India Fortune, 1720-1750", *Journal of Maritime Research* (2004).
 11. S.D. Smith, *The Lascelles and Maxwell Letter Books (1739-1769)* (Wakefield: Microfilm Academic Publishers, 2000), Introduction, 116-17.
 12. David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, David Richardson and Herbert S. Klein, *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD Rom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
 13. S.D. Smith, "Merchants and Planters Revisited", *Economic History Review* 55, no. 3 (2002): 461-62.
 14. Richard Pares, "A London West-India Merchant House, 1740-1769", in R. Pares and A.J.P. Taylor, eds., *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier* (London: Macmillan, 1956); Smith, *Letter Books*, Introduction, 14-15. For the latest, see Pedro L.V. Welch, "The Lascelles and Their Contemporaries: Fraud in Little England, 1700-1820", *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 48 (2002).
 15. Smith, "Merchants and Planters", Appendix, 461-62.
 16. *Ibid.*, 439.
 17. *Ibid.*, 453-54.
 18. Hamilton, "Naval Contracting".
 19. *The Diary of Joseph Farington* (Kenneth Garlick and Angus MacIntrye, ed., Vol. 2, January 1795-August 1796, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 570; North Yorkshire Record Office, Draft Transcript of Holy Trinity Parish Registers, 1753, 16/10.
 20. Harewood Archives, Acc.2677, West Yorkshire Archives, Sheepscar, Leeds, Indenture between Richard Lewing and Henry Lascelles 1777; *ibid.*, Indenture between Henry Maxwell and Edward Lascelles, 1796.
 21. New materials relating to the Harewood's absentee management emerged from hidden corners of Harewood House as this project progressed (see Bundle 4/6, Barbados Papers, Harewood House). I would like to thank Douglas Hamilton for allowing me to read his draft essay "The Lascelles' Caribbean Plantations" from which these data are derived.
 22. Confirming J.R. Ward's findings: "The Profitability of Sugar Planting in the British West Indies, 1650-1834", *Economic History Review* 2nd series, 31 (1978): 206-7.
 23. *Parliamentary Papers*, Sessions 1837-1841, Papers Relating to Negro Apprenticeship, Slavery and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, Vol. 89 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1969).
 24. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*

- (1776; Edwin Cannan, ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 2: 101.
25. Pares, "Merchants and Planters", 50.
 26. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*. For a recent discussion of the issues raised by Williams, see Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (London: Macmillan, 1999), chapters 1, 3 and 4.
 27. David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 14.
 28. This theme remains one of the unexplored/impending areas of research on the Harewoods.
 29. Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom*, chapters 1–3.

Charitable Trusts in Barbados:

Notes for a Research Project

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Abstract

This article makes a case for the institution of a research project on the neglected topic of charitable trusts in Barbados (and in the Commonwealth Caribbean). What little information has so far been recovered clearly establishes that these trusts existed in most, if not all, parishes from the late seventeenth century, and that some of these trusts made significant contributions to the provision of social amenities while expressing and reinforcing policies of social control and racial discrimination. The prime objective of the research project would be to create the evidential base, in the fashion of W.K. Jordan and David Owen, both to permit an authoritative assessment of these trusts (their activation, administration, achievements) and to enable government to regulate them efficiently.

Charitable trusts in Barbados should be examined in detail for at least three reasons. First, such research should provide information on and insight into the island's social history by showing how some social amenities developed, by pinpointing the role played in that development by charities, and by demonstrating the objectives that the dispensers of charity sought to achieve. Second, a large gap in information in the available literature on the extent of charitable activity mandates research. There is mention in the general histories of various charitable donations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in support of education but hardly anything about the very extensive charitable donations for poor relief. That gap in information exists mainly because much of the necessary research has not yet been done and partly because the general historical literature has not yet caught up with the

research that has been done. Third, the topic touches on issues of public policy. From the seventeenth century there have been suggestions that both the *activation* and *administration* of charitable trusts have been far less than perfect. Therefore, there is both a need to test those claims and a legitimate concern about the status of charitable trusts that, for one reason or other, seem no longer to be functioning.¹

What Is a Charitable Trust?

It was a legal instrument, "an invention of equity",² developed in England probably in the thirteenth century, to ensure that endowments for charitable purposes could operate in perpetuity without the necessity for incorporation. Originally, it was intended to shield/hide donations for religious purposes from the claims of the feudal overlord but, by the end of the sixteenth century, it had become fully accepted as an instrument for securing a variety of secular purposes.³ The technical definition therefore runs like this: a donor or testator could now convey in trust to another person or persons property to be used for purposes held in law to be *charitable*, and the Court of Chancery would not only accept it in perpetuity but, should the original purposes fail, would specify new ones as near as possible to the testator's original intention.⁴ This is the English definition, used in the United States, and which has been substantively adopted in the local Charities Act of 1979. So, there are a number of specific features of a charitable trust: donor or testator; a charitable purpose as defined in law; an endowment or capital gift to provide income; trustees; perpetuity; and legal machinery for the restatement, clarification, and alteration of the objects of the trust. (See the Appendix a for sample of trusts that exhibit most of these features.)

It is important to notice that this legal instrument was the principal one used by elite groups in England from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries in the exercise of philanthropy. Equally important, it must be noticed that by the seventeenth century it had become a national tradition for the English "strategic classes"⁵ to devote a significant portion of their income towards building a network of services for the mitigation of poverty (poor relief, almshouses, and so on), disease and infirmity (hospitals), and ignorance (grammar schools and universities); for religious matters (church maintenance); and for improvement of community life (building of town halls, roads, bridges, and so on). W.K. Jordan has shown that more than two and a half million pounds were vested

in charitable trusts in ten English counties between 1480 and 1660; and F.M.L. Thompson has estimated that four percent to seven percent of the gross income of the large estates in England was devoted to charitable purposes during the eighteenth century.⁶

Charitable Trusts in Barbados

These English antecedents must be emphasized because the prominent seventeenth-century settlers of Barbados were essentially Englishmen abroad. Therefore, it is to be expected that they transplanted certain English practices and attitudes and, as soon as their fortunes were made, sought to establish, as they did in North America, a tradition of "voluntary action for the improvement of the common life".⁷ No doubt, like Englishmen at home, they had mixed motives for their philanthropic action: doing good, being seen to be doing good, doing what was expected of successful and high-status individuals, responding to clear social needs, and endeavouring to influence social behaviour and development along certain clearly defined paths.⁸

What might be emphasized among all these motives is the response to social needs. Until the nineteenth century, central government, whether in England or its colonies, played a very limited role in the provision of social amenities. While central government might enact legislation on poor relief, for example, and while local government agencies did raise some revenue for that purpose, it was generally understood, if not explicitly stated, that private philanthropy or charity was expected to carry the main burden of the provision.

Because of the impressive research done by historians like W.K. Jordan, David Owen and others, we know details about what they term the "astounding scale"⁹ of charitable activity (often expressed through charitable trusts) undertaken by Englishmen at home. The question is: to what extent did Barbadians or Englishmen abroad in Barbados emulate Englishmen at home?

To answer that question with any degree of accuracy, we need to know the number and frequency of benefactions (expressed in charitable trusts), the estimated value of the endowments, and the institutions and services that were created or financed by those endowments. Unfortunately, the current state of knowledge does not permit either full or precise answers to these questions; but some "guesstimates" and speculation can be offered.

1. Number and Frequency of Charitable Trusts

The spotty data suggest that charitable trusts might have numbered as many as one hundred up to the end of the nineteenth century. The basis for this guesstimate is the number of charitable donations/trusts that could be found in the parishes of St John, St George and St Philip. For St John, as many as seven (for poor relief) existed by 1700; in St George there were six for the support of schools and schooling by 1825; and, for St Philip, at least seven (mainly for poor relief) can be identified by 1900.¹⁰ If that pattern was replicated islandwide (and there is no reason to doubt that it was), then the number of one hundred cannot be far wide of the mark. As for frequency, the indications are that charitable trusts were particularly numerous in the last forty years of the seventeenth century, and that they started to peter out in the later nineteenth century. This pattern can be explained by the changing fortunes of the sugar industry. By the end of the seventeenth century, Barbadian planters had already enjoyed their golden age of sugar profits and, therefore, it was very likely that planters were the chief donors in the seventeenth century while merchants increasingly took the lead in the course of the eighteenth century.

2. Value of Endowments

We have even less evidence on which to base any guesstimates. Because we do not yet know for certain how many trusts were created and because we do know that there was great variation in the size of endowments, we must be extremely cautious about any guesstimate. For example, Timothy Crowther's capital gift in 1662 was ten acres, and Rowland Bulkeley's annuity in 1688 was £20. But, at the other end of the scale, Christopher Codrington's bequest in 1710 was two sugar estates of 750 acres, regularly producing annual profits in excess of £2,000. However, some notion of the size of the early benefactions can be gleaned from a report made by the governor, Sir Richard Dutton, in 1682. He claimed, with some justification, that "considerable charitable legacies" had not been accounted for over a period of "ten or twenty years", and that he expected to recover, through a special commission that he had appointed, "four or five thousand pounds in money".¹¹ On this basis, it seems safe to say that significantly large sums were placed in charitable trusts, and we can therefore endorse Peter Campbell's conclusion that some Barbadian planters "had a conscience and felt that they owed a debt to society".¹²

3. What the Charitable Trusts Created/Funded

Here, the evidence is clearer. What have to be identified are the physical structures and institutions (school and colleges, churches, almshouses, hospitals, roads and bridges, and so forth) and the services (poor relief, apprenticeship schemes, educational support, and so on) which were funded or created by specific charitable trusts. Hospitals, almshouses, roads and bridges cannot be identified, but four or five schools and one institution of higher learning were established by charitable trusts. The foundation of Codrington College and the Lodge School were direct consequences of Christopher Codrington's bequest in 1710. Harrison College owed its foundation mainly to Thomas Harrison's deed of gift in 1733. The Alleyne School was the result of endowments principally made by Sir John Gay Alleyne in 1785. Combermere School owed its foundation in part to the Drax bequest of 1682 (though the modern school was probably not established until 1819). The Boys' Foundation School came into existence after 1809 partly as a result of the 1671 bequest of Captain John Williams. Some churches, notably Providence, Bethel and Rices (Methodist), Mount Tabor (Moravian) and St Barnabas (Anglican), were built on land donated by church members, and some of those donations may have been expressed in terms of charitable trusts. There are several other examples of charitable trusts that supported poor relief, and many of these functioned into the twentieth century (for example, Carpenter, Lyder, Blades). Similarly, some charitable trusts provided financial support for the education and support of poor (white) children (Bryant, Butcher, Collymore), and some of these are still active.¹³

Does this record square with the intent? At one level, it certainly does. Charitable activity, expressed through charitable trusts, was mainly responsible for the presence of whatever rudiments of social welfare provision existed before the early nineteenth century. After that date, voluntary charitable associations and a modest extension of the state's responsibilities (seen first in the founding of Combermere School) signalled the slow emergence of what has been called "a mixed economy of social welfare".¹⁴ In other words, until that time, charitable trusts were the main source of funding for secondary education and poor relief; and the examples in the Appendix seem to confirm this observation.

Equally important, the provision of those social amenities was also intended to perpetuate certain social values as well as racial distinc-

tions. All the charitable trusts that I have examined, with one possible exception, whether established in the seventeenth century, or even in the twentieth century, catered solely for poor white persons. Sometimes this discrimination was made explicit, particularly after slave emancipation in 1838 (Blades, Lyder, Collymore) but, in earlier times, the code was usually "servants" and "the poor", though "white widows" was also employed. All this indicated a persisting intention by the elite to aid the disadvantaged segment of the free white population, to defend racial boundaries, and to exercise a measure of social control. How pensions were distributed and how the pensioners were policed under the Carpenter Trust is a classic example of those tendencies and attitudes.¹⁵

The one probable exception is the Codrington trust/bequest. If Codrington's will is read in conjunction with what has been described as his "cherished ambition"¹⁶ to christianize the slaves, then he seems to have been directing that the professors that should be appointed under his bequest would be expected to practice medicine, surgery and divinity on "*all mankind*". Presumably, he intended that his enslaved people should have the consolation of religion but was not sure whether they also needed the benefits of education.

Activation of Charitable Trusts

However, the record does not seem to match the intent in terms of the *extent* to which donors' clearly stated wishes were translated into concrete action. It is highly likely that, despite clear provision in wills, many trusts were never activated. What is the evidence? In the sample of charitable trusts in the Appendix, no action was ever reported on four: Nicholas Rice's bequest (1677) in aid of a hospital for the poor of St Philip; Peter Hancock's bequest (1679) for the establishment of a "free school" in St Peter for the sons of the poor; Rev Gilbert Ramsay's bequest (1727) to support the poor youth of Christ Church; and Elizabeth Frizer's bequest (1736) of £10 each annually to twenty "poor widows" of St Michael and St Joseph. Similarly, we know nothing about the fate of several contributions/bequests made during the early nineteenth century in support of the establishment of a girls' school in St George. At the same time, it must also be noticed that activation of some trusts (Carpenter, Crowther, Captain John Williams) could be delayed by as much as one hundred years.¹⁷

The other part of the evidence is the expressed opinion of contemporaries that executors and trustees did not always act with probity. For

example, in 1671 Nicholas Rice felt it necessary to remind his trustees, who were his "very loving friends", John Reid and John Witham, that their responsibility was to ensure that his will was "conscionably performed, as they will answer for the same at the Tribunall seate of God". In 1682, the governor, Sir Richard Dutton, complained that potential benefactors were deterred from making charitable bequests because they had observed that "the rich alone" were profiting from the considerable number of inactive charitable trusts.¹⁸ Both sentiments were fully endorsed by Rev Gilbert Ramsay in his will of 1727:

The careful and conscionable discharge of this trust I must earnestly recommend to the gentlemen of the Vestry as they will answer for it to God, the great patron of it. Indeed it is a matter of grief to consider how public charitable donations for the good of the island of Barbados have been neglected and mismanaged to the great discouragement of such good charitable designs, which I wish may be well considered and amended to the glory of God and the public good of that deserving island.¹⁹

The irony is that the bequests of both Rice and Ramsey seem to have fallen victim to the circumstances about which they were complaining. No doubt, it was this neglect or mismanagement that explains the comparatively meagre record of achievement for the charitable trusts.

Several factors created this situation. In some instances, litigation among heirs/successors might have been a cause for delay in activation and of eventual suppression of the trust. In other cases, executors may have judged that the estate, because of declining fortunes and/or the weight of other encumbrances, could not immediately assume the burden of the donor's philanthropy. In yet other cases, self-interest may have induced the executors and heirs to suppress the details of charitable trusts. In all cases, collusion between executors, trustees and heirs would have been the common denominator, and this factor could and probably did frustrate many donors' intentions.

Administration of Charitable Trusts

Is a similar conclusion tenable for the administration of charitable trusts? Because we have so little detailed information on the trusts, the most that can be said is, "perhaps". However, let us see what is revealed through an examination of two charitable trusts against the obvious criteria for efficient administration. The two trusts are the Codrington Trust, the subject of the book *Bondsmen and Bishops* written by J. H. Bennett, Jr and published in 1958, which is a very detailed study of the

period 1710–1838; and the Carpenter Trust, about which I have written a brief article, published in the *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*. The criteria being employed are: efficient management of assets to produce adequate income to fund the charitable purpose; consistent application of the income to the charitable purpose; good records-keeping to demonstrate transparency; and periodic reports of income and expenditure to a supervising agency to demonstrate accountability.

Efficient Management of Assets

This was doubtful at best because of probable conflicts of interest. In the Carpenter case, the best returns for those leases of the principal asset could never be guaranteed because trustees tendered for these leases and could easily influence both the award and the value. In the case of Codrington, the practice of relying on *unpaid* attorneys clearly led to neglect of management, and it is instructive that the plantations returned to sustained profitability when paid attorneys were employed after 1780.

Proper Application of Income

In the Carpenter case, there is no doubt that trust income was spent for the designated purpose. But, in the Codrington case, there is ground for alleging misapplication, at least for a time. Codrington's charitable purpose seems to have been the foundation of a seminary to train missionaries for the conversion of enslaved persons in the British Caribbean. But the trustees did not manage to establish the seminary, Codrington College, until 1830; and they only made token efforts to christianize enslaved people on the Codrington estates before 1795, when they established schools for them. Instead, for most of the eighteenth century, they spent most of the trust income on the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel's (SPG's) general activities, but did allocate some of that income after 1745 to support both a grammar school, The Lodge School, and a charity school. This was done, not because these were priorities for either Codrington or the trustees, but because influential local opinion insisted that the foundation of a grammar school, in particular, was Codrington's real intention. Apparently, these absentee trustees, not surprisingly, took the line of least resistance in the face of opposition from their own plantation managers, the apathy of their own

chaplains, and the hostility of local planters, and for a long time acquiesced in the opinion of one of their own chaplains that blacks were too "intractable and perverse"²⁰ to profit from religious instruction.

Efficient Records-Keeping/Regular Accounting

These can, for obvious reasons, be taken together. In both cases, the nature of trusteeship guaranteed compliance. For the Carpenter Trust, the trustees were the Vestry, which was a public and accountable institution. The Parochial Treasurer was obliged to render accounts for auditing, and the Vestry Minutes recorded all important decisions. In the case of the Codrington Trust, the SPG was a semi-public institution but, more important, it was absentee. This meant that it sent detailed instructions to its local managers and to the Barbados Committee, and its local agents and employees in turn had to submit regular and detailed reports to headquarters in London; and all this could be scrutinized by the hierarchy of the Anglican Church.

There are only three safe conclusions that can be drawn from this examination. First, trustees were perhaps less than scrupulous in separating their self-interest from their trustees' responsibilities. Second, prevailing prejudices or dominant local opinion determined in large measure the interpretation of charitable purpose. Third, there may have been an assurance of at least adequate administration whenever trustees were routinely supervised by an official or semi-official agency.

Public Interest/Public Policy Issues

Did Barbados possess, like England, the source of the charitable trust, adequate and functioning machinery for the supervision of the administration of charitable trusts? Jordan asserts that charitable funds in England were "on the whole administered with astonishing probity and skill"²¹ during the seventeenth century mainly because the Court of Chancery actively exercised its power of oversight of charitable trusts through frequent inquiries into their operations. It also seems apparent that when some laxity of administration of these trusts was alleged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, detailed investigations followed, and the Charity Commission and, later, the Nathan Committee were established to oversee them.²²

Barbados did have an England-derived judicial system but its Court of Chancery, unlike its English counterpart, apparently never did exer-

cise an active supervisory role in respect of charitable trusts. Indeed, until 1980 when the Charities Act came into force, no institution, office or individual seems to have been formally invested with the responsibility and authority for active oversight. Rather, there were elements of a regulatory framework, involving the courts, parliament and government, that were occasionally used by trustees and representatives of beneficiaries to secure a limited amount of remedial action. The convention was that the courts were expected to act only when complaints were registered by beneficiaries and trustees; and there is clear evidence that the courts did act when trustees sought recovery of the assets of charitable trusts (Carpenter in the 1730s and Bulkeley in 1811–12) and when trustees and other interested parties sought clarification of either the status or the provisions of a charitable trust (Collymore in 1959 and Codrington in 1970).²³ Parliament's role was larger but also occasional. On the petition of trustees and/or other interested parties, it granted permission for new trustees to be appointed (Blades, 1887; Butcher, 1894; Lyder, 1896; Maxwell, 1907), facilitated the activation of at least one charitable trust (Captain John Williams in 1709) and terminated one other (Crowther in 1881).²⁴ On the other hand, the office of Attorney General played a continuing but passive role in that regulatory framework. That formal role was the holding of a watching brief on behalf of beneficiaries and trustees rather than one of active oversight and routine investigation of the charitable trusts.

These were mainly *ad hoc* arrangements which by no conceivable stretch could be favourably compared with the English model or be regarded as fully satisfying the conditions for oversight and efficient administration of charitable trusts. There was little to ensure activation, nothing to provide for routine investigation of the operations, and therefore precious little to reassure beneficiaries and the public about their efficient administration. For example, how could an intended beneficiary, by definition neither a member of the elite nor the owner of financial means, press for the activation of such a trust, or how could a beneficiary make effective complaint about its administration? In general, trustees and executors could have been prodded into action only if a governor (like Sir Richard Dutton) or some other prominent political figure intervened. Because there is no record of regular intervention of this sort, either through special commissions, official requirement for regular reporting of the number of charitable donations, or less formal means, the evidence both of collusion to frustrate donors' intentions and of failures in management is left for researchers

to find principally in the wills deposited in the Department of Archives and in the Vestry Minutes.

However, in statutory terms, the situation has changed drastically since the end of 1979. The Charities Act (cap. 243) has put in place an extremely comprehensive regulatory regime for all charities. It defines all the pertinent terms, mandates the maintaining of a Register of Charities by the Registrar of Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property, and identifies "exempt charities". More important, it sets out at length both the conditions for alteration in the objects of a charitable trust and the procedures, involving trustees, the Attorney General, and the courts, which must be followed in order to effect an extension of trustees' powers and/or their mode of administration. Equally important are the elaborate arrangements for both supervision and administration of charitable trusts. The Attorney General is responsible for supervision and can initiate inquiry into the operations of any charitable trust; any member of the public can seek a court order to bind trustees to discharge their responsibilities effectively; and failure by trustees to cooperate in an inquiry is punishable by fines, imprisonment, or both. Trustees are required to keep proper records, prepare periodic statements of accounts and balance sheets, and deposit these with the Registrar; such documentation is open to public scrutiny; the Registrar can order the auditing of those accounts; and failure either to make returns or to cooperate with the auditor is punishable by fines, imprisonment, or both.

Enforcement of these provisions should cure all the deficiencies identified in the pre-1980 period. We can therefore assume that "neglect" and "mismanagement" will not characterize new charitable trusts. But what about the trusts that were never activated, and what about those pre-1980 ones that were activated? Presumably, those in the first category can be regarded as an academic question, of interest only to those who study human behaviour and the evolution of institutions. However, those in the second category are properly the business of the Attorney General and the Registrar because the existence and operation of those trusts are subject to the provisions of the Charities Act. But it is also apparent that charitable trusts cannot be terminated, their objects altered or their assets disposed of unless, first, full information on surviving charitable trusts is compiled, and unless, second, the courts take action as prescribed in the Act. The point is pertinent because, for example, just over forty years ago, eight or nine charitable trusts were invested in the Southern District Council,²⁵ but no one seems to know

what has happened to their assets (and they do not appear in the List of Registered Charities). A second more recent example is the compulsory acquisition in 2002 of Parish Land (St Philip) for housing purposes. That land was the sole remaining asset of the Carpenter Trust, but there was no action by the court to terminate the trust and no mention of the Charities Act during the parliamentary debate.

All this seems to underline an urgent need for research that would address the legitimate concerns of scholars, judicial officers and members of the public. That research would hopefully reveal the full extent of charitable trusts, those activated and those not activated, the size of their endowments, the specific purposes they serve(d), and their modes of operation. But, perhaps most important from a public interest perspective, it would produce an inventory, and therefore justify collaboration in research between the Attorney General's Office and the University of the West Indies.

APPENDIX: Extracts from some Charitable Trusts1. *20 March 1662: Will of Timothy Crowther of St Philip*

"And likewise that she my said wife do lay out ten acres of land for the use of the poor of this Parish of St. Philip's, to be enjoyed by them *forever*, at the expiration of ten years or within twelve months after her decease (of which of these times it shall please God first to come to pass)."

2. *25 August 1671: Will of Captain John Williams of Balls plantation, Christ Church*

"I give as a stock [capital gift] for the poor of the Parish of Ch. Ch. and towards a free school three hundred pounds to be paid within three years."

3. *12 June 1677: Will of Nicholas Rice, merchant, of St Philip*

"I give and bequeath to the poor of the Parish of St. Philip fifty thousand pounds of muscovado sugar to be paid by my said executors in five years after my decease, (viz.) ten thousand pounds of the like sugar a year, the same to be laid out and disposed of for uses as Capt. John Higginbotham, Lieut. Richard Townshend, and Lieut. Samuel Finney, with the approbation of the Governor or Commander-in-Chief of this island for the time being, shall think proper for the only benefit and advantage of the said poor of the said Parish, wishing that this may be so exemplary to others that there may be so much bestowed as with this may be sufficient to erect an hospital in the Parish for the poor thereof."

4. *4 December 1679: Will of Peter Hancock of St Peter*

"I do truly, give, bequeath and devise all that my mansion house wherein I now dwell, situate in the Parish of St. Peter near Speights Bay, together with all the land thereunto belonging, being one and twenty acres or thereabouts, with all the outhouses, garden and appurtenances thereof to the uses hereunto expressed *forever more*, that is to say, for the founding and effecting of a free school for the teaching and instructing of the youth, the sons of poor parents, in Grammar and knowledge of the Latin tongue and for the maintenance of the said poor scholars and their master as far as the premises by the best improvements may extend unto."

5. *30 June 1682: Will of Henry Drax of Drax Hall, St George*
"Herein I give and devise for the erecting and enduring a Free School or College in Bridgetown, in the Island of Barbados, *to endure and continue forever*, to be paid by my Executors in England, three years after my decease, £2000 to the extent and purpose aforesaid."

6. *6 November, 1686: Will of Rowland Bulkeley of Bulkeley, St George*
"and I do now further give and bequeath for the reparations of the said School House the yearly sum of £20 current money of this Island *forever*, to be issuing and payable out of my plantation aforesaid, and yearly to be expended on such repairs according to the discretion and appointment of my said executors; together also with that piece of land containing by estimation 5 acres."

7. *22 February 1702: Will of Christopher Codrington, Governor of the Leeward Islands*
"I give and bequeath my two plantations in Barbados to the Society for the Propagation of the Christian Religion in Foreign Parts and my desire is to have the plantations continue entire, and three hundred Negroes at least kept thereon; and a convenient number of professors and scholars maintained there, all under the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; who shall be obliged to study and practice physic and chirurgery as well as Divinity; that, by the apparent usefulness of the former to all mankind, they may both endear themselves to the people and have the better opportunity of doing good to men's souls whilst they are taking care of their bodies; but the particulars of the constitution I leave to the Society composed of wise and good men."

8. *21 February 1727: Will of Rev. Gilbert Ramsay, former rector of Christ Church*
"I order and appoint that the sum of five hundred pounds current money of the Island of Barbados to be paid to the order of the Vestry of Christ Church within one year after my decease *in trust, to be by them well and faithfully secured forever at eight pounds per centum per annum on some very good estate and in trust, that they the said Gentlemen of the Vestry and their successors forever do and shall yearly forever pay and dispose of the interest of the five hundred pounds quarterly for the schooling and education of as many of the poor youth*

as [the] interest will pay for to fit them for being bound out apprentices to useful trades and employments."

9. *21 July 1736: Will of Elizabeth Frizer of St Michael*

"I give to fifteen poor widows of the parish of St. Michael and to five other poor widows of the parish of St. Joseph, such as my executors shall think proper, the sum of ten pounds current money each, *to be annually paid out of my estate in the parish of St. Joseph*. I give to the organist of St. Michael's parish the sum of ten pounds current money to be *annually* paid out of my estate in the parish of St. Joseph."

10. *25 April 1777: Will of Francis Butcher of Golden Ridge, St George*

"It is my will that my executors and trustees hereinafter named do and shall immediately on my decease place one thousand pounds current money of this island in good and solvent hands and take security for the same in their names, and I do direct that my said trustees, or the major part of them, do and shall apply the interest thereof *forever* in the clothing, educating and maintaining of six poor boys of the parish of St. George, such as shall deserve charity, whose parents cannot afford their clothing and schooling."

11. *4 April 1843: Will of Joseph Lyder Snr of Puckerins and Zoar, St John*

"I also order and direct that, after the death of all such persons in this will who have life property, all my landed property named in this will shall be rented out and such monies from the rents equally divided as *every year* betwixt all such whites are bedridden, blind or so lame that they cannot earn their daily bread of St. John's Parish, and such monies I order to be divided by the Minister of the said Parish for the time being."

12. *6 December 1848: Will of Edward Blades of Charity Hall, St Philip*

"I give, devise and bequeath unto my beloved wife, Mary Jane Blades, my Place whereon I at present reside for and during the term of her natural life and no longer; and from and immediately after her decease I order and direct the aforesaid Place and buildings thereon to be sold, either by public or private sale and for the most money that can be obtained for the same, and that the money or income arising from the sale or sales thereof be applied for the purposes hereafter directed that the money be put out at interest

upon the most binding security that can be obtained which legal annual interest accruing on the aforesaid loan I do hereby order and direct to be equally divided *yearly and every year* among twelve deserving poor and reputable persons of the white population to be selected by the Rector of the aforesaid parish."

13. *2 December 1921: Will of F.A.C. Collymore, merchant, of Bridgetown* "the scholarship Trustees shall in the second place out of the said income apply a sum not exceeding three hundred and sixty pounds per annum in establishing and maintaining studentship at Harrison College to be called the 'Aubrey Collymore Studentships', each of the annual value of twenty pounds to be from time to time awarded in manner hereinafter directed to white boys whose parents are natives or one of whose parents is a native and the joint income of whose parents does not exceed two hundred pounds per annum."

NOTES

1. These points apply with almost equal force to most of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Only Patrick Bryan has conducted detailed examination of charities (philanthropy) but his study on Jamaica focuses on the post-slavery period [see *Philanthropy and Social Welfare in Jamaica: An Historical Survey* (Kingston: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1990)].
2. W.K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England, 1480–1660: A Study of the Changing Patterns of English Social Aspirations* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), 109.
3. *Ibid.*, 109–16.
4. David Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660–1960* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964), 70.
5. *Ibid.*, 2; cf. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England*, 153.
6. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England*, 117–19; F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 210, quoted in Owen, *English Philanthropy*, 4.
7. Owen, *English Philanthropy*, 1; G. Finlayson, *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare in Britain, 1830–1990* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 46–54; A. Brundage, "Private Charity and the 1834 Poor Law", in D.T. Crichlow and C.H. Parker, eds., *With Us Always: A History of Private Charity and Public Welfare* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), 100.
8. Owen, *English Philanthropy*, 14–16.
9. *Ibid.*, 2.

10. Information for St John can be found in P.F. Campbell, "The Barbados Vestries, 1627–1706, Part 1", *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society (JBMHS)* 37, no. 1 (1983): 55; for St George in "Lucas Mss", *JBMHS* 21, no. 3 (1954): 133–36 and 21, no. 4 (1954): 175; and for St Philip in the St Philip Vestry Minutes, 1794–1920, in the Barbados Department of Archives (BDA).
11. *Calendar of State Papers (CSP)*, 666, Dutton to Lords of Trade, 29 August 1682.
12. Campbell, "Barbados Vestries", 55.
13. BDA, RB6/8/264, Captain John Williams's Will, 1671; H.N. Haskell, "Notes on the Foundation and History of Harrison College", *JBMHS* 8, no. 4 (1941): 189–92; K.A.P. Sandiford and E.H. Newton, *Combermere School and the Barbadian Society* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1995), 2–3; "Lucas Mss", *JBMHS* 21, no. 3 (1954): 132–48; R.H. Schomburgk, *The History of Barbados* (London: Longman, 1849, Frank Cass, 1971), 104–5; Jill Sheppard, *The Redlegs of Barbados; their Origins and their History* (Millwood, New York: KTO Press, 1977), 52–54; F.W. Blackman, *Methodism; 200 years in Barbados* (Bridgetown, 1988), 99–104, 111–12, 125–26.
14. Finlayson, *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare*, 6, quoting S. Kamerman, "The New Mixed Economy of Welfare: Public and Private", *Social Work*, January–February 1983.
15. See Woodville Marshall, "Charity for the Undeserving? The Carpenter Trust and the Creation of the Parish Land Tenantry in St. Philip", *JBMHS* 49 (2003): 167–91.
16. J.H. Bennett, Jr, *Bondsmen and Bishops; Slavery and Apprenticeship on the Codrington Plantations of Barbados, 1710–1838* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), 1.
17. The Carpenter Trust was activated 71 years after the death of the donor, and the Williams Trust was activated about 130 years after the death of the donor.
18. BDA, RB6/13/398; *CSP* 666; cf. *CSP* 337, 863.
19. BDA, RB6/16/428.
20. Bennett, *Bondsmen and Bishops*, 86.
21. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England*, 117.
22. Owen, *English Philanthropy*, 5, 70.
23. St Philip Vestry Minutes, 27 March 1871, letter of G.W. Carrington (26 March 1871). Carrington's letter summarizes action from the Vestry Minutes for 1721–1748; "Lucas Mss", 138–48; Collymore, Leacock and Armstrong v Connell and Others, *West Indian [Law] Reports* 1 (1959): 316–22; Christopher Codrington and United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel v Attorney General, Supreme Court, 165 of 1970.
24. Act re legacies of Captain Williams, 21 March 1709 (*Hall's Laws*); Act of 6 September 1887, Blades Trust Act; Butcher Trust Act, 1894; Lyder Trust Act, 25 November 1896.
25. See Minutes of the Southern District Council, 28 January and 28 April 1960.

La Presse Sportive dans les Antilles Françaises

JACQUES DUMONT

Résumé

La diffusion du phénomène sportif, est indissociable de la médiatisation de son spectacle. La presse spécialisée est un domaine d'étude intéressant qui délimite un champ d'extension de l'objet sport, mais également rend compte de la perméabilité de ce domaine aux thématiques sociales. Cette presse spécialisée en Martinique et Guadeloupe, étudiée de 1930 aux années soixante alterne profusion – on compte jusqu'à 5 revues pour 250 000 habitants – et absence, sans rapport avec l'importance prise par la pratique sportive. Par rapport à d'autre milieux (Europe, Etats-Unis) la presse sportive semble concentrer dans le temps plusieurs tendances qui se télescopent. Trois dominantes peuvent la caractériser: une tendance pionnière où se lit l'idée d'une mission, une tendance militante où le sport est le support de revendications sociales plus ou moins explicites, commerçante enfin par la mise en œuvre de produits sportifs. Les différentes figures du héros sportif, fabriquées et répandues par la presse, permettent de suivre les itinéraires croisés d'une quête identitaire et de l'inscription dans une modernité attachée au culte de la performance. Cette communication souhaite, à partir du cadre proposé permettre d'établir des comparaisons avec d'autres pays de la Caraïbe.

Abstract

The broadcasting of sports and the media are inseparably linked. The sports press is an interesting field that allows one to carve out a specialized area of study and at the same time highlight its place as a social discipline. This specialized press in Martinique and Guadeloupe, from 1930 to the 1960s, which is the focus of this essay, goes from abundance, with no less than five magazines for the 250,000 inhabitants, to zero, with no dedicated sports magazine. Compared with other countries (Europe, the United States), during the period under study the press seemed to have had certain biases, three of which were

dominant: a pioneering or "missionary" focus, a "militant" tendency with sports being used to support more or less explicit social claims, and the commercial promotion of sports products. Different kinds of sports heroes, created and given public exposure by the press, make it possible to follow the cross currents of a quest for identity and the inscription in modernity of a performance cult. This work attempts, within the boundaries proposed, to highlight issues for comparative studies with other Caribbean countries.

Préliminaire

Si les media sportifs représentent un champ d'investigation neuf,¹ les convergences entre le sport et la presse ont été maintes fois soulignées en France,² mais restent peu étudiés dans ses anciennes colonies.³ Ces relations ouvrent pourtant sur la compréhension des phénomènes de diffusion, c'est-à-dire non seulement un mécanisme, mais un processus de séduction sociale. Comment sont diffusées les vertus attribuées au sport? Comment le sport, référence omniprésente dans les sociétés antillaises d'aujourd'hui, conquiert cette place? En quoi le sport rend-il compte des transformations sociales et politiques dans des îles de dépendance coloniale puis départementale? D'abord fait divers, puis rubrique des journaux généralistes, le sport est quelquefois inclus dans leur sous-titre, soulignant ainsi l'importance accordée et la place sociale ou commerciale des activités physiques,⁴ le sport a ensuite généré une presse spécialisée. Mais, et sans doute est-ce une caractéristique majeure des revues sportives dans les îles Caraïbes de sujétion française, les thématiques sportives, ne se limitent pas aux commentaires des rencontres. Elles intègrent des données culturelles, littéraires, politiques. Des écrivains y font même leurs premières plumes, comme Joseph Zobel, dans *Le Sportif*.

Le but de cette étude n'est bien sûr pas de proposer un inventaire de journaux quelquefois tombés dans l'oubli, mais de s'interroger sur la vitalité de ce secteur aujourd'hui disparu, de tenter d'en dégager les traits spécifiques, d'en lire les permanences et les transformations, d'ouvrir la possibilité de comparaisons avec les pays voisins. Bien que le corpus étudié concerne l'ensemble des revues spécialisées⁵ parues en Martinique et Guadeloupe entre 1930 et les années soixante, l'exposé se centrera sur celles jugées principales, par leur diffusion qui oscille entre 1000 et 5000 exemplaires, et leur continuité, sur plusieurs années. En Martinique, le premier journal, *Madinina sportive*, naît en 1930 et sera suivie en 1938 par *Le Sportif* qui va perdurer jusque dans les années soixante. D'abord "hebdomadaire de propagande d'information et de

critique sportive", il devient après la seconde guerre mondiale, "hebdomadaire sportif, littéraire et d'information". Comme l'indique son sous-titre, ce journal s'intéresse à la vie culturelle et publique et est d'ailleurs régulièrement cité dans les sources de presse au même titre que des journaux généralistes. Un autre journal *La Gazette sportive* tente de le concurrencer dans les années 1947, mais ne dépassera jamais les 1500 exemplaires. Après une éclipse de plus de quinze ans, paradoxalement au moment du plus grand développement des activités sportives, la presse spécialisée ressort à la fin des années soixante-dix avec deux revues, *Sport plus* et *Stade1*.

En Guadeloupe, il faut attendre 1943 et la libération pour que la presse sportive apparaisse.⁶ Mais pas moins de cinq journaux spécialisés vont éclore dans cet immédiat après-guerre, pour deux mille licenciés et une population de deux cent cinquante mille habitants, où comme en Martinique, la proportion d'illettrés reste importante.⁷ *Match* paraît dès décembre 1943, en Grande-Terre, comme *Le Sport hippique*, en août 1944 et *Stade* en juin 1945. *Le Dimanche sportif* sort en décembre 1945 sur Basse-Terre, de même que *Le petit sportif* en 1946. Ce positionnement géographique, qui recoupe les deux parties de la Guadeloupe, recouvre aussi une opposition de conceptions. Si on laisse de côté *Stade*, dont le tirage ne dépasse pas 600 exemplaires, et qui disparaît en janvier 1947 et l'éphémère *Le petit sportif*, pendant quatre années, les deux revues principales, *Match* et *Le Dimanche sportif* vont tenter de développer le sport et s'approprier son contrôle jusqu'au début des années cinquante. A cette effervescence, succède l'absence de presse sportive, rompue entre 1963 par le journal *La Tribune*, dont le bulletin de naissance commence par affirmer une nécessité: "Ce journal c'est le journal du sport guadeloupéen avant tout. Car il en fallait un depuis longtemps."⁸ Ce périodique, après de nombreuses difficultés,⁹ une tentative de transformation en magazine, disparaît définitivement en 1968, écrasé par France-Antilles qui développe une abondante rubrique sportive et récupère le journaliste fondateur. Un premier constat souligne donc que le nombre de publication ne correspond pas au développement de la demande ou de la pratique sportive, mais plutôt à celui d'une offre, sous forme d'un engagement de type militant, cherchant à promouvoir "la bonne parole sportive".

Au-delà des divergences et des transformations dans le temps, ce qui caractérise cette presse sportive, c'est le rôle social dévolu aux exercices physiques. Pour toutes ces revues, le sport n'est pas seulement un divertissement, mais un lieu de formation du citoyen."Est-il besoin de

démontrer que l'éducation physique et le sport sont les plus sûrs moyens d'acquérir l'esprit public?"¹⁰ Malgré ces valeurs présentées comme intangibles, l'émergence du champion souligne la transformation d'un idéal et les bouleversements d'une société.

Une mission: le prosélytisme sportif

La presse naissante est l'œuvre de sportifs pionniers, journalistes d'occasion, mais très impliqués dans les institutions sportives. La revue est souvent la caisse de résonance d'une institution. *Madinina sportive*, "l'organe du sport martiniquais", est ainsi la vitrine de l'Union des Sociétés Martiniquaises de Sports athlétiques (USMSA), fondée en 1912 qui regroupe la plupart des clubs. En Guadeloupe, *Le Dimanche sportif* de l'USBT (l'Union Sportive Basse-Terrienne), étend rapidement son influence et son champ d'intervention. Patronnée par la Fédération sportive de la Guadeloupe, qui regroupe les deux ligues de Basse et de Grande Terre, la revue devient un "bulletin de propagande en faveur du sport en Guadeloupe", mais aussi davantage, comme en témoigne son titre étendu à partir de novembre 1947: *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel*. Elle intègre bien avant son changement d'appellation, des manifestations culturelles dont elle se fait l'écho: théâtre, foire-exposition, jeux floraux. Dès le numéro 32 en novembre 1946, cette orientation est précisée: "de plus, estimant que rien de ce qui intéresse la jeunesse ne doit lui être étranger, le Dimanche, désormais tâchera de développer dans notre pays le goût littéraire et artistique".

Les premiers rédacteurs, ont en commun une forte implication dans les responsabilités sportives et le milieu associatif en général. E. Donatien, créateur de *Madinina sportive*, est président-fondateur de plusieurs clubs, médaille d'or de l'éducation physique fièrement rappelée dans ses signatures. Ferriez Elizabeth, pilier du club colonial et de l'USMSA, crée le journal *Le Sportif*. *Match* est l'œuvre d'un groupe de sportif parmi lesquels E. Chartol président des premières formes de fédération guadeloupéenne et Camille Jabbour qui occupera les fonctions de président de la ligue de boxe et de cyclisme et passera de la vente de cycles au journalisme professionnel. Seule *La Tribune* dans les années soixante est l'œuvre d'un journaliste professionnel: Jean Chomereau-Lamothe, formé en France.

Mais en quoi le sport est-il vecteur d'éducation aux yeux de ces pionniers? La pratique est réservée à quelques milliers de pratiquants, à peine un pour cent de la population dans les années cinquante. Le prosé-

lytisme sportif ne se limite pas aux exercices du corps: "Le sportsman reçoit deux éducations: celle qu'il acquiert par l'enseignement des exercices corporels, éducation essentiellement sportive, celle qu'il se donne surtout à lui-même par l'acquisition de principes généraux qui se dégagent de cet enseignement, éducation essentiellement morale. Chez le vrai sportif, la considération de l'équilibre physique doit aller de pair avec celle de l'esprit sportif régi par des règles morales."¹¹ Cet esprit sportif, maintes fois évoqué, est intimement liée à l'idée d'une élévation physique et morale. "Stade s'adresse à tous ceux qui ont avant nous élevé leur voix pour le relèvement matériel et moral de notre pays. Stade a été fondé. Son but, des plus nobles: défendre le sport et partant les sportifs, plaider leur cause. Son idéal des plus élevés: avoir le culte du Beau et du Bien, le propager."¹² La mise en page rend compte de cet objectif: les premières revues, souvent limitées à quatre feuilles, s'ornent de devises. De l'inévitable "mens sana in corpore sano" pour *Match*, à une réflexion de Jules Simon, instigateur d'un comité d'éducation physique en France à la fin du XIX^eme, "l'art de vivre c'est l'art de jouer pour se fortifier et de se fortifier pour bien travailler", pour *Madinina-sportive*. Mais s'y ajoutent également des bandeaux de citations qui sont autant d'appel à réflexion, qu'elles émanent de responsables sportifs, d'écrivains ou de philosophes antiques. Elles exaltent toutes l'indispensable culture physique et ses vertus morales. Le sport "n'est d'ailleurs qu'un moyen agréable de dresser le corps au service de l'âme, d'assouplir la matière pour la rendre plus obéissante."¹³ L'aspect ludique est mis au service d'un apprentissage: "Tout s'apprend, il suffit d'un peu de discipline."¹⁴

Tous ces hebdomadaires¹⁵ posent d'emblée l'idée d'une mission: "Match remplira aussi un rôle de missionnaire, d'éducation de la masse sportive",¹⁷ qui justifie le rôle du journal et légitime la place de ses rédacteurs: "pour favoriser son essor, le diriger, le soutenir, l'harmoniser, il est nécessaire que des amis compétents et expérimentés en suivent régulièrement le progrès pour éclairer la route, aplanir les obstacles et prévenir les défaillances".¹⁸ Les fondateurs et rédacteurs s'investissent d'un Devoir. Véritables initiés, ils souhaitent faire bénéficier la population de leurs lumières. A ce niveau, la presse sportive est bien dans le prolongement du rôle militant de la presse aux Antilles. Il faut "amener ceux dont la formation culturelle est déjà assez poussée à concevoir qu'ils se doivent d'être les apôtres-éducateurs de leurs frères moins avancés".¹⁹ Les valeurs attribuées au sport doivent permettre de s'élever, dans une hiérarchie humaine héritée de l'esprit colonial de la troisième

République, tout en affirmant au passage une position sociale. Il s'agit donc d' "encourager le sport; aider à le répandre, à le généraliser; de veiller qu'il soit bien compris".²⁰ Derrière cet objectif répété tel quel un an plus tard ²¹ se profile la définition d'une légitimité, d'un espace de pratique investi par un groupe qui pense détenir la vérité et se donne pour but de répandre "la bonne semence des idées de concorde, de solidarité, de fraternité".²² La promotion du sport prend l'allure d'une croisade. Les termes d'origine religieuse abondent et attestent de la nature de cet engagement. L'analogie liturgique est revendiquée: "C'est un office célébré en l'honneur d'une divinité moderne appelée sport et à laquelle les foules demandent de leur faire oublier un instant les misères quotidiennes de la vie urbaine, tout en ayant l'air de se passionner uniquement pour les actions d'éclat des officiants, les vedettes du terrain."²³

Le succès du spectacle sportif soulève enthousiasme et inquiétude. Les revues se chargent de poser des garde-fous en définissant les limites du bon comportement. "Voilà enfin les vrais sportifs. Ils ne songent pas aux exhibitions bruyantes, ne pensent pas à se mettre en vedette. Ils font du sport pour le sport, pour tâcher d'acquérir l'adresse, source de confiance, la souplesse et la résistance à l'effort, dons qui affirment et qui élèvent l'individu."²⁴ Les collaborateurs de la revue n'ont de cesse de fustiger les comportements jugés déviants, le défaut de respect envers les dirigeants, le manque de *self-control*, de *fair-play*, d'éducation des spectateurs. Le thème revient avec insistance et constitue l'objet de plusieurs éditoriaux. Les attitudes "discourtoises" sont dénoncées, ainsi que "le manque de mesure" dans les manifestations. Il faut donc guider, corriger, "redresser l'opinion souvent fausse",²⁵ puisque "même ceux qui passent pour des évolués, ignorent tout des règlements, des jeux et des compétitions".²⁶

Le journal est un élément d'un dispositif plus vaste de propagande sportive, qui intègre également la radio. "Depuis quelques semaines, l'aimable et combien précieux micro de Radio-Guadeloupe se trouve, chaque mardi, à 19h.30, à la disposition de l'Union²⁷ pour sa chronique sportive la création du Dimanche sportif, dont l'objet sera de compléter Radio-Guadeloupe dans l'oeuvre de diffusion de la bonne parole sportive."²⁸ Après-guerre, les postes récepteurs ne sont pas nombreux, mais leur faible nombre en rend l'attrait d'autant plus convivial et efficace, que les représentants du régime de Vichy en avaient interdit l'usage public. La radio, dans une île où une partie de la population reste illettrée, est un média accessible à tous, qui jouit du prestige de la

modernité. La volonté est bien de conquérir l'opinion, et pour ce faire de multiplier les initiatives et les supports. La portée du message est amplifiée par la synergie des moyens employés. Il contribue à l'édification d'une "culture sportive" au sens où l'entend J-P. Callède, c'est-à-dire un "ensemble de manières de penser et d'agir, plus ou moins formalisées, qui, étant apprises et partagées par une pluralité de personnes, d'une manière à la fois symbolique et objective, conduisent à constituer ces personnes en une collectivité particulière et distincte, 'les sportifs'".²⁹ La notion de groupe, d'équipe, de famille est encore renforcée par la publication d'informations privées concernant cette communauté sportive. Des chroniques "hors des touches", ou un carnet, annoncent les événements touchant directement les membres de cette confrérie. Elles révèlent au passage, dans une rubrique "hyménée", la fréquence des mariages que l'on pourrait qualifier d'endogamiques. Les sportifs cultivent leur appartenance à une "élite" sociale.

La fabrique de l'évènement

Sans doute faut-il distinguer la revue *Match*, qui ne dispose pas comme les autres du soutien d'un organisme sportif, d'un éditeur, de l'administration³⁰ et se trouve confrontée à la logique de marché pour survivre. Le journal continue d'affirmer sa volonté éducative mais non seulement rend compte des événements sportifs – football, boxe, concours hip-piques, régates – mais va aussi les créer. Le cyclisme est l'objet d'une attention particulière: son rédacteur est marchand de cycle et en contact avec la rédaction du journal *L'Auto* puis *L'Equipe*,³¹ organisateurs du Tour de France. Les publications suscitées par le centenaire du troisième événement sportif mondial, ont largement rappelé le rôle tenu par la presse sportive dans le développement des événements cyclistes.³² Dans cette lignée, *Match*, va créer des critères, des grands prix, avant d'instituer le tour de la Guadeloupe. Camille Jabbour rapporte dans ses mémoires: "Le sport cycliste attirait une marée humaine le long des routes et dans nos communes."³³ Cette emphase illustre bien les rapports entre des pratiques existantes et l'amplification donnée, souhaitée, par la revue. Car cet apparent foisonnement ne doit pas faire perdre de vue la faiblesse des effectifs: 9 participants au "grand critérium du 27 février 1944", 11 au "derby cycliste" en mai 1944. Le premier tour de la Guadeloupe, limité à deux étapes, lors de sa création en 1948, ne concerne que trois clubs.

Mais grâce au vélo, le sport n'est plus une activité exclusivement

urbaine. Une nouvelle catégorie de sportifs prend consistance: les supporters. Le mythe aisément entretenu du héros cycliste, le déroulement des courses qui se prêtent au style épique, l'exemple des feuillets cyclistes métropolitains, comme le tour de France, sont autant d'éléments asseyant le rôle de la revue et qui contribuent à modifier les relations entre demande et offre sportive. Le spectacle se réduit souvent à un duel, composante essentielle du récit sportif pour Gritti.³⁴ La presse locale va s'appuyer sur la tradition des défis cyclistes opposant deux coureurs, commandités chacun par un mécène ou un magasin. Elle crée ainsi une dramaturgie, une véritable mythologie³⁵ sportive. Des qualités fantastiques et symboliques sont prêtées à chaque concurrent, qui forcent ainsi l'identification et contribuent à modeler l'image du héros sportif. La rivalité entre les cousins Gilbert Mérope et Gérard Paulin est une aubaine pour *Match*,³⁶ comme le sera dans les années soixante le "combat" entre Pauline et Molia, instrumentalisé par le nouveau *France-Antilles*.³⁷ Tous les ingrédients sont réunis et exploités pour enflammer la Guadeloupe, comme on a pu le suivre dans d'autres pays avec l'opposition Coppi-Barthali³⁸ en Italie ou Anquetil-Poulidor en France. Le duel cristallise et schématise les oppositions: progrès versus tradition, modernité technique opposée aux qualités physiques jugées séculaires, Grande-Terre contre Basse-Terre.

L'impact s'en fait sentir jusque dans l'île-sœur. "Fantastique, le mot n'est pas trop fort, le tour de la Guadeloupe est fantastique. Ceux qui ne l'ont pas connu ne peuvent s'imaginer ce qu'il représente pour les Guadeloupéens. Enthousiasme qui dégénère en passion, à telle enseigne que pendant quinze jours de l'année, les habitants de l'île oublient leurs préoccupations primordiales qu'elles soient politiques, sociales ou religieuses."³⁹ Les commentaires oscillent entre admiration et condescendance, peut-être parce que la Martinique ne dispose pas à cette époque d'un événement sportif de cette résonance. *Le Sportif* s'y emploie mais reste attaché aux valeurs pionnières, à ses symboles et s'efforce de pérenniser la course du souvenir, organisée la première fois à l'occasion du tricentenaire du rattachement des Antilles à la France en 1935. Ce relais sera de plus en plus contesté dans les années soixante, comme emblème d'une dépendance et coupé des engouements de la population.

La presse pionnière est tiraillée entre le souci éducatif et la nécessité commerciale, qui finit par l'emporter. Pour assurer les ventes, les rédacteurs du journal sont amenés à utiliser tous les registres de la séduction. Les techniques de fabrique du sensationnel sont employées; depuis les

annonces anticipées, jouant de la surprise ou du mystère, en passant par l'emphase caractéristique des reportages sportifs "dix mille personnes acclamaient le vainqueur dont l'exploit faisait crier d'admiration".⁴⁰ Les gros titres, souvent accrocheurs, quelquefois alarmistes sont dignes d'une presse dite à sensations: "vers la fin du cyclisme en Guadeloupe?" interroge le numéro 76 de *Match*, suivi immédiatement dans le numéro 77 d'un "vers la fin de la boxe en Guadeloupe?" *Le Sportif* en Martinique utilise lui aussi de plus en plus le registre de l'extra-ordinaire. Superlatifs, titres racoleurs et effets d'annonce font désormais partie intégrante du langage sportif aux Antilles: le journal *Stade 1* à la fin des années soixante dix n'hésite pas, évoquant la violence, à titrer "la syphilis de notre football".⁴¹

J. Gritti⁴² a analysé les registres de discours employés dans la presse sportive française. Elle se distingue de la presse d'information générale par le langage, le ton adopté, l'emphase. Reprenant ces caractéristiques et l'invention permanente de l'exceptionnel, la presse sportive antillaise s'en démarque néanmoins, car la langue du reportage n'est pas prétexte à une syntaxe relâchée, à des incorrections, bien au contraire. La trace des pionniers, convaincus d'appartenir à une élite, reste trop attachée à la maîtrise de l'expression pour supporter un quelconque manquement ou l'utilisation de familiarités.⁴³ Le français est la langue de promotion, le créole est absent. Il faut attendre l'après départementalisation pour qu'il fasse son apparition, sous la forme de contes en Guadeloupe, quelquefois de blagues ou de proverbes.

Le culte de la performance⁴⁴

Pour ancrer les événements dans la vie antillaise, les manifestations sportives sont dans un premier temps obligatoirement inscrites à des périodes de congés. Mais les dates choisies sont symboliques: le circuit colonial se déroule le 14 juillet; 1948, date-clé du centenaire de l'abolition de l'esclavage voit la naissance du trophée Caraïbe de football et du premier tour cycliste de la Guadeloupe. Aujourd'hui, la finale de la coupe de Martinique de football a été placée le 22 mai, jour de commémoration de l'abolition de l'esclavage. La création d'un calendrier spécifique témoigne de la place prise par le phénomène sportif. Elle ne se limite pas à l'invasion d'une culture du corps. Les journaux portent témoignage d'une transformation majeure des sociétés au XX^e siècle. Le passage de valeurs collectives d'une société du devoir à une société centrée sur l'individu et la recherche de bien-être. Composante majeure

de cette presse, le profil du héros sportif change: l'athlète complet se mue en champion. L'honnête homme sportif, le *sporstman* idéal des pionniers, cultivé, raisonnable, dévoué à la collectivité, laisse place à l'exaltation de la performance, au record, à la compétition et l'efficacité comme valeurs cardinales de la modernité.

Déjà, dans les années 1930-1940, l'exaltation constante des valeurs collectives laisse supposer qu'elles sont menacées: "c'est l'équipe qui doit réussir et non pas toi".⁴⁵ Ces axiomes accompagnent une véritable foi dans les vertus du groupe et d'une prévention à l'égard de l'exhibition. "Qu'est-ce qu'un sportif et spécialement un champion? Certes c'est pour le public un jeune homme ou jeune femme qui court le 100 m à une allure record, qui joue avec brio 3 sets de tennis. Mais il s'agit là du côté spectaculaire, nécessaire sans doute, mais qui n'est pas l'essentiel. Le sportif est avant tout un homme qui développe à la fois son corps et son esprit, qui se discipline, qui exerce sa volonté, qui pratique la loyauté, l'entraide."⁴⁶ La résistance à l'égard de la promotion de l'individu reste longtemps perceptible. Ainsi, dans les années cinquante, un professeur d'éducation physique, Guy Azémar lance "une grande enquête sur l'athlétisme en Guadeloupe" dans la revue *Match*.⁴⁷ Il précise et tente de rassurer dans la *Revue Guadeloupéenne*: "l'athlétisme m'objectera-t-on est un sport individuel et partant, il exalte seulement l'effort égoïste au détriment de l'esprit d'équipe. L'athlète est le plus souvent fidèle à son club, à sa cité, à son pays, tandis que nous assistons périodiquement au commerce effarant des vedettes du ballon rond ou ovale qui semblent s'expatrier sans scrupules excessifs."⁴⁸ Le sportif est encore pensé au service d'un collectif.

Les années 1960 vont bouleverser ces repères. L'explosion démographique, conjuguée avec l'arrivée d'une société de consommation bascule les valeurs. La télévision, l'effacement de la presse locale par des capitaux métropolitains plus préoccupés de rentabilité que d'information, contribuent à transformer le paysage social et culturel. La mise en place d'une politique sportive prioritaire sous la Vème République, l'irruption d'athlètes antillais sur la scène internationale – originaires des îles et non de métropole – va catalyser des aspirations à la réussite que les économies insulaires n'offrent pas par ailleurs. La méritocratie se redéploie. La valeur humaine est de plus en plus rapportée à la mesure de la performance. Une société du rendement se propage à travers ses icônes. La place de ces nouvelles figures sociales se lit dans l'ensemble de la presse, où disparaissent les revues sportives. Malgré des tentatives, comme *La Tribune* dans les années soixante, la presse spécialisée

locale ne peut plus lutter contre le déferlement de *France-Antilles*, qui prend soin de réserver une place considérable aux faits divers et au sports. Il faut attendre la fin des années soixante-dix pour que des revues spécialisées resurgissent, elles permettent de suivre un itinéraire. A coté de l'affirmation de "l'esprit sportif", le culte du champion y est omniprésent et revisite les "vedettes d'hier".⁴⁹

Les journaux contribuent à l'affirmation d'une nouvelle figure sociale aux Antilles, le champion, ces "productions symboliques de la culture de masse qui rendent visibles ou lisibles pour tous, les caractères dominants de notre imaginaire social".⁵⁰ Car ce loisir suscite et encouragé par la société industrielle, "projette un monde de récits et de légendes que la société se raconte à elle-même: un espace d'héroïsation qui la confirme dans ses valeurs et dans ses choix".⁵¹ Le héros sportif doit en permanence être dans une dissonance optimale: suffisamment lointain pour susciter le rêve et malgré tout demeurer accessible au prix de qualités socialement exemplaires. Elevé au rang de demi-dieu, il n'est pas d'essence divine, mais représente plutôt l'expression laïcisée d'une croyance. Il mêle la traduction d'un mérite et d'un destin. L'idole sportive est l'incarnation du lien paradoxal entre inégalité de fait et égalité de principe, affirmée comme une valeur républicaine centrale. Expression fantasmée d'une collectivité, le mythe du *self-made man*, qui réussit quelle que soit ses origines ou sa couleur, peut s'y épanouir, moteur du spectacle et pour certains de l'engagement sportif.⁵²

Les revues sportives, témoins (et vecteurs?) des changements sociaux

Les journaux affichent explicitement un attachement politique. Après quatre ans d'interruption, *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel* reparait pour une saison, en 1952. L'éditorial du premier numéro, réaffirme une mission, voire un sacerdoce: "le Dimanche sportif et culturel était plus qu'un journal, un mouvement au service des jeunes. Cette mission nous la précisons à nouveau: guider, encourager, stimuler la jeunesse, force vive du pays. L'inviter à fortifier son corps, à orner son esprit tout en tâchant de rendre meilleur son coeur. Enseigner à cette jeunesse ce qui constitue la grandeur de la France, de la vraie France que nous voulons croire immortelle. Lui montrer le visage de notre chère Guadeloupe, belle dans sa nature mais enlaidie dans plus d'un domaine. Lui faire comprendre qu'il se doit de travailler à l'évolution de son pays,

français depuis trois siècles, promu département depuis 5 ans.⁵³ La thématique sportive semble inséparable d'une quête de reconnaissance. Elle s'inscrit dans la relation de domination et de distance entretenue par la France. La presse sportive des années trente brandit l'incorporation de la rhétorique coloniale: "Plus belles, plus fortes, plus cultivées, plus dignes, seront les races des peuples coloniaux qui évoluent sous les effluves puissantes du génie merveilleux de la mère-patrie, plus grand, plus fascinant sera dans le monde le prestige de la France humanitaire et émancipatrice."⁵⁴ Les devises et les propos affirment: "semper francia".⁵⁵ La promotion de l'effort, avec ses traductions à l'interface du corps et de l'esprit apparaît comme une étape indispensable pour "mériter" l'intégration. Dès la fin du XIXème siècle, l'inégalité de développement sert de justification à l'entreprise coloniale. La reprise du thème du retard souligne l'importation de cette vision: "chers camarades secouons notre apathie et montrons nous plus empressés quand il s'agit de la cause sportive. Soyons assez raisonnables pour combattre notre négligence native, par là nous ferons déjà acte de volonté."⁵⁶ Il faut se monter digne, multiplier les signes d'appartenance. "Nous ne devons plus rester en arrière"⁵⁷ est un leitmotiv des revues qui voient dans le sport un outil de progrès. L'affiliation de l'USMSA à la Fédération française d'athlétisme en 1930 est présentée comme une victoire et un insigne honneur.⁵⁸ Tout écho dans la presse métropolitaine est aussitôt retranscrit et prétexte à renforcer l'assimilation des valeurs véhiculées par le sport.

Sport et politique sont présentés comme antinomiques, et nombreuses sont les déclarations de principe cherchant à se démarquer de visées politiciennes. "Politique sportive: oui, politique: non", titre ainsi le journal *Match* pour son numéro deux en 1944. Cette prévention générale du milieu sportif face au politique a été bien analysée par J. Defrance,⁵⁹ et la négation du politique semble même être une caractéristique de l'idéologie sportive.⁶⁰ Mais si le sportif antillais se vit lui aussi comme apolitique, il ne renonce pas à son rôle de citoyen, renouant avec la racine même du terme: "Nous ne nous occupons du corps que parce qu'il faut libérer l'esprit et nous nous occupons des questions sportives non comme un but mais comme un moyen. Mais rien de ce qui a rapport à la vie de la cité ne nous est indifférent. Rester en dehors des luttes politiques, d'accord, mais conserver intégralement nos droits de citoyens, dire notre mot chaque fois que besoin est, à propos de toute affaire concernant la cité."⁶¹ Cette conviction est sous-tendue par une conception de l'homme et de la société, que le sport doit

promouvoir: "la pierre angulaire d'une démocratie est le gouvernement de soi-même".⁶²

Pourtant, ces journaux largement favorable à la départementalisation, sont aussi parmi les premiers à en dénoncer les effets. Ils font ouvertement référence aux désillusions qu'entraînent les retards dans la mise en œuvre d'un alignement sur la France métropolitaine, n'hésitant pas à titrer par exemple "La Martinique entière proteste contre les premières mesures nées de l'assimilation"⁶³ et multiplient les attaques contre toute forme d'inégalité. Ces journaux rejettent avec virulence les signes d'une distinction, aussitôt qualifiée de discrimination entre "les fils de l'Union française". Dans l'esprit et sous la plume de ces pionniers, il s'agit toujours de la recherche d'une égalité attendue mais toujours différée. Ainsi dans les années Cinquante, les comparaisons avec la France ou les autres pays de la Caraïbe sont l'occasion de stigmatiser le désintérêt de la métropole pour ses nouveaux départements d'outre-mer. Les installations sportives sont depuis les années trente, dans *Madinina sportive*, le lieu de dénonciation d'une différence de traitement. Les demandes de développement du domaine sportif, prolongent les attentes liées à la départementalisation. La résonance symbolique perce dans les discours. "Compte-t-on la Martinique dans la France?"⁶⁴ "La Guadeloupe, département français, demande pour son peuple, que les conditions mêmes de la vie des citoyens ne lui soient jamais marchandées."⁶⁵ *Le Dimanche sportif* prophétise: "un jour viendra où la jeunesse de ce pays, qui compte parmi les 299.000 sur 300.000 habitants exigera les mêmes avantages dont jouissent les jeunes français."⁶⁶ Ce qui est imputable d'une façon générale au peu de cas qui est fait du sport dans cette période de reconstruction,⁶⁷ est interprété aux Antilles comme une marque de dédain, dont les incidences affectives sont profondes. Suite à la non participation de la Guadeloupe aux championnats de France de boxe amateur, Jabbour adresse une lettre de protestation au Ministre de l'Éducation nationale, reproduite intégralement dans *Match*. "Nous élevons une énergique et indignée protestation contre cette tendance insultante des milieux continentaux à ne vouloir nous considérer - bien qu'assimilés - que comme des français de seconde zone."⁶⁸ *Le Sportif* souligne avec amertume qu'il existe décidément deux catégories de français.⁶⁹

Le glissement vers des thématiques polémiques est sensible.⁷⁰ Le journal *Match* va à partir de 1952 servir de podium pour les idées politiques de son rédacteur Camille Jabbour et perdre progressivement son ancrage sportif. En Martinique, plusieurs numéros du journal *Le Sportif*

sont largement consacrés au "mémoire des 18" déclaration de chefs de service métropolitains, qui scandalise la Martinique en 1951. Les propos sont suffisamment révoltants pour que M. Lodéon et Symphor, sénateurs et anciens sportifs, anciens rédacteurs de *Madinina-sportive* adressent une lettre de protestation au Président du Conseil en France. Différents numéros expriment l'émotion, les résonances: "Les nouveaux venus, si l'on n'y prenait garde, réussiraient ce monstrueux et impossible tour de force de nous obliger, à travers eux, à détester la France."⁷¹ De même les grèves des fonctionnaires particulièrement virulentes en 1953 sont largement exposées dans les pages de l'hebdomadaire *Le Sportif*. S'agit-il d'une entorse aux positionnements pourtant réaffirmés d'apolitisme? Plutôt l'expression de l'imbrication des valeurs sportives et du modèle républicain. L'État doit jouer le rôle d'un arbitre impartial: "Il incombe à l'administration, à l'État, de veiller plus sérieusement à ce que l'égoïsme des forts ne puisse si régulièrement bafouer la justice, le droit à la vie des faibles."⁷² Le sport n'est pas pour ces pionniers un but, mais un moyen d'accéder à l'intégration et surtout à la reconnaissance. Justifiant la sortie du journal *La Tribune*, Jean Chomereau-Lamothe, annonce: "Il fallait que nous fassions connaître ce dont nous sommes capables de faire sur les terrains et au delà des terrains. Il fallait un œil pour nous suivre, un doigt pour se lever quand nous nous égarions, une bouche pour crier partout que nous sommes davantage que ce que l'on croit."⁷³

L'examen de la presse spécialisée aux Antilles françaises rend compte des certitudes mais aussi des contradictions qui traversent le milieu sportif. Il permet de suivre l'itinéraire d'une diffusion et ses singularités. L'étude de la presse sportive est un genre doublement mineur, en marge des grandes investigations sociales et politiques. C'est justement parce qu'elle apparaît comme *a priori* insignifiante, qu'elle mérite attention et qu'elle est susceptible de révéler la complexité d'une modernité en train de se construire.

NOTES

1. A. Bernstein et N. Balin, "Sport and the media: the emergence of a major research field", en A. Bernstein et N. Blain, eds, *Sport Media, Culture: Global and Local Dimensions* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 1-30.
2. A commencer par E. Seidler, *Le sport et la presse* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1963), qui reste d'actualité.
3. E. Combeau-Mari et J. Dumont, "Sport in the French colonies: comparative study. Guadeloupe and Reunion 1925-1950", en J. Tolleneer et R. Renson,

eds., *Old Borders, New Borders, No Borders: Sport and Physical Education in a Period of Change* (Oxford: Meyer & Meyer, 2000), 157-76.

4. Ainsi, *La Raison*, porte en sous titre, "journal indépendant, économique, littéraire et sportif". *Le Miroir de la Guadeloupe* annonce les thèmes suivants: "politique, économique, littéraire et sportif".
5. Ce travail ne tient pas compte des bulletins de ligues, clubs, etc.
6. Il est quelquefois difficile de caractériser les limites de cette presse. La revue *La Guadeloupéenne*, qui paraît en 1915, s'appuie de plus en plus explicitement sur les activités physiques, sportive et de tourisme étroitement associées. Dans les années 1980 en Martinique, le journal *Le Naïf* propose plusieurs numéros spéciaux, intégralement consacré au sport.
7. Entre 1942 et 1946, les conseils de révision dénombrent pratiquement 25 pour cent d'illettrés (2121) sur les 8780 jeunes gens recensés (*Annuaire de la vie martiniquaise*, 1947).
8. *La Tribune*, n° 1, 28 septembre 1963, éditorial.
9. C. Merland, *La Tribune: Un homme, une revue, une époque*, mémoire de maîtrise STAPS, 2004.
10. *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel*, n° 74, 1947.
11. *Le Sportif*, n° 226, samedi, 19 décembre 1942. On peut noter que cette revue est publiée sans interruption pendant la période de vichy, appréciée par le gouvernement en place.
12. *Stade*, "tous les sports", 30 juin 1945.
13. *Madinina sportive*, n° 3, 20 février 1930.
14. *Le Sportif*, n° 540, 20 janvier 1950.
15. Le jour de publication peut varier, et il y a souvent une interruption avec la fin de la "saison" sportive.
16. L'idée d'une mission semble bien ancrée parmi les pionniers. J. Goddet, rédacteur du journal *L'Auto*, puis de *L'Equipe*, seul journaliste français présent aux jeux olympiques de Los Angeles en 1932, déclare dans ses souvenirs, *L'Équipée belle* en 1991: "écrire dans un journal d'actualité, c'est dépendre et faire comprendre, apporter une explication, juger même, influencer peut-être, donner des idées en tout cas. Cela peut devenir une sorte de mission."
17. *Match*, n° 1, 23 décembre 1943.
18. *Madinina sportive*, n° 1, jeudi, 6 février 1930.
19. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 32, 1946.
20. *Le Dimanche Sportif*, n° 23, 1946.
21. *Le Dimanche Sportif*, n° 73, 1947.
22. *Le Sportif*, n° 4, jeudi, 2 juin 1938.
23. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 59, 1947.
24. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 7, 1946.
25. H. Olympie, "Quelques aspects de l'âme antillaise", *Madinina sportive*, n° 3, 20 février 1930.
26. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 56, 1947.
27. Il s'agit de l'USBT (Union sportive basse-terrienne).

28. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 2, 18 décembre 1945.
29. J-P. Callède, *L'esprit sportif: essai sur le développement associatif de la culture sportive* (Bordeaux: MSHA, Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, 1987), 9.
30. Ferriez Elizabeth rédacteur du *Sportif* est éditeur. *Le Dimanche sportif* est édité sur les presses de l'imprimerie officielle de la Guadeloupe. A l'inverse, *La Tribune* dans les années soixante sera contraint de changer plusieurs fois d'éditeur en raison des coûts.
31. *L'auto* devient *L'Equipe* après son interdiction pour collaboration à la libération.
32. "The Tour de France 1903-2003", *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 20, n° 2, June 2003.
33. C. Jabbour, *35 ans de souvenirs* (Paris: GEDIP, 1981), 25.
34. J. Gritti, *Sport à la une* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1975), 48-51.
35. Voir R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris: Seuil, 1957), en particulier le chapitre sur le Tour de France.
36. La *Revue Guadeloupéenne* parle à ce sujet du duel des Mérope.
37. D'abord tri-hebdomadaire, puis quotidien, le journal du patron de presse métropolitain Hersant débarque aux Antilles après une étude de marché. Le sport y tiendra une place importante, la rubrique étant tenue en Guadeloupe par Jean Chomereau-Lamothe.
38. S. Pivato, "Coppi et Bartali: un mythe entre politique, sport et imaginaire collectif", en *Anthropologie du sport, perspectives critiques* (Paris: AFIRSE, 1991). La construction de cette mythologie doit beaucoup au prestige d'écrivains tels Curzio Malaparte, qui dans *Sport Digest* en 1953, va donner à cet affrontement sa dimension métaphysique: "Bartali est un homme dans le sens ancien, classique, métaphysique aussi, du mot. C'est un ascète qui méprise et oublie à tout instant son corps, un mystique qui ne croit qu'à son esprit et au Saint-Esprit. Fausto Coppi, au contraire, est un mécanicien. Il ne croit qu'au moteur qu'on lui a confié, c'est-à-dire à son corps. Du départ à l'arrivée, du commencement à la fin de la course, il ne cesse un seul instant de surveiller ce moteur précis, délicat et formidable qu'est son corps à lui.
39. *Le Sportif*, n° 598, 26 avril 1952.
40. Jabbour, *35 ans de souvenirs*, 23.
41. *Stade 1*, n° 11, 30 janvier au 6 février 1978.
42. Gritti, *Sport à la une*.
43. A l'inverse, la maîtrise de la langue, de sa ponctuation est quelquefois mis au service de l'ironie. La visite du ministre Claudius-Petit est ainsi présentée dans *Le Sportif* n° 615 du 9 octobre 1952: "M. Claudius, petit ministre de la construction est venu aux Antilles".
44. A. Erhenberg, *Le Culte de la performance* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1991).
45. *L'Echo de la reine*, n° 250, février 1939, 65.
46. *Le Sportif*, n° 238, 14 mai 1943.
47. *Match*, n° 128, et 129.
48. *Revue Guadeloupéenne*, n° 30, 1950. Cette revue n'est pas spécifiquement

sportive, mais ouvre nombre de rubriques à ces activités. Beaucoup de collaborateurs viennent du *Dimanche sportif*.

49. Par exemple, "Antoine Labridy: le gardien au grand cœur", *Stade 1*, n° 8, du 9 au 16 janvier 1979.
50. A. Erhenberg, "Le Show méritocratique", *Esprit*, avril 1987, 269.
51. G. Vigarello, *Du jeu ancien au show sportif, la naissance d'un mythe* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).
52. Les interviews de J. Chomereau-Lamothe sont à cet égard exemplaires: les coureurs cyclistes d'origine populaire, rêvent de gains (de quoi s'acheter un petit commerce ambulancier, un véhicule) qui leur offriraient une promotion sociale.
53. *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel*, n° 111, 18 novembre 1951.
54. *Madinina sportive*, n° 1, jeudi, 6 février 1930.
55. La devise de l'USMSA, et de *Madinina-sportive* reste l'orientation dominante des autres revues.
56. *Madinina sportive*, n° 8, avril 1930, à quoi se résume notre esprit sportif Roland Lozon.
57. *Le Sportif*, n° 617, 22 octobre 1952.
58. *Madinina sportive*, n° 3, 1930.
59. J. Defrance, "Le sport et la politique de l'apolitisme", en *Sport et démocratie*, Assemblée nationale, 1998, 87-90.
60. J.-M. Brohm., *Sociologie politique du sport* (Paris: Delarge, 1976).
61. *Le Sportif*, n° 357, 11 mai 1946.
62. *Le Dimanche Sportif et culturel*, n° 76, 1947.
63. *Le Sportif*, n° 417, 20 janvier 1948.
64. *Le Sportif*, n° 608-9, 5 et 10 juillet 1952.
65. *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel*, n° 73, 16 novembre 1947, reprise d'une allocution à radio-guadeloupe.
66. *Le Dimanche sportif*, n° 64, 22 juin 1947.
67. M. Amar, *Nés pour courir: sports, pouvoirs et rébellions (1944-1958)* (Grenoble: PUG, 1987).
68. *Match*, n° 102, 23 novembre 1948.
69. *Le Sportif*, 20 janvier 1948.
70. Les liens sport et politique sont ouvertement évoqués dans les années 78, dans la revue *Stade1*, de Camille Chauvet. Il s'agit sous cette rubrique d'interroger les différents partis sur leurs actions en faveur du sport, leurs conceptions.
71. "Le rang et la sueur", *Le Sportif*, n° 549, jeudi, 22 mars 1951.
72. *Le Dimanche sportif et culturel*, n° 80-81, 4-11 janvier 1948.
73. *La Tribune*, n° 1, 28 septembre 1963, éditorial.

A Multifunctional Space:

The Uses of Rituals among Enslaved and Freed Afro-Caribbean Peoples

EDWINA ASHIE-NIKOI

Abstract

This article examines enslaved and freed Afro-Caribbean people's utilization of ritual practices. It argues that rituals were a means by which Afro-Caribbean societies "remembered", recalling their pasts as well as commenting upon and recording their present for the use of future generations. Rituals were also used for resistive purposes and fostered and strengthened a liberationist ethos. They were the mechanism by which Afro-Caribbean peoples soothed the pains of their collective present and built communities. Further, the article argues that within this process of healing and community building, rituals served as the locus of perhaps the most vital of New World inventions – the Afro-Creole identity. Ritual action galvanized the creation of an Afro-Trinidadian, Carriacouan, and Afro-Jamaican identity, among others. By proceeding on the premise that rituals such as Junkanoo, Carnival, Vodun, and Big Drum chronicled and visually illustrated the historical and social realities of Afro-Caribbean communities, this work identifies them as ritual lieux de mémoire, useful avenues through which the submerged historical voices of black subalterns may be excavated. The study of rituals is important to the recovery and understanding of any society's past but is especially so in those, such as the community of enslaved persons in the Caribbean, that record(ed) their histories in non-written forms. Echoing the caveat that "anthropological means do not offer any infallible paths to historical ends",¹ this article proposes that a more nuanced reading of the Afro-Caribbean past is available through a critical examination of the region's main rituals.

Understanding Ritual: Definitions and Typologies

The ways that the term "ritual" is being utilized need clarification. On the one hand, ritual is used to describe performing complexes of the Caribbean often referred to as "festivals". Examples of these include

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Junkanoo of Jamaica and the Bahamas, celebrated during the Christmas and New Year's seasons; Carnival of Trinidad, celebrated prior to the Lenten season; and Crop Over of Barbados, celebrated, as its name suggests, during the harvest season some time in July or August. Ritual is also used to describe the sacred complexes that have sometimes been merely labelled "dances" and "feasts": Carriacou's Big Drum, Jamaica's Myal, and the various rites of Haiti's Vodun and Cuba's Santeria, for example. However, also to be considered sacred for their appeals to, and close connection with, gods and ancestors are rites of passage, burial "practices", and such ritual occurrences as the *ikem* rite that secretly announced the Antigua conspiracy of 1736² and the various other "dances" and "feasts" that did the same before conspiracies elsewhere in the Caribbean. This separation according to sacred and non-sacred must not be taken as a preclusion of religious elements in the "secular" rituals. The abovementioned rituals are also sometimes referred to as ritual *lieux de mémoire* to distinguish them from other non-ritual sites of memory, such as landscape and the market. Additionally, this work recognizes Christmas and Easter as ritual times of significance to the enslaved people, for they provided a space in which to observe their own ritual expressions, and were the best periods for them to plan and stage revolts.

Parchments of History: Caribbean Rituals as *lieux de mémoire*

The sight that met her as she disembarked the slaver newly arrived from Africa would have confirmed to the *bossale* what she may have suspected from her moment of capture. Watching fellow shipmates being touched, appraised, branded and sold at the slave market seared into her consciousness the fact that she and they were now something less than human: they were property who would take their place next to animals and machinery in plantation inventories. The law sanctioned this new status, relegating the enslaved persons to private property or, more so, a "special kind of property". Among the regulations that governed enslaved people were sanctions against them acquiring literacy. However, instead of robbing enslaved Africans of an avenue to record and process their experiences, the law reinforced ways of remembering the past, valued by the societies from which enslaved Africans originated. The newcomers utilized their memory skills to aid them in the recreation of cultural forms and in passing along privileged knowledge

- religious, medical and, most importantly for our purposes, historical. Thus, instead of putting pen to paper, as did their masters and mistresses, enslaved Africans recorded their experiences by putting words to tune and drumbeat. An excavation of the historical pasts from the perspective of these historical actors would need to take this into account and would require the utilization of new methods and sources, including the often overlooked but crucial "non-written social memory embedded in ritual acts and formulaic speech and grounded in meanings lived in the social landscape".³

Although Caribbean scholarship has acknowledged the possible utility of non-traditional material such as oral histories and folklore as sources, the region's ritual complexes have been largely overlooked.⁴ Like oral histories and traditions, rituals serve as important documents from within the society, are valuable for what they reveal about what is and was important to the society, and provide us with their views on the historical events that affected their lives. Victor Turner asserts that "communal social drama" - a description that Errol Hill would certainly agree is a fitting one of the Trinidad Carnival and other Caribbean rituals - "involved reflection on the past myths and history of a group's culture".⁵ Indeed, Paul Connerton argues that it is through ritual performances that images of the past are conveyed and sustained. In essence, it is through ritual performances that "societies remember".⁶

In Caribbean ritual texts were (and are) events, moments and heroic deeds that Afro-Caribbean groups determined were memorable and conveyed their perspective. To borrow a description from Sterling Stuckey's discussion of the ring shout, a ritual of the plantation South, rituals were "shot through and influenced by the traditions and sentiments" of the enslaved people.⁷ Ritual practices developed in spite of the laws that forbade large interplantation gatherings. However, enslaved persons on the same plantation met "after-hours" and indulged in what was perceived of as harmless entertainment by owners and managers. They were often given permission to attend "parties" on other plantations. Left alone, the enslaved people developed a space in which they could unload and leave a legacy for later generations. So it was that the enslaved African woman's poignant longing for home was recorded in Carriacou's Big Drum two centuries ago and echoes hauntingly today:

Beautiful Louisa
Let us go back to Guinea
The sea water bars me
From my mother in Guinea.⁸

And another Afro-Carriacouan mother's anguish is remembered:

Weep for me Lydia, weep Mary Rose
 Lament for me, lament for our going
 Whoever loves me, console my children for me
 Sunday next, the vessel sails for Haiti
 He [the plantation owner] have sell us like animal.⁹

Another song, hinting at the healing functions of ritual, responds to a mother's torment, emphatically declaring, "I will not say a word, I will cry with you." To give yet another illustration, in this instance from Haitian Vodun, Ezili, the *Iwa* of love in one of the ritual's reenactments of the country's colonial past, "loses" her child Ursule and wails, "*Moin pa ganguin chance!*" ("I am unlucky!"). Ezili's lament provides us with painful evidence of the desperation and anguish of enslaved mothers driven to commit infanticide in order to spare their children the misery of slavery.

The aforementioned examples add meaningful dimension to our understanding of the enslaved persons' reactions to their condition. They speak to the pains of the enslaved people's experience: separation from and longing for Africa, the difficult decisions enslaved parents often had to make, the anguish of separation from family, and the painful realization (evidenced in the defiant verse, "He have sell us like animal") that one was hardly more than disdained property. These examples also clearly demonstrate that the rituals reveal the enslaved persons' emotions and perspectives that otherwise scholars have so far only been able to speculate or glean largely from the pens of owners and other observers.

In his diary entry of 1 January 1816, Monk Lewis, describing that year's Junkanoo, wrote that John Canoe bore upon his head: "a kind of pasterboard house-boat, filled with puppets, representing some sailors, others soldiers, others again slaves at work on a plantation".¹⁰ Junkanoo literally carried a crafty commentary on the enslaved people's experience.¹¹ His houseboat was an amalgamation of two signal forces in their lives – the boat, the vehicle of their forced transatlantic voyage, and the "Great House", which oversaw the everyday motions of their lives. It is highly likely that the sailor and soldier puppets that Lewis saw in the Junkanoo houseboats had implicit reference to independent Haiti and the Afro-Jamaican desire for freedom. Julius Scott, Markus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh have convincingly demonstrated the importance of sailors and seafarers in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Atlantic

communication and, more importantly, their links to the post-Haiti resistive fervour that contributed to the destabilization and eventual collapse of the slave system.¹² It is not surprising that these personages, who were so central to the lives of the enslaved people, especially in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, would figure prominently in Afro-Jamaican ritual celebration. Lady Nugent's journal informs us of the heavy military presence in Jamaica in the tumultuous years following the Saint-Domingue Revolution and the establishment of independent Haiti. Soldiers, whose presence signalled the fear of slave uprising, were also characters who warranted ritualized commentary by the enslaved people.

Ritual continued to be a potent *lieux de mémoire* for emancipated Africans experiencing the varied dimensions of "false freedom". In post-emancipation Trinidad when freed Africans could not be legally kept off the streets during Carnival festivities, Carnival itself became a symbol of emancipation. The streets, and later the calypso tents as well, became sites of memory and history was dramatized, enacted, or sung. Afro-Trinidadians used Carnival to commemorate their experiences under slavery, dramatizing elements of their slave experience on the streets of Port of Spain: "One of this gang – of primitive Negroes, as nearly naked as might be, bedaubed with a black varnish – had a long chain and padlock attached to his leg, which chain the others pulled the chained one was occasionally thrown down on the ground, and treated with a mock bastinadoing."¹³

It is indisputable that the quotation immediately above depicts the dramatization of an aspect of slavery. We are not informed whether the person who meted out the "mock bastinadoing" was another member of the "gang of primitive Negroes" bedaubed in black varnish. If so, did he symbolize a driver, detested representative of planter authority? Yet the dramatization mentioned above could also be a reenactment of the sale of enslaved persons, a likely event, considering the chains. Thus, Afro-Trinidadians, through rituals that "exhibited hellish scenes and the most demoniacal representations of the days of slavery", attempted to ensure among their progeny the memory of the enslaved people's experience. The change in their condition of bondage was also commemorated through the ritual of *cannes brulées* (or *canboulay* in Trinidadian Creole) which annually inaugurated the Carnival festivities.¹⁴ Hill suggests that the "combative element in Carnival", that is, the burning of the canes, stickfighting and other activities that the dominant classes labelled riotous behaviour, "began as a ritual observance of slavery".¹⁵

Considering Carnival as a *lieu de mémoire* for newly freed Afro-Trinidadians provides us with additional insight into fully comprehending the historical situation at hand. The violent conflicts that became a part of the Carnival commemorations and drove away elite participants were reflective of the violence present in the memories of the freed persons' recent past. The histories that the freed persons chose to perform ritually and the memories that they persisted in keeping "indicted" the elite and were not compatible with the latter's attempts to forget the horrors of the recent past. The result was numerous attempts to curb the celebration of Carnival. After years of living under a brutal system and its replacement by what many considered a false freedom, the attempts to suppress what was a critical *lieu de mémoire* was perhaps rightly understood by the newly freed persons as another attempt to control the motions of their lives.¹⁶ Thus, by thinking through the relationship between historical memory and rituals, we can begin to appreciate the riots and the severity of their nature as neither a sign of inherent barbarity and disorderliness nor a love for revelling and hedonism, but as passionate attempts by a people to preserve their method of memorializing and their version of historical events, an effort at "commemorative vigilance" (to borrow a phrase from Pierre Nora) to ensure that "history would not soon sweep them away."¹⁷ The attempt to suppress the observance of Carnival – at this point a record of the horrors of enslavement – was a hegemonic threat against the preservation of their history as they (Afro-Trinidadians) saw it and not as the elite wrote it. The Carnival riots were statements against the obliteration of the memories of a marginalized society. Connerton could well have been speaking of these nineteenth-century protagonists when he stated that "the struggle of citizens against state power is the struggle of their memory against forced forgetting".¹⁸

Making Themselves Masters of the Land: Rituals and Resistance

At a "dance" held on Good Friday night in 1816, the three ringleaders of Barbados's most severe slave revolt, Bussa, Davis, and Sarjeant, conferred together, ostensibly finalizing plans.¹⁹ Early on the evening of Easter Sunday, fires were lighted in several parts of St Phillip Parish to signal the start of the revolt.²⁰ The officials that took the testimonies of these enslaved Barbadians were not as particular about ethnographic detail as were those Antigua officials who would give us the most

exhaustive account of ritual used as a site of resistance – the *ikem* “dance” staged by the Antiguan insurgents of 1736. Although we have no descriptions of an elaborate coronation or other ritual, it is highly likely that this Barbadian “dance” held symbolically on Good Friday was, like the *ikem* “dance”, not innocent entertainment and had a significance not divulged by the enslaved persons during their testimonies. It may be that the dance was a final recruitment exercise. Testimony gathered revealed that some enslaved persons were told at the dance about the planned revolt, shown the heap of trash that was to be lit as a signal to start, instructed to burn canes and buildings when they saw the trash light up, and promised the cooperation of free blacks.²¹

Entertainment of “dancing, gaming, and feasting” were the “chief measure” Court and Tomboy used to “corrupt” other enslaved Antiguans. These sometimes expensive affairs were always covered with some “innocent pretence”, such as “commemorating some deceased friend by throwing water on his grave, or christening a house, or the like, according to Negro customs”.²² Tomboy, we are informed, made Jemmy, an enslaved Creole, swear allegiance and take an oath at one of these “harmless” events.²³ The *ikem* ritual, described as a military “dance and show”, announced the enslaved people’s intention to revolt. The *ikem* ritual, held exactly a week before Tomboy held a feast “to which were invited a great number of slaves”, crowned the leader Court as “King of the Coromantees”.²⁴ A similar coronation of an “Eboe King” occurred in Jamaica before a planned revolt (see below). One may speculate that perhaps these rites held greater significance to Africans than to Creoles and were considered by the former to be necessary prerequisites for spiritual strengthening before conflicts such as revolts. In the context of the New World, revolts may have become equated with wars and the rather public ritual acts engaged in prior to revolts, to which whites were sometimes invited, as in Tomboy’s feast and Court’s coronation, were due warnings to the dominant society that the enslaved people were ready to make themselves masters of the land.

Not only were ritual activities performed or engaged in prior to revolt, but ritual times were chosen to embark upon revolt. What is immediately striking about the conspiracies discussed here are that they all occurred or were scheduled to occur during an auspicious time, especially the ritual moments of Christmas and Easter. The “Coromantee Negroes” of the 1760 insurrection in Jamaica chose Easter Monday.²⁵ The 1815 Christmas season in Barbados saw the planning of the 1816 insurrection and the rise of a rumour that freedom from “friends of the

blacks in England" was near.²⁶ The insurgents chose Easter as the time "beyond which forbearance would no longer be extended".²⁷ Easter of 1816 was also the time that some enslaved Africans in Jamaica – "not a creole was among them" – were caught planning a revolt during the funeral of a child.²⁸ This particular group of insurgents had chosen a King ("King of the Eboes") who felt that Christmas was the "very fittest season in the year" to undertake the "laudable design" of massacring all the whites on the island.²⁹ The insurgents in Antigua chose the eleventh anniversary of the King's coronation to "perpetrate their Negro plot".³⁰ Aside from the distraction that the ball scheduled for that day would have created, one can conclude that the day would have been perceived as having a symbolic potency for its association with the ritual coronation of a king who the rebels aimed, in effect, to replace with a king of their own. Some members of the dominant class suspected that the Christmas and New Year's jollity veiled insurrectionary plots and the militia was sometimes called out.³¹ These fears were not unfounded: one quarter to one half of pre-emancipation rebellions took place during the Christmas and New Year's seasons.³²

The links between post-emancipation ritual and resistance are evident in the preceding section's discussion of the Carnival riots. The trials of freed persons as they tried to achieve "full free" were not only played out in Carnival but also recorded in cultural documents. A Big Drum *kalenda* (stickfight song) displays empathy for Afro-Trinidadians and expresses the disdain and frustration felt over their limited freedom:

In my own native land
I can't Bongo as I please,
I can't speak as I please,
I can't stand up as I please.³³

Another Big Drum *kalenda* celebrates Joe Talmana, "a powerful stick-fighter and popular hero" who led the resistance against British colonial attempts to suppress Carnival. Other versions of the song relate that when the police chief Capt. Baker sought out the ringleader, Talmana defiantly responded: "*Mwe rivé!* Joe Talmana, *mwe rivé!*" ("I am here! Joe Talmana, I am here!").³⁴

The connections between Caribbean rituals and resistance offer us perhaps the most profound evidence of the importance of rituals to the historical actors being investigated. Although potent, the ritual space was more than a mechanism of resistance. Similarly, although they were sites of historical memory, Caribbean rituals functioned beyond reflec-

tion on the past or present. They were also spaces in which the collective attempted to transcend African ethnic divisions and create a truly Afro-Caribbean society, a process examined below.

Towards “All O We Is One”: Rituals and the Creation of the Afro-Caribbean Community

Beyond being reflective of past or present conditions in which their participants found themselves, the Caribbean rituals under investigation here were also reflexive. Afro-Caribbean peoples learned about themselves through these ritual performances.³⁵ To quote Turner, “the actor may come to know himself better through acting or enactment; or one set of human beings may come to know themselves better through observing and/or participating in performances generated and presented by another set of human beings”. In the ritual spaces of history, cultural traditions and societal norms, such as reverence for elders, were passed on as elements of the emergent Afro-Caribbean identity. Importantly, the transcending of ethnic differences that permitted the development of a coherent communal identity often occurred within the healing parameters of ritual.

The ritual document of Big Drum offers us a glimpse of how one group of Afro-Caribbean people sought to answer the perplexing question, “What shall we become?” Big Drum consists of the dances and songs of the nine African nations that Carriacouans recognize as their historical origins – Cromanti, Igbo, Manding, Temne, Congo, Arada, Moko, Chamba and Banda – as well as performances identified as “Creole”. The dance of any particular nation opens the ritual but dances from other nations are also performed. According to Fleary, when a dance was taking place in a Chamba yard, for example, people from other nations would come and perform their dances, and would also learn the Chamba steps. During the ritual they “met on common ground and this is how the Big Drum happened”.³⁶ In this ritual space, togetherness was emphasized; indeed, Carriacouan oral traditions stress consensus forged by their collective experience and claim that there was never “vexation” among the different African nations.³⁷ Thus, while maintaining distinct African ethnicities, the enslaved people in Carriacou also created a viable “African” community.³⁸ Yet Big Drum did not just resolve inter-African differences; it bridged the gap between Africans, Creoles *and* the Scotch descendants of the Windward villages of Carriacou. Today, because Big Drum is “part of Carriacou culture”,

the people of the Windward villages make sure to hold the ceremony and to open it, "*vari* or do our own type of dance", followed then by Cromanti and other nation dances.³⁹ Similarly, in pre-emancipation Jamaica, Junkanoo closed rifts between coloureds and blacks who worked in concert during the festivities, crafting the houseboat that John Canoe carried and paying for other expenses associated with the ritual.⁴⁰

Caribbean rituals reflected a choice between issues enslaved and freed persons decided to preserve or suppress. Issues (such as "vexations" between groups) were repressed to heal and enable a forging of a collective identity. Elements that were rejected in the process of "negotiating space for the expression of a collective identity" included false cultural representations and stereotypes that "had been signified upon Afro-Creoles by the dominant society".⁴¹ Fabre concurs, stating that "black celebrations strove to correct certain inconsistencies of history".⁴² Thus history as remembered in ritual was not only selective but also prescriptive. Elements such as folktales, traditions, folk characters and beliefs that were familiar to the various African ethnicities that found themselves in New World societies were preserved as part of a collective memory and identity. At times, elements were also forgotten and others preserved and enacted in rituals to help heal and soothe the pains of the collective experience. An exploration of revolutionary Haiti's Vodun illuminates how Afro-Caribbean rituals operated as sites for remembering and forgetting in the process of forging a collective memory and identity.

Vodun carried the memory of the ancestors and its practices honored past African rituals and traditions, instilling in the midst of emotional chaos a sense of cultural pride. This pride was reinforced and renewed by the large number of *bossales*, many of whom became guerilla soldiers in the revolutionary war.⁴³ Priests and priestesses were also among these ranks of *bossales*. Vodun provided the bridge across the "incoherence of language and traditions" that existed between the many African and Creole Haitians, and because it represented the interests of enslaved persons, Vodun developed the "cohesion and unity of the masses".⁴⁴

Simultaneously, Vodun was the site for forgetting, a vehicle of healing that provided the strength for resistance, and in the post-independence period, for the building of the nation. In the dance that honoured the ancestors, the spirit of Vodun was kept alive to comfort, discipline and enable its children to face their struggles.⁴⁵ Vodun allowed enslaved

Africans to dare realize their wish for an unshackled existence. Its songs and incantations to *mbumba*, the serpent rainbow spirit of Kongo, was sung during the war to "tie-up" or confuse the enemy.⁴⁶ It was also used to call for protection of new initiates at initiation ceremonies. It is almost impossible to understand the creation of an Afro-Haitian identity without acknowledging the importance of this ritual *lieu de mémoire* at its roots. Vodun's collective memory served as the focus for political consciousness, and the centre of appreciation for old African and new Creole values.

Conclusion

This article has suggested that Afro-Caribbean rituals were critical spaces for their enslaved and freed participants who utilized them for various purposes. As *lieux de mémoire* Afro-Caribbean rituals served as documents onto which enslaved and emancipated people inscribed their experiences. This process helped Afro-Caribbean peoples to understand past and present events, and to merge the two. It was an effort to have the "past make sense in the situation of their peculiar collective present".⁴⁷ The ritual space was also cathartic – healing, strengthening and alleviating their collective pain as they "helped each other cry". Rituals (whether in the form of satirical songs and performances of "the tradition of Carnival", Big Drum, Set Girls and Actor Boys of Junkanoo, or pre-rebellion rites) were generally "utilized by the people as part of their organized cultural resistance, to check the imposition of European values and customs"; they were among the tools that were "used in acts to rid the people of their oppressors".⁴⁸ They were "not merely reflections of the past but agents of change that invented more viable futures for the marginalized".⁴⁹ This essay has argued that by fostering the creation of community, rituals served as the locus of perhaps the most vital of these inventions: the Afro-Caribbean identity. Perhaps the importance of Caribbean rituals to present-day expressions of national identity or solidarity is a telling testament to their past central role in the creation of Afro-Caribbean community and identity.

NOTES

1. Charles Joyner, *Shared Traditions: Southern History and Folk Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 93–94.
2. David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels: A Study of Master–Slave Relations*

in Antigua, with Implications for Colonial British America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

3. Thomas Abercrombie, *Pathways of Memory and Power: Ethnography and History among an Andean People* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 410.
4. The literature on rituals in the English-speaking Caribbean has tended, for the most part, to focus on their carnivalesque manifestations, especially those in Trinidad. These rituals have been used as the analytical focal points from which scholars have researched and debated a number of issues, including the (African, non-African, Creole) nature of Caribbean societies, post-emancipation conflict and nationalism (see, for example, Judith Beetleheim, "The Jonkonnu Festival", *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 13 [1985]; Bridget Brereton, "The Trinidad Carnival, 1870-1900", *Savacou: Journal of Caribbean Studies*, 11-12 [1975]; Errol Hill, *The Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre* [London: New Beacon Books, 1997]; Hollis Liverpool, "Rituals of Power and Rebellion: The Carnival Tradition in Trinidad and Tobago" [PhD dissertation, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1993]). The argument being made here centres on the consideration of Caribbean rituals (past and present) as *lieux de mémoire* and critical historical sources.

- Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).
13. Charles William Day, *Five Years Residence in the West Indies* (London: Colburn and Co., 1852), I, 313–16.
 14. Hill, *Trinidad Carnival*, 23–24; see also Hollis Liverpool, *Rituals of Power and Rebellion: The Carnival Tradition in Trinidad and Tobago, 1763–1962* (Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications, 2001), 221.
 15. Hill, *Trinidad Carnival*, 25.
 16. A Big Drum song quoted below illustrates the emancipated person's resentment of continued elite control of (or attempts to control) aspects of the lives.
 17. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*", in Genevieve Fabre and Robert O'Meally, eds., *History and Memory in African American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 289.
 18. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 15.
 19. "Remarks on the Insurrection in Barbados", *Christian Observer*, n.d., 26.
 20. *The Report from a Select Committee of the House of Assembly, Appointed to Inquire into the Origin, Causes and Progress of the Late Insurrection* (1817; London: T. Cadwell and W. Davies, 1818), 8.
 21. *The Report from a Select Committee of the House of Assembly Appointed to Inquire into the Origin, Causes, and Progress of the Late Insurrection* (Barbados: 1816), 7.
 22. *A Genuine Narrative of the Intended Conspiracy of the Negroes at Antigua* (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 5.
 23. *Ibid.*
 24. Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels*, 249.
 25. SC 004, 582-1, Schomburg Center Clipping File, 1925–1974, Slavery – West Indies, "1760 Insurrection of the Negroes (of Jamaica) Mentioned in Our Last", 294.
 26. *The Report of a Select Committee of the House of Assembly*, 6.
 27. *Ibid.*, 8.
 28. Lewis, *Journal*, 226–28.
 29. *Ibid.* Lewis quotes the song an overseer heard the "King" sing at the funeral: "Oh me good friend, Mr. Wilberforce, make we free! God Almighty thank ye! God Almighty thank ye! God Almighty, make we free! Buckra in this country no make we free: What Negro for to do? What Negro for to do? Take force by force! Take force by force!"
 30. SC 004, 582-1, "Extract of a Letter from Antigua" (?), *Chronicle* 24 October 1737, 59.
 31. William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica* (London: 1790), 392; *The Antislavery Examiner*, nos. 7–14, 1838–1845 (Westport, Connecticut: Negro University Press, 1970), 11; Sylvester Hovey, *Letters from the West Indies: relating especially to the Danish island St. Croix, and to the British Islands Antigua, Barbadoes, and Jamaica* (New York: Gould and Newman, 1838), 62.

32. John Nunley and Judith Beetleheim, *Caribbean Festival Arts: Each and Every Bit of Difference* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 139.
33. Lorna McDaniel, "Memory Songs Community, Flight, and Conflict in the Big Drum Ceremony of Carriacou, Grenada" (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 1986), 145.
34. "Mwe rive, Joe Talmana", *Tombstone Feast: Funerary Music of Carriacou*, The Alan Lomax Collection, Caribbean Voyage Series, Cambridge: Rounder Records. Both songs were composed by Carriacouan migrants returned from Trinidad.
35. Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 81.
36. Winston Fleary, Director, Folklife Institute of Grenada, interview with author, 16 August 2002.
37. Ibid.; CD # T1188, Alan Lomax Archives, Caribbean Field Recordings, Wilfred Redhead and Sugar Adams, interview with Alan Lomax, 31 July 1962.
38. Until this day Afro-Carriacouans may be said to maintain a triple identity – their specific African "ethnic" identity, their general "African" identity that acknowledges the origin and nature of their culture, and a Carriacouan identity.
39. B P. Compton, Carriacou Historical Society, personal communication, 19 August 2002.
40. Peter Marsden, *An Account of the Island of Jamaica* (Newcastle: 1788), 33; also Lewis, *Journal*, 75–76.
41. Rachel Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder: Candomble and Alternative Spaces of Blackness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
42. Genevieve Fabre, "African American Commemorative Celebrations", in Genevieve Fabre and Robert O'Meally, eds., *History and Memory in African American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 78.
43. John Thornton, "African Soldiers in the Haitian Revolution", *Journal of Caribbean History* 25 (1991): 59.
44. James Leyburn, *The Haitian People* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1990), 137; also Michel Laguerre, *Voodoo and Politics in Haiti* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).
45. Joseph Murphy, *Working the Spirit: Ceremonies of the African Diaspora* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 43.
46. A similar "confusion-working" function was called upon the Saramaka *obia* Mása Lámba. The *obia*'s role in confounding the enemy is commemorated at the Dángogó shrine at Awónôgè (Richard Price, *Alabi's World* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990], 47).
47. Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, 94.
48. Liverpool, *Rituals of Power*, xv.
49. Fabre, "African American Commemorative Celebrations", 5, 72–91.

Refining "Bajan" Identity, 1930–1980

PATRICIA STAFFORD

Abstract

The concepts of imaged communities and the invention of tradition are now familiar to historians through the work of Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawn.¹ This article shows how, with the coming of an independence consciousness, the Barbadian middle class, which had allowed its cultural heritage almost to be lost, re-appropriated Barbadian folk culture to assert their national identity. Within the space of fifty years they moved from being "Little Englanders" to "Bajans". While this process was taking place, they refined what had been unacceptable and made it desirable by validating and professionalizing their cultural products.

They are callin
becos you are here
fuh you never went away
yuh stayed
hidin under de talk
of massa tonque
disguising yuhself
all along.²

Introduction

Against severe economic odds, the black Barbadian middle class grew steadily from probably 2,000 mainly urban dwellers at the end of slavery and apprenticeship in 1838 to around 20,000 adults by the 1930s.³ The economic difficulties involved in rising in status from plantation labourers have been well documented. It suffices to say here that because of the constraints of the Master and Servants Act of 1840, the

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dense population of the island and the determination of the planter class to keep land in their own hands, along with the lack of crown or empty lands on which to settle or squat, most routes to affluence, other than the fruits of emigration or education, were unavailable.⁴ Those who did achieve middle-class status during this period usually obtained a toehold on the social ladder through the higher wages that they earned as artisans or by displaying high intellectual abilities and becoming pupil teachers on completing elementary school. Others were fortunate to belong to families that, through earnings from abroad, were able to invest in a small piece of land or set up a shop or other small business. From these families the brightest children might be encouraged through private lessons to obtain exhibitions or scholarships to secondary school; in a few cases the parents earned enough to pay school fees.⁵ As the schools were based on the social assumptions of the British colonial power, and at secondary level were taught largely by expatriate Brits, the system was almost guaranteed to inculcate respect for the culture of the imperial power. Most Barbadian children of this era left school knowing far more of the history of the Roman and British empires than of the island in which they were born.

This hegemonic control was so successful that Barbados became widely known of as "Little England". Respectability was important to the Caribbean colonial middle classes and one way to show respectability was to adopt the mores of the British upper- and middle-class colonial servants who served in the islands. In Barbados this involved worship, preferably at the Anglican Church, although Moravian, Methodist or later African Methodist Episcopal was acceptable for those on the less exalted rungs of the social ladder. It also involved copying lifestyles: a roomy dwelling house with servants in caps and aprons, an indoor kitchen and dedicated dining area, furnishings which included comfortable chairs, a piano, lamps and mirrors, and for country dwellers a horse and buggy or later a motor car.⁶

Pastimes had to reinforce respectability. Men might join sports clubs that admitted only certain cliques of the middle class, or join a Lodge, while boys went to Cadets, Scouts or the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association). Girls had fewer choices but could join the Girl Guides or the Girl's Industrial Union, which taught skills such as table-setting and handicraft. They might also join clubs that held respectable dances where the girls wore gowns, and the boys jackets and ties.⁷ At home or at special classes, girls would learn needlecraft and how to play the piano. The piano seems to have been optional for boys, but respectable

families certainly did not allow their piano-playing sons to do like the lower classes, and publicly play jazz and other such music. The rule for music was classical in the home and religious in the church, just as the rule in language was Standard (British) English.

In public the black middle class exhibited loyalty to the empire. They celebrated the coronations of Edward VII and George V with gusto, as they also celebrated Empire Day each year.⁸ They were so committed to "Empire" that in 1914 Empire Cricket Club was formed for the "coloured middle classes".⁹ In 1922 the Empire Theatre opened its doors. However, with the various movements abroad for the ending of empire and the attainment of independence for the British colonies, gradually the middle class began to change its thinking.

Because of the endemic racism in Barbadian society, one thing the black middle classes had never forgotten (were never allowed to forget, however much they might have wished to do so) was their African roots. This memory was kept alive during the later nineteenth century by movements such as the Barbados Colonization Society, which took 365 people to settle in Liberia in 1865, and "civilizing" Christian missions to Rio Pongas in what is now Guinea through The West Indian Church Association for the Furtherance of the Gospel in West Africa.¹⁰ At the beginning of the twentieth century, when it became clear that despite over sixty years of fighting for the franchise, the white planter elite would make as few concessions in this area as possible, black middle-class Barbadians, such as Washington Horatio Harper and Augustus Rawle Parkinson, became interested in the politics of the black diaspora in the form of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Movement. Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association followed and several middle-class people, especially those involved in business, became members in the 1920s and 1930s.¹¹

It was therefore logical that when the black middle classes started to wake up to the fact that an independent Barbadian nation was a possibility and began to question the essence of Barbadian identity, they should look not only to the folkloric retentions of the labouring masses, but also their African past. The other area that they sought to validate was the Barbadian dialect that had previously been avoided by most persons who had achieved a degree of social standing. Black middle-class children had been taught to speak and write in Standard English.¹² By the 1930s, coincidental with the political baptism of the lower classes, black middle-class Barbadians were not only taking the possibility of political control seriously, but they were also producing litera-

ture that would lead to the definition of "Bajan" culture as it is presently understood. The 1930s saw Africans in the Caribbean Diaspora, as elsewhere, being influenced by the Harlem Renaissance (the black Arts movement in the United States). Information from Barbadians based in the United States also reached the island regularly.¹³

Developments in Literature

Locally, *The Forum Quarterly* was started in 1931 and ran until 1934, and again from 1943 to 1945. It was published by the Forum Club, a debating society with such speakers and guests of honour as Clennell Wickham, H.A. Vaughan, H.A. Thorne and John Beckles.¹⁴ It was important in the inter-war period in inculcating nationalist ideas and ideologies among its readership. Several contributors to the magazine saw a clear connection between self-government and literary expression. The first editorial, written by K.C. Lewis, stated, "During the century which has elapsed during our physical emancipation, we have not acquired much wealth. But it seems certain that what little we have acquired will increasingly aid the development of art and literature in these parts." Lewis went on to remind the reader that great deeds were not limited to people of any particular race or country, and that although the Forum was not primarily a political body, it had an important duty to foster certain objectives, such as amalgamation of the British West Indian colonies and the quest for Dominion Status, which was the constitutional objective of that era.¹⁵ However, by September 1933 an unnamed editor was stressing the creation of a presumably independent West Indian nation.¹⁶

The Forum Quarterly is rich in articles dealing with issues concerning black people, though it also included Eurocentric works of fiction and poetry. Contributors also wrote about eminent black persons in the United States. Gordon Bell wrote about Langston Hughes and Claude McKay,¹⁷ while an article on Booker T. Washington was reprinted from an American newspaper.¹⁸ There were sundry other articles, including one on "The Economic Outlook for the Negro",¹⁹ advocating a system of cooperatives. *The Dawn of the Day*, a musical play produced by a Barbadian in New York, portraying "the rise of a race from slavery to freedom", was reviewed,²⁰ and there were also several articles on the Negro Renaissance and other topics.²¹ A broadcast by C.L.R. James for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on slavery and freedom was printed. Local teachers, such as A. Rawle Parkinson and Charles W.

Springer, were featured.²² Regular news items about black Barbadians who achieved prominence in the academic and musical fields overseas appeared and there was even a short item about the only "coloured man" to have been to the North Pole being presented to the United States Senate.²³

The Forum Quarterly was supported through advertising by such black middle class business people as Madame Ifill, dress designer, and the Martineau Aerated Drinks Factory. It carried articles about African history and linguistics and stories such as that of "Sarah", a local black woman, by John Wickham.²⁴ "The Black Cat", published in 1934, was the magazine's first attempt at a story using Barbadian dialect when portraying speech.²⁵

The magazine also reported the Forum Club's submission to the 1932 Education Commission. A letter to the commissioners signed by C.W. Wickham, J.C. Hope and H.A. Vaughan drew their attention to flaws in the school curriculum. One issue was the lack of West Indian elements in subjects such as History, Geography and Civics, while the other was the use of textbooks with derogatory statements such as "Negroes are lazy". The letter also recommended that books should contain information on black educators such as Booker T. Washington and Kwegyir Aggrey.²⁶

Other areas covered by the magazine were racial injustice and gender issues. Ralph Mentor wrote about "Racial Relationships" in Trinidad and Tobago and Errol Pilgrim wrote that the "accentuation of colour feeling" and the spirit of exclusiveness based on colour prejudice were forcing West Indians to recognize their "blood unity" and to acquire a sense of racial solidarity.²⁷

There were several articles about Barbadian womanhood following an article suggesting that, unlike Trinidadian women, Barbadian women had achieved nothing because of their deep conservatism and "Victorian attitudes".²⁸ In their defence, J.C. Hope pointed out that "Negro womanhood is still the serf of the ages to be kept behind locked doors when honourable and cultural opportunities arise."²⁹ Interestingly, the contributors to the *Quarterly* were mainly men and no obvious effort seems to have been made to attract more female writers, except on one occasion when prizes were offered for a competitive essay that Nella Taitt won with an article on Sir Conrad Reeves.³⁰

Another similar publication was the *Weymouth Magazine*, which again appeared for a time during the 1940s.³¹ Gladstone Holder, the editor in 1944, wrote that fraternization in the pursuit of the Arts by peo-

ple of various cultures and opinions would pave the way for the birth of a literature that was essentially West Indian.³² By 1949 the editor was able to write, "During the past decade, there has been steady progress on cultural matters."³³ The magazine included items such as a letter from Bruce Wendell entitled, "Everyone conscious of his African heritage should make a pilgrimage to the Schomberg Collection (New York), the permanent repository of Africana in the New World."³⁴ At the same time the lack of knowledge of local history was voiced by the YMCA which, in 1944, had formed a group to study local history. H.A. Vaughan gave an outline as to how this might be done and bemoaned the lack of suitable literature.³⁵

Bim, a literary magazine, was the successor of a magazine started by the Young Men's Progressive Club (YMPC) in 1935.³⁶ The first edition appeared in 1938 with an editorial committee comprising Kenneth Tucker, Fab Hoyos and Jimmy Cozier. Gradually editors changed as Dick Stokes, Trevor Gale and Therold Barnes took over from the first two above, and then Frank Collymore³⁷ took over from Jimmy Cozier. The editors concentrated on Caribbean-focused materials and paid a small fee for poetry and short stories accepted for publication.³⁸

By 1942, when Frank Collymore became editor, the magazine was publishing stories with characters using Barbadian dialect and making reference to Africa, while the woodcuts showed local scenes.³⁹ Many pieces, however, reflected a middle-class lifestyle that could have been English, and Frank Collymore's verses resembled those of Edward Lear. Volume four of the magazine had an editorial soliciting new work and asked contributors to write from their own viewpoint on the topic, "Why worry to write about the rigours of the Alaskan winter when you can spend the month of February in St. Joseph's parish. And you don't have to travel all the way to Chicago to find crooks."⁴⁰ In the 1950s *Bim* produced anthologies of West Indian poems, and Frank Collymore's "Notes for a Glossary of Words and Phrases of Barbadian Dialect", as well as the works of Derek Walcott and Lawson Edward (Kamau) Brathwaite.⁴¹ It expressed thanks to Henry Swanzy for broadcasting many poems on his BBC radio programme *Caribbean Voices*.⁴²

The Bajan first appeared in September 1953 as "the monthly magazine of what's going on in Barbados", edited by George Hunte. In a letter headed "Dear Reader" he wrote, "Bajans have written books and not a few have studied painting in England and on the continent. Many a Bajan has strutted on an English stage and many more still strut on Bajan boards. As musicians Bajans are not without fame and to this day

some earn honest pennies by blowing wind instruments in large orchestras or by pulling a bow over violin strings."⁴³ In the first edition the magazine printed an article praising a review called *Revue de ville*, where it was noted that the comedian Joseph Tudor was using local dialect to the amusement of the audience.⁴⁴ In December of 1953, the magazine also printed a short story, "Eggs too scarce", completely written in Bajan dialect.⁴⁵

The content of *The Bajan* changed considerably over the years. During its foundation years in the 1950s it focused mainly on white images in its advertisements and photographs, as well as the ideal of beauty, shown in the beauty queen contests. As late as 1963 all the students shown in a photograph of the Barbados Dancing School were white.⁴⁶ However, in the mid-1960s, around the time of Independence, the magazine became more consciously black and Caribbean-oriented and published photographs of ordinary people fishing "for food and fun", and of black people such as Denise Hope, who was appointed as the London Sales Manager to the Barbados Tourist Board.⁴⁷ Articles appeared giving advice to West Indian writers and there was one by Derek Walcott giving a not very favourable review of the Barbados Schools Drama Festival.⁴⁸ By 1968 all the photographs that appeared in the "people" segment were those of coloured persons rather than wealthy white foreigners who had been the mainstay of this section in the 1950s. Black personalities such as Sir Winston Scott and Sir Grantley Adams were featured in major articles.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, models advertising clothing and beauty items were also still largely white. Black was becoming beautiful only incrementally. By the 1970s the photographs in the magazine started to reflect more accurately the ethnic make-up of the Barbadian people. There was a full-length article with photographs of Richild Springer, daughter of Sir Hugh Springer. She had trained in Paris and was shown performing a dance entitled "End of the Search of the Black Girl". There were also articles of African-based creative dance, steel pan and gospel music.⁵⁰

Meetings in Guyana in 1966 and 1970 had led to the formation of the Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts (CARIFESTA), first held in that country in 1972. The festival covered not only the English-speaking but also the French-, Dutch- and Spanish-speaking Caribbean and this coming together reiiTD7hzitecl,cityrticles of Aeaking Carculere theless

hands of our European past in so many ways but we are relatively free at the moment of the temptations of Europe and we find ourselves more tempted by our racial memories of Africa."⁵¹ The anthology includes a poem entitled "Bajan Litany" by the Barbadian writer Bruce St John that uses the call-and-response form commonly found in African oral tradition. Between 1967 and 1973 Edward Kamau Brathwaite published his trilogy, *The Arrivants* (a work published in stages).⁵² These poems, in musical quality, form and content, are considered a major contribution to the new literature of Independent Barbados.⁵³

Developments in Theatre

Barbados has a long history of black and coloured people being involved with theatre. It seems that the first non-white theatre company was formed by a free-coloured group in 1805.⁵⁴ Glenn O. Phillips tells us that Samuel Jackman Prescod served as manager of the Black Amateur Theatrical Club.⁵⁵ Until recent times, however, most productions used non-Caribbean scripts.⁵⁶ A memorandum on the establishment of a West Indian theatre, sent to the British Council in 1950, reported that a number of travelling companies visited the Caribbean islands, including Barbados, in the early twentieth century but were not financially successful. The problem was not that the inhabitants did not want theatre but with shipping schedules demanding that a company's whole repertoire be performed in the same fortnight, the expense of attending the whole series was beyond the pockets of most citizens. Another problem occurred when a company, the Colonial Film Exchange, took over available theatres for cinematic performances and the touring companies had to play in makeshift halls. Although the memorandum recommended that local talents should be incorporated into the proposed West Indian Theatre Company, there is no suggestion that local material should be used. The memorandum spoke of the "vast quantity of drama completely unknown to great numbers of the West Indian audience". As this recommendation was sent to the British Council, one might assume that most of the plays would have been English or European.⁵⁷

The Green Room Theatre was the brainchild of Viscount Radnor. Initially, shows were held in the stables at the back of his home, also known as "Radnor", and patrons paid twenty-five cents for admission. In the early 1950s it seems that only whites were admitted.⁵⁸ Later in that decade, "nearly whites" were included, such as Alfred Pragnell

(1932–2004), the son of a British soldier and a local woman of mixed origin, who became one of Barbados' well loved actors and media personalities.⁵⁹ By the 1960s, he and Frank Collymore had taken over and had started to lead the group in a more egalitarian direction.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, the Barbadian black middle class also became involved in drama in the island. Freddie Miller, a businessman and member of the House of Assembly who became Minister of Health, mounted a spectacular pageant at Kensington Oval, on Good Friday 1953, of the Dorothy L. Sayers's radio play, *The Man Who Would be King*. There were over seventy speaking roles in the play and many in the middle-class community, including Gilmore Rocheford, who was to become a member of the Federal Parliament, took on roles.⁶¹ In the same year Miller mounted another spectacular but this time the material came directly from Barbadian history researched for the purpose by H.A. Vaughan, F.A. Hoyos and others. There was a slave scene that included dancing and singing the folk song "Jin Jin". Bussa was hanged in effigy for his part in the 1816 rising, while a pregnant slave was flogged for being rude to her master.⁶²

The British Council had been set up during wartime to encourage the Arts in the British Empire. Its remit was to sensitize the subjects of the empire to British Arts, a somewhat controversial role at that time.⁶³ Freddie Miller used British Council funds in 1955 to bring the young dramatist Errol Hill from Trinidad to organize a series of seminars on drama and drama techniques. He also arranged for the top floor of Queen's Park House to be laid out as the Civic Theatre.

Daphne Joseph-Hackett, remembered as "the first lady of Barbadian theatre", taught at Queen's College,⁶⁴ and it was through her efforts while serving there that Barbadian dialect received an important boost as a medium for drama. Dame Billie Miller, daughter of the late Freddie Miller and a long-serving minister in the Government of Barbados, remembers rehearsals for a Christmas show where, playing the cook in a sketch, she forgot her lines and found herself speaking in the same dialect in which the cook spoke in her family home.⁶⁵ It is difficult now to imagine the significance of this: to this day it is remembered by her school friend Jeannette Layne-Clarke, writer and broadcaster, as a seminal moment.⁶⁶ To repeat the lines in the public production, it was necessary to seek the permission of the headmistress, and the students were somewhat surprised that it was given. It was following this that the girls, with Dame Billie as playwright, started to produce a series of dialect plays that they performed in the gym at lunchtime for their own

amusement. The plays were centred around a bus stop. This theme has been used subsequently on the Barbadian stage in the comedy *Bajan Bus Stop*. For many years Jeanette Layne-Clarke herself has written and produced *Pampalam*, using verse and dialect and creating comedy around Barbadian village life.

The early 1960s saw the establishment of the Barbados National Theatre Workshop with Elombe Mottley, Daphne Joseph-Hackett, Andrea Gollop-Greenidge, Monica Procope, Mike Owen, Angela Owen and Icil Phillips. A spin-off from the Theatre Workshop was a Writers Workshop that included Earl Warner and Timothy Callender.⁶⁷

In 1968 a motley group known as "Black Night" emerged, comprising some of the more radical poets, actors, musicians and writers. The organization sought to help black people redefine themselves in a more

Barbados Central Bank complex and named the Frank Collymore Hall, in honour of another Barbadian actor and literary figure.⁷⁵

Developments in Art

Joyce Daniel, who was responsible for setting up the Fine Arts Department at the Barbados Community College in 1974, remembers the dearth of artistic pursuits in the community in her childhood during the 1940s. Such pursuits were not considered important and apart from indigenous pottery, plaster of Paris ("plaster-paris"), religious sculptures and prints of religious subjects, few artistic works were displayed in the community.⁷⁶ Art was taught as a subject in Barbadian schools and community classes but all the trained artists, who often taught for a living, were white persons, Barbadian and foreign, who had been trained abroad.⁷⁷

Joyce Daniel was fortunate to attend Girls' Foundation School where Art was taught, but even there teachers and parents saw it as of minor importance, as it was not considered a subject that would help their children earn money. The content of the syllabus was geared to acquiring certificates from the Royal Society of Arts and the Cambridge Syndicate, and a lot of the work involved copying pictures. Joyce Daniel remembers that this situation obtained until the 1960s, and that because students were taught to copy pictures of white persons they did not understand the palate of colours required in painting darker skin.

Such early twentieth-century Barbadian paintings as there were had been mainly portraits and landscapes, although by the 1930s and 1940s, white Barbadians, such as Aileen Hamilton, Golde White and Carolyn "Caro" Gill, were painting black persons. Barbados had no dedicated space for exhibiting artwork; the annual Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition held in Queen's Park at the beginning of December was the only public place where artists and craft producers could display their work.⁷⁸ When the Barbados Arts and Crafts Society was founded in 1944, it held Art classes and sponsored Art teaching in schools, and in the 1950s it started to provide exhibition space, as well as acquiring pieces for a national Art collection.⁷⁹ It was in this era that the works of Ivan Clairmonte Payne and Karl Broodhagen became known.

The 1950s was an important time in the development of all the Arts in Barbados, not only theatre and literature but also painting and sculpture. Apart from the work of the Barbados Arts and Crafts Council that by this time had black committee members, other influences were con-

tributing to the Arts. One was the developing tourism industry, which provided a market for small landscapes and market scenes to remind visitors of their stay in the island; another was the building of houses on the West Coast for international personalities who wished to spend time

musicians were uncommon. James Millington, a black New York-trained concert violinist, performed at St Michael's Cathedral in the 1930s. On his arrival at the cathedral for the first performance, crowds were clamouring to be admitted and he had difficulty in persuading them that he was a performer and should be given priority to enter. Performers were expected to be white. Millington and Gerald Hudson (the British organist at St Michael's Cathedral) got together under the name "Black and White Whiskey Dogs" and played at concerts around the Caribbean. Millington also became involved in teaching the violin at his studio in Spry Street.⁸³ It was not until 1949, when he was appointed visiting master at Combermere School, that a trained musician taught music at a school in the island.⁸⁴

Irvin Harris remembers the music education at Combermere School prior to Millington's appointment. A Glee Club was run by a master known as "Graffi" Pilgrim⁸⁵ as an extramural activity, where the boys sang English folk songs. There was also musical appreciation with Gerald Hudson, which involved listening to recorded classical music. In Harris's words, "That was the extent of our music."⁸⁶

Millington also taught European classical music but at home he encouraged his family to take an interest in all musical forms, including calypso, tuk band, and folk music. Up to that time these forms of music were considered raw and crude, with connotations of belonging to the "uncultured" descendants of formerly enslaved persons.⁸⁷ Irvin Harris remembers: "They called that 'banja' [in his home]. You would have to sing that out in the yard; you couldn't bring that in the house."⁸⁸

Janice Millington, the daughter of James Millington, followed her father onto the international stage as a musician and also a teacher, in her case playing the piano. Interestingly, her father had suggested she should become a language interpreter and diplomat. At that time travelling around the world as a concert pianist was not considered a suitable career for a woman.⁸⁹

Meanwhile, in 1948 Irvin Harris teamed up with Neville Phillips, Rudolph Hinds and Festus Thompson to form the "Thompson Quartet". They sang chiefly English, German and American folk songs but, Harris stated, "not Caribbean. At that time Caribbean music was unheard of. Caribbean music was calypso and that was not for middle-class people."⁹⁰

Barbadian folk songs gained some international recognition in 1957, on the eve of the inauguration of the West Indies Federation (1958–1962). A festival was held in Trinidad to honour that event and

Barbadian folk songs were performed. The Barbadian group arrived intending to wear tuxedos but realized that these were not quite right for folk songs and went out and bought brightly coloured shirts. Harris recalled that people from other territories expressed surprise at their songs, as they expected Barbadians to sing something more Eurocentric.⁹¹

It was at the Civic Theatre in 1962 that the first tuk band⁹² appeared on stage.⁹³ By independence in 1966 it was clear that there was a great interest in indigenous music, partly to service the tourism industry and partly as a quest for a national identity. The organizers of the Independence celebrations approached the Festival Choir to perform Irvin Burgie's "Ballad to Bimshire". It was considered too American, and was rewritten in dialect and with a lot of Bajan humour. Irvin Harris remembers this as the prototype of such shows as *Bajan Bus Stop*, *Pampalam* and *Laff it Off*.⁹⁴ The 1960s also spawned attempts at creating Barbadian popular music. Jackie Opel, who died in 1970, is credited with developing a "leading vehicle of Barbadian musical identity", in the form of the "spouge" beat.⁹⁵

In 1968 Harrison College established a music department, which became the foundation not only for music teachers and artists, mainly performing indigenous music, but also for inspiring those who wished to follow careers in the musical sphere, in areas ranging from producing and managing musicians to laws relating to music copyright. Harrison College formed a youth orchestra that was important in training musicians, while simultaneously experiments were taking place in synthesizing classical and indigenous forms of music. One such attempt was John Fletcher's "Caribbean Mass", composed in the 1970s, using drums, Caribbean hymnology and folk musical rhythms.⁹⁶

The Arts were given a fillip with the establishment of the Barbados Arts Council in 1957. Not only did it take over the work of the Barbados Arts and Crafts Council, but its remit also included literature, drama and dance. Another important step was the founding of the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) in 1973, starting with drama, verse speaking, dance, art and craft. Photography was added in 1975 and culinary arts in 1984.⁹⁷

Freddie Miller and his friend Sir Clyde Gollop sought to revive the Crop Over festivals that had taken place in plantation yards after the sugar harvest. Flora Spencer, the daughter of A. Rawle Parkinson, a head teacher and supporter of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee movement, was a script writer for radio and television, and a member of the

Barbados Arts Council. She wrote a booklet, published in 1974, about the original Crop Over festivals, lamenting the fact that "this plantation festival has completely disappeared".⁹⁸ She described the traditional festivities that had taken place. It started with a labourer banging a gong, followed by a parade of carts bearing the last of the canes entering the plantation yard. The carts and animals would be decorated with flowers and bandanas, and the women in the first cart would be dressed completely in white, with flowers tucked in their bandanas. One cart would carry the effigy of "Mr Harding", made of sugarcane trash and wearing a black suit, top hat and mask, who represented cruel gang drivers and hard times, and whose effigy would be burnt as part of the festivities. After speeches, there would be games, including climbing the greasy pole and catching the greasy pig. There were stick-licking contests and music for dancing, as well as a feast of sweet liquor, rum, falernum, salted pork and fish, bread, pone (a cassava and/or cornmeal recipe), and cassava cakes.⁹⁹

In 1978 Elombe Mottley, founder of the Yoruba Cultural Foundation, joined with the Ministry of Education and Culture to produce the first modern Crop Over festivals.¹⁰⁰ The present-day Crop Over can be described as a "reinvented" tradition, in the sense that although it uses traditional motifs such as masques and masqueraders, Shaggy Bear and Mother Sally,¹⁰¹ its format and the calypso tents arguably owe more to the modern-day Trinidad Carnival than to what had taken place in the plantation yards.

In 1983 the Barbadian government established the National Cultural Foundation (NCF), a statutory body with a mandate to oversee the country's cultural development, with Mottley at its head. Cultural officers were appointed in the fields of Fine Arts, Literary Arts, Music, Dance and Theatre Arts. From its founding to 1986, part of its remit was community work, which produced development programmes in the Arts and oversaw the work of community centres in the island. The NCF took over the running of Crop Over as well as the management of "art spaces", such as the Queen's Park Gallery and the Steel Shed.¹⁰²

Conclusion

In the early twentieth century the need for mimetic behaviour by those who wished to acquire social status meant that they saw their African roots as something to be left behind as they mounted the social ladder. They assimilated the culture of the colonial power through the educa-

tion system to which they were exposed and by choice. With the first vision of political freedom in the 1930s, and more so when it became a reality at Independence in 1966, they rejected the notion of being "Little Englanders" and made conscious attempts to become "Bajans". A major route to this was through the Arts. By 1980 teaching of the Arts was taking place in secondary schools and some branches were being taught at the tertiary level. This teaching valorized dialect, folkloric motifs and references to African roots. Not only non-governmental organizations but also the government itself had become involved in propagating a national culture that owed much to what had been previously spurned.

NOTES

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (revised edition; London and New York: Verso Press, 1991); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
2. Adisa Andwele, "Antiquity", in Nailah Folami Imoja and JerolyAnn Thomas, eds., *Voices: An Anthology of Barbadian Writing* (Christ Church: Barbados Writers Collective and the National Cultural Foundation, 1997), 8.
3. These figures have been estimated using schoolteachers, shopkeepers and artisans on the electoral roles as guides.
4. Reference to nineteenth-century conditions in Barbados can be found, among others, in O. Nigel Bolland, *The Politics of Labour in the British Caribbean* (Princeton: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2001); Celia Karch with Henderson Carter, *The Rise of the Phoenix* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1997); F.A. Hoyos, *Barbados: Our Island Home* (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1978); Claude Levy, *Emancipation, Sugar and Federalism: Barbados and the West Indies, 1833–1876* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1980).
5. Patricia Stafford, "Acquiring Affluence in Barbados, 1880–1937" (History Forum paper, University of the West Indies [UWI], Cave Hill Campus, 21 Nov. 2003), and *ibid.*, "The Black Middle Class in Barbados, 1880–1945: Religion, Respectability and 'Tint of Skin'" (History Forum paper, UWI, Cave Hill Campus, 30 April, 2004), detail the evidence for these developments.
6. Stafford, "Black Middle Class in Barbados", 25–26.
7. *Ibid.*, 27.
8. Anthony DeVere Phillips, *Modernizing Barbados, 1880–1914* (Barbados: author, 1996), 22. *The Official Gazette*, 1925, 309–10, has an item quoting a letter to the governor from the secretary of the Elementary Teachers

- Association regarding a resolution at their meeting of 4 June 1927. The secretary thanks the legislature for providing £300 to supply school children with refreshments on Empire Day.
9. H.A. Vaughan, "Some Social and Political Tendencies, 1910–1935", *Silver Jubilee Magazine* (1935): 32–34, 58–61.
 10. Incorporated by an Act of 18 August 1857.
 11. Rodney Worrell, *Pan-Africanism in Barbados* (Bridgetown, Barbados: author, 2002), 32.
 12. During an interview on 29 March 2004 with Grace Pilgrim, who attended Queen's College in the late 1930s, despite her speaking Standard English she apologized for her Barbadian accent which she said would not have been acceptable at school.
 13. W. Burghardt Turner and Joyce Moore Turner, eds., *Richard B. Moore, Caribbean Militant in Harlem* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), 8.
 14. *The Forum Quarterly*, Christmas 1931 (Wickham and Vaughn), 4; *ibid.*, 20 March 1932 (Thorne and Beckles), 30.
 15. *Ibid.*, Christmas 1931, 4.
 16. *Ibid.*, September 1933, 4.
 17. *Ibid.*, Christmas 1931; *ibid.*, 16 March 1932.
 18. *Ibid.*, December 1934, 16–17.
 19. *Ibid.*, December 1932, 18–19.
 20. *Ibid.*, September 1933, 5, 42.
 21. *Ibid.*, March 1932, 17.
 22. *Ibid.*, September 1932, 22–23.
 23. *Ibid.*, 35.
 24. *Ibid.*, December 1934.
 25. "The Black Cat", *ibid.*, December 1934, 21.
 26. *Ibid.*, March 1932, 31.
 27. *Ibid.*, Christmas 1931, 14.
 28. E.R. Graham, "The Barbadian Woman", *ibid.*, March 1932, 8.
 29. *Ibid.*, March 1932, 31.
 30. *Ibid.*, Christmas 1931, 16.
 31. The *Weymouth Magazine* was published by Weymouth Sports Club, which formally opened on 24 June 1939. In 1940 it started a literary and debating section that produced drama, mock trials, lectures, quiz nights, brains trusts and debates. It was partly inspired by the 1939–1945 World War, which made it difficult to obtain foreign literature, so Barbadians were obliged to fall back on their own resources. Contributors to the magazine included such future luminaries as H.W. Springer and Frank Walcott, as well as Francis "Woodie" Blackman and John Wickham. By 1944 Gladstone Holder was the editor.
 32. Gladstone Holder, Editorial, *Weymouth Magazine* 2 (1944): 3.
 33. *Weymouth Magazine* 4 (1949): 3.
 34. *Ibid.*, 40–41.
 35. Sixty Fifth Annual Report of the Barbados YMCA, 1945.

36. The Young Men's Progressive Club in those days catered for young men of light complexion who were not considered white or were not sufficiently wealthy to join a white cricket club, such as Wanderers.
37. Frank Collymore (1893–1973) was a very light-skinned brown man who attended Combermere School and became a teacher there in 1910. He retired in 1958 as deputy headmaster. As well as being a prominent Barbadian writer of both poetry and prose, from the 1940s he also became well known on the local stage (Philip Nanton, ed., *Remembering the Sea* (Bridgetown: Central Bank of Barbados, 2004), 7, 44.
38. Jimmy Cozier, "The Beginnings of Bim", *Bim* 12, no. 48 (1969).
39. *Bim* 1 (1942).
40. *Ibid.*, 4 (1945): 1.
41. In 1970 Brathwaite wrote, "[T]he problem of and for West Indian artists and intellectuals is that having been born and educated within a fragmented culture, they start in the world without a sense of 'wholeness'. The achievement of these writers was to make the society conscious of the cultural problem." (*Savacou* 2 [1970]: 36, quoted by J. Michael Dash, "Edmund Kamau Brathwaite", in Bruce King, ed., *West Indian Literature* [second edition; London: Macmillan Education, 1995]), 194.
42. Henry Swanzy edited "Caribbean Voices" (on the BBC General Overseas Service) from 1946 to 1954. He critically discussed the work of George Lamming, Edward (Kamau) Brathwaite, V.S. Naipaul, Wilson Harris and others, long before their names became well known ("Obituary", *The Guardian*, 20 March 2004).
43. *The Bajan*, September 1953, 5.
44. *Ibid.*, 8; *ibid.*, October 1953, 5. Joseph Tudor (1922–1970) was the son of a Roebuck Street merchant who attended Combermere School and Harrison College. "Revuedeville" was his first success. He later had shows on Redifusion radio, such as "Flying High" and "Children's Party". Initially, his career as a comedian had taken him into nightclubs in the "red light" areas and he was aware that some people were disappointed that a middle-class man would be found there. Later, he played a prominent role as a promoter of shows at the Globe Cinema (see Sean Carrington, Henry Fraser, John Gilmore and Addington Forde, *A-Z of Barbadian Heritage* (1990; Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2003), 211.
45. *The Bajan*, December 1953, 13.
46. *Ibid.*, January 1963, 10.
47. *Ibid.*, May 1963, 19.
48. *Ibid.*, May, 1963, 21; June 1963, 22.
49. *Ibid.*, March, 1968, 4; April 1968, 13; June 1968.
50. *Ibid.*, May 1978, 54; April 1978, 15. Richild Springer's career was based in Paris but she spent some time in Barbados assisting with the training of promising young dancers.
51. A.J. Seymour, ed., *New Writing in the Caribbean* (Georgetown, Guyana: no publisher, 1972), 14.

52. Edward (Kamau) Brathwaite, *The Arrivants (A New World Trilogy)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).
53. King, *West Indian Literature*, 194–208.
54. Marcia Burrowes, "The Tonic Effect of Acting: Frank A. Collymore and the Barbadian Theatre, *Remembering the Sea* (Bridgetown: Central Bank of Barbados, 2004), 50, note 4, points out that there is some dispute as to the precise date of this venture. This is the date provided by Glenn O. Phillips in "The Beginnings of Samuel J. Prescod, 1806–1843: Afro-Barbadian Civil Rights Crusader and Activist", *The Americas* 38 (1982): 366.
55. Phillips, *Modernizing Barbados*, 366.
56. A local author, Oughterson, produced a few plays in the nineteenth century (Carrington et al., *A–Z of Barbadian Heritage*, 207).
57. Barbados Museum and Historical Society Library, "Memorandum on the Establishment of a West Indian Theatre", submitted to the British Council, 8 May 1950.
58. R. Mann, personal correspondence as a teacher at Harrison College, 1954–1958, Mss W. Ind. s. 50. Letter dated 24 October 1954, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. In the post-independence era an increasing number of "average" Barbadians joined its ranks (*The Advocate* 29 November 1996).
59. *Sunday Advocate*, 17 August 1997.
60. Burrowes, "The Tonic Effect of Acting", 44.
61. Interview with Dame Billie Miller, 21 April 2004.
62. Rudolph Hinds, "Freddie Miller: His Contribution to the Arts", *Daily Nation*, 5 July 1989.
63. Alissandra Cummins, Allison Thompson and Nick Whittle, *Art in Barbados. What Kind of Mirror Image*. (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1999), 34.
64. However, she did not teach drama. Jeanette Layne-Clarke remembers drama being treated as an extramural activity, "rather like the Scripture Union" (interview with Jeanette Layne-Clarke, 17 March 2004).
65. Interview with Dame Billie Miller, 21 April 2004.
66. Interview with Jeanette Layne-Clarke, 17 March 2004.
67. *Barbados Advocate*, 29 November 1996.
68. Worrell, *Pan-Africanism*, 93–94.
69. Ria Jillian Birmingham, "The Impact of the Black Power Movement on Barbadian Culture, 1966–1980" (Caribbean Study Paper, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, April 2001, 47).
70. *Sunday Advocate*, 17 August 1997. Joe Tudor was one of the other pioneers of Bajan dialect on radio.
71. Interview with Jeanette Layne-Clarke, 17 March 2004.
72. Interview with Irvin Harris, 22 March 2004.
73. Carrington et al., *A–Z of Barbadian Heritage*, 108.
74. *Barbados Advocate*, 29 November 1996.
75. Burrowes, "The Tonic Effect of Acting", 45.
76. Interview with Joyce Daniel, 24 March 2004.
77. Cummins et al., *Art in Barbados*, 14–16.

78. Ibid., 34.
79. Ibid., 54.
80. Oliver Messel (1904–1978) was born in London and became involved with British films in 1934. Not only was he famous for his costume designs, he was artistic consultant for the settings in *Romeo and Juliet* (1936) and production designer for *Suddenly Last Summer* (1959). However, he worked mainly in the theatre and did many designs for hotels and resorts (http://theoscarsite.com/whoswho4/messel_o.htm).
81. Cummins et al., *Art in Barbados*, 94–95.
82. Interview with Joyce Daniel, 24 March 2004.
83. Interview with Janice Millington, 23 January 2004.
84. Keith A.P. Sandiford and Earle H. Newton, *Combermere School and the Barbadian Society* (Kingston: The Press University of the West Indies, 1995), 79.
85. Owen Alexander "Graffi" Pilgrim was the son of Alexander Pilgrim, Moravian minister of Mount Tabor. He gained his nickname because he was so tall (about 6'8½") that he was likened to a giraffe (interview with Torrey Pilgrim, 12 February 2003).
86. Interview with Irvin Harris, 22 March 2004.
87. Interview with Janice Millington, 23 January 2004.
88. Interview with Irvin Harris, 22 March 2004. The National Cultural Foundation launched a magazine called *Banja* in 1987.
89. Janice Millington was awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship in 1967 to study in London. (It was more the Commonwealth Scholarship Awards Committee than the Barbadian education authorities who realized that trained musicians were important to Barbados.) Irvin Harris also studied in England in the early 1950s on a British Council scholarship.
90. Interview with Irvin Harris, 22 March 2004.
91. Ibid.
92. According to Carrington et al. (*A–Z of Barbadian Heritage*), the Tuk band is an example of successful creolization. It consists of a tin flute, a "kittle" or snare drum, a bass drum, and a triangle, and is believed to have been derived from British military bands, but using Barbadian folk tunes to which it would be impossible to march.
93. Rudolph Hinds, "Freddie Miller: His Contribution to the Arts", *Daily Nation*, 5 July 1989.
94. Interview with Irvin Harris, 22 March 2004.
95. *Sunday Sun*, 12 March 2000.
96. Interview with Janice Millington, 23 January 2004; *Barbados Advocate*, 15 December 2002.
97. *Barbados Advocate*, 29 November 1996.
98. Flora Spencer, *Crop-Over* (Bridgetown: Barbados Tourist Board, 1974), 2.
99. Ibid., 2–4.
100. Rudolph Hinds, "Freddie Miller: His Contribution to the Arts", *Daily Nation*, 5 July 1989.

101. All these motifs originated in Africa, although they have been creolized (Editha Nancy Jacobs, "Roots and Branches: Africa, Brazil and Barbados", *Barbados Advocate*, 21 March 2004).
102. Carrington et al., *A-Z of Barbadian Heritage*, 135.