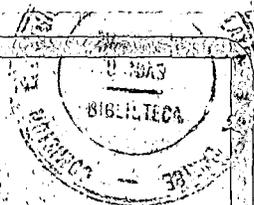66

THE CARIBBEAN: ONE AND DIVISIBLE

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UNITED NATIONS

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CUADERNOS DE LA CEPAL

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1. A rationale to be discovered

From 1492 to the present, the population of the Caribbean has largely been comprised of indentured labourers, enslaved and rural or urban workers, living and toiling under conditions invariably below the living standards of the countries that colonized the region. In the beginning of the colonization period, the destitute population seemed to regard this new world as a veritable hell on earth. In his book *From Columbus to Castro: the History of the Caribbean*, Eric Williams recalls that:

> Barbados, a word of terror to the white servant, became to the Negro, as a slave trader wrote in 1693, "a more dreadful apprehension... than we can have of hell".[1]

Anyone interested in Caribbean development must wonder how the idea of a nation emerged in this region, together with the related notion of a heritage which the society as a whole should strive to preserve and enrich, in short, to develop. At first, the objective of the struggles and revolts of the enslaved was not to defend a particular territory but rather to establish a certain kind of relationship between people, in other words, the conquest of freedom without any reference to a specific geographical area.

In another part of his book, Williams relates that in June 1838 the General Assembly of Jamaica protested against the abolition of slavery decreed by Great Britain, on the grounds that the Jamaicans belonged to a different nation:

> It is unreasonable and unnatural that one nation should assume to pass laws to bind another nation, of whose customs, wants, constitution and physical advantages and disadvantages, she is, and must be, profoundly ignorant...[2]

Throughout the region, plantation owners adopted a similar position whenever the metropolitan edicts ran counter to what they considered to be

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their interest. It would therefore be useful to determine what constituted this "nation" which claimed to own the wealth that gradually became its common patrimony.

Account must be taken, not only of the groups which belonged to this social body and of those that were excluded from it, but also of the institutions that either united or divided these groups. What aspects of the concept of nation-State were retained by plantation owners and social groups that succeeded them at the apex of Caribbean societies over the course of the various phases of the region's history?

Contrary to the separatist behaviour of these dominant groups, the enslaved groups seemed to display a certain degree of loyalty to the metropolises when these showed more benevolence than the planters and suceeding dominant social groups. The rebellious enslaved in Saint Lucia, Saint Domingue, Guadeloupe and Dominica who rallied to the cause of the temporarily anti-slavery French Republic provide clear examples of this loyalty.

However, if the plantation owners had no hesitation in distancing themselves from the metropolises when they felt that their rights and privileges were being threatened, it would certainly be reasonable to conclude that the enslaved and their descendants did not really identify with the mother countries that had been thrust upon them. The manifestations of loyalty on the part of the enslaved, who were all immigrants or descendants of immigrants, bear scant resemblance to the manifestations of membership in a primary group.

There is also the question of how to establish a connection between, on the one hand, the contributions of the maroons, freed slaves and poor whites to the notion of an entity distinct from that of the colonial powers and, on the other, the divergent positions of the planters and the enslaved. No analysis of Caribbean development is possible without a set of hypotheses on how the national families in the region came to be formed. And since these analyses exist, they must be re-examined in the light of their implicit assumptions.

It would be impossible to describe the rationale behind the attitude of Caribbean societies and the social groups that comprise them using only current concepts and without taking into account the special circumstances of the formation of those societies. Among other fundamental problems, it is virtually impossible to grasp the subtle difference that exists in the region between opposition to colonialism and rupture with the colonial State.

During the nineteenth century, efforts to break away from one metropolis were usually aimed at entering the sphere of influence of another,

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and not at creating an independent State. While the situation today has of course changed, Caribbean societies are no closer to a common vision in which independence is valued above all else.

Certain populations oppose colonialism while correctly refusing independence. Their argument is that the attainment of political rights is not necessarily accompanied by greater respect for civil liberties, or greater economic security.

Our intention is not merely to point out that foreign powers sometimes exploit this position for their own ends. Nor can we accuse any historical figures, certain contemporary leaders or the populations concerned of not having the same level of social consciousness as the rest of the world. It is important to understand why, from the point of view both of the dominant and of the subordinate groups of several countries of the region, this position is perfectly logical.

Before making such value judgements there is one essential step to be taken which may even render them superfluous. One must be able to explain the collective decisions and choices of the peoples living in the Caribbean. There again, emphasis will perhaps have to be placed on the quality of the relationships between people and concomitantly on the absence of any material wealth to be defended.

In the Caribbean, the concepts of country, nation and State do not correspond to those held in other regions of the world. The genesis of the sense of belonging to its specific societies, the development of this sense of belonging, the elements which define the national identities and the point of convergence of individuals who identify themselves in this way are unanswered questions, and some attempt should be made to find an answer to them.

There are a number of corollaries to the questions about the characteristics of the heritage —material and spiritual— of the region's peoples. The considerations mentioned above raise doubts as to whether the "national economies" of the Caribbean will have the same characteristics as those of the peoples who "possess" material resources and who have a tradition of defending and developing these resources.

In the absence of a common heritage, how should political boundaries be perceived and how does political authority become established to administer what these boundaries should be protecting? How can laws of economic development be imposed and enforced? To what tangible reality should these laws refer? In other words, it must not be assumed that the nation-State —as it is conceived of in the West— must necessarily succeed the type of colonial State which the Caribbean has known.

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On the one hand, the very idea of a colony established for the purpose of exploitation –into which category the Caribbean colonies fall–, as opposed to a colony established for the purpose of settlement, presupposes the absence of an economy and of interests that have validity outside of that which is conferred by the metropolis. On the other hand, the perception of the act of colonization implies the recognition of two different nationalities.

If there were no necessary link between the nation and the nation-State, then the problem would be resolved. The colonial State would simply convert its colonies into overseas departments and destroy the nations living there. The main obstacle would be how to get rid of the historical and cultural memory of these nations.

What is more, nation-States do exist in the Caribbean. This reality cannot be defined other than within the framework of the international political system. The assimilation of the formerly exploited colonies by the metropolises would also entail the negation of the demonstration effects of the international system.

Should there then be any doubt as to whether a Caribbean-style nation-State should have a national economy? Or should a type of national economy be sought that would be suited to the States that arise out of the colonization of the Caribbean?

Providing the inhabitants and specific groups and village communities of the Caribbean with any kind of material wealth, together with the means of defending it, does not seem to be an easy goal to attain in the foreseeable future. This, however, is precisely the objective of national development policies.

It is difficult to conceive of how, in a market system of open competition, those who are completely destitute could prevail over those who own everything. It is, moreover, difficult to imagine how, in this age of multinational corporations, it will be possible to promote the administrators of marginal resources to the role of relevant economic actors.

This difficulty can perhaps explain why nowadays one often hears –because few people dare to write it– that the States and economies of the Caribbean are not viable and that this is so because they do not conform to a European models of nationhood.

Europe seized a region and implanted a population there which it controlled to serve European interests. Since these populations could not duplicate a European world, because they lacked European concepts for planning the trajectory of their own development, the idea took hold to deny them the prerogatives and privileges which enabled Europeans themselves to organize and control their environment. It is not known whether this was

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due to ethnocentricity on the latter's part or simply to the low level of scientific research or to both of these.

An analysis of the logical congruence of the concepts on which the social sciences are based would probably be valuable, especially if it skirts the dangers of Eurocentrism. Since the rationale of development in the territories of the Caribbean and in the region as a whole is not the same as that of other countries and regions of the world, the question must be asked whether, in the future, these populations can or should develop in the same way as the other nations of the Western world. The response to that question should attempt to point to the direction in which their future would be oriented and would also perhaps, identify the types of social actors adequately equipped to put them on the right path.

The present study adopts a different approach. It attempts to describe the developmental logic of the region, in other words, to understand why its nationalism does not necessarily mean a break with the metropolises. It also seeks to define those social dimension where some measure of distancing vis-à-vis the Western powers has been taken.

Before speaking of either development or what it is that should be developed, one should possess greater understanding of the nature of the former, and the interrelationships among its constituent elements. The aim here is not to define how the Caribbean will or should be developed, but rather to comprehend how the role played by the region in the world system affects the relationships between the social groups within its societies. There is a rationale to be discovered, as will be shown in the following chapters.

2. Toward a form of social development

It would be unwise, in the Caribbean context, to hastily apply the principles and techniques of social planning which have been tried and tested in other countries of the world. It would be even more unwise to embark upon large numbers of socially-oriented development projects without the elaboration of a model describing the functioning of those societies.

If there is to be a sustainable improvement in the living standards of the population, then a system of analysis reflecting the social customs and habits of the region must first be developed to serve as the basis for the elaboration of a formula to optimize investments in the social sectors.

In his book *Elusive Development*,[3] Marshall Wolfe describes the experience of the United Nations, and in particular the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in promoting development. He shows how the official thinking of the Organization was

originally moulded by economists and how social considerations were introduced on different and not always compatible grounds. According to Wolfe, the best result in developmental programmes were obtained in those areas where governments and the United Nations together defined what development *should be* and issued declarations protecting the economic and social rights of nations, thus setting new quantifiable standards of development.

If we accept the statistics used by these same governments and the United Nations Secretariat, we should not be surprised at the frequent assertions that these new standard-setting declarations remain moot. Even though they may not have helped to raise the living standards of the underdeveloped populations as high as one might have wished, they still do not deserve to be judged so harshly.

Progress in defining the rights of nations to develop has been accompanied by advances in the popular perception of these rights. Development today thus constitutes an aspiration widely shared by underdeveloped populations particularly those of the Caribbean.

The problem still to be resolved however is that of the group or sector of those populations affected by aspirations toward development. Despite the apparent paradox, the question must also be asked whether this frantic search for development contributes to the achievement of any kind of substantive development.

Moreover, the rhetoric of the rich nations, particularly that of the United States of America which sometimes makes the granting of its financial aid contingent upon respect for individual freedoms has an impact which must not be underestimated. Whether or not this rhetoric succeeds in modifying the behaviour of despotic regimes, it does, in any case, "develop" and delimit the frame of reference of the population concerned, modifying its perception as to what is possible, feasible and even available.

Since Christopher Columbus landed in the Caribbean, the peoples of these lands have seen their dreams of freedom and respect for human rights generally fade. While the conditions of economic and social development of the nations have hardly changed in spite of the increasing congruence between these solemn declarations and the profound aspirations of the populations, the latter's rightful claims are gaining more and more impact on political decisions.

The age-old clamour for change in the nature of interpersonal relationships seems at last to have struck a responsive chord in the metropolises. Certain rules of the game must be changed in order to ensure

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that economic development is accompanied by the exercise of individual freedoms.

While the official ideology of development emphasizes the right to progress which a rational effort undertaken over a given period of time should achieve for the nation-State, for the island societies of the Caribbean, the image of the future is endowed of a sort of contemporaneousness. It is accessible and within reach and not at the end of an arduous time consuming process which may not necessarily result in success.

The period of transition from one stage of social development to another is reflected in the disparities among the different societies. A gestation period for social transformation no longer seems necessary, and the effort of the society as a whole towards greater well-being is no longer the only way to achieve progress. The island society, stripped of its collective material heritage, may be excused for not considering the development of a non-existent heritage as a reasonable alternative.

In formulating and disseminating development standards and values, governments and the United Nations are unwittingly helping to destroy the frame of reference which they used in elaborating their principles. The State, in its known political structures, has ceased to be for the population –if indeed it ever was– a social actor that must be pressured into better reflecting the aspirations of the national community.

In the best of cases, the endogenous transformation of the political and economic systems have become one of the ways of improving life-styles. Ever increasing groups of individuals managed to satisfy their individual aspirations by emigrating to the rich societies, where respect for human rights guarantees a minimum standard of treatment superior to living conditions in their own countries.

Wolfe doubts whether all the nation-States can take the steps needed for their development, as the concept is defined in official and international circles. One may add that the principal economic theories need to take into account the unpleasant realities of everyday life; they must draw, in one form or another, on popular concepts and must be attuned to the modes of behaviour and to the systems of thought which are responsible for such behaviour. One of the tasks of a scientific discipline of social development would be to help to ensure that the perception of the nation-State which is in widespread use in macro-economics as a unit of analysis is taken into account.

In everyday life, Wolfe continues, the concept of development refers to an overall process of social transformation, i.e., the evolution of numerous interdependent phenomena. The concept also suggests a goal, a collective aspiration to a more acceptable state of affairs.

A systematic effort toward development involves making a proposal for a kind of ideal society. There is need for a utopia.

'Development' responding to the minimum criterion of enhancement of the capacity of the society to function over the long term for the well-being of all its members requires far-reaching changes in the ways in which people relate to each other and to the wider society, represented by the State. Ideally, these changes should be in the direction of a more open, better integrated society, with freer choices and opportunities for voluntary associational ties and voice for all in the composition and policy guidance of local as well as national authorities.[4]

A rational strategy must therefore be proposed for attaining this standard-setting model, and consideration given, of course, to the actors and to the socio-political groups and forces which will execute this strategy. These three stages of a steady advance towards development –which in fact constitute development planning– derive from two factors mentioned in the paragraph above, namely, knowledge of the social fabric and of its particular evolution and knowledge of the goals of the society as a whole.

The present study describes the evolution of the social structures of the Caribbean and points to the existence of a dual process of formulating social objectives: the creole way of thinking and the local way of thinking. As will be seen from the arguments presented below, it has been impossible to formulate a development plan that does not prolong colonial authoritarianism because the political leaders of the day have had to choose between one or the other set of objectives.

In fact, there has been no such choice, as will be seen, because the fact that there is a local way of thinking has not been perceived. Because of this, authoritarianism has not always been sentient.

The "common" objectives supposedly pursued through economic planning are not those of the society as a whole. Since this is not understood, the methods of planning are blamed for the scant progress made in the implementation of development plans and programmes.

At the same time, negotiations conducted at different paces and according to different rules, produce another set of objectives which the population seeks to attain without any reference to the authorities.

The co-existence of a dual set of social objectives frustrates the most well-intentioned planning efforts. Survival strategies become institutionalized and the official policies are either disregarded or are unknown. The "social sectors" planner encounters an insuperable resistance to participation by the popular sector.

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In determining the social objectives on which the planning process should focus, there is one pitfall which must be avoided. On re-reading Marshall Wolfe's definition of social development one discovers that it refers to the formal mechanisms of a society's operation and not to the content of the goals to be achieved.

It is not the growh of investment in the areas of education, social security or public health that should be optimized. What is important is the decision-making mechanism: the informed participation of all sectors affected by a given decision and not the decision per se.

Social development falls within the ambit of relations among individuals and between those individuals and the society at large. In every country, Wolfe points out, and particularly in those whose leaders take development objectives seriously and share the population's sense of urgency, the limitations of the lines of communication between the masses and the governments are a cause for concern.

In the Caribbean, social development is the ever-increasing efficacy of organized collective dialogue. Whether the society is characterized by two or more cultures, or by two or more sets of social objectives, it is essential to avoid the unilateral imposition of a single choice and to reach agreement through negotiations.

Social development is less concerned with the tasks undertaken by the society than with the way in which it sets about implementing them. Planning should therefore be concerned with the ways and means in which the entire society can participate in the control of its everyday existence.

Just as in real life one does not converse about just anything at any time or place and with anyone, social development planning should identify the most appropriate time, place and vehicle for negotiating those problems which the society as a whole deems important. It should ensure that even the remotest corners of a given country are kept informed of existing needs and of available local and national resources.

Social development planning is the architecture of a communication process, a discipline which describes the instruments and systems of communication among institutions, social groups, voluntary associations and pressure or interest groups. Its goal is to ensure a constant flow of information and ideas for decision-making at all levels.

The task is, of course, monumental and, when viewed from another angle, must be sub-divided. Although it draws on the theories that regard culture as a system of ideas, social development planning leaves the substantive problem of the value of ideas to the philosophers and moralists found among all social scientists, and focuses on the formal aspects of social

relationships. It thereby recognizes the inherent rights of all human groups to express and defend their views.

We would have liked to suggest a practical method that would gradually lead to forms of social cohesion which could buttress the efforts of governments in their struggle against underdevelopment. Unfortunately, the styles of government put into place by the colonial regimes and their authoritarian monologues require that a preliminary step be taken, and this is the subject of the present work.

The Caribbean States today are in the position of having to legitimize new power structures and establish new relationships with local civilian society. The aim of the study that follows is to describe the differences in the systems of thought of nations as tiny as those of the region, as well as the shortcomings of the current form of social cohesion. The study will show how this imperfect cohesion permits a dialogue between the governors and the governed, which helps to facilitate the participation of the former metropolises in these family conversations but does not ensure the participation in this dialogue by all the members of these families. This form of cohesion has an adverse effect on the legitimization of the political authority and thus constitutes an obstacle to development planning.

We shall try to describe how cleavages are perpetuated in the criteria of knowledge and judgement, how these cleavages are reflected in local and regional socioeconomic organization, how they are aggravated by the international system and how they lead to an impasse in the art of governing the region. We shall also describe the methods used to overcome this difficulty.

We are convinced that this methodological approach is consistent with the structural changes now taking place, just as the traditional approach to social planning −by social sectors− runs counter to observable trends. Because the governments and States of the Caribbean need to be legitimized, social development planning must, in the present circumstances, aim first of all to accelerate the process of identifying local ways of thinking.

Once this has been done, attention could then be turned to the formulation of a social strategy that is adapted to the region. The present study does not set out to accomplish this task and certainly does not attempt to identify the social actors capable of undertaking it. Despite our basic concern, which is the problem of social development in the Caribbean, we feel that, given our present level of knowledge, we should first of all trace the social evolution of the region and establish its specific features.

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If this approach is satisfactory, it would then be appropriate to discuss the method of intervention in a process that is underway. Failing this, it will be necessary to re-examine the evolution of these social systems in order to devise another strategy of intervention.

3. An unpredictable future

Colonialism and colonization (meaning settlement) are two distinct realities. The colonized societies were not constructed on the basis of a network of institutions responsible for regulating and determining the interests of the populations concerned. The configuration of their social groups reflects the implementation by brute force of a metropolitan project. Even granting that coercion is now increasingly used as a last resort, the fact of its imposition remains, although the manner in which it is implemented may have become more sophisticated.

Policy in the metropolis naturally emerges from a range of possible options which are generally, though not necessarily, shaped by economic considerations. In contrast, the economy of a colony or former colony is a function of the options permitted or tolerated by the policy of the metropolis. Here political considerations determine economic policy.

The colonized groups and societies of the Caribbean cannot explicitly formulate and pursue overall objectives that are different from those of their metropolises. As long as the population is not in a position to rid itself of its colonizers, it can only express its aims and objectives within the framework imposed upon it. The history of the official institutions merely reflects this deployment of the metropolitan society and the "dissemination" of its culture.

A colonial rhetoric exists which the colonized themselves may sometimes engage in. This rhetoric, however, does not embrace the totality of their social objectives. The possible choices that remain outside the purview of colonialism are singled out for attention by official institutions in their efforts to remove them. The colonizer sees only the reverse side of the choice, since the true choice is apparent only upon careful examination.

This counter-history, an unwritten one, is in fact the pre-history of the modern Caribbean. In order to describe it accurately, emphasis should be placed on the methodological risks inherent in a scientific approach which seems to run counter to patterns of deliberate behaviour.

The phenomena observed at a given period of the history of the Caribbean are not identifiable at their point of origin. Official rhetoric clouds them. In a colonized milieu more than anywhere else, social

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phenomena do not reflect the entire reality. A sociological reading of the region's history must often be done backwards, from the present to the past. It is in the results of social behaviour, not in their most obvious intentions and goals, that one perceives the elements that influence the processes of social change.

This problem was particularly evident during the transition from the period of enslavement to the contemporary period. If the merits of this argument can be demonstrated, proof will have been given as to why the knowledge needed for describing the main features of a future society do not seem to be available today. At the same time, it will become clear why the proposal is to develop a discipline of social planning that is limited to the formal characteristics of the future societies.

Let us look at two periods: first the eighteenth century, then the nineteenth. Let us suppose that, in this society under formation, there are during the first period three social groups: a) the enslaved, b) the planters, and c) the administrators of the colony. During the second period, the respective groups are: a) agricultural workers, peasants and sharecroppers, b) large landowners, and c) the colonial administration or, in the case of Haiti for example, a national administration. Note that at the point where the two periods merge, each of these groups may be comprised of the same physical persons.

After England ended the slave trade, the enslaved born in the colonies tended to constitute the majority of the population. An analysis of the eighteenth century would lead to the assumption that the creole enslaved were the persons most socialized or adapted to the plantation economy. However, a study of the nineteenth century immediately casts doubts on this assumption.

What was it that suggested to the creole slaves that there were advantages to peasant multi-crop agriculture? Why were indentured labourers preferred to creole workers? The rationale of the behaviour of creole slaves does not shed any light on why a peasant class developed or on the attitude of agricultural workers.

Any study of the eighteenth century must include an analysis of the processes of adaptation (seasoning), socialization or acculturation of the enslaved. However, the key to understand these behaviour patterns is to be found in the nineteenth century, where it is evident that the acquisition of the traits of docility recorded by witnesses of the previous period was a mere figment of the imagination and not a characteristic peculiar to a certain type of enslaved.

The study of the nineteenth century forces us to reformulate the ideas which had been based on observation of the eighteenth century. The

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individual referred to as a *slave* in eighteenth-century documents and according to the vocabulary in current use –i.e., according to the ideological barrage– is really a prisoner or *enslaved person*, that is, someone whom the system must relentlessly force to obey.

The nature of the system is itself explained by this distinction between the slave and the enslaved person, a distinction which explains the constant presence of forces of repression and the participation of the planters and their representatives in the violence organized against the enslaved.

It becomes clear that, like the *bossale*,[5] the enslaved creole, despite his apparent submission, did not share the social philosophy of slavery. The planters, despite their declarations to the contrary or the documents that they have left behind, knew this full well.

The creole was different from the *bossale* only to the extent that he had a better understanding of the rules of the game, and not to the extent that he accepted these rules and the reasons for their existence. In the case of those enslaved persons who adapted best to the colonial situation, such as Toussaint Louverture, the true depths of their thought were never expressed except in exceptionally favourable circumstances. The viability of such behaviour was determined by the above-mentioned circumstances and not by their internal logic.

The fact that the chronology of social phenomena must be reversed in order to better ujnderstand them casts doubt on the usefulness of social development plans based on the manifest objectives of the population. This leads us to adopt another methodological approach for the study of the region's societies.

The transition from the position of an enslaved person to that of a peasant implies a complete refashioning of the matrix of social relations. In the colonial society, it is this matrix that creates the social categories,[6] not the mutual relationships among the different categories which determine the characteristics of the social matrix.

In the Caribbean, the matrix is laid down by the metropolitan powers. It is they that create the categories of planter, enslaved and colonial administration. The relationships among these categories are diverse and played a determining role in colonial life. Far from allowing the colony to evolve from one stage of development to another however, the relationships between these categories aimed at preserving its exploitation system. To repeat a traditional distinction, the aim is the growth of the system not its development.

When the metropolitan countries change –when they industrialize and discover other areas in which to operate– another matrix is created in the

Caribbean, and the components of the original matrix are replaced. The planter could then become a manufacturer and the slave a wage-earning worker. The choice of becoming an entrepreneur or a rentier, a tenant farmer or an agricultural worker was not one that was available to the former planter or the former slave.

A macro-sociological reading of colonial history is therefore done *ex post* and cannot claim to identify the "necessary" stages of development. There are no broad outlines of any future development.

The metropolitan powers that devised these social categories and forced them upon the colonies are themselves governed by different systems of relationships unconnected with colonial social life. The rationale for this difference may be self evident, but the point here is that, by definition, development in colonized societies is not an immediate result of endogenous transformation.

In independent countries, the goals formulated by the majority of the people in the society will have meaning for social development planning only when the groupings involved are sufficiently informed of the international trends that are likely to modify their everyday life. In other words, this will only be possible if all the barriers to the free circulation of information are removed. The main task at hand, meanwhile, is precisely to destroy these barriers.

4. Social groups and categories

It is suggested that the social objectives leading to the formation of a peasant class cannot be inferred from the manifest behaviour of the creole slave. It is also claimed that, in a sense, the metropolis "created" the slave and peasant categories. In these two sentences, the terms "slaves" and "peasants" do not refer to the same social groups.

In a number of countries, the year 1838 marked the disappearance of the slaves as a significant social category and heralded the birth of the peasant class. Whether a person wished to or not, he or she could not remain a slave after emancipation. Moreover, from that year on, it was forbidden to procure and maintain a group of enslaved persons on the plantations.

Prior to emancipation, a small number of persons who might be termed peasants existed. However, there was no peasant class as such or even historical actor referred to as a peasant whose presence could have been felt within the society prior to general emancipation.

At a basic level of analysis, the social category of slave or peasant was a creation of the legislative system which assigned a role to this category

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defining its duties and obligations within the framework of the institutions required for the proper functioning of the plantation society.

These social categories constituted the instruments to implement the colonial project of society and were instituted without regard for the attitudes, aspirations and performance of the individuals to whom the various roles were assigned.

On a second and deeper level of analysis, the members of one social category formed various groupings and maintained interpersonal relationships that corresponded to a range of given choices. The establishment of such groupings was determined in a large measure by fortuitous encounters between individuals.[7]

The grouping of individuals depended on their activities, attitudes and aspirations. A group always arrived independently at its decisions.

The possibility of maintaining interpersonal relationships within a normative framework imposed from outside rendered the future of the region's societies even more unpredictable. The value systems of the first groups of African adults were different from the canons that defined the category to which they belonged. We believe that these differences were perpetuated despite and even within the process of creolization.

The metropolitan laws applicable to the colony, for example, prevented the slaves from constituting families —as defined by those very laws. The father, mother or children could be sold separately or together depending on their master's needs.

In reality, the enslaved were not necessarily sold; their daily life on a sugar island like Barbados was not the same as that of their counterparts in Dominica or Curaçao. Many families were formed despite the more or less standard legal provisions. Obviously such families did not correspond to the European conception of that institution, but rather to purely local circumstances, which were reordered according to the value systems inherited from Africa. Thus an indigenous family model ended up being institutionalized side by side with the official model.

Duality emerged out of the asymmetrical relationship between the metropolis and its citizens and, the colony and the colonized. In the daily and private life as it existed in the colony appeared the first divisions separating the Europeans and their representatives from the local population.[8]

When research is conducted with a view to determining the overall evolution of a society, rarely does it examine the different patterns of social behaviour. Both the modes of behaviour prescribed by the official institutions and the development of interpersonal relationships must be

considered at one and the same time. It is in the contrast between the legal prescriptions and the actual patterns of behaviour that the dynamics of the colonial societies lie.

Although the dynamics of a colony were subordinated to those of the metropolis, which created and sustained its static social categories, the history and evolution of the colonized society did not depend on the history and evolution of the metropolis.

Within the second level of analysis referred to previously, it is no longer the evolution of the main social categories, but the interchange between individuals and the creation of networks of interrelationships that claim one's attention. The specificity of the Caribbean as a region and the specificity of the individual countries that comprise it were a function of this interrelationship between the social categories that were sanctioned and given legitimacy by the colonial power and the forms of social interaction outside of the dominant system.

> In Guyana, as elsewhere in the Caribbean, the integration of the slaves into "one moral community", to use Durkheim's phrase, took place outside the social, cultural and organizational framework of the plantation. This new society which developed outside and around the plantations was based partly upon the slowly evolving system of non-slave relations and partly upon developments forced upon the planter-dominated colonies by Britain.[9]

A new world developed parallel to that of the colonial society. It may be regarded as a counter-plantation system. Its emergence was not painless. It was the result, both necessary and unexpected, of colonialism. The seeds of new and specific nationalities and cultures took root there. Relationships and particularities developed that were capable of defying the policies of the metropolis, wherever the conditions for doing so were present.

Once social categories are institutionalized, their behaviour is governed by legal prescriptions and generalizations can easily be made about it. The decisions of social groups vary according to circumstances and are susceptible to error and to successive modifications.

Social categories and groups of individuals are concepts that are used frequently and imprecisely in many texts, giving rise to annoying confusion. It is known, for example, that the slaves in Santo Domingo revolted in the late eighteenth century. This statement would only be true if the word slave is being used to refer to a social category. In fact, not all enslaved persons revolted and not all of them fought in the wars of independence.

An actual rebellion is led by individuals who find themselves by chance in special circumstances that enable them to form themselves into groups

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and to organize themselves. These groups act *on behalf of and in the name of* the above-mentioned social category.

This scenario presupposes that all the enslaved share certain common knowledge and opinions. It does not follow, however, that they all express, must express or are capable of expressing these opinions in the same way.

The fact that the Saint Domingue Revolution took place, thus conferring a specific character on Haitian society, does not place a halo over the Haitians that sets them apart from other Caribbean peoples.

Any sociological study of the Caribbean should always be firmly rooted in a recognition of the two levels of social reality. The categories and groups of individuals correspond to different logical systems, and a sum of groupings does not constitute a social category.

The main social categories are defined in one way or another in the legal codes and within the basic institution of the colonial system, namely, the plantation. The proper functioning of every other official institution requires a certain level of compatibility with these definitions.

Groups of individuals emerge out of the various forms of collaboration and social solidarity which develop during the course of the performance of daily tasks together. They create and consolidate networks of relationships which constitute the backbone of social cohesion in a given community.

Because of the intermingling of categories and groups of individuals, social cohesion in the Caribbean milieu takes on a dual aspect. On the one hand, it represents a challenge to the *imposition* of colonial norms and not necessarily to the norms themselves as systems of representations. While this type of cohesion usually characterizes groups of individuals in the dominant social categories, it is also found in the subordinate groups.

On the other hand, another form of social cohesion challenges not only the imposition of colonial norms but even more so the very *content of the* norms. Human groupings, belonging generally to oppressed categories, are more sensitive to the significance of the norms imposed on them than to the fact itself of that imposition.

The struggle against colonialism and its subsequent versions received the support of one or the other network of groupings depending on the degree of liberty that followed from greater political autonomy. As long as the external domination remained unshakeable, the groups evolved in isolation, in other words, without any independent means of modifying the normative system.

The divergent orientations of these two types of social groups were slowly brought closer together as the economic and social situation of the

territories deteriorated. As long as a compromise –a social contract– was not formulated, the metropolitan powers were able to take advantage of the support they received alternatively from the dominant or the subordinate group.

5. Dualism and legitimization of power

The fundamental political and economic institutions of a colony established for purposes of exploitation were in many ways comparable to voluntary associations,[10] in the sense that they developed out of authoritarian decisions and did not evolve out of the relationships among their participants. It follows, to begin with and despite any superficial resemblance, that such institutions do not function like their European equivalents.

The special nature of Caribbean institutions is especially striking in the case of economic institutions, which do not generally depend on the play of market forces.

Several other key institutions also displayed striking specificity. In the area of religion, to take an example apparently far removed from the economic world, the relations between the clergy and the congregation, in the exploitation colonies, were of a different kind. The members of the congregation belonging to the oppressed categories were debarred from the priesthood, however devout they might have been.

Institutions based on metropolitan models, adapted to colonial objectives, constituted the official sector of the colony. They established the norms of political, civil, public and private life, but in fact they organized only the lifestyles of those groups that were part of the dominant system.

Contrary to the functioning of the matrix of colonial categories and institutions, relationships between groups of individuals created a society that functioned on the basis of the principles that emerged from the everyday intercourse of its constituent elements. These embryos of civil society strove to flourish under the yoke of colonialism and to some extent resembled the metropolitan societies.

> If we penetrate to the inner metropole we find wonder, we find Labat, Mocquet, the indefatigable Raleigh, Defoe, Shakespeare, and the myth of El Dorado: exploitation converted to dream and image. For us, on the plantation, there should have been a similar atomic beginning: ourselves, the networks of us: relation to landscape, accumulation of language and experience.[11]

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In order to manage their affairs, the European civil societies have in the course of their evolution institutionalized what they referred to as the State. It was that State which undertook the colonization of the Caribbean and which, when for one reason or another the metropolis wanted or was obliged to part with its colonies, was given the responsibility of administering the affairs of those colonies.

The State in the Caribbean was nurtured mainly on metropolitan norms of conduct and values. It was less susceptible to the impacts of an official civil society which flourished under its auspices and protection. The latter differed from the embryonic local or colonized civil society.

The colonized civil society –an underground civil society– was a response to the contrivance of the State, which not only dominated it but pledged to destroy or at least dismantle it. After the territories acceded to independence, the handing over of colonial institutions to the representatives of the colonized populations therefore affected the participation of the new nation-States in the international political system only to the extent that the legitimization of these representatives relied on the support of the underground civil society.

The extent and source of the legitimization of the forces of law and order distinguish a truly independent State from one which has barely emerged from colonial tutelage. When formal rupture from a metropolis sprang only from the demands of an official civil society, the result was an "emancipated" State. Such a State was characterized by a political system half way between the norms and values of the former metropolis, which served as its source of inspiration, and the demands for expression of the styles of living and of thought of the local population.

The local or underground civil society did not necessarily pursue the same objectives pursued by the colonial State or by the emancipated State. In several instances, it did not even try to influence them.

The emancipated State shared certain common denominators with its Western counterparts, whose internal dynamics gave rise to certain legal norms and moral standards which had to be observed. Of these norms, the legitimization of the monopoly of violence held by the State was fundamental.

Consequently, whatever the conditions under which the reins of colonial government were transferred to the nationals, sooner or later the authorities had to reflect the wishes of all of the governed, organized within the autonomous groupings of the official and underground civil societies.

Despite the conflicts which sometimes arose between them, the official civil society shared with the colonial or emancipated State a central

objective which, since the end of the Second World War, has characterized economic relationships between the former metropolises and the former colonies. This was the attainment of economic and social development as early as possible.

Although the goal of development was not necessarily alien to the local civil society, it was not the main focus of its concerns. The quality of the relationships among the human groups and above all the problem of justice and individual freedoms took precedence over material well-being.

The thirst for justice and individual freedoms is inherent in the formation of the Caribbean societies and nations. It remains to be seen whether the sacrifices which the national development efforts appear to demand are compatible with these aspirations. The policies of a State which sacrifices on the altar of economic development the rights and aspiration to justice of oppressed populations rules out any possibility of legitimizing the political power.

This clash between economic development and social justice is the most relevant issue during the present stage of Caribbean development. The sudden appearance on the political scene of principles and criteria of social cohesion characteristic of the underground civil societies foreshadows a change in political systems and societal projects in directions that are still not clear.

6. Plan of the study

From the sociological standpoint, the model or image of a future society cannot have material topics or thematic features of its own. It may be described as an increasingly dense network of interrelations designed to optimize the bargaining power of the different social agents. It is, however, impossible to foresee or determine the living standards to be reached, the wealth to be distributed and its pattern of distribution, or the "social sectors" that will be capable of stimulating lagging activities.

Social development planning concerns itself with how to distribute wealth or shortages. It cannot predict future social matrices and consequently the standard-setting structures that will be created. It is unable, too, to predict the scope and kind of compromise that will result from the negotiations under way.

The future society will emerge from the day-to-day dealings of the various human groups with each other. Social development planning consists of maintaining a continuous dialogue among all the groups of individuals who, on one ground or another, claim to be part of the Caribbean.

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It is a collective enterprise, based on respect for contending human groupings. It is also an effort to inform them and guide their social practices rather than a patronizing attempt to provide for their shortcomings and to meet their needs.

The present study avoids any kind of normative analysis. It makes no reference to the right of nations or individuals to economic and social development, or to the injustice and exploitation to which the populations of the Caribbean are subjected. It seeks rather to describe the rationale of the region's evolution.

Following this introductory chapter, the study begins by analyzing the creole, who is the main social actor according to the most current theories in the region. It then examines the type of workers that succeed the slaves and shows how they differed from the wage-earning worker.

The fourth chapter analyses the structure of regional unity based on the behaviour patterns of the human groups involved. The fifth chapter outlines the progress of the various forms of consensus and identifies the local institutions that seem to underpin the social cohesion of the nation.

The sixth chapter deals with the reproduction of structural dualism, despite a better integration of systems of production. The mechanisms of production and reproduction of poverty will be described in this chapter. The existence of the two civil societies mentioned in the introduction is next posited, and the study concludes with an analysis of the relationship between systems of government and the national culture.

Chapter 2

THE CREOLES

1. A new definition

The dynamic dimension of Caribbean society grew out of the fabric of relations among individuals. Relationships between groups are likely to transform the interplay of social categories organized in such a way –if the rules of the official institutions are observed– as to be repeated indefinitely. Social innovations flow from the actions of networks made up of groups of individuals. The practices of these groups may tend toward the direction desired by the official institutions or in an opposite one. The important thing is that they reflect collective choices and local initiatives.

The establishment of groups and of networks of permanent relationships requires a certain familiarity with the way in which the society functions. In the colonial situation, this was the work of the Creoles or creolized peoples. It was not by mere chance that social scientists of the region, in freeing themselves from metropolitan tutelage, attempted to define the Creole and the process of creolization.

The words used to express what was occurring in the region belong to languages which are very widely spoken, and transmit ideas in extremely diverse contexts. These words are applied to the Caribbean situation and are rarely derived from the situation itself. This is particularly true of the vocabulary used in written language, above all scientific language.

Except in the Spanish-speaking countries, discourses in European languages are seldom intended for the local population. At best they are aimed at an intellectual elite well-versed in the use of these languages which, though foreign, are sometimes official. They restrict themselves to formulations which are acceptable in the countries where these "mother-tongues" originate but do not necessarily have the same meaning attributed to them in the Caribbean.

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If we acknowledge the fact that Caribbean society is responsible for the social changes taking place in the region, we must try to comprehend exactly how the local populations organize their experiences and transmit their knowledge to future generations.[12]

Any information essential for survival in a given society is unquestionably contained in the languages in current use –the vernacular languages. One cannot really understand a society if one does not understand its language, and clearly one cannot change the former without first mastering its system of communication.

Linguists are of the view that the indispensable and frequently used concepts in a given milieu tend to be presented in the form of relatively short standardized labels.[13] In order to understand the central, specifically colonial figure known as the Creole, it is useful to adopt this approach. This will permit the Caribbean problem to be situated in its proper context and ensure that it is not defined in terms drawn from foreign dictionaries.

The word Creole is used with a variety of meanings –even in the Caribbean– and understanding them is no easy task. The vernacular language used in Haiti has two opposing concepts, which seem to sum up the problem in question perfectly. These concepts are, firstly, the *nèg* and the *blan*, and secondly, the *kréol* and the *bosal*.

The black is in contrast with the white, and the Creole in contrast with the African born, or bossale. In Haiti, the term "Creole" is used to refer to a social group only before independence. After 1804, the country had no more colonists and received no large contingents of Africans. Since the term no longer described a category of persons, it disappeared.

The concept of "Creole" stands in contrast only with that of the African born, and this suggests that the difference between the metropolitan white and the Creole white has not been codified. In Haiti, and in most of the countries of the region, the word "white" means foreigner.[14] During colonial times therefore, there was an identity among whites, whether they were Creoles or metropolitans.

It is noteworthy that this way of conceiving the dominant ethnic group in the colony contrasts with the Latin American view of the Creole, which has developed in opposition to the concept of metropolitans. This difference is especially important in understanding the peculiarities of the Caribbean societies that were established during Spanish domination. We shall return later to this aspect of the question.

Consequently, the distinction between the Creole and the metropolitan remained valid only during the period of colonization. After independence, the people from the metropolis became foreigners.

The situation in Haiti cannot be generalized to apply to the Caribbean as a whole, without certain reservations. In countries that are still colonies and in those that have only recently become independent, Creole whites are known as *béké, French Creoles* or *local whites*, which distinguishes them from the rest of the population and from metropolitan whites. These very common designations do not, however, affect the assimilation of all whites as foreigners.[15]

In the Caribbean region, the distinction drawn between the Creole and the African born (bossale) originates in the period of the slave trade. When England put an end to that trade, the entire population tended to be labelled Creole by force of circumstances and the distinction gradually disappeared.

One might expect the concept of Creole to be used in the same way to categorize indentured labourers from South-East Asia, who may or may not be familiar with the rules of the game in a given colony. However, this is not the case.

The reason for this is very simple. In all the region's colonies there were European planters and Creole planters, as well as African-born enslaved and Creole enslaved. But there could be no indentured labourers born in the colony. That would contradict the terms of the labour contract which defined that category.

An indentured labourer was a European or Asian worker who paid his own passage to the colony by providing his labour free or almost free of charge for a certain number of months, usually 36. The mechanism for integrating this type of migrant into the colonial societies was different from that used for integrating Africans or other Europeans and their respective descendants.

The Creole was not defined by his place of birth, as many dictionaries claim.[16] An individual and his descendants may be classified as Creoles depending on the type of contract that determined their original insertion into a colonial society.

The Indian, Chinese or Javanese indentured labourers, like the individuals born through miscegenation with the "creolizable" ethnic groups, did not become Creoles and did not consider themselves as such. The individual born of the miscegenation of a European and an African –the mulatto– represents the Creole *par excellence*, a person who could not be anything but Creole.

The case of the Portuguese and European indentured workers in general complicates this attempt at a definition, because they were assimilated with the *local whites* when their contracts expired. Nevertheless, most of the

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countries that received European indentured labourers placed them in a category created especially for them. A distinction was made between the *petits blancs*, *white niggers* or *rednecks* on the one hand, and the *grands blancs*, *béké* or *French Creoles*, on the other, thus emphasizing the origin of this segment of Creole whites.

Despite this slight difference imposed by the social history of the European indentured labourers, it may be said that the term Creole was reserved for black people, mixtures of blacks and whites, *petits blancs*, *béké* or *local whites*, not only because they were born in the Caribbean but also because of their peculiar association with the plantation society project.

According to Caribbean usage, two types of immigrants, the bossale or African and the white or European, could become Creoles. In each of these cases, creolization had a history (a chronology) and an end. The mulatto was not affected by the creolization process because, in principle, he was always a Creole.

As we shall see in the following chapter, it was precisely to frustrate the effects of creolization that the colonial authorities and planters invented indentured labourers' contracts in the nineteenth century. We shall return to this subject, but it should be made clear that the Caribbean Creole's situation was quite different from that of the Latin American Creole.

The Creoles in a colonial slave society constituted a different social category from the basic ones (the enslaved and the planters) in that it derived from them. The Creole strata arose during the execution of the colonial project when the system of rewards and discriminations was being set up. Creoles and non-Creoles possessed different attributes and aptitudes. The Creole white was not always the equal of the metropolitan, just as the Creole enslaved was not always the equal of the African-born bossale.

In this chapter, we shall study the means by which an African-born enslaved person became a creolized enslaved person, and the change of status from an enslaved person to that of a freed person. This represents an attempt to analyze the behaviour of the Creole category before general emancipation and not the day-to-day relationships among the individuals categorized as such.

2. African-born (bossale) or creolized person

The creolized person was therefore a clearly defined historical figure. In order to analyze the creolization process one must examine the fate which befell him or her so as not to be misled and not to omit any of the essential characteristics of the process.

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One will readily admit that the creolization of a metropolitan –his conversion to a *béké*– did not follow the same course as that of an African. At the beginning, the metropolitan was the master, the person in charge of the colonial institutions. The African was the enslaved person whom R. T. Smith had in mind when he suggested that the plantation should be studied as a "total institution".[17]

The plantation was, however, considerably more than a "total institution". Prisoners or novices know why they are in prisons or convents. They are aware of what is expected of them and why they should submit themselves to the discipline of these institutions.

The planter and his employees were bound to use a contingent of enslaved persons according to a given production plan. The labour force thus acquired had no idea of what this "total institution" was about. One can therefore imagine the task which fell to the masters.

The slave owners could not appeal to the workers' understanding. The legal system indeed recognized that the former had a right of ownership over their enslaved, but it was up to the slave owners to make sure that these new arrivals, whose language and systems of reference they were ignorant of, behaved in a manner which to them –the enslaved– was totally unfamiliar.

It was therefore evident: 1) that the enslaved worker was not an employee of the planter because certain common denominators that normally exist between employee and employer were lacking in that relationship; 2) that it was the planter assisted by his agents, who gave meaning and direction to the adaptation of the enslaved, that is to say, he dictated the characteristics, the areas and the pace of the creolization process; 3) that the captivity of the foreigner was an established fact –a necessary but not sufficient condition to convert him into a slave. Between the status of an enslaved and the status of a slave lay the socialization process: the *seasoning*. It is worth stressing that the person in captivity was not a slave, but "an enslaved person".

The systematic mortification and humiliation[18] of the enslaved foreigner were the starting point of the creolization process. Since the foreigner or African born was totally unfamiliar with the ways of the plantation, the first and principal technique used in this process was torture.[19]

Torture in the plantation system was a normal phenomenon and not a sadistic perversion. It was functionally necessary to the system and the only way to convert an alien into a slave.

As in a market economy, where an employer who refused to pay a wage would have no one to work for him, on the slave plantation a planter who

was disinclined to torture his slaves would have no workers. Torture was practised not just during the *seasoning* period. The system could not function without either real torture or the threat of it.

This predominant role of torture explains the ambiguity of the creolization which it was thought to produce and reproduce.[20] Despite all that has been said, in fact, torture was the ironic expression of the equality of the actors in the plantation system.

The planter, who regarded his donkey as an inferior being, did not have to resort to torture to make it work. Torturing an enslaved person was therefore a tacit recognition of his equality.[21]

The more the planter tortured his captive, the more he admitted his failure to understand him. Conversely, the more the enslaved person was tortured, the more he permitted the planter to exercise the only hold he had over him, which was brute force, and, consequently, the more he proved that he did not understand his situation.

The creolized enslaved person may thus be defined as one who acquired a certain mastery over the mechanism by which labour was obtained in the slave system. He understood the importance of power relations in setting up the framework in which his life would henceforth unfold.

The unrestrained use of torture as the normal system of management on the plantation-based colonies served also to create a distance between the planter's value system and that of the metropolis. In the mother country, other forms of management of labour relations were practised. Its legislative system, which defined the social category of "slave", was a response to certain material interests, principles and criteria whose dynamics of change bore no direct relationship to daily life in the colony.

At a certain stage the metropolitan legislative system decreed the equality of civil and political rights for freed persons and even total emancipation. In the daily management of their enterprises (and of their private lives), the planters, however, had no intention of relinquishing the benefits to be derived from the subordination of the freed men, or the practice of torture, or the threat of torture of the enslaved. Since they constantly had to convince themselves that their behaviour was justified, they were in no position to fully emulate the progress achieved by the metropolis in the areas of law and justice.

This divergence between the criteria applied by the planters in their daily life and the ideological progress made in Europe was never carried to its ultimate consequences. The planters could not survive without the (or a) metropolis, nor did the latter wish to divest itself of its colonies.

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The compromise consisted of limiting the exercise of the rights that the colonizing power recognized as belonging to one sector of the Creole world. The sector that benefitted was the one which the colony had to assimilate —and only to the extent that it needed to assimilate it— to ensure the smooth running of its institutions.

As the danger to a colony increased, the size of the groups and categories that had to be assimilated would also grow. The appearance on the colonial political scene of "petty whites", *anciens libres* or freed men, Creole enslaved, maroons in revolt and finally of all enslaved persons reflected the increasing gravity of the situation in the French colonies towards the end of the eighteenth century.

This was the main difference between the so-called English, French, Spanish and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries. The difference had nothing to do with the internal structures of these entities but was a reflection in the occupied territories of the differences between the various metropolises.

The evolution of the canons and values that guided the daily life of the planters always followed the pattern set in the metropolises and it is *this constant adjustment of the metropolitan culture to colonial conditions that the present study refers to as Creole or dominant culture.*

The rights and privileges that were acknowledged as belonging to the citizens of the metropolis were not extended to those who were born in the colony but had no part in administering it. Such persons constituted a sector that remained unassimilated, a sector whose over-exploitation produced the profits that justified the existence of the colony.

It should be noted that very early on the enslaved Creoles split into two groups. One group progressed towards emancipation in keeping with the needs of the colonial administration. The other remained in captivity and therefore had no access to the cultural elements that determined the thinking of the planters.

By socializing their enslaved captives within the plantation framework, the planters also set up an insurmountable barrier between their own world and the world of the persons whom they tortured. Because torture took the place of labour relations, the persons tortured *ipso facto* gave no thought to how the desired economic results could be obtained and made no effort to achieve them.

The economic output of the plantation held absolutely no interest for the creolized enslaved as opposed to the freedman. The enslaved person was concerned above all with his (social) relationships with the planter and his employees.

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The creolized worker had no relationship with the product of the plantation until after the abolition of slavery, or at least after the abolition of the slave trade, when the labour supply ceased to be elastic. We shall examine the machinations to which the planters resorted to prevent the emergence of a system of labour relations designed to negotiate the share of the output of their enterprises that the workers should receive.

The slave was not an employee. His relationship with his master was not economic; it was a power relationship –a political one.

The lure of remuneration transforms a mere employee into a self-motivated worker willing to accept the discipline of the enterprise. On the plantation, it was torture that converted the enslaved into workers and ensured the system's continuity.

The worker negotiates an increase in his wages for the continuation of his services while the enslaved person negotiates, in his own manner, a reduction in the frequency and degree of torture required to make him work.

The African-born enslaved who knew nothing at all about the norms and customs of the plantation had to undergo the novitiate described above. Following his initiation, the more he behaved like a creolized person, the more he was able to avoid torture. Creolization under the system of slavery took place under the threat of the whip, i.e., the prospect of unlimited corporal punishment.

When the enslaved had grown accustomed to the discipline of slavery, they adopted the patterns of behaviour demanded by their masters, but their motivations remained different. Consequently, the meaning that the planter would give to an action was not necessarily the same as that attributed to it by the enslaved person.

The use of torture created the conditions for establishing two levels of understanding, without necessarily any interface between them. The plantation system was always on the verge of exploding. It lacked the institutions which would enable the interrelated parties to agree on a common undertaking and to share the same symbolic system. The slavery-based plantation was never a voluntary association of individuals sharing certain minimum objectives.

When one comes to understand the relationship between creolization and torture as the key instrument of personnel management, answers to a number of questions begin to emerge. The creolization process loses its ambiguity when one attempts to capture its content.

Creolization must be conceived first and foremost as a negotiation process aimed at improving a negative wage, in other words, avoiding

whipping or mutilation. Nowadays, one would say that *the creolization process led to an improvement in the living standard.*

It would, however, be wrong to infer from the above that there was any connection between creolization and the development of a single culture, shared by all the persons born in the colony. Any such deduction would imply that progress could have been made or that unlimited improvement could have occurred in the living standards when the negotiations that led to creolization were concluded.

To use R. T. Smith's comparison again, in a prison, new arrivals go through a "novitiate" period and learn willingly or by force what the principles and rules of the institution are. As Smith rightly points out, the prisoner has not lost his culture but he has no opportunity to live it while in captivity.

Obviously, no one expects the prisoner to apply the prison rules and principles in his everyday life after he is released, however much his personality may have been distorted by that experience. It is not that he is unaware of the rules and principles of the prison, but there is no reason for him to apply them.

Similarly, once he has left the dominant system, the enslaved Creole or creolized person has no use for the plantation culture or the Creole culture. In other words, that culture is not the culture of all persons born in the colonies.

The approach used in this study explains why there has never been a uniform culture in the type of colony established in the Caribbean. Whereas the adaptation of metropolitan cultures to plantation systems was conceived of as a Creole culture, *the culture that the population develops in response to the policies of the metropolises* is called Caribbean or local culture.

This culture is by no means another pole of Creole culture, its African pole, but an indigenous product that reflects principles distilled from the Caribbean experience.

The confusion between local culture and the dominant culture is kept alive by the fact that the Creole culture is usually expressed in the official European languages. Paradoxically, the local culture is expressed primarily in the vernacular languages, which are commonly referred to as Creole languages.

The local culture is likened to an African way of thinking because of an erroneous definition of the term "culture". Furthermore, such assimilation fails to take into account the specificity of the Caribbean milieu which was organized around an institution of which Africa had no previous knowledge: the plantation.

The sum total of the survival strategies and of the achievements of its populations certainly makes it possible to subdivide the Caribbean into such categories as English-speaking, French-speaking, or Spanish-speaking subregions. But this diversity of behaviour patterns and achievements —which, moreover, does not cover all the populations of the islands in question— in no way implies a variety of processes of creolization.

The creolization processes did not contain elements that were peculiar to each plantation system. Few colonies have belonged to one metropolis alone and few colonies of the same metropolis have shared the same history. Proof of this is the fact that the nuances of creolization never prevented the exchange of enslaved between one island or territory and another.

Over and above the creolization processes, the choice of behaviour patterns and the consequences of collective choices varied from one territory to another. The most important thing, therefore, is to understand the criteria used in evaluating survival strategies and decision-making. These are criteria that establish similarities between, for example, enslaved persons in Barbados and those in Saint Domingue, whatever their specific conditions of existence. Such criteria distinguish these two groups of enslaved persons from their English and French masters respectively and enable the English and French to agree whenever necessary.

3. The Creole or freedman

It is interesting to note that nouns were used to designate the fundamental categories of the plantation —slaves[22] and planters— whereas the subcategories were designated by adjectives and participles used as substantives —bossales, Creoles or freedmen.

While the primary categories were mutually exclusive, the secondary categories showed a progression, as follows: the African enslaved, the creolized enslaved, the Creole enslaved and the emancipated or freedman. The latter could be further subdivided either into blacks and mulattoes or into "old" and "new" freedmen, which occurred during the Saint Domingue revolution.

Social strata in colonial society were clearly defined, and transition from one stratum to another could take place within one or two generations. Two points deserve to be highlighted here. Firstly, these "class transfers" did not call into question the basic differences between planters and slaves, and secondly, such mobility was individual and uni-directional. The

emancipated mulatto never became a freed black. An enslaved Creole never ran the risk of becoming creolized again. The creolized person would never be a newly arrived, African-born *bossale*.

Colonial society was composed of castes, and upward mobility was possible in the sense of greater assimilation into plantation society. Downward mobility usually affected an entire stratum of society.

Downward mobility implied a reformulation of overall relationships between the colony and the metropolis. Changes brought about in the French possessions by Napoleon's takeover offer a good example: they resulted in the revocation of the decrees granting civil and political rights to freed persons as well as those providing for the general emancipation of slaves.

The creolized class was one of the early products of the pattern of interpersonal relationships in the colonial society. That class was followed by the Creoles, in the narrow sense of the word, that is to say, persons born in the colony. Among these were the Creoles *par excellence*, the mulattoes.

Still at the level of interpersonal relationships, the next class to emerge was that of freedmen. They came into being as a result of local initiatives in order to play given roles within the system, and these roles, in addition to the status that they conferred, finally became institutionalized.

It must be borne in mind that by bringing interpersonal relations into the analysis of the origins of the secondary social categories into which colonial life is organized, one is venturing into two very different spheres of social life, shifting from the public to the private life of persons and vice versa.

In order to be able to function at his post, the African-born *bossale* had to be creolized. The appearance of the other actors mentioned above in their various social positions implied that there were other forms of family or private relationships leading to the emancipation of an enslaved person. By becoming institutionalized, these private relationships in turn established the bases of networks of interpersonal relationships, i.e. of the local civil society.

Examination of the link between public and private life is another way of analyzing the relationship between social categories and groups of individuals. When confronted with the power structure that dominated colonial life, the creolized person had three options: to "accept" the *status quo*, that is to say, to acknowledge an external situation which he could not modify either by himself or through the collective action of his group; to

commit suicide (history records individual and collective suicides); or to escape from the dominion of the colonial authorities.

The last two options bore no direct relationship to the creolization process. The reader will recall that there were not only individual or collective decisions, but also choices available or projects realizable. The creolized person in Antigua, for example, would have had considerable difficulty in conceiving of escape as a viable solution.

The institutionalization of public life was much more visible than that of private life. This was particularly true of the performance at the work-place. The enslaved person had to do his utmost to observe the principles which guided the organization of his labour. He could not display the cultural distance that separated him from the colonizer without triggering an apparatus of repression which did not "normally" (that is to say in his relations with creolized persons) function.

In his private life on the other hand, displaying signs of his cultural difference could initiate the forms of solidarity necessary for interpersonal relationships to develop. "Otherness" *vis-à-vis* the colonizers led to the formation of networks of social groupings that enabled the enslaved to survive.

Insofar as the enslaved as a group were unable to overcome oppression, individual emancipation remained the only way to improve their living conditions. The two methods of emancipation are well known: the granting of freedom by the slave owner or the purchase of that freedom by the slave himself.

Individual emancipation implied a process of negotiation between individuals (an interpersonal relationship) belonging to different social categories (negotiation within official institutions). This gave rise to acts of cajolery, duplicity and betrayals, which formed part of the process of creolization of the *bossale*.

There were two ways in which the freedman or emancipated slave could work: he could either set himself up in business independently, or he could hire himself out. Unskilled manual labour was mainly performed by slaves, and since such labour was unpaid, the freedman could only work as a skilled craftsman or fill junior posts in the administration of public or private enterprises, such as that of foreman, policeman or silversmith. In other words he had —as an emancipated person— to be useful to the smooth operation of the plantation system.

The special situation of emancipated persons —the *anciens libres* as they were called in Saint Domingue— and of their descendants reveals the importance of the Creole culture in the Caribbean. In contrast, the

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creolization process and access to Creole culture were normally studied in the context of the "total institution", the plantation.

However much he tried to assimilate the norms and principles of colonization, the creolized or the Creole enslaved person did not have the material resources or indeed the rights and privileges which would permit him to organize his private life on the basis of the official institutional model. Once he was emancipated, his family, religion, cuisine, language, dress, modes of recreation, dwelling, etc., could only copy the formulas of the metropolitan settlers in a very specific context.

A distinction must be drawn between a) individual emancipation made possible by the performance of the enslaved person and the functional needs of the colonial system; and b) the total emancipation of slaves in response to demands of another kind, which followed an itinerary that will be the subject of the following chapter.

The enslaved person who broke away from his peers and won his freedom had a certain familiarity, however limited, with the dominant system. Because his new status was useful to the administration of the slave system, he managed to obtain some material goods as well as some rights and privileges which permitted him to attempt to organize his private life along lines that increasingly reflected those established by the dominant institutions.

The freedman's "acceptance" of metropolitan life-styles and his inclination to copy those prestigious models were not simply a question of personal choice. An individual who, for one reason or another, was granted or purchased his freedom within the framework of the slave system could only survive if he observed the rules and regulations in force.

The acculturation or assimilation of the freedman was inevitable because he had to refrain from any display of ethnic or cultural difference in exchange for the chance of a better life. The freedman was the first local social category to have access to employment and wages.[23] He therefore developed some interest in the products of the plantation and its related economic institutions.

The successful freedman had, above all, the right and privilege of passing on the fruits of his success to his heirs. Since the improvement of his living conditions depended on a prudent observance of the norms of public life imposed by the colonial power, he educated his children in the manner desired by the official institutions.

Certain rules and principles that governed public life gradually made their way into the private lives of the free sectors of the local population. Social groupings and peculiar systems of interpersonal relationships

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emerged from the activities of these freedmen in both their private and their public lives. These practices created a gulf however, between the latter and enslaved persons which could not be bridged before general emancipation.

This new of emancipated person, because of his legitimate aspirations to better living standards, better work conditions and the safeguarding of the progress he had achieved, gradually changed his life-style. The more successful he was, the more necessary and easier this step became. Since he was exploited less and less, he enjoyed the material conditions and legal status which enabled him to pattern his life-style after European standards.

As we are aware, in the best of cases the freedman became a planter and bought his own slaves. In the framework of official institutions, the system tended to perpetuate itself.

In addition to the possibility of economic collapse, the colonial society imposed real limitations on the freedman. He was excluded from certain professions, certain civil and political rights were denied him, and he was not allowed to occupy the more productive lands.

Freedmen were quite aware of the discrimination to which they were subjected. It reminded them all too vividly that the social category to which they belonged came out of the slave category and was not a fundamental part of the colonial system.

The emancipated were the final product of the creolization process, and the mulatto was the most typical of that group. Their privileged status, which was linked to the plantation system and to the Creole culture, set them apart from the Creole or creolized enslaved persons, who had no particular interest in defending that system and that culture.

With the general emancipation of slaves, the freedmen disappeared as a social category. They were replaced by other protagonists whose status reflected the deterioration of the plantation system in the nineteenth century.

In Haiti where the plantation economy went bankrupt, the former freedmen (anciens libres) and their descendants, unlike the Creole whites and the metropolitans who fled or disappeared, resorted to forms of popular solidarity and in their own way participated in solutions implemented by the "new" freedmen, les nouveaux libres. Without abandoning their fundamental aspirations and attitudes, the anciens libres engaged in urban activities that complemented the peasant economy.

In those colonies where the plantations managed to survive, the system was perpetuated thanks to the anciens libres and their descendants, who were less restricted in their choice of a profession at that time than during the period before emancipation.

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4. Creoles in the Caribbean and Latin America

At this stage of our study, we should make a distinction between the different types of Creoles. As we underlined at the beginning of this chapter, the use of terminology created in other contexts poses certain difficulties for the study of the region's problems. By Creole, one generally means a person of foreign origin who was born in a Latin American or Caribbean colony. The Creole was generally the social actor best adapted to any colonization model. A distinction needs to be made however, between the Creoles in the settlement colonies and those in the colonies established for purposes of exploitation. The former, the prototype represented by the Latin American of the Southern Cone, constitute large groups of free settlers, who severed their political links with their mother country. In the rest of Latin America, the concept of "Creole" tends to cover –and after independence to be replaced by that of– the "mestizo".

In comparison with the indigenous population, the Creoles and mestizos constituted a dominant although not necessarily the majority ethnic group. Their domination of both the indigenous and the black groupings gave Latin American countries the dual character of a settlement colony and an exploitation colony.

The Latin American Creoles were settled in the colony without any hope or possibility of returning to the metropolis and consequently acquired interests of their own. They were also in a position to bequeath this legacy to their descendants and to defend them more or less successfully, especially during the periods of crisis in the economies and societies of the metropolis.

The Creoles were the architects of national independence. In their eyes, the Amerindian and black populations were marginal –although not necessarily minority– groups to be integrated into what they called national life.

Certain connotations derived from the racial classification systems of past centuries serve to define the Latin American Creole. The contemporary characterization of Latin American culture still makes use of elements of the biological sciences of that period. One therefore often reads that this was a Creole or mestizo culture, and it is typically described as a mixture in which the constituent parts combined without weighting factor.[24]

The colonies of the Caribbean were essentially colonies for exploitation. A different logic lay behind the various forms of social cohesion because the majority of the people were not settlers, even though they were of foreign origin.

Unlike their Latin American counterparts, the "Caribbean Creoles", therefore did not live within the framework of a given system for one or two

centuries. The plantation, and above all the slavery plantation, did not demographically reproduce any of its social strata. The region did not produce successive generations of planters or enslaved persons who might end up creating or adopting a dominant mestizo or mulatto culture.

There is no doubt that the Caribbean, like Latin America, witnessed several socialization processes, but these evolved at a different pace. They were part of the history of the plantation system, which constantly expelled the resources necessary for its own consolidation.

As soon as the accelerated rotation of the "human resources" of the plantation society ceased, the latter's history could no longer be followed without noting the effectiveness of its opposite, the peasant or counter-plantation economy. The history of the Creoles in the Caribbean is therefore not the consequence of successive generations issuing from one and the same type of society.

Moreover, unlike the Latin American model, the dominant ethnic group within the new populations of the Caribbean was clearly a minority. Even during the worst metropolitan economic crises, it failed to conceive of and even less to apply any forms of self-centred development. It remained in the colony only in the hope of leaving it one day.

Cultural contacts between various ethnic groups of the region occurred within the framework of a societal project completely lacking any local base. The social cohesion which grew out of this project was negligible and occupied only those spaces which did not adversely affect the colonial exploitation system.

In this way, the interpenetration of cultural contributions from the various ethnic groups took place on each side of the rifts between the exploiters and the exploited, without any attempt to define the objectives of the colonized society as a whole. The process had nothing in common with the assimilation of immigrants which characterized the formation of the populations of the Southern Cone of Latin America.

The cultural contacts that took place in the Caribbean are reminiscent of the exchanges observed in the meso-American and Andean countries between, on the one hand, immigrants of European origin and their descendants and, on the other, the various Amerindian tribes and their descendants. There was however, an important difference: the support given by the mother countries to the immigrants of European origin who finally settled in the region enabled them to profit from the exploitation of the resources of the colonies.

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The Europeans did not establish a settlement infrastructure in the Caribbean, nor did they set up the institutional bases needed to create locally a common heritage.

Contrary to what occurred in Latin America, it was the oppressed ethnic groups which, in times of crisis, created the most remarkable forms of self-centred development. The first initiatives of this kind were the maroon societies and the free villages.[25]

In Latin America, the contributions of the settlers of European origin formed the axis of national cultures. In the Caribbean, it was the oppressed group that made a significant contribution to the core of local cultures. This local culture cannot be called Creole without running the risk of confusing the creations of the dominated ethnic groups with the adaptations of European institutions by the dominant ethnic group.

The situation in Spain's former Caribbean colonies deserves special study. People of European origin, including poor Spaniards, Moors, Jews, and other "pagans" and "heretics" fleeing from the Inquisition and other forms of persecution and discrimination, established themselves in the region as settlers or "colonists", in the strict sense of the term. These "colonists" constituted the bulk of the population in those territories,[26] where the situation they created reflected that of their Latin American counterparts.

Nevertheless, unlike societal groups on the continent, the Creole settlers in the Spanish Caribbean did not define themselves as distinct from the humiliated and despised Amerindian and black groups. In the Spanish Caribbean, there were no "ethnic groups to integrate" or "to hispanicize".

The labour force used on the plantations where the Creoles of Spanish origin worked was singularly heterogeneous. As this type of slave plantation developed, especially when the sugar factories became modernized, thus increasing their demand for cane, the plantations used not only enslaved persons of African origin, but also immigrants from Spain, indentured Chinese labourers and Creole agricultural workers of European origin.[27] Interethnic relationships in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico differed from those which developed in other Caribbean countries and Latin America.

The Creoles in the Spanish Caribbean could not break away from their metropolis by copying the Latin American formula. The United States of America intervened in these conflicts, which tended to create a dualism similar to the situation of the oppressed ethnic groups in the rest of the region.

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Consequently, the territories that Spain occupied in the archipelago were peopled by a highly stratified population of settlers, which constituted the dominant, majority ethnic group. This situation, which is similar to that of Latin America, makes Cuba the most Latin American of the Caribbean countries. The struggles of the Creole elites there to win national independence emphasizes even more the similarity between Cuba and the Latin American nations.

In the establishment of the dominant social structures, the plantation system played a role much like the one it played in other Caribbean nations. However, the gap between the ethnic groups was less than in the islands where the plantation system had flourished since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Moreover, the first "visible" core [28] of self-sufficient relationships was created by persons of European origin and not, as in the other Caribbean islands, by immigrants of African origin. In Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, the term "Creole" does not discriminate between the cultural origins and consequences of behaviours typical of the Creole plantocracy and the culture of peasants and agricultural workers themselves, which encouraged their own self-directed efforts. In this subregion, the latter were, for the most part, of European origin. Their social practices, though divergent, seem to reflect a common set of standard-setting norms and principles. The observations that follow cannot therefore be extended to the above-mentioned countries without serious reservations.

Chapter 3

THE FREEDMEN

1. A new social category

The establishment of groupings and networks of relationships that could resolve the difficulties faced by the population required a sound knowledge of the milieu. How could the newly arrived, whether African-born bossales or indentured labourers, manage to control a situation in their best interests if they had not been trained by the Creoles and taught the rules of the game? These rules were to a large extent dictated by the metropolitan power and its agents, and the Caribbean culture or cultures were therefore often regarded as local substitutes for the European cultures.[29]

There is no doubt that an adaptation or creolization of the European cultural models took place in the Caribbean. It does not follow, however, that this Creole culture was the culture of all Creoles.

In order to describe the characteristics of the regional mentality, one must observe the behaviour of these groupings of individuals responding to a value system formulated in Europe and transplanted into the Caribbean colonies. That value system defined the social categories imposed by colonialism; the grouping of individuals placed into these categories was a mechanism they developed by their own means to cope with the conditions imposed on them. The Caribbean culture was both the origin and the outcome of these groupings of individuals and of the networks of relationships binding them together.

The production system that was established after the general emancipation of the slaves was not as clearly defined as that of the slave plantation. The Caribbean counted for less and less in the economic development projects of the metropolises, and different types of agricultural workers emerged. Manual workers ceased to be the chattel of the planter and began to enjoy some bargaining power.

Nevertheless, the concrete relations among the workers and the living conditions of the groups into which they formed themselves represented a prolongation of the conditions experienced under the tutelage of their former masters. In so far as the creolization processes of the preceding period would have influenced the way of thinking of both former masters and former slaves, the attitudes of both of these groups might have been expected to show a certain continuity in terms of the primacy of the values and norms of slavery. This was true, however, only of the masters.

In the nineteenth century, the organization of an export-oriented agriculture in the Caribbean was more or less dynamic depending on the ability of the territories involved and the protection granted by one or the other of the metropolises. George Beckford summarizes the steps taken to ensure the survival of the plantation thus:

> (...) throughout the first-established New World plantation areas the basic pattern of adjustment to the abolition of slavery was the same: plantation monopoly of the land to prevent the ex-slaves from being independent of plantation work; legislation by planter-controlled governments to force the ex-slaves to continue working on the plantations; other measures to keep the ex-slaves "attached" to the plantations; and immigration of new laborers where all else failed.[30]

Among the "other measures" adopted to ensure that former slaves remained on the plantations, Beckford cites the institution of levies and taxes which forced the former enslaved to move over to the money economy and which prevented them from resorting to any kind of *marronnage*. The measures were rendered harsher by the regulations against "vagrancy", which was the official term used for internal migration.

The restriction of the movement of workers and the need for cash compounded the artificial scarcity of arable land. Although these constraints did not constitute economic data, they described the limits of economic action that the population could take.

In this chapter, we shall try to describe the relationships between the *nouveaux libres* (freedmen) and the planters and to clarify the nature of the groupings of workers that were formed during this period as well as the norms which guided their behaviour. The expression "nouveaux libres", borrowed from the colonial vocabulary of Saint Domingue, is used to designate any person freed by the decrees of abolition of slavery.

Several points here need to be clarified. Who replaced the enslaved person *vis-à-vis* the planter? What exactly was this freedom that was recognized by the erstwhile pro-slavery authorities as being a right of the

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enslaved persons? And conversely, how did individuals in this new category meet their daily needs? The views which follow relate not to the distant past but to phenomena which still occur today on the eve of the year 2000.

2. Piecework

One century after the abolition of slavery in the British possessions, Lord Moyne (in chapter III of his famous *West India Royal Commission Report*, "Social structures and conditions"), deals with the *nèg-blan* dichotomy:

> In this Chapter, our main concern will be the conditions of life of the non-European populations –the negroes, whose ancestors were brought to the West Indies in a condition of slavery and the East Indians, who came in circumstances which cannot be regarded as equivalent to the immigration of free settlers. (...) The negroes had one function only –the provision of cheap labour on estates owned and managed by Europeans for the production of their valuable export crops.[31]

The Caribbean's economic contribution –excluding that of Cuba– increased at only a modest rate as the nineteenth century unfolded, owing to the development of a market economy, technical progress in the production of a cane sugar substitute, the establishment of plantation economies in other geographical areas and, following the First World War, the increasingly efficient production of tropical produce in the metropolitan countries located in temperate climates.

Contrary to what economists believe is too obvious even to discuss, the negotiations that affected the total wealth of the Caribbean societies and how it was distributed did not respond to economic rationality. Local economic practices stemmed from political agreements, without which there could have been no plantations.

The subordination of economic life to political considerations still persists in contemporary society and most seriously affects the production of agro-export enterprises. The present crisis of the Caribbean sugar economy as well as its success are the best proof of this. Without the agreements between the Dominican Republic, represented by the *State Sugar Council*, and the Republic of Haiti, for example, there would have been no Dominican sugar on the international market.[32]

In order to place our arguments in their proper context, we should look again at the nineteenth century plantation and show how the practices established at that time still govern production in the plantation system. One

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may recall the subdivision proposed by Peter Fraser of the areas of plantation economies in the nineteenth century:

> The Caribbean can (...) be divided into five main areas where heavily capitalized export agriculture was (1) in ruins –Haiti; (2) declining –Suriname, Jamaica, the four islands mentioned above (Montserrat, Tobago, Grenada and Dominica); (3) holding its own –Barbados; (4) developing –Cuba, British Guiana, Trinidad, the anomalies of Martinique and Guadeloupe to which the French turned after the loss of Saint Domingue; and (5) underdeveloped –Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic (both turning to export agriculture on a large scale late in the 19th century) and Cayenne, better known for convicts than exports. With differences in the fortunes of the export sector went differences in rural society.[33]

In some instances, the plantation encountered serious difficulties and the planter quite simply reverted to being a large landholder. In other instances, the sugar factory was absorbed by multinational companies, and the local elites tended to assume responsibility for the production of cane and for maintaining a political climate that was favourable to the growth of the sector. In both cases, the arable lands were monopolized and the new freedmen's only alternative to working on the plantations was to till marginal lands.

In the picture that Celma draws of the contemporary society in Martinique and Guadeloupe, she describes the following types of workers: 1) the tenant farmers who shared the produce of their farm with the landlord;[34] 2) the workers who were provided with housing or *peones acasillados*; and 3) "outsiders", that is to say, agricultural workers hired by the day or by the week. Rodney writes that in British Guiana:

> The plantation labor force comprised three distinct sections; firstly indentured laborers [35] who were predominantly Indian; secondly, free estate residents who were usually time-expired immigrants and their Creole descendants; and thirdly, Creole villagers who were mainly African.[36]

Woodville K. Marshall, for his part, points out that, in the Eastern Caribbean, there were resident and non-resident workers and that from 1840 onwards the latter predominated.[37]

In the industrial relationships between enslaved and employers, the influence of the worker on the enterprise and, as a rule, on the official institutions which defined the latter depended first of all on the type of relationships between the employer and the employee, and secondly, on the degree of exploitation to which the latter was subjected. The freedmen

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—whether settlers, housed workers, outside workers, indentured labourers, workers living on the plantations or in the villages– like the enslaved developed no labour relations with the planters.

Some progress was, however, made in the work relationship in the sense that an economic relationship developed. Whereas the slave's labour was obtained through torture, the freedman was paid by the piece.

Piecework was available to any individual who had time. This enabled a diversified pool of labour to develop. A qualified worker could, during his free hours or with the assistance of his dependants, become an employer, a small independent peasant, a tenant farmer or even a pieceworker during the peak hiring periods.

What developed was a complex superimposition of various groupings of individuals and an apparent blurring of the distinction between work relationships and the relationships arising from the buying and selling of raw materials.

It is perhaps necessary to state that many factory workers have common interests with the field workers. Out of the crop season they are often called field workers and in common with the field workers are sometimes metayers and contributors. As contributors they stand to benefit by high prices and low wages. As sugar industry employees as well as contributors they have dual interests which may conflict - high wages *vs.* low cane production costs.[38]

Depending on the countries, the colonial labour force had variously linked "sections". The relationship between the freedmen and the planters explains why the logical separation between the types of workers mentioned above did not correspond to a division of individuals into different categories or social classes but rather into "sections" of the labour force, to use a term of Rodney.

Almost all analysts wrongly assume that piecework implied a wage relationship.[39] The Moyne Commission drew attention to the special nature of this relationship and concluded:

> The exact form of employment in agriculture varies from Colony to Colony, but everywhere task work is characteristic. Task work is the West Indian term for what is described in Great Britain as 'piece work' or 'payment by results'. By far the greater proportion of agricultural workers in the West Indies are paid for the amount of work they actually perform and not according to the length of time they take to do it. Payment by the day and not by the task is the rare exception for field work in the West Indian agriculture and the rates, though varying greatly from one Colony to another, are extremely low.

(...) Thus, generally, when sums paid to labourers are quoted, these are usually *earnings* and not *wages*. This is an important consideration and it cannot too often be repeated that most West Indian labourers employed on agricultural work are paid for what they actually do.[40]

Piecework constitutes a specific form of economic participation and is as widespread today as it was during the time of Lord Moyne:

Using the piece rate system, under which 97.5% of the Haitian informants in this study labor, the plantations pay a worker only when he works, succinctly and eloquently stated by the workers themselves: "you don't cut, you don't eat".[41]

The production system did not purchase the labour of freedmen but rather the product of their labour. The planter thus avoided any economic pressures that might force him to take the agricultural worker into consideration as a person. There was no need for him to promote the acquisition of new skills or to incorporate new technologies in the performance of tasks that were not carried out under his responsibility.[42] Usually, the enterprise hired and paid a foreman who in turn recruited the labour force and allocated the tasks.[43]

This method of employing labour gave the plantation great flexibility in adapting to changes in the production schedule, to the availability of inputs and to price fluctuations on the international market. Conflicts of interests between the plantation and the workers were inconceivable because the agricultural worker maintained no direct relations with the enterprise.

The workers employed on the plantation were in fact subcontractors and were not as a group linked to the plantation. They were no more part of the plantation than the carpenters who are called in to repair the furniture in the House of Representatives would be members of the legislative branch.

Strictly speaking, the plantation was not the employer of agricultural labour. Piecework meant hiring an independent labourer or an own-account worker. This did not involve a labour contract but rather a contract for the purchase and sale of products or services, which was concluded between independent entities.

On a plantation there were no jobs which were operationally interlinked under the same administrative system. The day-to-day activity of the agricultural worker was merely an unconnected succession of sundry tasks. The income which he derived from them could help him to subsist but such employment could not constitute a life-style. The worker could not make a career, specialize and achieve progress within the plantation structure.

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The task is the "sum of labour required of each worker, on a daily basis, for the number of hours he is accustomed to work". According to the testimony of certain workers, a task requires around six hours of work (...). For the cutting of cane, the task is assessed for two persons: the cutter and the binder. One task might be to produce 20 piles each containing 25 bundles of 10 1-meter lengths of cane which would be equivalent to around 2 500-3 000 kg of cane.[44]

The duration of the work was concealed by the product to be delivered, which gave rise to all sorts of crafty schemes characteristic of monopolistic competition.[45] This procedure was very widespread. Celma notes, with respect to the strike at Bassignac in February 1923:

> The 3 000H 12 and the Big Tana types of cane are very hard to cut. Experience has proven that cutters cannot complete their tasks before 5 p.m., whereas previously they finished as early as 2 p.m.[46]

The "labour contract", by ignoring the time spent to complete a given task, was concerned only with the goods produced. The remuneration obtained therefore bore no relationship to the need to replace the energy expended in the performance of the task, just as the profits of an entrepreneur were not a function of the time he devoted to his enterprise. The total income of the agricultural worker bore no relationship to the cost of his upkeep and that of his family.

If an employer paid a wage for a given period of time, he was obliged to take into account the living conditions of his employee because the latter's productivity depended on those conditions (including nutritional and educational standards). When the worker was paid by the piece and not by the day, his hunger became a moral rather than an economic consideration and was not an economic factor with which the entrepreneur needed concern himself. The worker who wanted to earn more per unit of time would have to turn to his relatives for assistance. This was most clearly illustrated in the work of women and children.[47]

Consequently, the absolute minimum wage that a worker could accept was not an important factor that entered into the calculation of remuneration for work or, more exactly, of the price of the goods obtained through his work. The worker who was hired on a piecework basis could therefore die of hunger without the employer having to concern himself about it.

There were two consequences of the institutionalization of this kind of hiring: the poverty of agricultural workers and the bankruptcy of enterprises as profitable as the plantations. We shall return to this point later.

No pieceworker could exist outside the circuits of the peasant agriculture based on the systems of tenant farming or independent small holdings. Even when those outlets were closed to them, the workers engaged in various marginal activities, giving rise to what Lambros Comitas refers to as "occupational multiplicity".[48]

Where there was no pseudo-peasantry or if the human resources of the plantation could not be displaced, the development of the plantations depended on the migratory circuits, and the symbiosis between piecework and the peasantry was maintained in spite of national borders. This situation was similar to the slave trade and, according to Martin F. Murphy, it was considerably more advantageous for the employer than the slave trade had been.[49] André Corten also notes the analogy between these two traffics.[50]

3. Trade unions and politics

The rationale behind payment by piecework developed out of the original system of operation conceived for export oriented plantations and which was based on a set of political agreements designed to ensure the continuity of colonial production cycles. In the British possessions, it was the "producers'" associations [51] which negotiated prices and quotas with the imperial government. Quite apart from their monopolistic position, these "producers" operated on the basis of *ex ante* knowledge of the price and volume of the marketable output.

Besides cultivating on their own plantations the bulk of the cane crushed in their mills, these "producers" also set the price of canes supplied by the small independent farmers. Apart from a possible breakdown in negotiations with the metropolis, the only difficulty faced by the producers' associations was to ensure that the "wages" paid to the agricultural workers were consistent with the "economic facts", that is with the breakdown of the item under which these workers were categorized in the calculation of the total value of the ton of sugar.

The President of the Sugar Association of Saint Lucia wrote in January 1952:

> The amount received by a producer for each ton of sugar sold is used by him under four main heads:
> (1) To pay for supplies purchased
> (2) To pay wages
> (3) To pay overhead expenses and depreciation
> (4) Profits

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On the assumption that the every sugar producer in the British West Indies receives the same net price for his sugar, the items spent on (1) and (3) would be fairly constant throughout the colonies. Consequently, it is fairly apparent that when item (2) (i.e., wages per ton of sugar) is below average, item (4) (i.e., profits) are above the average and vice versa.[52]

The calculation was therefore very simple. A company expected to produce the number of tons of sugar set as its quota. On this basis, it determined how much of its estate area should be cultivated and the cost of production. By dividing the total cost by the number of hectares to be planted, it obtained the cost of the different factors needed for each hectare of sugar produced. The Malone Commission noted that the sugar-refinery itself also practised that method of setting "wages".[53]

There was no personnel management department within the plantation, and the society had no institutions that were capable of arbitrating financial disputes between the parties. The multitude of "tasks" assigned to independent workers could only create a climate of confrontation, even under the most well-meaning management.

The strikes which the plantation regarded as sabotage degenerated into riots because the disputes, being of a political nature, could not avoid challenging the colonial structures that established the relationships between the contending social categories. The conflicts were traceable to the agreements which were made when the economic system was put in place.

(...) It is unreasonable and meaningless to compare wages paid for any particular operation. The only comparison which can stand the test of economic and practical sense is the amount of wages paid out to labour per ton of sugar produced.[54]

Given this situation, a trade union in an enterprise was unthinkable, and it was in fact within the village or the entire community that workers' social cohesion took shape. Groupings and superimposed networks of agricultural workers, tenant farmers, peasants, and qualified labourers were all found there ... Labour negotiations were therefore of a very peculiar kind in that they pitted employers –the plantations– against employees –the population as a whole.

Consequently, the price of the product of labour was merely one of several factors. The main concern of the population was to obtain the minimum resources –products of peasant agriculture plus earnings from piecework– necessary for the survival of the worker and his family.

Walter Rodney describes the complexity of these negotiations:

> The organizational feature that distinguished village labour[55] was the independent task-gang. (...) Creole Africans in British Guiana constituted themselves into task-gangs and negotiated with management to have some control over wages, conditions, and duration of work. They moved from estate to estate in the search for better rates; they haggled over the definition of given tasks; and they sought to use the state of the weather or the necessity of the planters to extract some advantage. Above all, village labor aimed at subordinating the requirements of the estate to the rhythms of village life. Their own garden plots, their minor subsistence endeavors and their estimate of necessary relaxation came before the time and motion of the plantation. Except in dire necessity, villagers never entered into contracts with the estates - preferring simply to reopen bargaining at the beginning of each working week.[56]

Similarly, the voluntary associations that attempted to intervene in the negotiating of any conflicts that arose bore no resemblance to workers' trade unions except in name.

> About that time (1945) a few young men including myself decided to take an active part in the organization and as a result about four or five boys joined and began preaching trade unionism on the Market steps.[57]

In the absence of work relationships between "employer" and "employee", it was through political negotiation and not through economic arbitration that the outcome of the conflicts was decided. Immediately after emancipation, employers and employees either submitted to the governor's discretion, to the forces of order or to Her Majesty's Navy, or had recourse to rioting and sabotage. Once again, the indentured labourers had only minimal bargaining power.[58]

In an economic system where no wages are paid and where labour relations are not an integral part of production enterprises, there can be no trade unions "in the universally recognized sense of the term".[59] Trade unions cannot perform their functions if they refrain from participating "in politics",[60] since the entire institutionality of the society is threatened whenever there is a conflict.[61]

The strike in Saint Lucia (1951) was a perfect example of this. The conflict began in the Village of Canaries, during the electoral campaign of a merchant, Mr. Brown, who was running for a seat on the Legislative Council. Mr. Brown's detractors pointed out that since the elections were being held with universal suffrage,

he was shrewd enough to realise that promises of better conditions for workers might very well attract votes. His electioneering points were, in his own words, "to interest the people with an improvement in their lot in the area by trying to get better wages, and better conditions of living -improvement in social conditions and their manner of living".[62]

Mr. Brown therefore proceeded to organize the Roseau Workers' and Peasants Trade Union and, as was to be expected, won the elections.

It is interesting to note that the strength of the rural "trade unions" is quite disproportionate to the size of their membership. "Trade union" membership is usually small. Because it voiced the people's demands, the trade union mobilized the entire community and acted as its representative *vis-a-vis* the agricultural enterprise.

Furthermore, the very constraints of the political system created special conditions that favoured the emergence of leaders from urban areas. These leaders had to have enough experience to represent their members in the institutions of the overall system.

This brings us back both to the earlier questions of the *blan v. nèg* dichotomy and to the question of the particular form of insertion of the freedmen in the system of social negotiations. Improvements were negotiated by descendants of freedmen, who generally had no experience of manual agricultural work.

With the advent of universal suffrage and representative government, the economic situation of the plantations became untenable in the countries which now had representative government.

When Mr. Brown commenced his politics-cum-trade union stumping in the Roseau Valley in 1951 the Sugar Association members were worried, but they felt there was little they could do about it except to prepare to abandon the industry.[63]

Emboldened by the support given them by the mass of workers, the (urban) leaders of the rural trade unions became the necessary counterparts in bargaining with the powers responsible for establishing the colonial economic system. This was how a number of labour or socialist parties emerged in the Caribbean.[64] When universal suffrage was granted –in 1951, in that part of the Caribbean ruled by the British–, these parties became uncontrollably strong. They advanced towards self-government in the Commonwealth Caribbean or won significant improvements in the living standards of the population and in the territories under French control.

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4. Migration and creolization

The freedman –as defined in a society which only a short time before had been a slave society– was a worker who 1)   had absolutely no means of production beyond that of marginal utility, 2)   had no access to the labour market, and 3)   had no access to and no say in the political institutions and decisions that prevented the establishment of a labour market.

From emancipation to the end of the nineteenth century, Caribbean labour (like its capital) was initially drawn from all over the world. Indentured labourers were recruited for the most part from South-East Asia.[65] Nor can one overlook the Africans freed from the slave ships, who in Saint Lucia, for example, together with the indentured Indian labourers accounted for 10% of the population.

From the end of the nineteenth century, the labour force began to be drawn from the Caribbean region, in the strict sense of the term, namely, from the basin of the Caribbean Sea. Far from being unique and confined to that period of history, this phenomenon is still very widespread and remains a burning issue.

The new plantation economies which emerged, particularly in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Central America, all repeated the same formula.[66] They recruited national migrant labourers and immigrants who in their new countries met the same fate as that of the Indians, Chinese and Javanese in Guyana, Trinidad, Suriname or Jamaica.

No study has yet been carried out of the impact of these migratory movements on the host societies. However, one thing is certain: in this type of society, labour did not circulate any more than capital.[67] This explains why the earnings of a Haitian worker employed in the Dominican Republic were not comparable with the wages paid to the Dominicans (or more exactly those who were not of Haitian origin). The State imposed a legal system to govern the use of the two factors of production, but it was careful not to encourage any transaction designed to harmonize the costs of these factors. The State itself destroyed the labour market.

The importance of the migration of freedmen to the smooth running of the plantation economies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries raised a number of problems concerning the cultural and institutional systems around which daily life was organized. Unlike slavery plantations whose commercial success called for a creolization of the immigrant labour force, the nineteenth and twentieth century plantations preferred to use individuals who, during the slave trade, would have been termed African-born or *bossales*. According to the planters and colonial authorities, these "new *bossales*" became the saviours of the plantation system.

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In the beginning, the Indian immigrants were more useful to the plantation than the Creoles of African origin; subsequently, even among the Indians themselves, the new recruits were more highly rated than the creolized ones.

This discovery by W. Rodney has created an insurmountable obstacle for the creolization theorists by forcing them to redefine both the concept of culture and the term creolization. For more than a century, creolization had hindered the development of the plantation.

> Fresh arrivals were the most malleable of the sectors of plantation labor, and planters specially favored the continual influx of new Indian immigrants. The exceptionally large number of new immigrants introduced between 1877 and 1881 must have had a dampening effect on the struggles of their more seasoned counterparts. Whenever recent arrivals participated in a strike or riot, the administration deliberately played down their involvement by attributing it to inexperience. Conversely, immigrants of longer standing were accused of misleading their newly arrived countrymen. In the administration of justice, a consistent policy was worked out to give substance to the affirmation that a laborer of a few month standing would never protest violently unless confused by more mature mischief-makers. New comers who rioted were treated leniently by the courts, or sometimes not brought before the courts at all.[68]

This is one of the most striking features of the exploitation of Haitian workers in the Dominican Republic. In her study on capitalism and population surpluses in the Dominican Republic, Isis Duarte agrees with Rodney's views. To support her conclusions she quotes appropriately the historian Roberto Cassá:

> (...) Only very low wages could ensure economic viability to the plantations. (...) The low level of these salaries compared to income generated normally on small agricultural enterprises explains, to a great extent, the large proportion of foreign workers employed full time or during most of the year, in the capitalist agricultural enterprises.[69]

To the enormous satisfaction of the *Consejo Estatal del Azúcar* (CEA) (the State Sugar Board) of the Dominican Republic, the Government of the Republic of Haiti hinders the "creolization" of these latter-day indentured labourers. Negotiating on their behalf and without their involvement, it prevents the workers from applying the lessons of experience to negotiate their living conditions. Murphy asserts that the *anba fil* (the worker who

sneaks across the border) is better able to defend his interests than the *bracero* (the legally hired worker).[70]

The role that creolization played in the nineteenth century, when it was an absolute precondition for protest, explains the importance that it had had in the eighteenth century. In order to understand how an individual who had no knowledge whatever of the norms of a given plantation society suddenly became more useful than the Creole and the creolized person, one must make a combined study of the cultural systems and the concrete social relations among groups of individuals. A comparative reading of Duarte and Rodney would show that Guyana and Dominican Republic have more in common than could be thought at first sight.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, those groupings emerged from two social categories: the planter, who represented the capital factor, and the freedman, who represented the labour factor. Unlike what had occurred during slavery, the freedmen were in a position to band together and to defend their interests as best they could. Given this situation, the planter considered the *seasoning* period as the most productive stage in the life of the migrant worker, the stage in which he has not yet learnt to defend himself against abuses.

The plantation system perpetuates itself by renewing indefinitely the need for creolization. but it is not in its objectives to creolize anybody.

5. The reproduction of the bossale

The first attempt to explain the behaviourial patterns of the Caribbean population on the basis of their participation in a Creole culture that bore the strong imprint of Europe dates back to the de-colonization period. It describes the self-assurance of the intellectual elites who took control of the workers' trade unions and used them to control government. The familiarity of these elites with the official institutions explains the role they played and also why their status and their functions suited the objectives of the overall social system.

Since the issue at stake was that of de-colonization, protests were framed by the dichotomy *nèg v. blan*, but would still be unable to overcome the cleavages separating the secondary categories *krèol v. bosal*. For some sectors within the elites, the freedmen had no formal schooling, while for other sectors, they had no political consciousness.

Seen from this perspective, the virtues of the Creoles mistaken for those of the freedmen were enshrined as the paradigm of the Caribbean society. The traditional indentured labourers (Indian, Chinese, Javanese) were the

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only category that challenged the perception of an homogeneous Creole culture, conceived of as a European culture altered "to suit the local conditions".

The case becomes crystal clear by comparing the situation in Guyana and in the Dominican Republic and avoiding playing with words. The new indentured (coming basically from Haiti) cannot be accommodated into the *Latin-flavoured* Creole culture of the Dominican Republic, no more than the classical indentured from India can be assimilated in the *half-saxon, half-African* Creole culture of Guyana. The Haitians will never be Dominican Republic Creoles, no more than the East Indians will become Guyanese Creoles.

The newly indentured labourers and the peasant majorities, conveniently treated as negligible quantities, were stripped of their cultural idiosyncrasies, which were now seen as mere vestiges or traces of African culture. Their black skin was held up as evidence of homogeneity. One spoke of "race" and "class" in this cultural context whose variety appeared merely a reproduction of the differences between the various metropolitan powers. And whitening, in one form or another, seemed to be the fate of the entire Caribbean.[71]

Today, after the euphoria of accession to independence has faded and development strategies elaborated then have been exhausted, we must raise certain other questions and gradually forget the creolization theories.

The studies previously referred to attest to the continuity of the official institutions that governed daily life before and after emancipation. In analyzing the present situation of the labour force on the Dominican plantations, André Corten writes:

> The migration of the Haitian workers to the Dominican Republic is very much like the former slave trade. It constitutes (...) an actual slave trade. (...) This slave trade (...) indicates the deep interpenetration of economics and politics in the regressive capitalist relationships.[72]

Speaking of the living conditions of the Haitian workers in the Dominican Republic, M.F. Murphy concludes:

> It is the contention of the present author that the status under which the Haitian worker labors, in the Dominican Republic is *not* slavery. However, the conditions under which he lives and works are *worse* than the conditions present under the plantation slavery systems of the Caribbean in the *past centuries.*[73]

Given the changes –imposed from outside– in the basic social categories and in the mechanisms for labour negotiations, the common

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denominator between the societies before and after independence was not, in the final analysis, the continuing operations of main colonial institutions, but rather the relentless efforts to adapt metropolitan cultural development to the Caribbean setting. It should be recognized, however, that this attempt at adaptation was not typical of the Caribbean population as a whole.

The organization of the daily life of the Caribbean peoples should not therefore be envisaged as a tropical version of European culture. One could perhaps argue that the State sought to integrate them into this so-called Creole culture and to whiten them. But this official ideology —which is doubtlessly shared by a large section of the population— has not been reflected in a set of concrete measures aimed at achieving this objective.

Export agriculture, which the Caribbean States encouraged, was not designed to ensure the expansion of the population of the islands, nor did it seek to improve their living standards and to integrate them more fully into a modified European or Creole culture. For convincing proof of this, one need only recall the evolution of the "daily wages" that were paid for close to a century.[74]

It is hard to conceive of a society in which the remuneration paid to the workers of the major enterprises does not ensure a minimum standard of living and in which the State at the same time strives to promote the standards and values governing the use of the minimum wage. In such a society, the State does not seek to achieve a homogenization of private life-styles, and therefore there cannot be a single cultural policy in respect of the entire population.

The efforts by the State were resolutely set against creolization. After general emancipation, the plantations could only function by putting a brake on this process or destroying its effects by recruiting large numbers of immigrants, in other words, new *bossales*. In view of the social relations which the local authorities allowed to develop around the piecework system, they implicitly accepted that illiteracy, malnutrition, deplorable health and housing conditions, as well as ignorance of the rules of the game in any given locality, were factors favourable to the development of plantation agriculture.

Like their predecessors who strove to keep alive the memory of distant India, the immigrants —these new indentured labourers—, cut off from their national societies, cultivated their loyalty to their country or culture of origin. In order to protect themselves collectively, they reinforced their marginality and their character of newly arrived labourers or *bossales*. They became ethnic enclaves ignored by the national political authorities and by the opposition parties, both in their countries of origin and in their host

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societies. They consequently found themselves at the mercy of the transnational companies and of the Creole planters, which caused the local working classes to despise them even more.

A comparative study of the past or present labour relations Jamaicans and Haitians in Cuba, the *cocolos* and Haitians in the Dominican Republic, the immigrants from Saint Vincent and Grenada in Barbados or Trinidad and the workers from the so-called English-speaking Caribbean in Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua or Costa Rica would further contribute to Rodney's analyses of the workers of Guyana. With respect to the former British colonies, an article by Dawn I. Marshall underlines the extent of the migratory movements which, in one of the periods identified by her, reduced the size of the total population in most of these territories.[75] Moreover, the article points out how the negotiations between the planters and agricultural workers repeat at the regional level what Rodney observed in Guyana.

A comparative study of the regional labour force would reveal a preference by the agro-export enterprises for a labour force which has no access to the political systems in which working conditions are established. It would expose the reasons for and the effect of the discriminatory measures against migrant workers. It would show how the refusal to permit them to integrate into the host societies creates a vicious circle which reinforces the marginalization of the national agricultural workers, to the benefit of only the planters and the agro-industrial companies. This study would show how the discrimination suffered by the newly indentured labourers, all of them non-whites, is an extension of a certain form of European culture thought to be outmoded.

The agricultural worker in the Caribbean does not yet enjoy the civil and political rights that were won by the European working classes in the nineteenth century. In order to deserve some attention, the creolization process should focus on the dissemination and implementation of these norms and standards. As they lacked any real protection, the majority of the population reproduced and multiplied outside of the dominant economic and cultural systems, and despite official policies. This social area located outside the dominant system is referred to here as the counter-plantation system.

6. Freedmen and the political impasse

Colonialism is simply the combining of the economic and political marginality of the populations concerned. The colonial State dictated the distribution patterns of the only means of production available: land. But

its monopoly over the land, or more accurately its concession of that land to the planters, turned all the principles of a market economy upside down. The proliferation of the piecework system was a reflection of the search for survival options within an institutional framework imposed from outside.

Plantation could never sustain prolonged competition with enterprises whose type of labour relations required a constant improvement of technology and increasingly higher levels of training —and, therefore of living standards— of their labour force. The survival of export-oriented plantation was entirely dependent on the colonial system. By forcing the freedmen into only marginal economic activities, the institution which hired them was doomed to disappear.

Since it was impossible to render the supply of labour totally elastic and to deprive it of all possibility of negotiations, as during the height of the slave trade, the colonial State countered the scarcity of labour and destroyed the system of labour relations by splitting up the products of labour and imposing monopolistic competition. Forced to resort to marginal activities, the labour force, by definition, loses all significant economic value.

In order to comprehend the colonial situation properly, attention should be paid to certain linguistic ambiguities that tend to obscure day-to-day relationships. In regulating Caribbean social life, the official institutions resorted to basic concepts which were developed in the metropolises. Studies of Caribbean societies generally use these same concepts and treat local phenomena as approximations of metropolitan phenomena. In the area of economic production, reference is made to monopolies, labour contracts, work days, wages, strikes, trade unions, etc., where none necessarily existed.

If one studies the patterns of manpower use that predominated after the abolition of slavery, one discovers a model to describe the Caribbean societies which differs from the metropolitan paradigm. Before emancipation, a single economic agent owned both labour and capital, and economic relations were unknown within these societies. The fundamental social categories —planters and slaves— were defined at the level of political structures.

After emancipation and by unilateral decision of the metropolises, the ownership of capital was separated from the ownership of labour. From then on there were two economic agents representing two basic social categories, namely, the freedmen and the planters. While there were several types of freedmen, they all maintained the same relationship to capital.

The freedmen produced raw materials on the marginal pieces of land which they owned, on small plots of land leased to them or on the properties

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of the planters themselves. Raw materials were brought to the factory (which was sometimes owned by these same planters), where they were processed and *then* sold on the international market.

As a rule, it was not until after the total value of the product to be exported was determined that the cost of raw materials was set and the producers paid. The efforts made to produce raw materials or the time devoted to it was not regulated in any way, nor was it the subject of any institutionalized negotiation.

Because relationships —or the absence of relationships— between the planters and freedmen were guaranteed by the colonial State, groups of individuals and voluntary associations constantly demanded that the authorities protect their privileges and rights or arbitrate their disputes. The relationship between the agricultural workers' "unions" and the political parties placed negotiations between capital and labour in the appropriate context, that is to say, the framework of colonialism (of the *blan-nèg* dichotomy).

"Workers" negotiations cannot be separated from national liberation struggles. The success of such negotiations signified the plantation's death warrant. The sugar cane producers went bankrupt and sugar cane was replaced by bananas, a product rather more suited to small peasant farming. This type of farming will be examined in a later chapter, and we shall see that it failed to change the asymmetric relations between the planters and freedmen.

This type of negotiation challenged the entire institutional system, and assumed that the leaders had a broader social vision or experience than the workers and agricultural labourers. The population of freedmen did not therefore control all the consequences of the protest movements, and the leaders enjoyed a remarkable degree of autonomy.

The distance between the political leaders and the mass of the electorate seems to have made it possible, after independence, to tone down the issue of legitimizing the new institutional structures through the popularity or legitimization of the leadership. During this first phase of de-colonization, individuals rather than institutions or laws governed the Caribbean countries.

Ironically, the completion of the national liberation process created difficulties for the labour or socialist parties, which had great difficulty in consolidating their political successes by improving the living standards of their electorate. The bankruptcy of the plantation economy had a heavy bearing on their political successes.

The position of the elites in power rapidly became very uncomfortable. On the one hand, the electorate did not forget their early speeches inspired

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by the anti-colonialist fervour. On the other hand, the same electorate, however much it may have wanted to be loyal, finally realized that the system of export agriculture being practised could not meet their aspirations for greater economic and social well-being.

The misunderstanding of the nature of the freedman, who constituted the key element of the Caribbean labour force, and the preconceived ideas which made it impossible to grasp the rationale behind his reproduction, derived from the age-old divisions which separated the groups of individuals that belonged to the dominant and subordinate classes. The plantation system, by destroying or in the best of cases driving out its human resources, by the same token deprived their administrators of the chance to understand them. This centrifugal effect created and constantly refuelled a regional system of social relations which was also poorly understood. This will be the subject of the following chapter.

The modern Caribbean was born of this attempt to overcome the privations which the plantation society imposed on its workers. And it is thanks to that effort of striving to improve their working conditions that the freedmen forged for themselves national identities that were distinct from the colonial heritage. We shall seek to identify the bases of these identities in the course of the present study and, in so doing, to compile the additional background information needed for a description of contemporary societies.

Chapter 4

THE CARIBBEAN REGIONS

1. Introduction

The region as defined for geopolitical purposes does not coincide with the notion of region that underlies nation building projects. The term region refers to a unit of analysis and action, whose content and shape are defined by the purposes of the observer. Without the perspective of the observer there is no region. Any regional analysis is necessarily subjective.

The complementarity of the characteristics which help to give continuity to a region becomes necessarily blurred and disappears at its periphery. At that point, the exchanges which occur because of proximity or contiguity do not eliminate the possibility of distinguishing between adjoining regions.

A region is defined either by the agglutinating effects of a pole or nucleus on differentiated sub-sets of the same type, or by the complementarity or interdependence linking a group of attributes and explaining the similarity between homogeneous sub-sets.

The relationships of complementarity typical of the polarized regions are quite distinct from those underlying the homogeneous ones, as are the intervention projects that derive from one or the other method of analysis. In the first case, it is the material interactions among the sub-sets that distinguish the nucleus from its periphery and foster a possible hierarchical order in the latter. In the second case, the regional continuum is explained by the logical relationships between given characteristics.

Relationships of complementarity of varying origin and type criss-cross the geographical space and provide choices for studies and forms of intervention. The superimposition of various forms of regionalization is inevitable, since divergent interests attempt to impose themselves by using the same finite set of resources.

Depending on his perspective, the observer may rightly speak of the Archipelago of the Antilles, the Greater and Lesser Antilles, the English-speaking, Spanish-speaking or other Caribbean, or of the Basin of the Caribbean Sea, or simply of the Caribbean ... Each of these delimitations of the region, however, refers only to sub-units of the same order. For example, in order to include Haiti, Barbados, Cozumel and San Andrés in the same definition of the region, one must ignore political phenomena and focus exclusively on physical geography.

While the concept of region expresses a spatial configuration, it also reflects a historical perspective. The definition of a region, such as the Caribbean, on the basis of its physical characteristics takes place within a time horizon which corresponds to the duration of geophysical formations. In this case, the historical dimension plays a secondary role, given the pace of evolution of the factors considered. Recently, new ecological concerns have modified these methodological approaches.

In the same way as the complementarity of characteristics which define a homogeneous region cannot be geographically situated, the pull of the polarized region's centre does not depend on its geographical location. The effects of attraction and repulsion are a set of social relationships set in motion by the nucleus of the region through the spill-over effect of its internal conflicts.

A central core occupies a primarily sociological space, which generates the vectors propelled by the dynamism of its own constituent parts. Its polarization effects project in one direction or another, in search of the resources needed to solve its domestic problems. One could thus specify the dates of a region's birth or death by observing the effects of the polarization of its centre of gravity, or else by observing the evolution of the internal conflicts which they reflect. This history is none other than that of human groups, and seen in this light, the concept of the polarized region is of great relevance for the present study, since it helps to distinguish between outward and inward processes.

2. The Caribbean of the plantations

The "discovery" of the Caribbean by Christopher Columbus in 1493 and the takeover by the English of Dominica in 1763 marked the beginning and the end, respectively, of the destruction of a region organized by the Caribs, supplanting the first known aboriginals. These historical facts are often not recalled, and with good reason, despite the elements of continuity between the Amerindian period and the subsequent one.

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The history of Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Saint Vincent, Trinidad, Suriname, Guyana, French Guyana and Belize is evidence of the close relations that existed between the Amerindians and the newcomers. There we will see that these relations gave shape to a region, separate and distinct but no less real than the one created by the plantation system.

The present study deals with relationships among social groups. It defines the Caribbean as a region of the Americas, comprising countries which maintain worldwide, regional and internal relationships characterized or profoundly influenced by the predominance of the plantation economy.

The Europeans invented and organized plantation America, namely, a social and economic system which they were in a position to establish with no regard for the approval or disapproval of the social categories and groups. The power relations which they set up were taboo and fell far short of any participation or legitimization by the populations concerned.

The futility of consensus or social cohesion in the administration of the colonial Caribbean was due to the way the region's resources were centrally controlled by the Western powers. The system of relations was completely outward-oriented, and the European pole determined the value of the least of those resources.

The relationships of complementarity between Europe and its periphery split up and dismembered the Caribbean universe and rearranged its parts into a completely new entity that could be more easily absorbed and appropriated. At the same time, Europe sought at all costs to deny an independent existence to the residue to be absorbed and appropriated.

In the European colonies of the Caribbean, social relations evolved in the shadow of actual or virtual military occupation. The interactions between social categories and groups took place or were expected to take place in a manner determined by the power relations.

During the entire period under study, economic negotiations in particular reflected political dictates. The outward orientation of the dominant groups rendered futile any relationship among themselves, and any alliance aimed at opposing the designs of their respective metropolis was inconceivable.

In a colonial State, and without doubt during slavery, the population as a whole was by definition prevented from participating in institutionalized political relationships. After emancipation, the nominal granting of political rights did not change the situation, since the exercise of those rights was conditioned on the ownership of land and property to which the system denied the population access.

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Participation in the world economy was dependent on the exploitation of large estates which the metropolis placed at the disposal of its planters. It was combined with a participation in world politics and culture through the politics and culture of the European empires.

Conversely, agricultural work, illiteracy, and the experience of only the national culture became the lot of those –the vast majority– who were denied a voice in political matters. A huge gulf separated the planter class and their descendants from the enslaved and their offspring, despite the emergence of a minuscule intermediate class.

The balkanization of the region was perpetuated by the rifts that separated the social groups in each territory. These cleavages tended to prevent the formation of cohesive societies and nations which included the dominant sectors.[76] Possession of large estates (that is to say access to the land appropriated by the colonial State), cultivation and export of food crops (or participation in the international market), as well as the exercise of political rights and access to official institutions, together constituted an integrated set of privileges that characterized social domination.

The internationalization of the peripheral economies is not a new phenomenon in the Caribbean. Its further development during the twentieth century does not change the traditional colonial characteristics of the region in any way. The norms governing the appropriation of economic goods and the organization of productive factors leave only marginal resources to be devoted to the needs of the local population.

The context in which the modern Caribbean took form and evolved has deprived of its value whatever was specifically Caribbean, or what the Caribbean created for the Caribbean people. Before and after political independence, the plantation system brought about a total economic dependency which was intrinsically bound up with the balkanization of the region and with the fragmentation and dismemberment of societies which had been trying with difficulty to structure themselves.

Social life during the colonial period displayed the following characteristics:

a) The relationship between labour and capital was decided at the level of the relationship between existing political forces, and economic negotiation was reduced to a minimum;

b) Politics limited economic viability to only those enterprises supplying the external markets and to their attendant service activities;

c) Manual and non-manual jobs were performed in different contexts and, in the majority of cases, in different languages;

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d) Wage relations were confined to non-manual activities and to the service sector;

e) Measures were adopted to prevent the emergence of labour markets;

f) The governments sought to satisfy local needs only in so far as those needs related to export activities.[77] Those needs were met from the marginal resources that were not monopolized by the colonial State and its representatives.

g) The spill-over responsibilities placed upon individual families and groups of families in rural communities and urban shantytowns gave rise to an "unacknowledged" civil society.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the colonial administration of Caribbean resources brought Europe very few economic advantages and could be justified only from a strategic viewpoint. After the First World War, however, the geopolitical map was redrawn. The situation was further modified because of the Great Depression. As a result of these developments the relationships between the centre and the periphery as well as control over Caribbean resources were challenged.

Income obtained from services provided to export activities in decline was no longer enough to meet the population's basic needs. More intensive use of local resources –of that residue that Europeans persisted in ignoring– had now become necessary.

Greater administrative autonomy was granted to the territories. In most of the countries of the region, for the first time, a correlative legitimization of the power structures became functionally indispensable to the maintenance of law and order.

As the Caribbean societies were transformed into nation-States, a number of theoretical problems arose as a result of the perpetuation of the plantation system as the economic base of the society. Except for the Haiti of 1804, in contrast to the Haiti of 1934, the transition from colonial status to political independence did not produce any real change in the productive apparatus. Change occurred when the plantation system went bankrupt and when even generous subsidies, bonuses, quotas and preferential treatment proved incapable of ensuring its survival.

Most of the territories theoretically organized themselves into sovereign States which required legitimate governments for their operation. Plantation America cared little for self-contained economic mechanisms and had no tradition of protecting peasant agriculture, no vision of equality between the agricultural workers and wage-earners in the secondary and tertiary sectors, and no notion of food self-sufficiency.

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The collapse of the plantations created an economic vacuum, out of which the countries of the region then had to create a social organization which would give their citizens economic, civil and political rights similar to those enjoyed by the citizens of the States that provided the models for their new constitutions. This task was made all the more difficult because the independence of the plantation Caribbean occurred at a time when practically no distance separated the former colonies from their metropolises, and when they were subjected to a continuous bombardment of constantly renewed demonstration effects.

Thus, in practice, the economic crises that prevailed at the granting of independence, which obviously did not have the same origins as those that affected the world economy, compelled the typical Caribbean State to retain the patterns of manpower use described in the previous chapter, the justification of which served as a social contract that united the dominant classes.

A bizarre system of private enterprise emerged, to be described in chapter 6, which disregarded even the most rudimentary principles of market economies. The functioning of this type of enterprise is incompatible with the survival of popular political regimes.

The economic strategy of the independent plantation societies is based on their comparative advantages within the world economy. These societies offer the employers a cheap labour force located close to the large consumption centres.[78] In the race for foreign capital, the winner is usually the one who places on the international labour market the cheapest labour.

In order to absorb the surplus labour, the current development strategy does not seek to industrialize the plantation societies but to move from export agriculture to export processing zones.

Subcontracting enterprises are characterized by the suddenness with which they disappear without leaving a trace. The State then has to create a climate which makes it possible to retain these providers of jobs.

The irony of this development formula is that, in the end, absolute poverty becomes the best trump card in negotiations between capital and labour. The more underdeveloped a country, the more it attracts investors. Total deprivation is then promoted as the best condition for development.[79]

By acting in this way, the Caribbean economic planning authorities accept that the populations they serve will always be poorer than their neighbours. They vie with one another to make their fellow citizens the second class recipients of economic and social progress.

The agreements signed between poor countries in an attempt to mitigate the damage caused by unbridled competition prove just how far that trend

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has spread. Viewed in the most favourable light and assuming an inconceivable saturation of the local labour market, this development strategy seeks to convert the absolute poverty of the newly freed population of the Caribbean into a relative poverty.[80]

This explains why the independent and sovereign States of the region encounter more difficulties in meeting the aspirations of their peoples than do the administrators of territories still under tutelage, where certain metropolitan laws governing the hiring of labour have to be observed.

The independent Caribbean is therefore characterized by a scenario of chronic political instability. This instability sometimes takes the form of the institutionalized alternating of regimes that are equally incapable of breaking out of the vicious circle of poverty or to counter the influence of the life-styles of the rich countries.

The development model advocated is slightly different in countries where the exploitation of the resources of the subsoil makes it possible to compensate for the gradual bankruptcy of plantation agriculture and to resist the lure of the export processing industries. Unfortunately, the exploitation of non-renewable resources does not lead to a model which is fundamentally different from the above-mentioned one.

Since it was unable to organize the national populations into sociopolitical systems capable of satisfying their aspirations, the plantation-based Caribbean was obliged to maintain law and order by resorting —although not always with the desirable decorum— to external military and political patronage. In the final analysis, the metropolises retained their role as arbitrators of national conflicts and were called to the rescue whenever the chosen development model was endangered.

The Great Powers could thus pursue their geopolitical aims because they had the consent of either the existing governments or those ready to replace any recalcitrant regime in the next elections.

The transition from a colonial to a national economy promoted the further development of the only activity which brought unquestioned success in the plantation societies, namely, public administration and service activities ensuring its smooth operation. Once independence was attained, the traditional role of the urban "middle classes" was strengthened by the localization of the management of political power.

The deterioration of the productive bases of the society had a concomitant effect on the growth of the service sector. During the colonial period, this sector was increasingly financed from customs receipts and earnings from abroad: spin-offs from tourist services, outlays by assembly

industries, repatriation of funds by nationals living abroad, international grants in aid, etc.

Civil servants and other workers in the service sector tend to become the key players in a social order beset by a growing economic malaise. One should also include within these sectors, which like to be referred to as the "middle classes", the few workers employed by transnational companies.

Faced with demands for the legitimization of power which accompanied administrative autonomy and political independence, and in order to overcome the divisions within the ranks of the newly-freed population, the urban "middle classes" converted their own needs and aspirations into national goals. This was the period during which the theories of creolization gained currency.

The rhetoric of creolization did not however, offer the masses any new options. It proved incapable of putting a rein on the advance of protest movements, such as those of *Black Power* in Trinidad, of the *Rastafari* in Jamaica or of the *Dreads* in Dominica.

As they try to respond to the demands of the "middle classes", the governments and the State machinery provide broader sectors of the population with the necessary means of access to the metropolitan labour market. But they seem incapable of devising a societal project that will retain workers in their own country.

The real demands for food, housing and clothing go far beyond the production and trade possibilities of the traditional economies and of their successive reformulations. Presently, access to sources of employment in the industrialized countries as well as to consumer goods and imported semi-durable goods remains one of the most clearly stated demands of the region's population.

The management of power relations is being localized. The legitimization implied in this localization cannot be satisfied by local material resources. The plantation-based Caribbean seems therefore to be disintegrating at an accelerated pace.

Given the difficulty encountered by the countries of the region in defining strictly local demands and in satisfying these demands from land resources, many analysts are unable to conceive of the region in terms of what it creates instead of what is imposed on it. In fact, from the description given above it follows that the definition of the Caribbean as plantation-America applies to a *non-region*. It comprises an empty set, or a set constantly emptied by a centrifugal dynamic.

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This part of America in which the economic base of the nation-State is formed by its export activities cannot achieve either regional integration or the consensus needed for nation-building processes.

Given its inherent extroversion –which constitutes the reverse side of the polarization effects of the European nuclei–, the plantation defines a regional environment only through those criteria it negates. It emphasizes what the Caribbean is not, and never gives a glimpse of what it can be.

Approaching the subject from another angle of analysis, Sidney W. Mintz reached the same conclusion in his classic study entitled "Caribbean Nationhood in Anthropological Perspective":

> The argument so far suggests that the plantation system partially interdicted societal coherence at two levels of local group formation in Caribbean colonial societies: the community level on the one hand, and the familial or domestic level on the other. It also implies that these effects in turn limited the modes of integration of family groups and communities with larger social groupings –the total insular society or "nation"– and with national institutional frameworks, such as the educational system, the political system, national religions, and the like. The workings of these negative effects are perhaps most clearly revealed by the extent to which the bipolar structures of traditional plantation societies have persisted into the present, expressed today in highly differentiated modes of mating and domestic organizations, the relative paucity of local community organization, the limited participation of citizen masses in national political decision-making, the communication among the different strata of the social order. It is not only the presence or absence of intermediate social groupings that matters in weighing the importance of these after-effects, but also the ideologies of identity of such groupings.[81]

Moreover, even if the plantation system were to succeed in giving form and content to a society by explaining the nature and evolution of its specificity, the peoples of the Caribbean would not be able to lay claim to its positive or negative achievements. The plantation was originally a European institution, which was projected, organized and governed according to European laws to serve European interests.

The plantation was conceived from the start on the assumtion of an enslaved labour force. Since it was the product of European thinking, this form of slavery was spelled out in the laws and regulations that originated in Europe and enforced by a considerable number of institutions all of which pursued goals consonant with the purposes of the metropolises.

The truth, however, is that there were no plantations in Europe worth mentioning and that Europeans did not keep their labour force in captivity. Since the Caribbean was the cradle of the slave plantation, one is inclined to conceive of this institution and of the moral and other persons associated with it as indigenous and locally based, which creates considerable confusion.

A number of questions and answers concerning the formulation of a project for a Caribbean society are essential here. How can one separate this view of the Caribbean —a physical space where phenomena and relationships of all types occurred— from a view centred around the realization of local potential and its own internal dynamism? To what end could any initiatives taken by the inhabitants of the Caribbean lead? What has been projected, organized and governed according to Caribbean laws to serve Caribbean needs?

With regard to these concerns, the existence of a counter-plantation system might explain the past and the future of the region.

If the elements of Caribbean unity and coherence —which the plantation system is incapable of generating— were to disappear, total balkanization would result, i.e., the mere juxtaposition of components defined by forces emanating from a pole of attraction. Yesterday that pole was Europe; today it is the United States; tomorrow, who knows? From a socio-political entity in full process of structuralization, the region would be converted into a physical environment with a most uncertain future.

3. The paradoxical consequence of colonialism

To claim that the slave plantation is a product of European minds which later developed and flourished in the Caribbean, is equivalent to certifying it as a Creole institution. The slave plantation was in fact the core of the colonial society, the source of coherence for its most significant social relationships.

To say furthermore that the local population cannot lay claim to the good or bad deeds of the plantation is to assert that the Creoles are not architects of their own destiny and that they have no control over their own affairs. This is also equivalent to saying that by implication the Creole culture is a mere imitation of its central nucleus, namely Europe. The Creole world is stripped of any kind of personality, of any itinerary which is likely to divert it from the aims and objectives of the West.

A colonized territory is brought into the geographical scope of the metropolis for quite specific purposes, but the pursuit of these goals is only

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one aspect of colonial history. In a plantation system, given the exploitation to which workers are subjected, they are deprived not only of what can be considered as minimum living conditions but also of any possibility of negotiating some improvement in their working conditions with the authorities. They have therefore no opportunity of imitating or copying the private life of the colonizers and of living in the Creole style.

The Creole character of the Caribbean population does not account for its uniqueness. A Creole from Tobago is not a Creole from Trinidad, and any Creole can come from Trinidad, Tobago, Saint Lucia or even from Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, etc. It is the fact of belonging to Antigua, Tobago, or Saint Lucia which distinguishes the inhabitants of the region.

Despite the assimilation of the labour force advocated by the former metropolises, the relationships of solidarity and loyalty observed in the history of each of the territories provides the outline for a new regional identity.

The most obvious means of identification arising out of the groups of individuals organized during the colonial period generally goes unnoticed. While the planters and colonial authorities came from only a few different European nations, the enslaved labour force, whose ranks were swollen by many indentured labourers from three regions of Asia and from Europe itself, came primarily from a host of African nations.

As time went by, the population ceased to define itself as British, French, Dutch, Spanish or as a group of Creoles born of the British, French, Dutch and Spanish settlers. From these immigrants who came from everywhere, groups emerged who called themselves Jamaicans, Guadeloupeans, Guyanese, etc.

Neither the establishment of a slave regime nor the regulation of piecework was designed to increase the well-being of the enslaved or of the freedmen or the gradual improvement of their living conditions. The local population survived and multiplied by creating life-styles which were not governed by the political or economic decisions of the colony.

The plantocracies were constantly adapting to the metropolises. The local population made use of their knowledge of the fundamental institution and of its support mechanisms in order to adapt to these changes.

The divergence between the people's systems of knowledge and the planters' was due to different social orientations. The planters were guided by the induction effects from the European pole, while the freedmen were guided by their experience. With each passing day their judgement improved and their behaviour became more refined.

The changes in the plantation system coincided with those of the effects of polarization originating from the central economies. The influence of these economies was transmitted by the international market. In chapter 6, we shall describe the subterfuge to which the plantation system resorted so as to carve out a place for itself. Let us just remember that the plantation is a European recipe (an institution-norm) one of whose ingredients, the labour force, has a Caribbean history.

The Europeans are entitled to assess their influence on the life-styles and standards of a region which they owned. They are even within their rights in deciding on the mixed nature—i.e., part-European, part-African and part-Indian, of the latter.

In order to help overcome the obstacles hindering the development of the Creole Caribbean, this line of thinking should show how colonial Europe promoted the control and exploitation of those marginal resources which eluded its monopoly. The peasantry can be viewed as a offshoot of the plantation system, and the freedman as a disciple of the planter or of the colonial authorities to the same extent that the display of human solidarity is accounted for by the fury of a hurricane.

Autonomous life-styles created by the population flourished within the framework of the counter-plantation system, which reached its zenith after emancipation. The population found itself in a position to implement its own societal projects as soon as the State put an end to the institutionalization of the planters' monopoly (of capital) over labour. Denied of any means of production integrated into the dominant economic system, groups of freedmen united to occupy geographically, economically or socially "inaccessible" areas.

The importance of the peasants does not stem from the areas that they farmed, their number, their contribution to the national income, their influence on the institutionalized political system or their involvement in the establishment of official cultures. Caribbean peasants have never enjoyed the respect won by their European counterparts, the moujiks or yeomen, who are recognized as having a place, albeit a modest one, in the network of social relationships.

The colonial system did not acknowledge Caribbean peasants as a social category.[82] They were discriminated against as former slaves or indentured labourers, persecuted as squatters or "vagrants" and humiliated because they were illiterate or ignorant. They enjoyed only a few civil rights and no political rights whatsoever.

The emergence of a peasantry in the Caribbean shows in practical terms how normative social categories were transformed by groupings and

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networks of groupings of individuals. The social category provided for by the plantation society was that of the freedman, encompassing both the peasant and the agricultural worker.

The other aspect of the history of colonization is that the colonized people had to create a specific space in which to normalize their family and community structures. Colonial exploitation therefore led paradoxically to endogenous solutions.

The metropolises, in trying to impose new identities on the population while failing to take the economic, political and cultural measures that were indispensable to an integration process, compelled the labour force to create forms of social life and consequently, cultural structures –an oppressed culture– radically different from what was intended by the officialdom of the metropolises.

The influence of the peasantry was neither comprehended nor admitted by the established powers and their intellectual elites. Its behaviour was framed and protected by denigrated institutions which in turn it endeavours to shield. Specific norms governed the establishment and the organization of families, land ownership and access to property, the administration of the domestic economy and peasant mutual aid, the development of rural communities (free villages), religion and language. A system of life flourished without the peasants concerning themselves unduly about the patronage of the metropolis and its lieutenants.

This system which we call the counter-plantation[83] is a specific social organization encompassing a variety of techniques invented by the workers (enslaved, freedmen and indentured labourers) to oppose the owners and their metropolitan countries. If no direct reference to this organization is found in the official documents, it is precisely because the plantation system did not envisage or conceive of the reproduction *in situ* of the labour force.

The plantation necessarily implied the existence of a counter-plantation, just as enslavement pre-supposed a form of *marronage*.[84] This ambivalence was repeated in all the territories in the Caribbean, although its form was not always the same. In some territories, such as Santo Domingo in the eighteenth century and Cuba in the nineteenth, plantation and counter-plantation societies were highly visible. Barbados was mainly a plantation island, whereas most of the Caribbean countries owing allegiance to Spain were, up to the eighteenth century, *mainly* counter-plantation societies.

In the region dominated by Spain, the population was able to remove itself from colonial influence without having to confront the fortresses that had been established, not for the purpose of setting up a special economic

development model, but to "protect" the territories against the claims of other Powers. The inhabitants of these islands dedicated themselves to subsistence agriculture around isolated, scattered hamlets. When the State decided, in the nineteenth century, to encourage the systematic exploitation of the territories, the system of organization was sufficiently established to withstand the impact of the plantation and to force it to import its labour force.[85]

The Caribbean countries occupied by Spain were the only ones where slavery existed side by side with piecework and salaried labour in a single system and sometimes on the same plantation. The present study deals rather with the countries of the Caribbean which were colonized by the other European Powers, where the plantation system preceded the emergence of the peasantry.

The Caribbean is defined as the America of the plantations in so far as it came out of a past marked by the development and decadence of the plantation system. Far from being constructed on the basis of a life-style imposed by the West, it had to invent its own building blocks in order to overcome the devastation of the slave society.

The peoples of the Caribbean established themselves as a single nation by striving to surmount the particularly difficult conditions of exploitation imposed upon them. The Caribbean social milieu was distinctly characterized by substandard levels of living resulting from a context of external and illegitimate violence aiming at removing all initiative from the people. The Caribbean was endowed with a creativity whose very existence attested to the failure of the mechanisms of colonial social domination, while the difficulties preventing the expression of this creativity attest to the effectiveness of such mechanisms.

Caribbean culture was created by human groupings in a never-ending conflict with the dominant system. Because of their creativity and genius, these groupings continually defied the system which, nevertheless, served as a point of reference for them. Caribbean culture is not the culture of the plantation society, rather it is a response to the plantation society.

Similarly, the Caribbean as a structured region is also an unexpected and ironic result of the balkanization inherent in the creation of exploitation colonies. In the preceding chapter, we saw how the plantation society itself destroyed the creolization processes that it produced. In order to restore the rate of exploitation which creolization helped to diminish, it ignored the local patterns of social intercourse and constantly resorted to immigrant labour.

This policy for recruiting labour enabled contact to be made between homogeneous components of the region beyond imperial frontiers. Migration within the region created self-centred exchanges and the Caribbean emerged as an entity built on principles alien to the intentions of the colonial empires. The remainder of the present chapter deals with the creation of this structured Caribbean space.

4. The colonial city

The way in which the Caribbean is generally subdivided is reminiscent of the colonial period. Since we can no longer speak of the English, French, Dutch or Spanish Caribbean, we refer to the English-speaking, French-speaking, Dutch-speaking or Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

It is well known, however, that the population of the Netherlands Antilles does not use the Dutch language in its daily affairs. This is also true of the former British possessions of Saint Lucia and Dominica in particular, where the bulk of the people speak a Creole which has no significant link with the official language. In Suriname, as in Haiti, only a small minority can speak the metropolitan languages. It is only in the former Spanish colonies that Spanish is spoken in most circumstances.

With the exception of these last-mentioned colonies, what is the real situation concealed behind these linguistic barriers that makes the population both within and outside of the region, in both government and academic circles, still adopt this subdivision of the region that harks back to colonial times?

These official languages, which very few people speak in the course of domestic activities, are the languages of public administration and the service sectors in general. They are reserved for those who move in these circles, namely, the city dwellers. The fact that they are used in the rural environment simply proves the dominion of the city and its inhabitants over the resources of the territory.

The rules of the colonial city established the framework in which private life unfolded, without actually regulating the day to day affairs of the population. Those rules were above all the expression of the will of the metropolitan countries, of a need to negotiate with the outside world or of participation at the upper echelons of public life.

During the colonial era, the Caribbean region can be viewed at two levels. At the first level, the territories occupied by the same Power displayed certain common characteristics, in particular homogeneous political and administrative standards. The similarity of their forms of

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government was therefore a result of the balkanization of the region. Territories belonging to the same empire had no close links among themselves however, nor did they maintain relationships of complementarity.

For nearly two centuries Dominica had for example, identical political and administrative structures as Antigua and Saint Kitts, yet these structures differed from those of Guadeloupe. Nevertheless, because of the exchanges between Dominica and Guadeloupe, whose history is older than that of European political institutions, the populations of the two islands entertained relationships of another kind, which the colonial authorities often regarded as criminal. Conversely, exchanges between Dominica and Antigua were of interest for Great Britain and for the urban sectors of these territories. Nevertheless, the frequency of these exchanges remained insignificant, in spite of their legal status.

At a second level of social relations, groups of individuals, because of the domestic cleavages in the colonial societies, were autonomously in a position to thwart the administrative regulations that hampered them in their daily lives. Such initiatives were intended to meet local needs using available resources, and originally formed the basis of the traditions on which a self-centred social environment was built.

However embryonic they may have been, such local habits and traditions gave the Caribbean its own unique structure and frontiers outside of colonial compartments and efforts at homogenization/creolization within these compartments. A number of obstacles hindered the evolution prompted by this challenge to colonial order without threatening this endogenous regional structure, the mechanisms of which will be described in the last part of the present chapter. We will now try to explain the ambiguity which characterises, at the first level of regionalization, the conflicts between the metropolitan countries and the planters.

The institutions and groups which, in pursuit of metropolitan interests, sought to channel exchanges both between and within each territory were located in the towns, or more exactly in the colonial city. The Caribbean city typically started out as a seaport. A nest of pirates, filibusters and corsairs during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it would be called today a "military base" since it served as a support station during – wars among the imperial powers.

This military base was also a trading post, a role which consolidated as the plantations developed. The city became the meeting place for the architects and engineers of the plantation society, that is to say, the colonial

administration, and those constructing the project, namely, the merchants, planters and their representatives.

The first citizens defended the territory against the enemies of their mother country while maintaining the order necessary for organizing productive activities. The profitability of trade, in fact, depended much less on the productivity of the colonial enterprises than on the good fortune of military forces. Consequently, the development of the war industry strengthened the role of relay station that the port played *vis-a-vis* its hinterland.

Far from emerging from a rural countryside, the city thus created its own countryside –or more correctly, a particular type of countryside. It saw to it that the population was distributed according to the social categories imposed by the metropolis. Moreover, it had to protect its internal structure from the influence of the groupings of individuals that formed within the colony. Elected assemblies were in operation for only very short periods of time.

Its constitutional dependence on the metropolis did not permit the colonial city to gradually establish an institutionalized system of arbitration of the conflicts between the urban and rural sectors. What is more, the project of development inherent in the structure of the colonial city presumed that efforts at organizing rural resources to provide the population concerned with the means of meeting its own needs would be thwarted. However, the internal composition of this urban system did not permit it to absorb either burdensome migrations from the neighbouring countryside.

The port was therefore isolated from the rural settlements, even though this might not have been readily perceptible.[86] The primacy of city was due to its relationships with the outer world, which were much more important than its interface with its own zone of influence.

Indeed, the size of the colonial cities and the extent of the services that they offered to their inhabitants did not differ appreciably from the size of villages or the services available in them. The urban nature of such an agglomeration was determined rather by the military, administrative and commercial functions that were assigned to ports and not to towns –and to certain social categories within the population of the port.

Two different kinds of relationships linked the city to the countryside, both of them sharing nonetheless a common feature, namely, the non-participation of the local population in the management of its affairs.

There have been cases in which the port, severed from metropolitan tutelage and devoid of any development project, was unable to impose any form of socio-economic organization on the village societies. The latter

acquired the knowledge and techniques necessary for their own reproduction and growth, cut off from the mainstream of international life.

In such cases, citizens and public administrators proved incapable of transforming into constitutional law a situation of rural predominance that defied current norms of international relations. These were islands in which the peasant masses enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy and in which the schism between city and country dwellers verged on divorce. This situation existed during the eighteenth century in the Spanish colonies and during the nineteenth century in Haiti.

In contrast with the above situation, there were territories in which the colonial authorities imposed a production system closely linked to the world market as well as the corresponding social order. There were two variants of the latter case: that of the richer and more stable colonies on the one hand and that of the poor colonies, or territories "ceded" to another Power under the terms of peace treaties signed in Europe.

Barbados, Jamaica and Martinique fall into the first category in that their capitals had special institutions in which planters and administrators could arbitrate their disputes and decide on the treatment to be meted out to the local population engaged in agricultural production. Already one can see the seeds of conflicts of interest emerging between the political sector and those responsible for economic management.

In the second variant, the differences between the colonial administrators and the plantocracies appeared quite clearly. The successive changes of colonial regimes led to the first mixing between the various plantation systems and set off interactions within the same framework of the political balkanization of the Caribbean.

The most serious shifts were due to the change in political direction in France. Conflicts between a republican colonial administration and royalist planters led to the migration of these colonists –accompanied by their enslaved– to the sparsely populated territories occupied by Spain such as Cuba or Trinidad, or to British-owned islands as Dominica.

Conquest by England or the cession of certain territories previously owned by France therefore led to the superimposition of British administration on colonies which had French life-styles, such as Saint Lucia, Dominica or Trinidad. The "adopted subjects" then retreated towards the villages and rural areas, while the "legitimate subjects" of the Crown would monopolize the colonial administration.

This shift of the French colonial city to a rural milieu did not take place without friction. This sector of the plantocracy rebelled, and tried to

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preserve its laws, courts, language, religion and schools. The conflicts lasted for several decades.[87]

Cities in the poor colonies are particularly important. Not only did they reflect the close links between a colony and its metropolis, but they also represented within each territory a condensed history of rivalries between the various metropolises.

In the poorer colonies, planters of different nationalities formed different interest groups and relationships between various territories never led to alliances against the metropolis or metropolises, as occurred in Latin America from the nineteenth century onwards. In colonial Caribbean such alliances occurred later, when the United States prevailed in the inter-imperialist rivalries in the region.

In the "ceded" territories, certain segments of the plantocracies were discriminated against and marginalized and, lacking the protection of the government, had to resort to locally available resources to ensure their own development. Excluded from the colonial administration, these planters were in a sense obliged to become country dwellers and to mingle with the local population. These were the first planters cut off from their mother country and obliged to gradually "go native".

These changes in the rural settings affected predominantly social and cultural aspects. In Saint Lucia and Dominica, both French-lexicon based Creole and Roman Catholicism reigned unchallenged. By contrast, the linguistic history of Grenada and the Grenadines, the inhabitants of whose countryside remained predominantly Catholic, was not as clearly defined. In the case of Trinidad, the supremacy of English-based Creole over French-based Creole, owed nothing to Port of Spain's influence.[88]

In summary, the ports remained the support stations of the colonial Powers and helped to sustain the latter's monopoly over the resources of their zones of influence. Nonetheless, while the conflicts between the Powers did not prevent the balkanization of the region at the level of political and economic structures, they did lead to intra-Caribbean migrations from the end of the eighteenth century.

These initial migrations by both planters and enslaved tended to homogenize the rural societies beyond the imperial frontiers and to produce the first self-centred relations between segments of the regional plantocracies. The role which the nationals of Powers defeated by England played in spite of themselves, should be highlighted, as well as their ambiguous opposition to colonialism and the origin of the cleavages within the dominant groups.

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As soon as England achieved a clear hegemonic position, the functions of the city became simpler, while its ethnic composition gained more variety. The direct representatives of the metropolis installed themselves at the top of the social ladder. They imposed their rules on the merchants, who generally shared the same nationality. Gradually, administrators and merchants dominated the planters, of whom individuals from all ethnic backgrounds, including mulattoes, could be found.

If it is still convenient to refer to the Caribbean today on the basis of its colonial heritage, it is no doubt because the city and its citizens continue to turn their backs on the hinterland. Created by external centres of power, the Caribbean city is still trying to cling to its original vocation. Military stronghold, trading post, administrative centre, it continues to be the presence of the Western World in the region.

5. The endogenous Caribbean space

The Caribbean experienced profound transformations after emancipation, a time when England's interest in the region was on the wane. The traditional plantation societies were in crisis and a set of activities designed to meet local needs were set into motion by the newly freed who, despite the measures taken by the colonial administration, strove to organize a peasant economy.

After a period of some limited success, the counter-plantation itself also encountered difficulties. It failed to meet its liquidity needs through exchanges with an impoverished plantation economy. We shall return to this last point in chapter 6.

In contrast with this situation, new agricultural frontiers opened up in the south of the Caribbean, in Trinidad, in British Guiana and Suriname, and in the north, in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. In these new frontiers, the colonial authorities launched an immigration policy which attracted people from the traditional plantation economy and from the peasant economies of those islands where agricultural development dated back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

At the risk of being too schematic, it would be useful to summarize the trajectory of the plantation in time and space. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the plantations tended to be English and French. It was first established in the small islands. At the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth, it shifted to the larger and more sparsely inhabited territories which Spain had seized since the fifteenth century, or towards the Caribbean territories of South America.

At the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century, North American investments led to a shift away from the archipelago to the still more extensive and relatively untouched coastal areas of Central America. The plantation then took its place alongside the Amerindian peasant economies and the Meso-American haciendas.

Research studies, today considered classic, were conducted into the fate of the wealth extracted from the plantations. The economic studies are less concerned with the course followed by capital than with the new roles it performed by penetrating more complex forms of production together with the impact of these production methods on the reproduction and transformation of the plantation systems.[89] It would be wise to adopt the same method in carrying out any study of social structures in the Caribbean.

The manpower which was forced out by the plantation set itself up within other social milieux which it helped to change. From that position it exercised a certain degree of influence on the societies of origin. The trajectory of labour and its influence varied from one period to another according to the types of social milieux into which it was received. Given the cleavages between the social categories of the plantation societies, the geographical mobility of the Caribbean labour force is a condition to its occupational mobility.

Studies on the development of human resources would be more useful if they sought to clearly delineate the conditions under which populations emigrate, the level of remuneration for labour in the territories of origin or the host territories, the building up of savings among migrant workers, the destination and volume of funds remitted, etc.

In a society founded upon excessive recourse to extra-economic coercive measures, out-migration of the working population constitutes one of the few mechanisms for endogenous transformation. The response of groups of individuals to the problems posed by small and segmented social pyramid are traditionally found in the context of geographical mobility. Efforts at upward social mobility have historically been less effective.

The Caribbean nation and region were formed through migration. The political and economic consequences of this reality so far fall outside the scope of scientific reflection.

What should not seem strange in these processes of regional migration is the fact that these migrations are in a way always incomplete. The emigrant, despite all the lessons and experiences, always dreams of returning to his native country.

The *Garifunas* or *Black Caribs* of Belize and Honduras do not fail to venerate even today Saint Vincent, their mother country, after having

established themselves on the continent for two centuries. This return, real or symbolic, is at the root of mutual relations among the diverse populations of the region, and from this interconnectedness evolves a nation that is expanding, albeit, looking inward into itself.

George Beckford and Michael Witter consider migration to be among the forms of resistance of the Jamaican population:

> (...) there were other responses to oppression. One was migration (...) (...) We are suggesting that, among other things, migration was an escape from the hopelessness of poverty in which the majority of people lived.

Migrants are always expected to "look back" to their social origins by extending their assistance to their less fortunate relatives at home.[90]

In summarizing the history of the migrations in the Caribbean occupied by the English, Dawn I. Marshall[91] distinguished four periods after the general emancipation. The first is from 1835 to 1885 and is characterized by the "flight to the hills" –which in certain territories meant a flight to other islands–, and a more limited movement to the cities. In order to give an idea of the volume of these internal migrations, the historian drew attention to the fact that after emancipation, only 8 000 people out of a total population of 22 359 were to be found living and working on the plantations of Trinidad.

The role of poles of attraction played by the new territories acquired by the English (Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana) is more marked after emancipation. The planters tried to force the newly freed to sign annual work contracts, but the seasonal character of these migrations was imposed by the workers themselves, who were not averse to returning home for Christmas and helping out with the harvesting.

Marshall correctly points out that even though a large number of workers ended up establishing themselves in the host territories, migration was perceived as something temporary. There is no need, of course to point out that the objectives of the planters and those of the newly freed did not coincide.

Between 1885 and 1920, movements were made in the direction of Cuba and the Dominican Republic. One must add to the summary presented by Marshall, who dealt only with the case of the former colonies of England, the movement of the Haitian workers to these same countries. But it was above all the construction of the Panama Canal which attracted the populations of the Caribbean and threatened to depopulate the latter.

Between 1920 and 1940, the oil industry in Venezuela, and then that of Curaçãao developed into the poles of attraction for the populations of the

centre and south of the region, while in the North, Haitians continued to migrate to Cuba and the Dominican Republic, a movement accelerated by the occupation of Haiti by the United States.

The last period identified by Marshall began in 1940 and continues to the present. For the countries which she studies, the migratory movement is toward the United States and in the early stages included Bahamians, Jamaicans and later Barbadians. Subsequently, the Bahamas itself developed into a pole of attraction to which Haitians and Jamaicans migrated.

This period was marked above all by movements to the metropolises: for the English-speaking Caribbean, the United States, England and Canada; for Cubans, Dominicans, Haitians and Puerto Ricans, the United States; Martiniquans, Guadeloupeans and French Guyanese migrated to France, while Holland received emigrants from the Dutch Antilles and from Suriname.

Two statistics from Marshall serve to illustrate these migratory trends. Between 1961 and 1970, the level of immigration to the United States from the so-called English-speaking Caribbean reached almost half a million, while between 1960 and 1962 alone, England received 168 000 Caribbean nationals.

Thus the collapse of the first plantation economies gradually created a new sociological space, the Basin of the Caribbean Sea. This space was characterized by a very special system of social relationships and family loyalties. Intra-Caribbean migration helped to keep afloat the peasant and pseudo-peasant economies or the craftsmen activities and small businesses in the areas of origin, remedying through remittances the lack of income caused by the collapse of the plantations.

This migration may be conceived of as an effort to obtain in a foreign land the elements necessary to rescue village societies which stagnated because of policies implemented by the administrative centres. The internationalization of the market for food products rendered these desperate efforts futile and led to an increase in both migratory movements and remittances.

These phenomena illustrate the close relationship between the diaspora and the native land. In order to understand the special characteristics of the Caribbean migratory movements which define the region as an autonomous structure distinct from the structure imposed by the major Powers, it is necessary to refer once again to the theses advanced in the previous chapter.

The survival strategies of the newly freed developed outside of the system of social relations responsible for the development of economic

resources in the colonized territories. In relation to the networks of political decision-making, the newly freed was marginalized. His contribution to the determination of his future was, by the very nature of the plantation society, markedly less than that of the workers in an industrial system. Incapable of modifying his conditions of existence in his local society, he left for other countries which offered him a slightly better standard of living without, however, any change in his marginalized status with respect to the making of decisions that affected him.

The improvement in the living standards of migrants was slowed by the remittance of funds, which led to some degree of equalization of their living conditions *vis-a-vis* their kin who remained behind in the country. Moreover, these remittances widened even further the gap that separated them from workers in their host countries.

Indeed, the income of the migrant worker is part of the income of the family remaining behind in the country. Any study on income distribution which does not take this situation into account, risks leading to erroneous conclusions concerning the characteristics of the countries of origin and of the host countries of the newly freed.

Thus this endogenous space created by the movements of the newly freed, reproduces one of the basic characteristics of the local peasant economies, namely, their resistance and powerlessness in the face of the actions of the dominant systems. This is what is referred to as the replication of the *"bossalité"* of the newly freed. This particular process must be viewed as the reverse of the internationalization of the Caribbean's labour supply. The obstacles to the integration or "creolization" of the newly freed lend a specific character to the migratory movements of the region, which requires further study.

The evolution of the national societies depends to a large extent on the relationships of loyalty that bind the newly freed. Since such relationships are in turn excluded from the vision of the political and spiritual authorities of the countries of origin and of reception, they are not monitored, despite the volume of foreign exchange that is remitted each year.

One finds then a repetition on a scale several times larger of the cleavages that characterized plantation societies. The city and the dominant categories of the Caribbean manage resources invested in systems of relationships, which are different from those that enable the majority of the population to subsist and reproduce.

As the mechanisms of exclusion of the dominant system affect larger and larger segments of the population, groups of individuals belonging to the dominant categories cannot help but adopt the survival strategies used

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by groups lower down in the social hierarchy. The Caribbean diaspora throws up on foreign shores "middle class sectors" who face the same difficulties of integration into the host societies.

The internationalization of the labour force sometimes implies an improvement in living conditions which all too frequently accompanies a loss in social status. The small peasant returns to being an agricultural worker, the engineer is employed as a draughtsman, while the lawyer works as a clerk, if not as an unskilled labourer. The extent to which this downward social mobility is linked to the replication of relationships of loyalty towards the native country, remains a moot question.

In conclusion, it must be said that the political impasse of the States of the region is more serious than has been pointed out. The interests and areas of action of the electors do not coincide with those of their representatives. A balkanized Caribbean, whose economic structures are becoming increasingly fragile, is superimposed onto another Caribbean, this one self-centred and developing rapidly.

No institution regulates the mutual relations of these two facets of the same social reality. Their potential is not combined to achieve better control over the national and international environment. The balkanized Caribbean is in distress. The self-centred Caribbean is rudderless. The primary units of the latter display a collective pattern of behaviour which seems to follow principles still to be discovered by the social sciences.

Chapter 5

THE MAKING OF THE NATIONS

1. Introduction

When they settled in the Caribbean, the Europeans destroyed *almost* all traces of human occupation prior to their arrival. They were and still are powerful, and nothing can prevent them from developing the Caribbean territories to suit their objectives and interests. Their sponsorship of the societies they created is still operational and five centuries later, they still face the same problems of blending with endogenous solutions.

Although they seized territories with specific aims in mind, the Europeans could not occupy all the social space of the people they colonized. The conflict between their aims and interests and those of the inhabitants of the Caribbean was inherent to the process of colonization. The areas that they deemed insignificant and of secondary importance or which they were unable to control became the meeting places –however limited– of the people they subjugated.

Among such areas removed from the immediate influence of the Europeans, those created by the maroons should be mentioned. But these so-called "deserters" or "fugitives" lived in "inaccessible" regions outside the plantations societies. There also existed, within these societies, social spaces which escaped colonialist control.

This chapter will endeavour to show how the establishment of the plantation system gave birth to an alternative historical system that we have referred to as the counter-plantation. The counter-plantation continued and developed marronage to its ultimate limits, but it did not necessarily occupy a physical space different from that of the plantation.

As the enslaved began to understand what was expected of them, they were able to come to terms with torture, the most overt aspect of the slave system. As indicated above, the only option open to the captives was to become "creolized", i.e., to yield to the blind force of European colonialism.

In the opinion of the planters and colonial authorities, the Creole captives were ideal slaves –they did not challenge the dominant system's method of operation.

Following general emancipation, the newly-freed were obliged to fend for themselves. They made demands regarding payment for their labour. Having lost ownership of both labour and labourers, the planters took measures to tighten their monopoly over farmland, settle the newly freedmen near the plantations and curtail their bargaining power.

Thus piecework, a form of payment based on the amount of work done regardless of the time taken to do it, became institutionalized. The newly-freed negotiated their working hours in such a way that they could devote part of their time to plantation work and the rest to growing farm produce of their choice. The planters' reaction was to import indentured or migrant workers, setting off migratory patterns that shaped the Caribbean into an endogenous space of human geography.

The labourers' reaction to being overexploited amid efforts to settle them on the most productive plantations resulted in the destruction of the compartmentalization of colonial possessions. Imperceptibly, within the colonial system itself, and irrespective of political and administrative lines of demarcation, various versions of the counter-plantation benefitted from cross-fertilization. Societies began to blend, as different groups organized themselves and adjusted to the establishment of the plantation system.

The theory of endogenous regional structures is based on an analysis of some historical facts. The waves of migratory movements and intercourse between the migrant populations and their native countries gave rise to a single, articulated entity with characteristics that are different from those of the subregions established by the colonizers.

Available data indicate flows of material and spiritual resources that hardly correspond to the principles of colonial policy. To support this theory, the features of such flows and an outline of Caribbean culture, or at least of the nascent regional culture, would have to be proposed.

Two distinct approaches are currently used to characterize the main aspects of Caribbean culture. Traditional studies sometimes describe political and social doctrines, but usually they focus on the region's literary production. A different angle of observation requires descriptions of the Caribbean way of thinking on the basis of the rules and principles governing social intercourse between the populations of the regional system and on the basis of the outcome of such intercourse. The present chapter follows this last approach.

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The previous chapter discussed intra-Caribbean migrations, migrations to the coasts of the Caribbean Sea Basin and migratory flows to the metropolitan countries. We should find out why there are generations-old links between nationals of Costa Rica or Curaçao originally from Barbados or Jamaica and their relatives in Jamaica, Barbados or the United States of America.

What is the nature of such familial ties? Do they have any influence at all on the personality of such individuals, who belong to different national sub-groupings? Do such ties affect their relationships with other persons, their voluntary associations, their decisions with respect to economic or political issues, etc.? What principles govern the volume and frequency of remittances among the various groupings?

It should also be possible to compare the behaviour of Barbadian farm workers who live in Trinidad or Guyana, *cocolos* of the Dominican Republic or Jamaican emigrants in Cuba to the behaviour of their fellow countrymen living in Central America or the United States of America. What are the parameters of the differences and similarities observed in the process of establishing an endogenous Caribbean?

Very little research has been done on how local cultures evolved. There is no information on the principles and criteria that identify the different constituent groups of the Caribbean as an endogenous region.[92]

Two approaches will be used to try to understand the mechanisms of the formation of the different Caribbean nations, i.e. —the social contract that identifies them—. First, the settlement of groups of people on a given territory will be described. Since the patterns of settlement varied from island to island, a global picture cannot be proposed that applies to the region uniformly. This discussion will focus on Dominica to determine how the seeds of social inequality and stratification were sown amid negotiations aimed at achieving a consensus.

We hope to show how two civilian societies emerged in all the countries of the region and to indicate where they interacted. The situation obviously differed from country to country. We believe, however, that the centrifugal and centripetal forces have the same origin and that the principle of their coexistence is also the same.

The second part of the chapter will focus on the elements that bind the social groups of the Caribbean together and try to show that such unifying elements were local creations. Common denominators will be sought, i.e., the criteria and institutions by which Caribbean nationals are identified. Once again, it is assumed that the articulation of such elements into specific contexts produces either a Grenadian or a Martinican, but that the same

principles basically apply to Martinique, Grenada or any other Caribbean country.

2. Consensus and inequality

The history of Dominica during the eighteenth century provides an excellent opportunity to observe the following:

a) How the major social components of Caribbean societies were established;

b) How a consensus was gradually built around a specific system of inequality;

c) How the imposition of colonial categories by the colonialists led to the stratification of society;

d) The extent to which conflicts among imposed social categories affected the daily activities of individuals and groups;

e) The context which gave rise to and sustained a bipolar social structure.

It should be noted that it was only in 1763 that any European empire consolidated its control over Dominica. Rivalries between the various colonial States do not account for this. Such rivalries explain why Saint Lucia changed hands about thirteen times;[93] Dominica changed metropolises only thrice. The island was a Carib fortress that successfully repelled foreign attacks for two hundred years.

However, this is not the appropriate moment to dwell on the history of the Caribs. It is enough to say that the Caribs formed an organized nation able to defend what it saw as its birthright and heritage. They fought in battles that ranged from Puerto Rico to Saint Lucia and attacked Spanish galleons even on the high seas. The chronicle of the Caribs' heroic struggles shows that there was division of labour and specialization of tasks in their society and that their military skills and technology were sophisticated enough to guarantee a measure of success for two centuries.

In 1700, the Caribs were still the masters of the island of Dominica. According to a report by Joseph A. Boromé, their population was not so small compared to the fact that in 1745 the total European and captive population was just a little over 3 000 souls.[94]

> Numbering some 5 000 in 1647, they had been reduced at the dawn of the eighteenth century to about 2 000 because of wars and the mass suicide by cassava that had filled a sizeable cave ("La Caverne des Indiens") with their bones. Illness and emigration to the

Orinoco area, where they had originated, brought them down by 1713 to some 500. And by 1730, they would be a mere 400, compared with 1800 on St. Vincent.[95]

In the early eighteenth century, three groups of people lived in Dominica:

- the survivors of the Carib genocide;
- black settlers who had escaped from the neighbouring plantations to seek refuge on Dominica;[96]
- a number of white and mulatto settlers of mainly, though not exclusively, French descent[97]who had deserted the island plantations; they were sometimes accompanied by captives who were usually Creoles.[98]

The coexistence of Amerindians, Negroes and Europeans for at least half a century was by no means peculiar to the history of Dominica. In the countries where there were still Amerindian survivors, they undoubtedly interacted with the petits blancs (pirates, buccaneers, pioneer planters and indentured labourers) and the Negro settlers –called maroons in colonial parlance. Saint Vincent was a patent example of this. The black Caribs or Garifunas who inhabit the coasts of Central America originated from Saint Vincent. Trinidad, the Guianas, Belize and Hispaniola had similar experiences. Barbados, which the Europeans found uninhabited, was the only exception to what appeared to be a norm streching from Bonaire to Cuba.

Everything points to the fact that in Dominica, the Carib and black communities were or tended to be racially homogeneous while the Europeans were made up of several ethnic groups. We can assume that the Caribs tried to preserve their life-styles. The black settlers established a new society that was similar to the Carib model but different from the European plantation model.

We do not know precisely what forms of inequality existed in Carib and black villages; in all likelihood these villages did not have the opportunity to develop. In any case, it was doubtful whether any system of stratification derived from economic privileges. Moreover, such privileges would not have affected in any way the characteristics of the nascent island society.

The members of the multi-ethnic communities of the coast, constituted the European sector of the emerging island society. Such communities were subdivided into social classes. The owners of captives came from various European countries –nation-states– and identified with their homelands. The underlying structure of this sector provided for the exploitation of the captives acquired under the regulations that defined its own social classes.

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Since the dominant social class, the slave owners, could not rely on the support of the administration of any metropolis or trading company, it was unable to unilaterally impose its interests on the captives or to negotiate these. Accounts concerning that period do not report that significant numbers of captives fled to Carib or black villages. A description of the largest plantation of the period which was owned by the Jesuit order notes that there were even family units among the captives.[99]

The island's population seemed to be compartmentalized along tribal lines and the basic concept for understanding and describing the nascent society remains that of colonists –in the original meaning of the word– or, in the parlance of the region, settlers or "habitants" in French. These three groups of settlers were not yet a single social entity and no unifying structure appeared to emerge from their contacts with each other.

The island was therefore home to three distinct societies. Whatever shape eventual imposition and inequality took in each of these three major components of the island, they were apparently not substantial enough to affect the relations between these different societies. The type of activity and the different options for managing the products of such activities varied according to the group of settlers involved.

The Caribs, the independent Negroes and the European settlers were equally autonomous or at least self-sufficient. It was perhaps not an idyllic situation: some of these pioneers were scoundrels of the worst kind. Achieving peaceful relations in such a constricted world was no mean feat. J. Boromé talks about a "somewhat Hobbesian atmosphere of *bellum omnium contra omnes*".[100]

However, the process of unification gradually contunued and the common principles of a relatively unified social system were perceptible from the outset. The adoption of a common language and the development of versatile agricultural holdings run by their owners still bear testimony today to those initial developments. This subject will be dealt with in the second part of the chapter.

The analysis of these three groups of settlers necessarily leads to the notion of extra-territorial relations. Each group was linked to a broader social unit which gave it identity within the framework of basic social categories on which the emerging regional order and balance were based.

One of the main aspects of the Dominican settlers' common view was how they perceived local relations in the context of a region marked by different social classes. The daily activities of the early settlers and the decisions they took were informed and guided by their knowledge of regional structure and the changes that occurred therein.

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The possibility of Dominica becoming absorbed into the British or French colonial empire during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) meant that the settlers who, despite their relatively peaceful relations with each other, become parties to the conflict and had to adjust their daily activities.

As long as international rivalries remained unresolved, the Caribs and the blacks had little to worry about. Depending on the warring kingdom favoured by fortune, settlers of French or English nationality had to consider seeking refuge in the hills controlled by the Negroes and Indians or fleeing to more peaceful climes. The supremacy of one group of European nationals over the other depended on the outcome of the war and foormed the prerequisite for the system of social inequalities peculiar to the territories of the region.

Thus the three groups of settlers used the conflicts between the European nation-states as a yardstick for determining the range of choices open to them. Endogenous development and social differences based on individual performance depended upon an aggravation of the conflict. However, the war had to end before a system of inequalities could develop whereby parties to the conflict acquired some status and which was at variance with a locally devised equitable system.

In other words, the main social groups were defined as communities of settlers established along tribal or national lines in so far as life on the island was evolving in a situation of relative neutrality. The initial level of social structures can be defined within this social space. The social relations that occurred therein were unlike those which characterized plantation societies. They were based on equality and evolved into a system where individual merit created differences in social status.

Democracy did not come to the region from Europe; on the contrary, Europe tried to stifle its development. Relatively self-sufficient free villages were established by individuals on the basis of independent life-styles; they maintained relations which should be seen as forms of social negotiations aimed at ensuring that each community as a whole was able to reproduce itself and maintain its specific character. In order to allow such negotiations between settlers, some common standards and principles of interaction gradually began to emerge.

The nascent island society in Dominica before 1763 alludes to the notion of this emerging consensus. This consensus also contained the seeds of a nation organized by an incipient democratic state. The homeland of the three groups of merging settlers –their future national territory– was occupied or "invaded" by a colonial state in 1763.

The fact that such events were not spread out over time makes it more difficult to understand what actually happened. One did not see the burgeoning of a nation-state followed by its occupation by a colonial empire. The settlers were inserted within a broader context governed by standards and principles that clashed with endogenous developments of their groupings. The information we have on their behaviour shows that they were aware of that fact. This explains why even before colonialism there were traces of social friction as a result of discrimination in the awarding of rank and prestige.

Thus, in addition to the first level of social structures, a second one emerged at a similar embryonic level stemming from the broader framework which was reflected in Dominica by constant infringements of the treaty of neutrality by both the European states and the white settlers.

The prospects of one of the major powers experiencing a change of fortune was the primary reason for the truce between the three groups of settlers and between Europeans of different nationalities. However, the economic plans of each of these groups had to make provision for viable options after the truce ended. But such options were also incompatible, and that was why the presence of European states undermined social harmony and the building of new nations from the very beginning.

Some individuals were tempted by the prospects of adventure in America into escaping from their desperate plight in Europe. Realizing that opportunities awaiting them in the plantation societies were not much brighter, they chose to undertake independent and autonomous economic activities in Dominica outside the framework of the plantation societies.

Life in the coastal villages was similar to that of plantation societies. Despite the fratricidal wars between their respective countries and the few resources they possessed, the new settlers adapted to life on Dominica. They operated within a framework that evolved toward egalitarian social life-styles while hoping that a political order would be established enabling them to launch family enterprises.

The cases of the two other ethnic groups were different. With the end of the war, the Negro and Carib settlers had no other choice but to prepare to withdraw inland and to isolate themselves. Given the size of the island, physical isolation was relative but isolation from the island's institutions following the end of military and political conflicts had considerable impact.

The regional environment also threatened the economic prospects of the island's Carib and Negro segments. For example, qualitative differences existed between how a European lumberman and a Negro lumberman disposed of their product. For the same activity organized along a similar

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management pattern (family production), the two lumbermen would never obtain the same results. Although the European's isolation might have been real, it was not necessary. No matter how poor his community was, the European could always hope to develop more productive forms of economic organization. He could, and in fact did, exchange or barter his products with other Caribbean islands.

The Negro settlers of the Dominican hinterland had also to maintain ties with the outside world. At the very least, they had to acquire arms and stock their community's arsenal. The European settlers tended to act as middlemen in such relations since the Negroes were considered "fugitives" by the plantation societies. The isolation of Negro settler villages was necessary even if it was not real.

The economic activity of Negroes and Caribs was considerably affected by political restrictions imposed by contemporary regional legal and ideological definitions. Such restrictions also applied to a large extent to mulattoes; they had to prove that they were freedmen whenever they moved from one administrative system to another.

The main categories of the dominant economic system then, began to develop in Dominica at the outset of the European interventions. However, the social organizations related to these categories, i.e., the plantations, were unable to take root in the country. Regional categories predominated in the political and ideological spheres only. In this environment, which was, in a way, beyond its control, the population went about its business in accordance with the first level of structural relations identified above.

Economic inequalities were created by politics and not by differences in individual performance. Assessment of any behaviour depended on whether it occurs within a local context or within the context defined by Europe.

Two cultural trends developed out of these dynamics. However, all the territory's individuals and groups experienced these two divergent conceptions of the world and were able to deal with them simultaneously. The duality that emerged was peculiar to Dominica and by extension to the Caribbean as a whole.

A second element on which the island's entire population shared a common view, was its awareness of the crucial importance of political relations to the establishment of society. The population also agreed that social inequalities were engendered by externally imposed relations that had nothing to do with local problems.

The fact that the European settlers, especially potential planters, had access to plantation economies organized by their respective mother

countries enabled them to negotiate a trusteeship status that was kept secret at first, but which they hoped would come out into the open later. This encouraged them to lay claims to both superiority and social domination. As a result of repeated failures of such negotiations, they were obliged, their beliefs or prejudices notwithstanding, to abide by the rules of the first level of structures which rewarded individual performance.

Similarly, the Caribs and Negroes felt more at ease in the sector of society where individual achievements earned respect. However, whether they liked it or not, they had to accept being assigned to certain social categories and the concomitant consequences in terms of daily life in Dominica.

A study of Dominica's history suggests that in order to understand the principles of social intercourse during the formative period of Caribbean societies, the special connotations of certain concepts commonly used to describe contemporary events should be noted. The environment in which the early Dominicans lived had nothing in common with the view of a national or domestic environment as opposed to an international one. At that time, it was impossible to compare foreign or external affairs with "national" or domestic affairs. Domestic or national affairs assumed participation in a unified political system, i.e., a state.

The French and English settlers were still the subjects of their respective kings even if the territory did not belong to the king. This fact underscores the need to distinguish between nation and state. The notion of international relations refers to what goes on outside a national area of interaction and which may or may not affect such area. Dominica was not the "national" territory of any specific group, except, nominally, the Caribs. It did not belong to any State.

During that period, a distinction could be made between endogenous and independent ventures and dependent or externally-influenced ventures. The aim of the conflicts between France and Great Britain was to establish social systems controlled by Europe. That eventuality was used as the frame of reference for all autonomous or dependent ventures and the confrontation between France and Great Britain permeated the social fabric of the whole island. In other words, although the groups of settlers on Dominica belonged to a system of nations, they did not occupy the space of a nation-state distinct from international or external space.

Moreover, there were discontinuities between local activities and those activities carried out by nation-states within Dominica. The activities of the settlers, whose aim was to satisfy their own needs, were affected by the mere

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prospect of colonial domination. On the other hand, such activities could neither prevent nor encourage the advance or retreat of nation-states.

Great Britain and France were not particularly interested in Dominica's agricultural potential. Their economic influence was insignificant, but they were interested in the territory's strategic position. As a result of their rivalry, as well as their trusteeship, strong administrative and military organizations were established which were capable of controlling the island in times of war, but they were uninterested in providing the colony with the services and infrastructure needed to systematically tap its economic potential in times of peace.

As a result of the European powers' unwillingness or inability to create conditions conducive to colonial economic development, the island's European settlers were unable to establish a dominant position over the other segments of the population. Their predominance, as an extension of that of the mother country, was restricted solely to politics. Their marginal economic situation forced them to respect the principles of internal consensus geared to satisfying the community's needs.

The big powers' lack of interest in economic matters promoted an egalitarian society in Dominica and this dynamic was duplicated in all the Caribbean territories from the abolition of the slave trade until today. This point will be taken up again later since it holds the key to understanding the relationship between culture and power in the region.

Thus, the relationships of dependence that developed after 1763 when England officially occupied the island neither destroyed nor eliminated activities aimed at using the island's resources to satisfy local needs. Such activities were simply relegated to the background. Since they were crucial to the survival of all the island's inhabitants, one may well wonder why they were not encouraged by the metropolises.

Throughout the colonial period, Dominica remained "an economically neutral island". None of its export products were of any importance to the colonial powers, the neighbouring islands, their plantocracies or their merchants.

In contrast to dominant agricultural export activities, local trade did not lead to capital accumulation. During the period under consideration, wealth and capital were obtained and multiplied more by brute force than through purely economic performance.

The endogenous and least visible of Dominica's two parallel structural arrangements never developed its inherent political potential. At the same time, the externally-oriented approach upon which official historians constantly focused their attention was never able to transform the society's

economic fabric. However, the self-reliant social processes did not prevent the metropolises from developing the island, but the imposition of external policies on the island thwarted moves by the State to institutionalize a social contract.

Dominica was one of the few cases in the Caribbean where the elite never became wealthy. It is perhaps risky to generalize on the basis of Dominica's history. Nevertheless, from the nineteenth century until today, other planters of the region have experienced more periods of crisis than of opulence. On the basis of the foregoing analyses the following outline of the basic sociological features of Caribbean societies are proposed:

a) In the daily routine of colonial Caribbean, groups of individuals organized themselves to rely on their own resources to solve the problems that arose. The networks thus established created a civilian society which adapted to an environment different from those of the metropolitan countries and other types of colonies.

b) The weakening of Europe's economic stranglehold over the region created a propitious climate for devising an endogenous social contract which allowed the self-reliant development of the territory.

c) The social negotiations that led to alliances concerning the utilization of local resources to satisfy the population's needs were restricted to certain areas of public and community life, i.e., social areas where conflicts between similar autonomous units displaying very few differences in the internal division of labour had been resolved. Consequently, the cores of settlements and groups of inhabitants were relatively isolated from each other. The original groups of settlers –in Dominica's case the Caribs, Negroes and mulattoes– could still be distinguished.

d) A distinct urban civilian society was established outside the colonial administration's sphere of influence; it was composed mainly of groups of individuals belonging to the dominant social categories who interacted with individuals of the subordinate categories employed in economic and administrative support services.

e) The difference between how the two civilian societies operated was that one could rely on the resources and indulgence of the metropolis to solve its daily problems.

f) Social inequalities were fostered by a colonial power opposed to private initiative and consequently preferred granting social status over rewarding individual performance.

g) The differences in life-styles went hand in hand with the exercise of functions that defined the dominant categories. Such differences were a direct consequence of the support of the metropolitan powers.

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h)   Self-reliant activities which cemented the society and supported the nation-building process, provided a range of economic options and equal opportunities for all motivated individuals.

i)   Institutionalized social inequalities and their justification were not part of the system of relations which forged national unity and differences in opinion within that system did not result in the stratification of society.

j)   The differences in life-styles of the social groups were of secondary importance to the way such societies functioned. The economic factors behind the defence of life-styles depended on the preservation or response of primary political relations.

k)   The bipolarity of the logical postulates of social behaviour was the result of coexistence of two levels of social structures. This bipolarity was experienced by all the inhabitants of a particular territory. The evolution of Caribbean societies and the fact that they have not yet fully developed as nation-states is attributable to the incompatibility of these postulates.

3.   Aprè Bondié, c'est la tè [101]

A description of the links between plantations and counter plantations should help in defining a number of categories in Caribbean societies.

The first category is made up of the group of territories where the counter-plantation prevailed over the plantation for some time, either because of neglect by the colonial economies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (in the islands occupied by Spain or in Dominica, for example) or because of revolutionary activity as was the case in Haiti from 1804 to 1915.

The next category is constituted by the group of territories where the momentum of the counter-plantation was broken by the importation of indentured or immigrant farm labourers. This happened in Trinidad, Guyana, Suriname and, to a lesser extent, Jamaica.

Finally, the evolution of Martinique and Barbados, where merchants joined forces with planters to overcome the crises of the nineteenth century, places these islands in a separate category. [102]

No matter how accurate and elaborate such descriptions are, they would not solve the problem that sociological studies have to explain, which is why after centuries of European "colonialism" and "influence" these small island societies and economies have attained such a degree of social heterogeneity leaving them unable to bridge the social gaps that separate groups of a few thousand people.

It was noted in chapter 3 that the plantation systems with their institutions and development strategies, did not envision the reproduction of the labour force. The labour force multiplied under social systems invented and managed by itself. We know the plantation society, its institutions and strategies. We also know the peasant economy or counter-plantation, although it was rarely conceived of as a social system distinct from the dominant system. The basic institutions of the counter-plantation should be identified and its survival strategies described. No inventory can be made of a social system's cultural products. They consist of logical arrangements that can multiply forever.

Several excellent studies have been made on the religion, language, economy, music, painting, sculpture, leisure activities and many other customs of the region's inhabitants. Such studies reflect the "influence" of all the peoples who have crossed the Caribbean Sea. They rarely reflect what the Caribbean contributed to its own culture.

Studies on Caribbean culture should show how and why cultural traits blend into more or less harmonious systems. Since the societies under study were created out of nothing, there is no need to look for a miscellany of external ingredients in their make-up. What scientific observation has overlooked and what needs to be identified are the terms of the *social contract* that define such societies as special entities.

At some point in the nineteenth century, the region's inhabitants identified with and were identified according to the different European empires to which they belonged. The history of the groups of networks of relations that they established to run their daily activities differed from that of other exploitation colonies.

On the Latin American and African continents the populations had established self-sustaining groups well before they were colonized by Europeans. Social sciences, particularly anthropology and archaeology, have worked to reconstruct these social systems that were partially destroyed by the Western conquests. They could easily identify gaps in time and even sometimes in the space of the indigenous societal forms and the changes they suffered through after coming into contact with the colonizers.

The relations peculiar to the modern Caribbean were non-existent before the arrival of the Europeans. Moreover, these relations were never controlled by authorities which conveyed and arbitrated the various interests that regulated their continuous reproduction. It is therefore more difficult to perceive them let alone analyze them.

For reasons that we will try to uncover in the last chapter, the region's intellectual elite as a whole have not yet embarked on an attempt to identify

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the specific criteria used by the peoples of the Caribbean as benchmarks in their daily activities and relations. We will demonstrate why such criteria are unique by determining the functional requirements of daily life.

If we analyze how orderly social life developed, we can discover how a mix of factors combined in a special way to produce Caribbean nations. We shall not attempt to define the cultural principles of these nations nor shall we describe Caribbean culture. We shall, rather, analyze how such principles must have broken down.

Logically,[103] the first achievement of the Caribbean peoples was to create a means of communication –their own language– that enabled them to form social groups, prepare and implement collective survival strategies and accumulate and pass on local experiences and traditions.

Research on the history and sociology of the Caribbean languages is still in an early phase. Eventually, these disciplines will have to explain why bilingualism or the invention of indigenous languages occurred only where colonization was based on ownership of the colonized people by Europeans.

The only monolingual territories of the Caribbean are those where slave plantations were incorporated into peasant or pseudo-peasant societies that already existed, as in the cases of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. This situation highlights the settlers' role as socializers of immigrant labourers and the role of counter-plantations in the reproduction of the labour force.

However, the linguist Mervyn C. Alleyne has put forward a major objection to the foregoing explanation for bilingualism and monolingualism in the region. He likens the linguistic situation in Barbados to that of the Spanish-speaking countries. He argues that Barbados, like Cuba and the Dominican Republic, "experienced the unbroken and relatively intense presence of only one European nationality throughout its colonial history".[104]

Alleyne's argument rejects theories on the structural dualism of the region and agrees with the theories of creolization. According to him, Barbados is the most Creole of all the island-plantations. It seems to us, however, that Martinique's case is not much different from that of Barbados and the Spanish-speaking islands. If Alleyne's argument holds, the Creole of Martinique is doomed to disappear soon. This seems quite unlikely.

There are obvious similarities between the Creole languages of the Caribbean and European languages as far as vocabulary was concerned. The differences stem from their grammatical and phonological structures and several sementical aspects. Creole languages and the European

languages from which they borrowed vocabulary are not mutually intelligible, nor do they have similar relationships that exist among dialects of the same language.[105]

The vernacular languages were the vehicles through which the population expressed its thoughts. The indigenous population decided on the correctness of grammar or speech.

The vernacular and European languages as they were spoken in the region did not convey all the ideas expressed by the population. The inhabitants were not really bilingual. They did not speak a vernacular or the official language indifferently, because each one was used within strictly defined contexts.

Verbal communication reflected the peculiar relationships between the colonized people and the colonizers. Creole languages were used in social intercourse outside colonial circles, particularly in private life. Other social activities were conducted in the master's tongue. Public activities were conducted solely in the official language regardless of how well-versed the population was in such language.

The process by which the European powers took control of the Creole languages and depicted them as debasements of their own languages and a source of backwardness was typical of the fate suffered by the most important creations of the Caribbean. Creole languages were perceived as a source of backwardness; the "masters" assumed that the only way of developing was through integration into the Western world.

French-based Creole was created out of the need for communication between the early masters, *petits blancs* and their indentured labourers and captives. This language was used to establish the plantation system. Everybody spoke it, and it was usually the only language spoken.

As French became the language of the court and therefore of public administration in the metropolis, a group of settlers followed the lead of the civil servants and soldiers, breaking away from the local population and adopting French as their language.[106] French-based Creole then became the property of the "natives".

The substitution of French for Creole was dictated by political, social and economic interests and did not occur overnight. And yet, metropolitan social and political sciences began talking about the islands occupied by the French as French-speaking islands. Centuries later, it is still mistakenly believed that France's Caribbean colonies are French-speaking, and that the descendants of African captives speak a debased version of this language.

Misinformed people believe that, chronologically, Creole was second to French in the Caribbean. Discriminatory measures built on this misconception were put into practice by institutions and agencies of the

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colonial metropolis, eg. schools, courts of law, churches and the mass media, with an avowed aim of preventing the development of the local language.

A similar situation prevailed in the process of imposing English in Trinidad.107 In a seminal article, D. Winford108 shows how French-based Creole was the language most used on the island at the beginning of the British occupation. He quotes a nineteenth-century writer who established that Creole was the most commonly used language despite widespread knowledge of English, and affirms that it was the medium of thought. Fresh arrivals on the island first learned French-based Creole and then English.

Winford describes the transition from "French" to English. English imposed as the official language, was disseminated with some difficulty among the elite through classroom instruction. No formal system of mass education existed prior to 1900, yet by then English-based Creole had put down solid roots in the country. The masses of Trinidad did not learn English from a local elite that spoke it only reluctantly to satisfy specific requirements of community living. English-based Creole was learned through contacts with immigrants from other islands such as Saint Vincent and Barbados.

To sum up, Creole languages sprang up during the establishment of groups and networks of individuals among the indentured European labourers, the captives and, later, the freedmen and indentured labourers of the nineteenth century. Creole was used before French, English or any other official language in the formation of the peoples of the region into harmonious social units and in the seasoning of individuals.

The second achievement of the inhabitants of the Caribbean was to set up groups of individuals, the most important of these being the family. Contrary to the logical processes of establishing societies, the societies we are interested in are not the product of a combination of individual families. The Caribbean colonial society pre-dated the formation of individual indigenous families like a mold trying to shape an unexpected existence.

Regardless of whether they were pirates, buccaneers or prisoners, the *petits blancs* were first and foremost societies of men. After they had settled in the colony, they took delivery of shiploads of women, usually prostitutes, for whom they paid cash and with whom they set up family units.

The Negroes could not live as families. Sometimes they were forced to mate and entire islands were set aside for breeding them. It will be reminded that fathers, mothers and children were separate commodities that were legally bought or sold on the market.

Under such circumstances, one of the most outstanding social achievements of the people of the Caribbean was to establish stable units of procreation and a form of continuity from generation to generation. In this respect, the indentured labourers from India were in a very different situation, even though they had problems in having the legitimacy of their marriages recognized. This no doubt constituted a determining element of the social psychology of the Caribbean's Indian population.

No provision was made under the plantation system for the natural reproduction of the labour force. The system operated using immigrants. At best, the labour force was given access to only marginal resources. Simply put, the plantation society denied its workers the most basic needs. Duly established families among the working classes were basically contrary to its principles and values.

Measures were also taken to strip families of workers of any rights. The standard type of family that actually emerged from this context suffered the same fate of the Creole languages considered non-languages.

Even well-meaning people vilified the Caribbean family, and powerful institutions set about trying to destroy it. All sorts of legal codes and regulations based on various versions of the Judeo-Christian religions tried to reform the Caribbean family and in so doing to justify the fact that such workers were not allowed the material resources needed to sustain families built on the official organizational model.

The little that indigenous families managed to save was not easy to preserve. Under the letter of the law, that unit of procreation could not be considered as a family, and the official regulations on legitimacy and inheritance did not apply to the blood relationships that actually existed. This unit of procreation was called *plaçage*, *shack-up* or free union to distinguish it from the mores of people of sound moral values.

The *progeny of such sinful unions were barred from prestigious and well-paid jobs*. In fact, the entire Caribbean population had to overcome fantastic obstacles before securing such humble middle-class jobs as primary school teaching because of the nature of its family relationships.

Nowadays, many an institution still imbued with the colonial ideology still condemns the irresponsibility of its family heads, especially the male heads of family. This attitude enables these institutions to shift the blame that should fall on the State, its official institutions and development policies onto the victims of the plantation society. In recompense for such devotion, the dominant system confers life-long prestige and remuneration on these latter-day missionaries.

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The model of the Caribbean family flourished in the nineteenth century in areas where it managed to procure a bit of land and some security enabling it to project its potential beyond just one generation. Comparative studies of the family structure of the Bush Negroes of Suriname and of the free villages of Jamaica and Haiti in particular would yield significantly more information on the region's social and cultural characteristics.

Such studies would provide information on the basic model of the Caribbean family and thus make it possible to later classify the changes families underwent in other rural areas. The way in which it functions in urban areas where the relationship between man and the land is secondary could also be evaluated. Moreover, such studies would help to explain the changes in the institutions that go hand-in-hand with the establishment of family networks that are duplicated even in the diaspora.

The family's relationship with the land was the third social innovation of the peoples of the region. The history of the region's peoples is reflected by its agriculture. The people thus established peasant agriculture and the counter-plantation. The key to Caribbean culture should be the institution that regulates relationships between the social groups –first and foremost, the family– and the land.

It hardly needs to be recalled that, given the terms of access to agricultural resources, the region could not have been expected to develop in a spectacular way its own system of land tenure. A weak institution evolved which reflected the main characteristics of the counter-plantation and its specificity with respect to the plantation society.

European land-distribution policy was used to place people in the various social categories required to pursue colonial objectives. Such a policy was consistent with Western social philosophy and its definitions of what was non-European.

At the same time, in their efforts to break free of their chains, the peoples of the Caribbean invented and institutionalized their own system of land tenure. Obviously, that system was diametrically opposed to the objectives of Europeans and could survive only on the fringes of the latter's jurisdiction.

From the apogee of peasant agriculture in the nineteenth century until its interminable demise in the contemporary period, the endogenous development of the Caribbean has been clinging to a value that is aptly expressed by the motto of Dominica: "Aprè Bondié, c'est la tè". A typically Caribbean institution of land tenure and the crucible of the region's social philosophy is *joint collective ownership*.

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Joint collective ownership ensured that any inherited land was the common prerogative of an entire family. It encompassed all generations descended from the original owner or occupant of the land. The right to use the plot of land secured in this manner –commonly called *tè éritié* or family land– and to enjoy its produce, was shared by the entire family.

Decisions regarding the transfer of landed property were not made by individuals but by the community as a whole. The heirs of family lands were not allowed to sell or dispose of them as they please unless the whole family agreed. The marginal plots over which the peasants managed to gain control, after countless efforts, were free from any interference by colonial institutions.

However, joint collective ownership turned out to be useless insurance. In practice, the eventuality of the State and State-sponsored groups taking over the land again could not be effected through the play of market forces alone.

The purchase and sale of landed property outside the social divisions established by the metropolitan countries could not have affected many properties. In fact, it was not clear whether farm land was regarded as merchandise in the Caribbean. At the very least, formidable practical and institutional barriers had to be overcome before land could be transferred from one owner to another.

Since the plots were widely dispersed, those that eventually came on the market for sale interested only the small-scale farmers. However, capital formation in such circles was not enough to give sales of such plots any particular importance.

Big landlords were seldom able to consolidate and expand their property by acquiring land adjacent to theirs. In any case, most of the property owned by the freedmen was of poor quality. Once again, the expansion of large estates would not be significant enough to alter the balance between the plantation and the counter-plantation.

Finally, it was difficult to conceive of the fragmentation and sale of large estates to a host of impoverished peasants.[109]

It should therefore be concluded that the omnipresence of collectively owned property in the formation of social groups of the Caribbean expressed something more than the mere protection of collective wealth. It appears to have defined the community itself, its characteristics, standards of unity and mechanisms for transmitting such unity.

One often reads that joint collective ownership was the main obstacle to economic development and to the development of peasant

agriculture.[110] It was assumed to hamper individual initiative and prevent peasants from using credit facilities.[111]

Only one economic study has been found that conceives of the problem of agricultural development in terms of the inability of credit institutions to devise satisfactory linkage mechanisms for agriculture.[112] This problem underscores the dilemma posed by the region's structural dualism, namely, whether it is possible to devise a system of checks and balances for the dominant system.

Careful reading of Caribbean history shows that joint collective ownership helped to avoid the colonial land tenure system and its harmful consequences with regard to the establishment of families and networks of autonomous social groups. Far from being an obstacle to development, it became the source of all initiatives taken by the freedmen.

In 1966, a unique and pioneering survey of small-scale Dominican farmers conducted by J.B. Yankey shed some light on the quantitative importance of land under the joint collective ownership system. Yankey showed that 73% of the small-scale farmers interviewed were landowners and that the remaining 27% were renters. Of the owners, 33% worked wholly or partially on family lands.

As to the land area under one form or other of tenure, a minority of small-scale farmers (17%) worked exclusively on family lands. Nevertheless, most of the land worked by small-scale agriculture before 1948 (58%) was family land. After the first land distribution scheme in the country's history was undertaken in the early 1950s, a significant proportion of the land (42%) still remained in family hands.[113]

These data are very significant. In so far as they can be generalized and to the degree that empirical studies show the situation in other Caribbean islands to be the same, there is no need to find additional proof of the importance of collectively owned property in the region's social organization.

The fact that the dominant economy was organized differently and that it continued plantations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in no way diminishes the role of the survival strategies that ensured that the population was able to reproduce itself. Indeed, the population did not live off the profits of the dominant economy, nor had it ever done so.

Curiously several reports asserted that collectively owned property was a relic of the Napoleonic Code. One account states that Saint Lucia had:

"an old system of land tenure which is a legacy of the former French occupation. Saint Lucia's Civil Code, based on the Napoleonic

Code, includes sections which deal with Laws of Succession of ascendants and descendants as well as collateral relations."[114]

According to N.J.O. Liverpool, during most of the nineteenth century the laws of Saint Lucia continued deliberately to be those of the French colonial empire prior to 1789.[115] Even if at that time there was no written legislation in the country and that mere planters acted in several instances as judges, it would be very difficult indeed to link these planters to the ideological developments that led to the reforms of Napoleon Bonaparte.

In any case, assuming that joint collective property had any connection with the Napoleonic Code, it should have been as common in France as in Saint Lucia. However, it just so happened that in Saint Lucia the plantations, the properties of white Creoles were not inherited under the system of joint collective property. Why then would the black population have been more respectful of Napoleon's Code than the French or the white Creoles were?

Saint Lucia's black population would have adopted laws of succession based on the Napoleonic Code only if there had been models of Napoleonic families on the island. However, it was impossible for captives and freedmen to have ever been in a position to imitate such a model of family organization.

The specific arrangements provided under the system of joint collective ownership was what prevailed in most territories of the Caribbean. In Jamaica, this form of tenure could definitely not have derived from an "old" French custom. Even in Haiti, it is difficult to believe that such a system could have been of French origin and let alone from the Napoleonic era. We have merely to think about the relations between the two countries during Napoleon's reign and of the fate of the French after the Revolution. Studies of both societies offer more detailed information and a description of those systems as they operated in those circles.[116]

Edith Clarke suggests that in Jamaica, collectively owned property reflected West African principles of land tenure. It was linked to the reproduction of family ties. The concept of family land derived from principles of inheritance and the utilization, not by individual members, but by a group under a specific lineage.

Under traditional beliefs and practices, family lands were bequeathed to "the entire family", or to "all the children", and were also available to groups of related persons who jointly paid the taxes on the land. Clarke notes that in practice "all the children" included those of the same parents and their collaterals.[117]

It is generally believed that the system was established during the period that immediately followed emancipation. Grants of land to former

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plantation labourers were interpreted by the beneficiaries as belonging to the family forever.

Joint collective property offered a solution to the problem of high costs and arcane English civil laws and procedures. Since most of the plots were very small, when the combined costs of registering titles including surveying and lawyers' fees were compared to the commercial value of the land, any attempts to legally divide that land were senseless.

The concept of family lands was used to evade the regulations of English civil codes on inheritance. Such laws contradicted the traditions and customs sanctioned by the community. They did not recognize "illegitimate" children among the heirs. When no "legitimate" heir claimed the land it was confiscated by the Crown.

The concept of legitimate children assumed the existence of nuclear families; but the marginal land was insufficient for maintaining a nuclear family. Jamaican peasants therefore devised joint collective ownership of property or at least re-established an African tradition which had its own concepts of family and inheritance.[118]

Haitian principles of land tenure were quite similar to those of Jamaica. Serge Larose highlights their relationships with religion and the composition of the family group. He submits that there is a large variety of forms and cycles of development linked to collective ownership.

He distinguishes between self-sustaining units that use only family labour and residential or *lakou* units comprising consanguineous families and tenants; he stresses that the *lakou* is a group of nuclear families, each of which occupies a separate housing unit and shares a common yard.[119]

It is remarkable that French or English-based Creole languages use the same word *cour* or *yard* to express a concept which neither in France nor in Great Britain would be a Caribbean "yard". This is a clear example of the semantic similarities of Caribbean languages and their differences with the European languages from which they borrow vocabulary.

Moreover, this example illustrates the difficulty of differentiating between the Caribbean culture and the dominant cultures. European labels are used in the region to indicate institutions and things which have nothing in common with the Western environment.

In Haiti, anyone could begin a *lakou* if he owned land. Larose stresses, however, that the first *lakou* apparently date from the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were established on properties distributed to the soldiers who had fought in the wars of independence.

Religion was of capital importance to the family group of a *lakou*. The *lakou* can be described as "a model of social organization developed under

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an elaborate religious system containing the main elements of continuity with the past".[120] It might also be defined as a unit of worship organized around a church.

Larose, like Clarke, makes the same distinction between inherited land (*tè éritié*) and acquired land (*tè achté*). The resemblance between Haiti and Jamaica is even more striking when one looks at the rights of members of the *lakou* to use their land.

Larose states that all those who did not have the means to live otherwise were entitled to residence in a *lakou*. The *lakou* provided them with a kind of security in terms of both religion and family ties.

The reason why the system of joint collective ownership existed in most of the Caribbean islands and not in Europe is simple. The specific trait of the system of family property was not a basic participation in a common inheritance. Although this principle no doubt contradicted the right of primogeniture which characterized the principles of inheritance in feudal Europe, the mere fact of subdividing inheritance among all the descendants of the owner did not in itself, produce a system of collective ownership.

In addition to the distribution of the inheritance among all those entitled to it, none of the heirs could transfer such rights; after a few generations, all persons of the same descent became co-owners. In this case, the community or a reconstituted clan became the custodian of the property rights.

Joint collective property was defined by the inalienability of the right to inheritance. From this point of view, it seemed clear that any line of reasoning even slightly related to the liberalism of nineteenth-century Europe would not countenance such an institution. What was denied in joint collective property was the *jus uti et abuti*, the right to use and misuse one's property recognized by all Europeans regardless of whether the right of primogeniture was applicable or not.

The problem posed by joint collective property was all the more interesting in that there did not appear to be a similar prohibition in the inheritance of any other property apart from land. That is why Dominica's motto seems to be particularly suited to the Caribbean mentality. *Après Dieu, la terre.*

Land by its very nature is collective property. However, this does not mean that it is the property of an abstract community like the Occidental nations. Empirical data refer to family networks, which remain circumscribed despite unlimited prospects for expansion.

In order to be adopted as the basic institution for the social organization that materialized after slavery, the conception of relationships between

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human beings and natural resources embraced by joint collective ownership had to be compatible with the circumstances under which the Caribbean peasantry developed. Family lands and inheritance laws and how they were passed on and utilized constituted a direct response to the colonial policy of monopolizing natural resources and over-individualizing the labour force.

The system of joint collective ownership was in fact a monopoly of the community that opposed the control of the colonial State and metropolitan sanctions by avoiding them. The system silently and constantly disobeyed the principles on which the recruitment of labour to sustain the dominant economy were based.

This manner of opposing an obstacle by avoiding it was one of the most common survival strategies in the Caribbean. The population found in joint collective ownership a mechanism that enabled it to break the economic stranglehold of the planters on land and people. It was a unique societal plan, combined resources, a family organization, a language, a religion and symbolic systems into a palpable utopia. In a word, it was the main-stay of the counter-plantation.

The response of collectively owned family property to the scattering of plots owned by peasants was to consolidate landed property. The system's solution to the dispersal of families as a result of labour migrations was an indivisible and deeply-rooted family nucleus. In response to the difficulties that the nuclear family faced in taking care of its members under colonialism, the counter-plantation transformed community organizations into meaningful family units.

The networks of *lakou* (yards) were responsible for maintaining and passing on traditions, collective security, some aspects of identity and forms of loyalty able to resist dispersion over time and space. As suggested by Erna Brodber in a remarkable study, a *lakou* system seemed to exist.[121]

The author identifies 23 different types of yards. Some of them have a residential connotation such as the yards or estates built by the government or the yards comprising rented houses; other units have a religious connotation such as *Church Yard*, *Bedward Church Yard*, *Balm Yard*, *Obeah Yard*;[122] finally, others are utilitarian and are represented by commercial, industrial, coal deposit or forage yards.

All the inhabitants of residential yards had several activities in common such as taking care of children, the sexual education of adolescents, cooking, toilet facilities and the use of water fountains. In the late nineteenth century, the yards served as a link between the peasantry and the dominant system. Brodber presents this function in the following terms:

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"For Jamaicans of all derivations, (...) the meaning of the term Yard (becomes) a place where novitiates into a wage economy wait to have their labour hired and their goods bought."[123]

A comparison has to be made between the plantation society of the nineteenth century and this outline of a Caribbean alternative. On one hand, the planters, and to a lesser extent the colonial authorities, tried desperately to copy the forms of economic and social organization of the eighteenth century within an international context that was obviously unfavourable. On the other hand, the people of the Caribbean tried to introduce new forms of social and economic organization as well as new crops and fresh farming methods and techniques.

The colonial authorities and planters did not care about the reproduction of the population and even less about its education. They used their meagre financial resources to import workers from other islands and indentured labourers from Europe (Portugal) and Asia. The freedmen, on the other hand, tried to devise ways and means of bringing about endogenous development. Before praising the virtues of modern agriculture based on financial capital, greater attention should be paid to W. K. Marshall's discovery:

> "Peasant activity modified the character of the original pure
> plantation economy and society. The peasants were the innovators
> in the economic life of the community. Besides producing a great
> quantity and variety of subsistence food and livestock they
> introduced new crops and/or reintroduced old ones. This diversified
> the basically monocultural pattern. Bananas, coffee, citrus,
> coconuts, cocoa and logwood in Jamaica; cocoa, arrowroot, spices,
> bananas and logwood in the Windward Islands; these were the main
> export crops subsequently adopted by the planters and became
> important elements in the export trade by the 1870's. All of these
> crops did not succeed. In addition, the success of the peasants in
> combating attacks of disease on crops like cocoa and bananas was
> always severely limited by their shortage of resources of capital and
> knowledge."[124]

As a result of technological progress and the managerial skills of the freedmen, a market economy was established in the Caribbean; it was precarious because of many obstacles invented by the colonial authorities and their lieutenants. In that connection, share cropping was situated between an obsolete plantation system and the comprehensive development of mixed farming that should have followed the successive revolutions of captives and the uprisings organized throughout the nineteenth century by the freedmen.

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The colonial governments deliberately obstructed the development of private initiatives and free enterprise among the peoples of the Caribbean. They did their best to ensure that the people did not have a wide range of economic options to choose from. They reduced to a strict minimum the chances of developing the only viable alternative to the plantation economy by denying the population access to capital resources and destroying any evolution towards a healthy market economy.

The monopoly of arable land by the colonial empires and the scattering and breaking up of the population were countered by the establishment of completely new and innovative institutions:

> "The alternatives foreshadowed by the presence and activity of the peasants had great social significance as well. *The peasants initiated the conversion of the plantation territories into modern societies. In a variety of ways they attempted to build local self-generating communities.* They founded villages and markets, they built churches and schools, they clamoured for extension of educational facilities, for improvements in communication and markets; they started the local co-operative movement."[125]

The peasants organized their own community life, kept their languages distinct from those of the metropolises and introduced forms of economic organization which led to a type of full employment, forcing planters to import indentured labourers. Finally, they integrated their languages, religions, landed property, families and communities into an organized system.

The peasants created a people from a population and forged a nation from the colonial categories of captives, emancipated slaves and indentured labourers.

The Caribbean's collective thought and local culture were produced in a context controlled by one of the most hostile institutions any labour force had ever known. Scientific research should not merely discover the abstract principles that shaped an era whose characteristics as a whole are not understood by the average person. Such a macro-sociological approach is not sufficient.

Sociology must update the basic principles of social practice and understand the possible evolution of the populations of the region. By explaining why people think as they do, sociology helps them not only to shape their era according to their world view, but also to create a State that is coherent with their culture.

The Caribbean nations differ from others in that they were not created in an effort to overcome the rigours of the physical environment nor from

a collective defence of their common inheritance against land-craving neighbours. Their solidarity stems from their resistance to forms of oppression that attempt to invade the nooks and crannies of their daily life. The world outside the Caribbean is not defined by geographical frontiers.

The complicated situation in which the peoples of the region found themselves was created by the marginal nature of resources which were made available to them following evaluations carried out under social systems that were foreign to their ways of thinking. The utilization of such "marginal" resources helped to reproduce and strengthen their forms of collective solidarity. As time went by, the method of exploitation became increasingly effective.

The interaction between the counter-plantation and the plantation produced a vicious circle. More efficient popular crops accentuated the original marginality of the available resources. Far from promoting the insertion of such resources into the dominant economic systems, such increased efficiency alienated them further from the dominant system.

It should be noted, however, that the dominant systems were not viable because they were more rational or more logical. The plantation did not earn its place in the economic geography of the nineteenth century because it was rational. The dominant system was viable because it was imposed by force.

The subordinate people of the Caribbean could not be persuaded that the mechanisms of domination that kept the plantation alive were necessary. Thus, the gap between their culture and that of the oppressors was maintained as long as the effects of domination remained.

There are no states in the region whose political structure and ideology make them specifically Caribbean nations. The states that are an instrument of negotiation with the former metropolises. It should be stressed in concluding this chapter that, although there are no States that are profoundly national in nature, this does not mean that no distinct and cohesive nations exist. These are issues that are not directly linked to each other.

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Chapter 6

ECONOMIES WITHOUT MARKETS

1. Introduction

During the golden age of slave plantations, the Caribbean economy was part of the imperial economies. The international market did not exist. Rivalries between the big powers were settled on the battlefields.

The international market appeared in the nineteenth century with the rise in liberalism. Plantations tried to keep out of free trade.

For the colonial élites without any experience of relations other than the trade monopoly system, the international market was not where their enterprises interacted with other units of the same type. They made every effort to redefine their relations with their respective metropolis, hoping in so doing to avoid competition.

The fact that the Caribbean economies were part of the Western system did not mean that they operated like the Western economies. This chapter does not intend to define the laws that underpinned the Caribbean economy. Its purpose is to identify all the social relationships that produced and duplicated the endemic poverty of the population and its age-old backwardness when compared to the rich societies.

Attention will be focused on the contemporary period. The Caribbean has the sad privilege of containing one of the poorest countries in the whole world. Social scientists are obviously interested in scarcity and shortages, since scarcity and shortages are, by definition, the usual pre-requisites of development. The aim of scientific research is to understand the mechanism that triggers endogenous development. At the same time, such research indicates how endemic poverty can be overcome.

The present document points out that in social sciences the meaningful unit of analysis is social intercourse itself. A description of poverty does not entail drawing up a table of shortcomings but rather presenting relationships between the rich and the poor.

The premise of social change is that the modification of a situation deemed unacceptable depends not on the generosity or pity shown by the dominant system but on negotiations between the parties concerned. Such negotiations are better co-ordinated when they are institutionalized.

We have already submitted that the agricultural worker of the region is not a proletarian but a free man. He is a liberated or emancipated slave and consequently a worker in a specific system and a prisoner who is subject to the definitions of that system.

We have attempted to show that such circumstances do not define the range of choices open to the freedmen. We have also seen that although such choices are endogenous they do not produce steady improvements in their standards of living.

At the end of the previous chapter, we quoted from a passage by the historian W.K. Marshall on the "adoption" by the planters of the innovations introduced into agriculture by the Caribbean peasantry. The full significance of this observation should not be underestimated because it actually indicates how poverty occurred and was maintained at the national and regional levels.

Obviously, the planters did not merely adopt the innovations of peasant agriculture. Export-oriented production and trade were so closely linked in the local economies that the planters capitalized all development and prevented any trickle-down effects on the rest of the population.

In the following paragraphs, we will try to trace the history of the planters and traders. Bankrupt plantations did not affect the planters and their allies. They maintained their dominant positions in the face of severe economic crises. We must find out how they managed to preserve their preeminence despite the modest life-styles that they sometimes maintained.

How did the planters ensure that the peasants always remained poorer than they? What was the reason why the peasants and planters did not become farmers or heads of capitalist agricultural enterprises?

2. Caribbean poverty

Some features of the plantation remained unchanged throughout its history. It should always be remembered that the plantation was established by the large trading companies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and that it always remained dependent on trading activities.

Two types of workers: i) wage earners and ii) indentured labourers and captives were employed in export agriculture. This chapter does not deal

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with the former, who were employed in the public or private services sector. The latter group, indentured labourers and captives were manual workers.

It has already been seen that the plantation system made no provision for the natural reproduction of the labour force that it used. It needed a steady inflow of workers, captives or indentured labourers to be able to operate properly. However, regardless of the turnover rate of the labour force, the system had to ensure that the energy used by the workers was replenished. The workers had to be housed, fed, clothed and looked after.

On the plantations, the captive labour force was used to produce export crops, while food for their sustenance was bought from local importers. It was often said of the Caribbean economy that it produced what it did not consume and consumed what it did not produce.

In the times of slavery, the slave owners were responsible for replacing the energy used up by their workers. The governments of the colony were not responsible for the internal administrative problems of the plantations.

Of course, the colonial administration set out regulations relating to discipline at work sites and urged owners to see to the welfare of their captives. The captives' food and health, the care of children, the sick and the elderly, the police, the administration of justice, religious instruction, leisure activities and so on all fell under the planters' management of their private property. The planters were free to use and abuse such property.[124]

On the large, complex estates, the captives were sometimes allocated plots of land where they could grow their own food outside "working hours", instead of being provided with imported food. The metropolitan Powers did their utmost to encourage this practice.

Thus, in private life, a system was established for replenishing the energy lost through work and for eventually ensuring the reproduction of the labour force. It should be noted that these were either activities that occurred after the normal day's work was over or activities whose products could circulate only on the fringes of the economic system.

With the abolition of the slave trade and general emancipation, the colonial State compensated those who lost "their" labour (i.e., workers) and took measures to ensure that such "labour" did not find any alternative employment. The State was not always concerned about the welfare of the population and the public services that it lacked.

The agricultural workers might have become a landless proletariat had they been paid subsistence wages all year long or had they been offered other jobs. A plantation system based on a limited supply of labour had to devise a means of ensuring the reproduction of that labour force in order to

keep production cycles going. That was why the marginal agricultural enterprises that mushroomed were tolerated.

The planters felt –and many historians agree– that subsistence farms were the embryo of peasant agriculture. The structural limitations of subsistence farms, which set them apart from European, African and Latin American peasant organizations should not be overlooked.

Peasant agriculture in the Caribbean could not be a normal economic activity in the sense of a venture capable of limitless growth and development. It relied on the same "limited" source of labour and arable land. Plantations were eliminated from economic geography, as they were in Haiti during the entire nineteenth century.

It was noted in chapter 5 that after emancipation the authorities protected the monopoly of land held by the planters. Moreover, they took various measures to force labourers to work on the plantations.

The plans of the colonial authorities did not make any provisions for workers to lead their private lives as they wished. Their living conditions could not be improved at the expense of the labour force required by the plantations.

The freedman was basically a person whose freedom was exercised within limits imposed by others. Such limitations made him poor.

By observing the system of sugar cane cultivation we have been able to define this category of worker. Attention has been focused on his methods of bargaining. We have seen the birth of agricultural workers' unions, their development into labour parties and their decline. We have also indicated that slaves were freed following the employment of migrant workers.

After concluding in the previous chapter that the counter-plantation and its institutions constituted the backbone of nationhood and Caribbean culture, we must now analyse how the planters saw the role played by the counter-plantation. Specifically, we must describe to what extent planters tolerated subsistence farms and saw them as true reflections of colonial society.

The freedman was a worker who was neither allowed to define nor to take part in defining his economic options. A behaviour model was planned and imposed on him.

A study of how the foregoing was accomplished will show how the planters evolved. There is no need to deduce such evolution by making comparisons with forms of production that were typical of other social contexts. The survival strategy of the dominant social category could be observed in action.

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The end of the slave trade opened up two development options for Caribbean agriculture. An internal market could have evolved where the free play of market forces would have led to the establishment of modern agriculture. What actually happened was the alternative option, namely, a series of measures that were designed not to protect the local market –an error of perspective that was too often committed– but to protect the owners of official economic institutions.

In order to ensure the growth of an export-oriented agricultural economy with a limited supply of labour, provision had to be made for cheap labour. Raw materials had to be produced or purchased cheap in order to leave enough of a margin for fixing production costs.

The plantation system had to produce consumer items on the subsistence farms or to purchase them on the international market. The money value of locally-produced food was established on the basis of what it would have cost had it been imported.

In the eighteenth century, the produce bought from the local farm markets had to be cheaper than imported food. That situation did not change after emancipation; otherwise traders would have seen to it that prices were reduced. The more the prices of imported food declined, the lower was the value of farm output.

The farms had two outlets for their products. Part of their output went to satisfy the demand of the production services or urban sector; the other part was used to feed the workers themselves.

Improvements in peasant mixed farming increased the social costs of plantation labour. The supply of labour was probably less than what a plantation economy required.

The estates required surplus, cheap labour. The counter-plantation required a few days of well-paid labour.[125] If the value of consumer goods was directly proportional to that of imported goods, the number of man-days that the freedman was prepared to offer on the market increased in proportion to the decline in the prices of imported goods.

The resources upon which the rural population depended for its reproduction consisted of the value of peasant production plus the earnings of agricultural workers for plantation work. If, as the population grew, more farmland could have been made available to it, the system would have been able to produce the labour needed.

Initially, as the supply of labour rose steadily following the opening up of new land, labour costs declined and the prices of export crops became competitive. Things moved towards a point of equilibrium between the small-scale farms and the estates.

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Assuming the plantation and counter-plantation developed without any restraints, a measure of equilibrium would have been attained when the most complex unit in terms of capital invested and division of labour was not able to operate without securing a minimum of labour and the consumer items required to cover the living expenses of such labour.

Next would come a period when increased production would reduce labour costs through the injection of heavier doses of capital and technology. At that point, piecework would become obsolete. The employer would have to ensure that a certain number of hours of work were performed and a certain level of productivity was attained. Wages proper would emerge in the rural areas.

A domestic market would be created. Money would circulate among the peasantry. The costs of production factors would inevitably have to be compared. Destitution would give way to relative poverty.

This model assumes that the planter put his product on the market at his own risk, that prices of producer services were determined by the laws of supply and demand and were included in the planter's production costs if he used such services. It assumes that the consumer goods used in urban areas were supplied by the local farms at prices below those of the international market.

The flow of local consumer goods among rural and urban workers would gradually lead to a single wage scale. As money was used as a means of payment for the trade in goods produced by counter-plantations, capitalization prospects for counter-plantations would develop.

Farms would tend to specialize. As a result of competition from imported goods their productivity would improve steadily. A greater division of labour would stimulate the application of new technologies and mixed farms would develop into modern family farms geared to the local market. A dividing line would appear between agricultural workers and purely peasant families.

Plantations would have shed their mercantile aura. Their momentum of growth would have transformed the agriculture-based export economy into an agroindustrial and industrial economy that sold its surpluses on external markets.

The poverty observed in the Caribbean countryside was not related in any way to the standard of living indices. All peoples have gone through periods of shortages. Such shortages are not overcome in order to develop. Development is achieved by overcoming such shortages.

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We want to show that it is not the market that triggers the marginalization of large strata of the population. On the contrary, such marginality disappears if the laws of competition are respected.

Although the counter-plantation and plantation were opposing systems, they could still compromise. What is not clear is how in the end one of them was absorbed by the other.

It should be noted that the ideal model above assumes that economic decisions respected the free choices of all the actors. The Caribbean actually developed in a totally different direction. Political forces intervened at any time in the production process. The region's economic history is in fact the history of the intervention of such political forces.

After the slaves had been freed, measures taken to "settle" the freedmen consisted of preventing the free movement of the labour force and hence preventing the development of a labour exchange. Such measures were political. The controlling power of the colonial authorities varied according to the aptitudes of individual territories.

In some fertile and underpopulated territories, a rich and well structured peasant agriculture was organized. It was based on two factors: the maroon (black settler) economy and the subsistence farm markets. In such cases, the number of days that the freedmen were prepared to offer to the export sector were few and expensive.

The factors responsible for surplus food production also created conditions that favoured the cultivation of export crops, provided the problem of labour costs could be resolved. We have seen that the bargaining power of the freedmen was undermined as a result of the recruitment of indentured workers.

The planters of the Guyanas, Trinidad, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and, to a smaller extent Jamaica, used that strategy. They artificially reduced the price of labour and during a fairly long period managed to offer their products at competitive prices.

When similar strategies isolated the counter-plantation from the plantation, the trade in produce grown in gardens and consumed by the freedmen became a disguised form of barter. Capital accumulation was not conceivable in such rural food markets. Peasant production, which was part of the "real wages" of agricultural workers, was able to develop on squatted land. However, it did not stimulate economic growth.

As a result of the continuing surplus of manpower with no bargaining skills (bossales) on the labour market, the freedmen never evolved into wage-earning agricultural workers. They became trapped between the two systems as pieceworkers.

A policy of importing indentured labour prevented the plantation from having any linkage effects on the counter-plantation. The counter-plantation was forced to develop in isolation. This happened on the islands where, for one reason or another, the plantations could not flourish or went bankrupt.

Under such conditions, poverty was widespread regardless of the volume of food available. The evidence collected by the Royal Commission of 1897 shows that such analyses on the nature of poverty in the Caribbean are not new:

"Their condition (of the poor) (is) worse now than formerly; a great number are in want, not in want of food in the country *but almost anything else*, nor many earn wages."[126]

The importance of work on the plantations stemmed from the fact that since the services required to keep activities going in the rural areas were not offered by the former owners of labour nor by the State, the freedmen had to provide them or purchase them. The rural communities tried no doubt to satisfy their basic needs but they could not produce all the basic services within the framework of free villages.

The health services, formal education and instruction in the dominant language which were indispensable in dealing with official institutions were not accessible to them.[127]

As the village societies could not provide all the services they needed to be able to thrive, there was one aspect of the freedman's "real wages" which did not have any exchange value. It had to be acquired at all costs; this led to an emigration of the peasant labour force even in the expanding peasant societies.

As André Corten said in reference to Haiti, the function of migration was not to earn more but to save some money.[128]

Such emigration was caused by the fact that the plantation society was unable to provide the population with basic services or means of acquiring such services. When the plantation sector was affected by a crisis and even the towns lacked social welfare services, the whole society was in trouble. In the cases where the plantation crisis was compounded by failure of the peasant economy or heavy imports of foodstuffs, migration quickly turned into exodus.

The situation of the territories where the plantation economy received steady inflows of migrant labourers, was however, different from that of the territories where the plantation economy went bankrupt. In the latter case, the cash requirements of the peasant economy were satisfied through the production of export crops even within the counter-plantation system. That

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was what happened in Haiti, which grew coffee, and in Dominica, Saint Vincent and Saint Lucia, which raised bananas.

In the above-mentioned cases, mixed farming gave way to specialization of family enterprises. No economic theory can explain why such specialization did not lead to the development of a capitalist economy.

The new and aggravating situation, which was not experienced by the ordinary agricultural worker, was the fact that it was impossible to organize "unions". These independent workers did not have any employers with whom they could quarrel. They managed to survive by producing more and more export crops. On the other hand, the entire population was forced to purchase imported food. The local market-garden economy was destroyed. Emigration became depopulation.

In the rest of this chapter, we will show what became of the planters when the plantations went bankrupt. We will see that their systematic destruction of the market was designed to maintain the prestige and security of the local plantocracies, which had been transformed into consignees.

3. Planters and the market

The plantation economies of the contemporary Caribbean have preferred to operate with foreign workers. It would be useful to prepare a model of an exploitation colony and its relations with the metropolises in order to discuss the processes of decolonization in the Caribbean.

It is not clear how a colonial economy became a national economy. The plantation, which was the basic institution of the regional economy was not able to operate with nationals, i.e., citizens.

The Caribbean economy was created by mercantilism. Its dynamism was generated by its special links with the outside world, which evolved from mercantilism to monopoly capitalism; however, the links between the regional economy and the world economy did not change. In the Caribbean it was observed that i) external "trade" dominated; ii) that economic (though not necessarily productive) activities capable of satisfying this type of external "trade" prevailed; iii) that the political and administrative apparatus played a key role in the development of the domestic economy; and iv) that the population depended on a number of counter-plantation economic activities to reproduce itself.

The reference to the predominance of external "trade" does not have anything to do with trading products on a market where States, countries or "overseas" units interacted with each other. In his chapter on sugar

production, Sidney Mintz aptly quotes from a paragraph of John Stuart Mill where the latter argues along such lines.

Mill asserts that the West Indian colonies should not be considered as countries with their own production capital; they were areas where England deemed it suitable to produce crops it was interested in by investing its own capital in order to satisfy its exclusive requirements.

The crops produced by the West Indies were not sent to England to be exchanged for products that the inhabitants of the colonies needed. Their owners sent them to England to be sold for profit.

"The trade with the West Indies is hardly to be considered an external trade, but more resembles the traffic between town and country."[129]

It is difficult to challenge the validity of these arguments without forgetting that the metropolises and their nationals owned the colonies outright. Above all, the inhabitants of the colonies belonged to the metropolitans and their descendants. That was why the mother countries of the colonies hastened to compensate their citizens when they deprived them of some of their ownership rights.

We cannot understand the real relationships between the economy and society in the Caribbean if we use models of autonomous capitalist enterprises. William Davies, leader of the Dominican planters at the end of the nineteenth century, suggested to the Royal Commission of 1897 that it should take certain measures to ensure that the island's economic development was controlled by the planters.

The main condition was that planters should be placed under the State's protection. This would enable them to avoid obstacles stemming from competition. He identified four such obstacles that the British Government itself should eliminate.

First, England should not impose on its colonies unfair competition from beet sugar that was subsidized by the countries of the European "continent". The English islands should not be treated in the same way as foreign countries. Conflicting interests should not be allowed to mar relations between Britain and her colonies which, after all, were part and parcel of Britain.[130]

Secondly, it should be understood that the planters were not economic agents maintaining relations of complementarity with partners in the same milieu. They had to be spared such relations. Their conflicts of interests with the territory's refineries and traders constituted two areas of friction that the State had to eliminate.

Thirdly, according to Davies, the planter had to deal directly with the consumer. He had to be given the ways and means of breaking into the

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metropolitan market. He had to control the manufacture and distribution of sugar with the help of State- supplied capital. He should not have to turn to middlemen, particularly "the clique of West Indian traders", for loans.

The London merchants were the last obstacle to the development of the colonies. The State had to displace them as financiers. The capital required to resuscitate the plantations should be supplied by the Crown itself and not bought on the open market.

"The ruin of the planter being complete, the resuscitation of the industry must commence from the foundation, and the British Government is the *fons et origo malorem*, restitution and help must proceed thence (...). The first step for the British Government to take is the total or partial demolition of the National Free Trade fetish."[131]

Lord Olivier, Chairman of the West India Sugar Commission (1930), without going as far as Davies, said that the mother country had the *moral* obligation to protect planters from free competition.

"I have no desire to avoid or dissemble the basal issue, which is –do we prefer to have cheaper sugar or to preserve our oldest colonies, which regard themselves as part of our community. (...) Our imperial State definitely and constitutionally, and especially in the West Indies, by a profound and indestructible historical sentiment, includes our own Crown colonies. Our Imperial economy includes the Colonial sugar industry which actually supplies one-third of our own consumption. The Imperial Government apparently is not prepared to regard these colonies as having any claim except the luck of the open market. (...) We should naturally assume that it would not be possible for any British Government to take the view that they should leave them simply to the chances of the market and not take some special measures to keep these industries and colonies going."[132]

Lord Olivier's view, with which William Davis naturally concurs, is that, if the government "leaves the colonies to the chances of the market":

"... in despair, the whole of the West Indies will have to turn to the United States for help, as the paramount power in this continent. Failing justice from Great Britain, we must try to shame the Britons into doing their duty."[133]

Since the planters and representatives of the metropolises did not consider the plantation an economic enterprise similar to any other, at least up until 1930, one wonders why the social sciences persist in doing so. For planters to be considered as economic agents, the value added in the colony, which had to be paid by the plantation's clients for the production cycle to begin again, has to be calculated.

In the nineteenth century, as in the era of large trading companies, the planter secured all his production inputs from a consignee. When the crops were harvested, they were handed over to the trader, who sold them.

The value of the advances made to the planter and the consignee's commission were deducted from the proceeds of the sale of foodstuffs and the balance went to the planter. This was the type of export trade that both English and French colonies practiced. Michael Sleeman calls it *the consignee system*.[134]

The produce of the plantations was therefore neither exported nor imported and the metropolitan market was not an "external" market. Planters did not have direct access to the consumers and made profits only through consignees.

Consignees did not take any risks. They provided a service and charged commissions regardless of the going prices. Obviously, such consignees, as their name indicated, did not buy the planters' produce. They took it in as deposits.

Like intermediate products within the same enterprise, colonial crops had no real value in the colonies. Their cost was not based on operations carried out within the colonies. This cost comprised capital advances, consignees' commissions and transport costs.

The adjustment margin for production costs was therefore very small.[135] That was why competition frightened planters.

In conclusion, although there was an international market, the Caribbean did not really offer its products for sale on that market. European trading companies did so on its behalf. Production advances, including foreign capital received by the region, were not imports aimed at meeting the population's needs but imports designed to enable the "owners" to keep the production cycles going.[136]

The problem here was basically one of converting the original property rights of the trading companies in the colonies into property rights of the economic agents who intended to operate in those colonies.

In the previous chapters we saw that the peasantry introduced a number of social and economic changes. We wonder why the planters were unable to find some solutions to the problems facing their businesses. The conditions of economic growth of the plantations were probably not always favourable. Such conditions cannot, however, explain why the planters were such poor managers.

The peasants lacked capital, protection, markets and large volumes of output. They would not even have existed if the external conditions of economic growth had been as important as the planters thought they were.

The economic failure of the planters was not attributable to the scarcity of capital, the smaller profit margin or the conditions of the international market. Such conditions could account, however, for the economic failure of the plantations (which should not be confused with the failure of the planters).

Planters should not be compared to entrepreneurs in capitalist economies. Such entrepreneurs took risks to place products on the market. The principles of the capitalist economy affected their decisions, and their skill lay in trying to manipulate the market in their favour.

The planter's revenues were not profits. They did not depend on how skilfully he manage the uncertainties of the productive system. He did not use his imagination to change his output to reflect the costs of inputs. Theoretically, he owned the produce of his plantation. But he entrusted the task of selling his produce to others over whom he had no control whatsoever.

The planter was at the mercy of trade laws. His behaviour resembled that of an employee who dreams only of increasing his earnings by making the least possible effort.

The difficulty in defining the planter stems from the mistaken belief that he mostly operated in economic circles. The plantation system was not a stage in economic development; it neither resulted from nor preceded any form of production. The plantation was a product of politics and it thrived in the political arena.

Thus, the planter moved in many other areas that had nothing to do with economics. In the political and ideological spheres which he understood better than market forces, he was not a failure.

4. The freedmen and the market

Sugar cane, without any doubt, was the most typical colonial crop. The sugar companies generally operated as self-sufficient enclaves. They produced almost all the sugar cane that was milled in their factories and purchased on the average at least 20% of their raw materials from medium-sized producers or "contributors".

The entire working population was, so to speak, part of the agro-industrial complex. If, as we saw, the planter's margin for making economic decisions was limited, that of the worker was or should have been insignificant or, more likely, nil.

Banana production was different. Bananas were not processed before leaving the country. Moreover, they started being cultivated after the

general emancipation, that is, when workers became full-fledged economic agents. Unlike sugar cane, bananas were mostly grown on farms and the bulk of production was supplied by the smallest farms.

Sugar and bananas were distributed differently on the international market. In the case of sugar, we saw that some mill owners or their associations discussed with the metropolitan governments the degree of protection to be accorded to the industry. With respect to bananas, the bulk of producers were organized by local traders, who came to an understanding with transnational enterprises for the product's distribution on external markets in exchange, if possible, for a guarantee from the metropolitan government.

The national production of bananas involved the establishment of associations of local "growers" the majority of whom were peasants; their administrators were traders. The analysis of this arrangement enables us to understand one of the mechanisms through which the market as a local institution was destroyed.

Bananas began to be cultivated in Jamaica in the late nineteenth century. In most of the other territories the banana was developed as an export crop after the Second World War. Its cultivation usually followed the failure of, or a profound crisis in, the sugar industry.

In their studies of banana production, George Beckford and Michael Witter show how the rich mulatto peasants made profits from bananas in order to accumulate wealth and establish themselves as middlemen between small growers and consignees.

These authors inform us that in Jamaica, bananas helped to intensify ties between the freedmen, who worked as labourers, and the independent peasants. There was also more frequent social intercourse between these two sections of the labour force: the dock workers, transport workers and clerks in charge of consolidating, purchasing and dispatching crops. Such intercourse was accompanied by greater involvement of women in the labour market, especially in domestic services.[137]

Banana cultivation therefore brought in its wake a number of interrelated social changes. As we noted at the beginning of the chapter, we would have expected a market economy to develop.

Saint Lucia and Dominica were monoproducers of bananas. A study of their production of bananas helps to illustrate how, as the land area under colonial sugar shrank, several institutionalized arrangements were established 1) to pass on to the less fortunate political actors the risks of these new ventures, and 2) to avoid the obstacles that caused the failure of colonial sugar production.

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Since the bulk of cane used in sugar production was cultivated on the plantations themselves, social conflicts stemmed from the fixing of labourers' "wages". The price paid to "contributors" for the cane they supplied became a secondary problem. We have seen the political consequences of that system.

The expansion of banana cultivation and its substitution for sugar cane undoubtedly caused the decline in the political power of the "unions".[138] The planters and traders united under the umbrella of various national banana "growers'" associations in which independent peasants were invited to participate. The social negotiations that affected the population's welfare were entrusted to these groups of large growers and traders.

In the areas where sugar cane plantations dominated the economic system, the bi-polar structure of the society was almost palpable. The economic interests of the majority of the population were focused on the production of sugar cane in exchange for satisfactory standards of living. Owners and workers belonged to separate categories.

Outside the sugar industry, in so far as the population had access to plots of land under some form of tenure, conflicts between the big owners and peasants were not generally expressed in visible social movements.[139] There were no legal channels for arbitrating such conflicts, and political forces were so unevenly matched that an armed struggle was unthinkable.

From emancipation until the first half of the twentieth century, a compromise was struck between large estates that specialized mainly in the production of export crops, and small farms devoted mainly to the production of foodcrops. Land was unevenly distributed, but since the large estates and small-scale farms had different objectives,[140] they evolved without any major social clashes between them.

The conflicts that arose between big and small landowners had to do with the distribution of land resources and were resolved in political terms and not on the basis of economic principles. The economic negotiations that were held during that period took place within the sugar industry. The agricultural workers became the spokesmen for the labour force.

The introduction of bananas and their production on a large scale at the end of the 1940s caused fundamental changes in the compromise between large landowners and small-scale farmers. Self-generating development based on banana cultivation was capitalized by the local traders and big planters through the banana associations.

The purpose of the negotiations between the associations and the growers was how to distribute the revenue that accrued to the territory for

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its entire production. We will later show the special distribution process for such revenue and the measures taken to stifle any negotiation.

The banana associations were established from the 1930s onwards. They went into crisis during the Second World War and resuscitated during the postwar period.

In 1958, the Commission of Enquiry chaired by Milton Cato defined the members of the Board of Management of the Dominica Banana Association as people who controlled the purchase of bananas for their own profits. The Board was also depicted either as a class of old members, some of whom devoted their time to purchasing bananas from growers and reselling them to the Association as their own products, or as members of the ruling class.[141]

The Saint Lucia Association, which was established in 1953 by five planters, a trader and an accountant, did not claim to be a commercial enterprise. Its articles of association stated that it was established to promote self-help among its members and not to make profits but to act as an agent for the growers who were registered as members of the Association.[142]

The first Saint Lucia Banana Growers' Association was dissolved in 1967. In August of the same year an act of the Legislative Assembly replaced it by a State enterprise with monopoly on all transactions related to bananas.[143]

In 1967, 17 000 growers registered with the Saint Lucia Banana Growers' Association. By 1977-1978, there were only 6 400 members.[144] The growers of Saint Lucia were divided into four categories: "growers", "small growers", "medium growers", and "big growers", depending on their volume of transactions. The "growers" and "small growers" (99.4% of the members) accounted at the end of 1970 for about 65% of the country's banana output.[145]

The Association's Board of Management was made up of representatives of "big growers" (0.1% of the total membership). There were five in 1977 and six in 1978. Two representatives were allocated to the "medium growers" (0.5% of the membership or 31 persons). The "small growers", who accounted for less than 10% of the membership, also had two representatives.

There were 5 500 "growers" representing 90% of the members of the Association. The "growers" could not be elected to the decision-making organs. The "big and medium growers", that is, 0.6% of the members, therefore dominated the Board of Management. The Legislative Assembly made them consignees of the Board.

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Growers were classified according to their volume of "production" and not by the land area of their establishments. However, it should be noted that farms of 200 acres or more accounted for 0.6% of all the agricultural holdings in Saint Lucia in 1976 and took up 52.7% of the total land area under cultivation.[146]

In Dominica, bananas took up 52% of the farm area under cultivation. As in Saint Lucia, the bulk of the banana output came from small producers, even though they had the smallest portion of arable land.

"By the end of 1952 (...) almost 60% of the output of bananas for export comes from peasants and possibly half of this is from squatted land."[147]

J.M. Marie observed a similar situation in the 1960s,[148] which must have deteriorated gradually in view of the tendency to subdivide smallholdings even further.[149] In 1961, farms of 100 acres and above accounted for about 1% of the country's farms, and took up 55% of the arable land.

One study noted that towards 1960-1961, about 50% of estate land was not being cultivated.[150] Another study found that 65% of the land occupied by big estates was not under cultivation, compared to 49% for farms of 5 to 50 acres and 3% for farms of less than an acre.[151]

Accordingly, J.A.N. Burra in his report on land administration in Dominica recommended in vain:

> "There is no alternative but to recommend the introduction of land tax upon lands classed as *Agriculturally productive which are unworked*. The tax should be such as either to encourage idle and absentee landowners to work the land or to sell it."[152]

The best lands remained idle and the food crop farms were used to produce the main export crop. In order to improve the yields of marginal growers, the Banana Association supplied them with fertilizers and pesticides, and insured them against hurricanes and other natural disasters.

The inevitable failures to improve the productivity of these farms justified the lack of confidence in the administration of the Banana Association.[153] To understand this "development strategy" it should be noted that even though the small growers did not have a hand in the decisions taken they had to reimburse the expenditures made to improve the yield of their crop. It should also be borne in mind that the Association had the monopoly of all transactions relating to the banana industry. In brief, the more the Association spent on promoting marginal activities, the bigger commission it earned.

The grower's total earnings were calculated on the basis of what was known as the green market price of the banana delivered to London

merchants. From that amount the expenses of the commercial agent (the transnational company Geest W. I., Ltd.) were deducted; the remainder was the base price paid to the banana associations.

In turn, the associations deducted from the base price their current expenses, that is, expenses in respect of administration, packaging, internal transport, plant disease control, the costs of fertilizers advanced to the growers, the costs of other credits and their supervision as well as other contributions such as insurance costs. The remainder was the price received by the grower.

"The price received by the grower is arrived at only after Geest has deducted from the green market price per ton, 40% for freight charges, variable costs, fixed costs and a shrinkage and wastage charge, and after the Banana Association has made a further deduction of 35% for operating expenses and current debt. The association also deducts charges for leaf-spot, spraying, diothene, fertiliser and weedicide purchased on credit."[154]

Apart from the prices of green bananas, none of the other transactions described above were subject to the play of market forces. The banana industry was totally dependent on the transnational enterprise that acted as its commercial agent. The Association had no control whatsoever over the prices of green bananas nor on the costs of the transnational enterprise. It was hardly an exaggeration to say that the Association had no control over the prices it was paid.[155]

The grower had to face so many factors beyond his control that at the end of the production cycle he could even find himself owing money to national and international middlemen.[156] The comments of John Stuart Mill and Williams Davies quoted in chapter 5 are equally relevant here.

What the planters of the nineteenth century used to call the clique of West Indian traders was replaced by the banana associations united under a single regional unit –the West Indian Banana Association (WINBAN). The novelty is that the "clique" today comprises the big growers themselves. As for the freedmen, by legislative decision, they were barred from all transactions and all decision-making.

5. The State and the market

The political authorites gave the banana associations the widest mandate possible to manage the industry. They were generally authorized, as in Dominica, "to rehabilitate banana plantations and stimulate production, to

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market and control the disposal of all bananas produced in the colony of Dominica and intended to be exported therefrom and in addition to control the disposal of all bananas not intended for export but intended to be used either wholly or partially as an ingredient in any manufactured product and to have the general management and control over all matters relating to banana disease throughout the colony."[157]

This mandate revived the economic dualism that had waned as a result of intensive banana production. It meant that urban middlemen had to be involved in handling the bananas if they were to be switched from the distribution channels where surpluses of foodcrop farms were marketed.

Two separate markets were therefore institutionalized: a (marginal) market for the output of market gardens, and a market for commercial agriculture located in Great Britain which was inaccessible to the island's growers. The banana associations were established as a liaison mechanism or as a way of ensuring continuity between two systems of production and consumption.

These legislative decisions destroyed any prospects of the market gardens' entering into competition with each other even to meet large-scale demands for bananas. Small farms were caught up in satisfying the consumption needs of farmers and producing the supplementary foodstuffs needed by a few wage earners to survive.

A key problem prevented the associations from fulfilling their avowed aims. The associations were able to inflate their administrative expenses and the volume and costs of fertilizers and pesticides required with impunity.

Moreover, the institutionalized separation of the production units from the trading companies placed the latter in a good position to protect their profit margins. Since the local market was flooded with cheap imported goods, the peasantry was drawn into consuming greater quantities of "modern" goods. At the same time, the farms tended to produce export crops almost to the exclusion of everything else.

"The study puts in evidence that in farms established before the Banana Boom, 68.7% of the farmers produced for subsistence at the beginning, while none of them did so after the boom. Of the farms established after the introduction of banana, only 3.4% were dedicated to subsistence crops during the first year of production, and logically none of them would do so in subsequent years."[158]

The prospects of meeting the population's basic food and housing requirements from the farms or of exchanging provisions obtained from the farms, vanished. The steady growth in the total value of imports, particularly

food imports, proved this. From 1970 to 1980, food exports rose from US$9.4 to US$10.5 million (EC). Food imports increased from US$7.4 to US$25.7 million (EC).[159]

Thus, the peasants were not able to save and accumulate capital. Outside the market, treasures could be accumulated but not capital. Savings and capital became a "monopoly" of banana associations –which had access to these through third parties–and food importers.

If current agricultural development policies are anything to go by, the capital of enterprises is derived mainly from bank credits. We saw that joint collective ownership of property would, therefore, be the main obstacle to the growth of production and productivity.

Finance capital is a derived and secondary source of investment. Any entrepreneur first invests his own savings and then capital purchased on the market. In the economic organization analysed, it was the State itself that denied the farm administrators access to the profits accruing from any independent economic performance and blocked any prospects of accumulating capital.

Such action by the State did not affect farmers alone. It denied the industrialist the right to dispose of the main commodity and the possibility of processing it. Under the laws in force, agroindustries had to produce higher profits at smaller risks and in shorter periods of time than the banana "trade". The economic relations that should have governed the capital market were nullified by the law.

This level of "export protection" provided to the banana administration was more efficient than any economic measures. The preferential treatment given to the consignees over the farmers and industrialists was the cornerstone of the plantation system and the source of widespread poverty.

The "monopoly" over the banana trade granted to the associations was not obtained through the elimination of less able competitors. Moreover, and contrary to the usual types of monopolistic competition, there was no relation between the prices and volume of transactions. Everything was done through contractual arrangements.

Legislators made reference to banana "sellers". A clause stipulated that new members of the Association must transfer –presumably against payment– ownership rights over a certain quantity of bananas. However, the associations did not buy goods that they would resell; they controlled the disposal of such goods.

Ownership of the bananas was transferred to third parties between the time when the associations acquired the bananas and when their owners

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were paid for them. The transfer of bananas from the growers to the associations was a kind of barter and not a process of supply and demand.

In the same vein, the payments made by foreign traders to the associations and the payments that the associations made to national producers merely represented the allocation of operational costs within divisions of the same enterprise. The family farms at the lower end of the production chain became increasingly poorer instead of becoming modern production units.

The areas where peasants could make autonomous decisions gradually declined and tended to disappear. Independent agricultural production was transformed and led to the absurd development of piecework. This was noted in a report commissioned by the Caribbean Development Bank:

> ... in spite of the appeal of bananas as a source of quick profits the push did not come from below. Indeed, we are of the impression that many are reluctant participants in a system where the small scale nature of production camouflages what is essentially a wage relationship with Geest and the Banana Association.[160]

The economic decision-making powers that were taken away from the individual producers were concentrated in the hands of the associations, which administered the affairs of the territories concerned with the greatest freedom and impunity.

The operations of the banana associations were tainted with incompetence and corruption. From 1958 until 1980, commissions of enquiry succeeded one another in trying to stamp out that blight and force governments to take appropriate measures. In 1958, the Cato Commission reported the following:

> We were astonished to find that in spite of the clearly unsatisfactory state of the Association's affairs Government abandoned its responsibility for carrying out the Association's Audit without ensuring that any alternative arrangements were made. It is no wonder that in these circumstances the accounting system broke down completely and that certain members of the staff left as they were without proper supervision performed their duties in the most unsatisfactory manner.

We would like to point out that during the period under review various Government Officers were ex-officio members of the Board but these officers took little or no steps to influence the Board members nor to bring forcibly to Government's notice the chaotic state of affairs.[161]

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In 1981, a working group under the chairmanship of J.B. Yankey noted in almost identical terms the dishonesty that permeated the system.[162] Special note should be taken of the comments on the incompetence of the Dominica Banana Producers' Association:

> For an industry of such dominant economic importance and extensive scale of operations, it lacks the expected Management team with strong technical base, tested managerial experience and the level of stature to execute action promptly and effectively, particularly as this requires competent and trusted relationship with farmers, DBGA work force, other agriculture field staff, agriculture service institutions, particularly WINBAN, and Aid Donors (...).[163]

The exploitation of workers became difficult to check and was downrightly criminal. Since the population was unable to negotiate the degree of exploitation to which it was subjected, its only option was emigration.

The importance of the banana associations in Dominica and Saint Lucia cannot be said to apply in general to the rest of the Caribbean. In Haiti, for example, whose main crop was coffee, there were no growers' associations. However, as far as the peasants were concerned, the result was the same. Ownership of the crop was not transferred on the basis of market relations,[164] and the peasants did not know about savings and capital.

It should also be added that the current situation in Dominica and Saint Lucia is no longer what was observed at the beginning of the current decade. However, the description we have presented covers nearly half a century of history. It shows that the failure of the plantations is not that of the planters.

The planter is not an economic agent or a captain of industry. His income comes from consecutive political victories.

Chapter 7

DISCOURSE AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduction

The history of a population's impact on the physical and social milieux in which it lives reflects the size of this population, its rate of growth, its differentiation into social groups and categories, and the set of spiritual and material means that enable it to reproduce itself from generation to generation. The daily activities of this population continually update this history and define, on the basis of accumulated experiences, the options open to it.

In a colonized environment, collective and even private activities are carried out without the population necessarily being aware of its debt to a history other than that of the colonizer. It creates and respects cultural norms that are different and indigenous.

The pattern of progressive control over the conditions of existence of the colonized populations is at one and the same time contrary to and consistent with the history of the metropolitan countries. The population, in response to colonial domination, develops its own survival strategies, and occupies and administers institutional strongholds which it has erected itself. In other words, there are autonomous aptitudes for taking collective initiatives, which are developed without losing sight of the context in which –and against which– they are exercised.

The emergence or rebirth of autonomous national entities hostile to the colonial empire is an unforeseen and unavoidable consequence of imperialist adventures. Nonetheless, the international solidarity that was forged in the course of the struggle against colonialism seems to have created the habit of paying greater attention to the means which the great empires of the West employed to assert their will, and of relegating to the background the creativity of the oppressed nations.

It is rather difficult to orient official reflexion —that of the institutions of State— in other directions, since it is not a case of mere neglect. A selective blindness serves to benefit specific social categories and groups in the colonial and post-colonial society.

In their courageous struggles against the colonizers, the sectors responsible for mediating between the latter and the colonized did not oppose the increasing control over the environment exerted by the oppressed nation. They did, however, make certain general demands for greater respect for their positions as the official representatives of these same nations.

Since there are hardly any colonies today, there is little talk of decolonization. This objective has been replaced by the pursuit —in principle just as legitimate but much more vague— of development. The economic dimensions of this new adventure are undoubtedly prioritized in such a way as to avoid any question of compensating for the injustices perpetrated by the colonizers.

A State which has itself been freed from the colonial yoke has the responsibility for leading the less developed nations towards this goal, while avoiding reputedly ideological claims. These claims, in turn, tend to focus on the redressing of material wrongs committed against the colonized.

Whatever definition of the term development one chooses, it refers, in one way or another, to the control and dominance of the physical and social environment. It is therefore not easy to understand how these nation-States, products of a two-fold history implicit in the word colonization, can take control of their environment without rupture with the colonial Power, even while completing its civilizing mission. The question may therefore be rightly asked as to how the creativity of the colonized nations can be relegated to the background while at the same time their human resources are "prepared" for the task of development.

In considering the process of decolonization, one must begin with the peculiar circumstances of the Caribbean in relation to the other regions of the third world. In Africa, Latin America and Asia, Europe brought under its sway nations that had already been formed. In the region it referred to as the West Indies, however, it was the unconstrained plunder of resources that ironically gave rise to the formation of nations. Caribbean civilization therefore has characteristics which are not to be found in India, Benin or Bolivia, for example.

To propose and insist on a specific methodology for the study of the Caribbean requires the formulation of a long list of working hypotheses, the development of which is nowhere near complete. It is proposed to approach

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the study of these societies on the basis of the following premise: the institutionalization of community solidarity develops within the framework of metropolitan States whose principal objective is precisely to prevent such development.

A fundamental contradiction exists then between the objectives of the colonial State and the groups administering its affairs and, the popular will expressed by the peoples of the Caribbean. The history of the region is none other than the gradual resolution of this contradiction.

The relationship between culture and development generally embraces the problems of the discourse on culture and development. Development strategies are a reciprocal function of the verbalization of development experiences. This verbalization, together with these experiences, are primarily the discourses of the metropolitan and the Creole population. Omissions in these discourses are not fortuitous, they are compensated through a process of social change.

The Caribbean is not only pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural, the languages and cultures found in the region are characterized by asymmetric relations of domination, just as there are incontestable "links of consanguinity" among them. It must first of all be noted that institutionalized participation in historical developments and in development strategies is today still undertaken in the dominant languages and cultures of the Caribbean, that is to say, in the languages and cultures of the State.

The history of the dominant social categories and the elites who are capable of influencing collective projects must be viewed as a continuation of the imperial histories. The history of the majority of the populations concerned –and of their elites of artists, priests, healers, village heads, and so forth– constitutes precisely the reverse side of the coin, that is to say, a history and a historiography which were appropriated by the metropolis and its representatives.

Finally, to complicate matters further, over and beyond the differences between social categories, virtually the entire population –though to different degrees and with the exception of Suriname and Haiti– carries both dominant and dominated cultures and languages. Thus, unlike discourses on development, which are generally very logical and coherent, social groups elaborate concrete strategies of survival based on local conditions.

Any definition of the direction in which the life-style of a population is evolving is necessarily tentative and arbitrary. Contrarily, an examination of the bases of its social cohesion reveals elements that explain this variety of survival strategies and reinforce the social contract that binds the various actors.

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2. Culture and intervention

I propose to use three texts from two of the greatest Caribbean intellectuals to define the duality that is felt to exist there. These texts, which date from the late 1920s and the 1950s, are taken from the writings of Jean Price-Mars and Eric Williams.

The texts have been selected in order to identify the conditions under which an intervention in the social reality of the Caribbean is capable of leading to a solution of a duality operating for several decades now.

In a paper entitled "Le leader politique considéré comme un homme de culture", Eric Williams points out that the foundation of Greek democracy was:

> the recognition of the political leader as a man of culture –not an abstract culture, not an intellectual refinement, but the culture of an entire people, of an entire city, of which he was the representative.[165]

Williams, in 1959, denied the existence of an indigenous Caribbean culture. The problem in the West Indies, in his view, is that the pre-Columbian culture had been destroyed; apart from an occasional odd survival, the African culture brought by the enslaved has left few traces. He states quite unambiguously:

> The way of life in the West Indies, the scale of values, are European or American –at all levels.[166]

Thus, according to the author, one of the principal tasks of the political leader is in a sense to create the national culture. He defended "all manifestations of culture which, while not indigenous, are based on an adaptation of European and American heritages", and sought consciously to integrate "the scattered threads of the culture that constitute the West Indies –the European, African, Indian, Chinese and Syrian".[167]

Pluralism and indigenization (or creolization) go hand in hand. Under the colonial leadership of the West, the European segment of the population received preferential treatment. In a more just (post-colonial) system, opportunities would be more equitably distributed:

> The struggle for national culture today is not only a part of the struggle for political independence but also the struggle for the establishment of a new social order.[168]

The absence of a native language in the Caribbean constitutes, again according to Williams, a major obstacle to decolonization; in his vision as a statesman, decolonization culminates in genuine integration, "a confederation of Caribbean territories, tied to each other at the cultural,

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economic, trade, and even political level". That constitutes, in his view "the greatest form of nationalism".[169]

Price-Mars wrote his famous book, *Ainsi parla l'oncle*,[170] during the occupation of Haiti by the United States. Unlike Williams, he believed that a Haitian culture existed, independently of its capacity to prevail over the social milieu. The problem, in his view, was how to increase its visibility. This concern is clearly expressed in the first sentences of his work:

> We have long cherished the hope of making the people of Haiti more aware of the *true worth* of their folklore.[171]

Unlike Williams' view [172]the problem of language does not arise, and less still the problem of a relative value of this language. Since Price-Mars does not have the same vision of the Trinidadian statesman with regard to Caribbean integration, he has fewer variables to consider and may therefore be more categorical.

> In any case there will be no difficulty in agreeing that in its present form our Creole is a collective creation that has developed out of the need which masters and slaves had in former times to communicate their thoughts. (...) For the moment, it is the only instrument which our masses and we ourselves can use to express our mutual thoughts. (...) Whatever we call it –idiom, dialect, patois– its social role is an inescapable reality. It is thanks to Creole that our oral traditions exist, are carried on and are transformed, and it is through it that we may aspire one day to bridge the gap that makes of us and of the people two entities that are apparently distinct and often antagonistic.[173]

In Haiti no cultural pluralism exists that is worthy of Price-Mars' attention. He observes a duality which must be resolved.

Twenty years later (1984), Price-Mars addressed the problem of the political structure of society and was assailed by the same doubts as Williams. He examined the bases of authoritarianism in Haiti and identified the question of collective thought as the touchstone of national cohesion and development. He compared the late nineteenth century Haitian society with the society in 1948 in these terms:

> So while the Haitian society does exist, it does so at a certain level of infantilism which prevents it from manifesting its political existence. Is the American description of the Haitian State as "an inarticulate people" not therefore more correct? *Inarticulate people* is a term as comprehensible as it is untranslatable literally, at least in my view; moreover, it means a people devoid of the capacity to express their thoughts or articulate and realize their

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intentions, and who are therefore reduced to being no more than a "confused amalgam of individuals" sluggish in their ignorance, a flock of sheep ready to heed the beckoning of any shepherd, provided he be clever enough to assert himself.

This then was the situation in 1870-1880 which, moreover, has not changed much since... [174]

The works of Price-Mars and of Williams contain the central theses around which the ideas contained in this study are organized. The basic argument, which is taken from Price-Mars, is that culture is essentially awareness. It is knowledge, all types of knowledge —political, scientific, technological, religious, artistic, metaphorical, symbolic, etc. It is the wisdom of the people.

This definition will be elaborated upon in the next chapter; it should be noted for the moment that, unlike the position of Price-Mars, Eric Williams conceives of culture as a set of life styles the manifestation of which is closely linked to a new social order.

The second proposition is that in a democratic government the political man is a man of culture, of the culture of the governed. We will establish the origin of the distance between governments and the governed.

There are three elements in the equation of social development or of interventions in social exchanges in the Caribbean:

  i)   the existence of a culture that permits the encounter between a leader and his people (Williams);
  ii) the existence of a language (a rallying point for the nationalist movement in each territory (Williams) enabling the gap between the elite and the masses to be bridged (Price-Mars) and ensuring a greater solidarity among the nationalist forces (Williams); and
  iii) awareness (or science) of the value of this culture and of this language (Price-Mars).

On the first point, the advantages of the definitions of culture that are compatible with the thinking of Price-Mars are undeniable. There exist as many cultures as there are Caribbean countries and these cultures are a) different from those of the colonizer or colonizers; b) different from those of the native societies of the colonized; and c) different from a mixture of the contributions of the colonizers and the colonized.

As regards the second point, it must be remembered that within each country in the region there exists, apart from the official language, a common language which ensures communication between the various social groups. It is submitted that the task of the intellectual elite is to instrumentalize these national languages for the management of public affairs.

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This problem does not arise in those territories that were formerly and partially used as colonies of settlement. Such territories use the language of the former metropolis. An empirical study of the points of rupture observed in the social dialogue of these countries would reveal those aspects that are blurred by bilingualism. This effort would also highlight the non-cultural mechanisms that hinder a greater social cohesion.

Consideration of the process of decolonization or of development, added to the problem of the value of national cultures and languages, allows a distinction to be drawn between culture and the "discourse" which it encompasses. The formulas proposed by the local culture for solutions to the challenges inherent in the milieu are what we refer to as the national "discourse" or expression.

The value of a culture or of a language is determined by its usefulness in surmounting the obstacles that must be faced by its creators. The perception of this value varies according to whether one belongs to a dominant or subordinate group in the society.

If an individual speaks only the vernacular and uses only the subordinate institutions for his survival, he has no choice with regard to the ways and means of controlling his milieu. When a person is caught between the national language and culture on one hand and those of the colonizers on the other, the manipulation of the dominated culture can even require the conscious negation of its value.

In both cases, it is necessary to determine the conditions under which the value of the autochthonous creations is affirmed and to promote the project of national society which they encompass.

Once the choice is made in favour of endogenous development, the course of scientific research —of knowledge or awareness of the value of national cultures and languages— is clear. Its aim is the optimal utilization of the instruments of social action that are controlled by the populations concerned, and by them alone.

Progress is then made towards the interpenetration of politics and culture, the culmination of the processes of democratization, according to Eric Williams. A full appreciation —awareness and knowledge— of the national culture and its value is the only instrument that is essential to social development.

3. Fragments of the metropolises

In order to understand the obstacles to an "interpenetration of politics and culture" in the Caribbean, it is first necessary —at the risk of repeating certain

commonly accepted ideas– to distinguish between two histories which have been superimposed upon the region –and in every colonized country: that of the political structure or the State's history, on the one hand, and that of the culture or the nation's history, on the other.

The first concept to which attention must be drawn is that of national territory, which in the mostly insular societies of the Caribbean seems to present no difficulty. In the eyes of the sociologist, a territory is not a place where certain relationships are entertained, but rather a place which is created by these relationships. It is the sum total of the human relations that define the space, and not the reverse.

Thus, when a foreign army and the institutions which accompany it take over a territory, this appropriation implies a redefinition of the occupied territory and its components as well as a subversion of its historiography. The new definition then varies according to the social categories and groups that dominate the colonizing nations. In the case of the Caribbean, an overseas territory is established which can exist only in the geography of the metropolis.

What is actually being observed however, is an expansion of the conquering nation's territory, which, added to that of the other colonial empires, gradually encompasses the entire planet. The habitat of the conquered nation or nations is taken to be a differentiated sub-unit of the geography of the metropolises. New meanings, belonging to external structures of thought, are imposed on this habitat and on its constituent parts. The conclusion may already be drawn of an overlapping in the collective thought of the conquered nations of two systems of definitions, deriving from two systems of social relations.

During the past five centuries, armies and other corporate bodies of colonization interposed themselves between the oppressed nation and its physical and social environment, preventing it from freely manifesting its internal differentiation –and thus its particular history– in the political sphere. These forces introduced it to a new totality and converted it –or so they believed– into a fragment of that totality, homogeneous in its necessary ignorance and savagery.

The nation, whose social intercourse defined a space that was then seized by the colonizer, was thus transformed into "a people deprived of the capacity to express their thoughts or to articulate and realize their will". Such a nation lost its "power of expression", and in the worst cases was physically liquidated for the benefit of a conquering nation and, more specifically, for the benefit of the dominant categories and groups in that nation.

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A nation reproduces itself due to the institutions it maintains and which transmit to its members a sense of belonging, identity and loyalty. One understands by "power of expression" or discourse of a nation, the expression of its future as reflected in the institutions which denote its specificity.

The power of expression or discourse of a nation interprets the environment and gives to it meaning and shape which correspond to that society's need for cohesion. The power of expression or discourse of a nation is thus a project of continuity, of the future as the sequel to and consequence of a common past.

The concept of the power of expression or discourse of a nation is more constricted than that of culture. The former seeks to isolate this projection to the future, as shaped by the management of the collective memory. In other words, it is the prism of culture continually transforming itself into styles of living.

The distinction between power of expression and culture shows that a conquered nation can lose its power of expression, and can be deprived of the "capacity to express its thought", without necessarily losing its culture. To be deprived of its power of expression means not to have the capacity to translate, in an autonomous and coherent manner, its thinking and its judgements into styles of living. This inability to fashion a socio-cultural organization to the will of the national collectivity at no time affects the totality of criteria and standards that comprise the culture of this collectivity.

It may then be stated that conquering nations appropriate the territory occupied by the conquered nation as well as its spirit, that is to say, the relations between the colonized and their environment. In the colonies of exploitation, it is first of all this relationship between the nation and the environment which revolutions attempt to restore. It was this objective which the Haitian revolution of 1804 formulated in terms of "Liberty or Death!".

By appropriating overseas territories, conquering nations initiate the use on a worldwide basis of the social categories typical of their own forms of organization. A bridge is established between entities as dissimilar as two national societies may be, and the oppressed nation becomes, in its totality, the most oppressed social category in the colonial empire.

"The confused amalgam of individuals" which occupies the new geography is a concrete achievement of the colonizers. This "confused amalgam" is the result of an imposed system of individualization and its cleavages.

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Only one evolutionary direction is open to the colonized at the culmination of which one finds either *New* England –the colonized people having been exterminated– or *New* Spain –the survivors being muzzled by oppression in one form or another.

In the "New Englands", a national way of thinking disappears. In the "New Spains", the channels for expression of this thought –the power of expression of the nation– are blocked once and for all. The colonized person becomes the opposite of the metropolitan one: an emptiness which has to be filled. His distinctive world is now perceived as a cahotic one in need of reorganization; an organized society as a mass of indigenous people to be integrated into "national life". In a number of Latin American countries these policies are openly referred to as policies of "castilianization".

The absence or virtual absence of autochthonous populations in the Caribbean creates no difference between these countries and those of Latin America, Africa or Asia with regard to cleavages between the colonized and their colonizers. This absence reflects, however, the Caribbean experience of colonization and how this experience differs from those of other colonized countries. Above all, it permits the discourse of the Creoles on decolonization to be placed in its proper perspective.

The black people transplanted to the Caribbean and elsewhere in the America are moulded into conquered nations. The question is to determine what becomes of conquered nations within the framework of the kind of development projected by the metropolitan Powers, and how, on the basis of their forced insertion into the oppressed social categories, they organize themselves into social groups responsible for their own liberation.

As is well known, the colonial empires did not divide up the world by friendly agreement, and the Powers of the moment have experienced varying fortunes. The fragments of metropolitan societies, responsible for administering and exploiting the colonies, suffer the consequences of these rivalries.

Pressured by their dominant groups, these fragments emancipated themselves and founded new so-called independent "nations". The struggles of colonial America for independence required a certain degree of mobilization of various social groups, but not all mobilized groups became full fledged citizens of the new states. One must understand the mechanisms that excluded the population from decision-making systems.[175]

The independence of the Caribbean territories, like those of the countries on the continent, were generally linked to a reformulation of the

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relations between the metropolises. In the Caribbean, the protagonists of the confrontation that led to this juncture were the masses of the population (the "indigenous people"); these confrontations included the wars of independence of Haiti or Cuba, as well as the workers' revolts in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Unlike Latin America, the rupture between the Creoles and the metropolitan groups was not the main factor leading to national independence.

This second element marks a difference between the two regions. In the first place, the exclusion of the majority of "citizens" from the decision-making systems takes place in a different manner than in Latin America. The marginalization of the dominated groups is the result of social mechanisms that more closely reflect colonialism. In Latin America, which in large measure, was a settlement colony, note must be taken of efforts to promote national integration.

Consequently, the oppressed peoples of the Caribbean developed and maintained a form of cultural cohesion that marks a clear and visible distance between the colonial power of expression and the national discourse. Throughout their history the indigenous peoples of Latin America have failed to present a common front distinct from that of the Creoles.

As a result of this form of participation of the "indigenous" people in the nation-building process, independence as a political objective has had much more importance in Latin America than in the Caribbean.[176] For the Creoles of Latin America, independence from the metropolis is an objective in itself.

The manipulation of nationalist ideologies enabled Latin America to mobilize, in massive social movements, the most antagonistic social categories. The onus for the Creole's exploitation of the indigenous people fell on the metropolitan who were then expelled by the independence movements. The victories of the creoles over the metropolitan were transformed at the ideological level into exploits of the *mestizos*, i.e., the union of the Creoles and the indigenous people. The term Creole itself disappeared after independence and was replaced by *mestizo*.

In the Caribbean, the borderline between the "Creoles" and the "indigenous people"–to use the Latin American terms–was of another type. Independence from the metropolis became, in the best of cases, a weapon in the pursuit of common objectives that transcended the cleavages that separated the colonial social categories.

A Caribbean nation does not express itself through the dominant social categories. The concept of "mulatto" as it is understood in the Caribbean

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bears no relation to the Latin American term mestizo. This is explained by the fact that the European colonies of the Caribbean were not settlement colonies as they were in Latin America. The racial connotations of the concepts of Creole, indigenous, mulatto and mestizo, are fluid and almost non-existent in the Caribbean.

In this region, the major linguistic divisions reflect the borderlines between cultural structures. These borderlines correspond to a large extent to the cleavages between the colonial social categories. But the cultural divisions and the normative social cleavages do not necessarily separate groupings of individuals. The values of independence are expressed in the oppressed cultural structure, which is maintained by groups of individuals who could not possibly be assigned to a single social category. This subject will be dealt with in the next chapter.

La Pátria del Criollo, in Latin America as in the Caribbean, differs from the colony to the extent that it is situated between the metropolis and the dominated groups. Its trajectory implies both a conflict and a constant dialogue with the former metropolises. In fact it is this effort which characterizes it as a special type of State that should be called an emancipated State.

The need for legitimization of the emancipated State forces it to distinguish between the objectives of its own policies and those of the metropolis. The emancipated State achieves its objective and exhausts its chances of progress to the extent that it manages to effectively substitute economic development for decolonization, as the social objective of the "new" national collectivity. This permits it to pursue the colonial objective of destruction of the conquered people under the apparently less objectionable guise of their acculturation or integration into the great national family.

The States that were created as a result of the dismemberment of the colonial empires differed from the colonialist entities in two important respects: the rigidity of their borders and the nature of their social categories. It is rarely noted that they were in fact the only States to be circumscribed within a defined territory. The metropolises not only possessed so-called overseas territories –and this is still the case today– but their political activities continue to be characterized by their worldwide scope as they were during the best years of the previous centuries.

Moreover, a metropolis was a national entity in which different social categories and groups were gradually established. Workers and employers came from the third estate and were pitted against the nobility and the clergy. It is therefore hardly surprising that after several centuries they should share similar frames of reference and prospects for the future.

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The dominant classes and groups from the metropolises attended to the needs of the State and, in order to do so, carefully promoted the national cohesiveness from which they emerged. An emancipated State was, on the contrary, an entity comprised of social classes and groups that emerged from colonization, striving constantly towards the formation of a united nation.

In these contexts, the emancipated State imposed various sacrifices on the dominated classes and groups in order to achieve the objectives of economic development. Restrictions on social negotiation, that is to say, a deceleration of the nation-building process, became the cost required of the colonized people for progressing toward material well-being.

It may be concluded that the emancipated State was the prisoner of a territory bequeathed by colonialism and prisoner of a future contained in the project of the former metropolises. The "national" territory remained a fragment of the metropolitan territory, and the project or discourse of the emancipated State was a reflection of the future proposed by the metropolises to the planet as a whole.

Unfortunately, as time passed, the promises of future "development" were repeated with dull monotony. The "Creole" or "mestizo" nation and its emancipated State apparently lost their raison d'être to the extent that they lost their capacity to control their environment themselves. It became increasingly difficult to perceive the borders of the national territory and to preserve the State's ability to define a project for the future, even in the short term.

Increasingly, "national" economies and emancipated governments failed to escape the limitations of a period and space of intervention defined exclusively in terms of metropolitan projects. The emancipated State was confronted with increasing difficulties in distinguishing itself from the type of colonial State from which it emerged and in operationalizing its formal independence.

In order to rectify this rather uncomfortable situation, the former colonies advanced on two fronts. On the one hand, regional integration projects and the movement of non-aligned countries seeking to establish a new international order were created. Mention must also be made of the establishment of new alliances of social groups that sought to redefine the State and the nation. It is in this second context that the problem arises of the relationship between culture and social development, and the specific characteristics of the Caribbean are reaffirmed.

4. Social structure and mobility

The ultimate purpose of public life in the colonies, under a system of slave plantations, is to ensure the maximum possible exploitation of the colonized

people. This untrammelled exploitation tends to reduce to a strict minimum the spaces necessary to the survival of the colonized people and affects even aspects of their private lives.

The colonized person has no right to the fruits of his labour. If possible, even the vital minimum necessary for his biological reproduction is taken away from him. The settler forbids him access to metropolitan forms of public and private life or from recreating his own traditional forms of life.

In the Caribbean, this tendency is pushed to its ultimate consequences, the destruction of the conquered nations being undertaken in an environment different from that in which those individuals that escaped death have to live.

The African diaspora does not constitute the migration of tribal units that can count on a minimum of institutionalized relations. It is characterized rather by the transplantation of isolated individuals. The colonial system ensured that these individuals were deprived from all possibility of realizing the least part of their individual project of life, and more so of their collective project of society.

This ruthless exploitation decimated groups which survive the Atlantic crossing and imposes on them new forms of individuation. It also tends, however, precisely because of its rigorous nature, to create the conditions necessary for the birth of new national entities.

The conqueror, by pursuing his own objectives, unwittingly creates a space in which family and community structures are formalized, and consequently new cultural structures are instituted. The emergence of endogenous solutions contained in these new forms of social life is one of the paradoxical and ironical consequences of exploitation.

Colonial greed engenders contradictions which are ultimately expressed in terms of "marginal" social cohesion and cultural creation, in other words, in term of a consensus situated outside of the control of colonialism. The efforts of the colonizer to fill the void which he creates and to reorganize this disorder by moulding "the confused amalgam of individuals" to conform to norms of metropolitan logic, produce another nation which resents its influence.

On the surface, these autonomous forms of perceiving, assessing and reorganizing the environment, based of course on the vestiges of cultures that existed prior to the conquest (the disparate threads mentioned by Eric Williams), pose no threat to the colonial system. On the contrary, they contribute to the reproduction of that system. They enable the colonized people to survive despite the insane nature of their situation and to also experience social solidarity in the face of dehumanizing oppression.

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Provision grounds are an example of this type of social organization, which is consistent with the system of colonial exploitation and constitutes a refuge for a creativity that opposes this exploitation.

The obstinate efforts of the exploited people to reorganize themselves into new nations around cultures which are themselves new, become the object of harsh criticisms and systematic denigration. In the best of cases, the colonizing nation and its agents arrogantly ridicule and trivialize the modest attempts of the colonized people to liberate themselves.

The oppressed cultures lack institutions specialized in the production and transmission of knowledge. Operating, as they do in a colonial system, they have no access to the spheres of politics.

The colonized people do not have the institutional resources required to undertake, within the colonial system itself, a collective struggle to safeguard their particular interests. They remain powerless in the face of an imposed categorization and resulting discrimination, leaving them unable to defend themselves within the colonial State. It is the spectacle of this powerlessness that becomes the stepping stone for the achievement of higher objectives.

In this light, social struggle and conflicts between human groups belonging to the principal categories of the colonial societies are defined as struggle and conflicts of national liberation, and the encompass the negotiation of cultural interests. This characteristic of social conflict is reinforced when the colony loses its economic assets and becomes a mere outpost in global geopolitical strategy.

For political independence to be acceptable to the colonies of the Caribbean, it must be accompanied by the establishment of a viablae productive system by those responsible for the economic debacle –the colonizers–. In the absence of such a system, it might be just as well to receive the subsidies that would normally be paid for the use of a strategic military outpost.

The conjugation of genuinely economic conflicts arising around the distribution of surplus production, and of cultural conflicts related to the perception and organization of groups of reference, creates a complexity which is perhaps not peculiar to the Caribbean, but which assumes there an importance vital to an understanding of its networks of social relationships and their dynamics.

To distinguish between social categories and groups, one places on one side the distribution of the inhabitants along the normative partitions contemplated in the model of the colonial society, and on the other, their distribution into concrete and autonomous cells of interpersonal relations.

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In the first case, the partitions are simple. Individuals are assigned to specific categories on the basis of a certain number of criteria determined by the metropolis. In the second case, the networks of interpersonal relations are a result of the performance of the individuals themselves. In theory, there is no limit to their multiplication and their possibilities of controlling their environment.

In the extreme situation of oppression represented by plantation society, the formation of certain groups tends to compensate for the shortcomings of the current system of social categorization and its omissions. Such groups respond to a rationale that differs from the dominant system. The evolution of this rationale, i.e., the history of these groups, gives rise to a tradition that serves as protection against the misdeeds of the dominant system, thanks to knowledge and awareness of the particularities of this system.

Consequently, even though the rigours of colonial exploitation give rise to the establishment of new forms of social life, it does not follow that the innovators are to be found on the margin of the dominant social organization and of its basic principles. The marginality that is the product of a colonial system of this type affects not individuals or groups of individuals but rather such structures as they might put into place in their survival strategies.

For example, the fact that Paul, who belongs to the social category of slaves or freedmen, does not have the resources required to establish a European-type nuclear family does not make him a marginal person. It converts the type of family institution that Paul invents into a marginal institution, which is different.

Moreover, if slaves and freedmen constitute the largest social group, the family institution which they produce is not, strictly speaking, marginal. It is referred to rather as of lesser social standing, an undervalued institution.

Paul and his family are familiar with the norms and principles of the dominant or official institution, but they do not organize themselves in accordance with them. They are thus guided by two types of rationale or by two cultural systems, and they participate in two types of civil societies. It may be noted that Paul may have the opportunity to operate both within the European civil society and within the local civil society.

This is also true of the groups of individuals that belong to the dominant social categories. From the time the plantation becomes a deadweight which must be kept afloat by the metropolis through the adoption of protectionist measures, several large landowners begin to witness the degradation of the material and spiritual resources that normally permit them to organize their lives along the same lines as the dominant Western models. There may be

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no solution other than joining forces with the oppressed culture and implementing the solutions which that culture dictates.

It follows that the most diverse groups of individuals share traditions of a local or foreign origin. We shall return to this subject in the following chapter. This eventuality poses the problem of the impact on the cultural dynamics of social mobility of certain oppressed groups, to which the rest of this chapter will be devoted.

These mobile groups usually exhibit a disdain for the oppressed culture which must be situated in its proper context. Care must be taken not to mistake ignorance of the local cultural heritage for a lack of knowledge or information on the subject of national cultures.

In principle the official culture and the "imperial language" serve mainly to perpetuate the world of colonialism. The oppressed culture and the national language remain the principal –though not exclusive– preserve of endogenous creative activity.

In order to properly understand the importance of this phenomenon, account must be taken of the colonialist attitude towards the population. The first social project of the metropolis provides for the reproduction of the population, especially through the introduction of new waves of immigrant workers. The organization of the private life of a worker –slave or freedman– is of no interest to the public authorities who delegate this role to the slave owners and employers.

For the metropolis, a transfer of resources obtained from economic activity for the maintenance of a worker's family life makes no sense. We have seen that the worker has access only to marginal resources not needed for economic development.

The second social project is consolidated as the plantation loses its economic advantages. For the metropolis, these territories then become places to be administered without having to be developed. In order to administer a territory without developing it, it is necessary to have the continual presence of an external armed force and a bureaucracy capable of becoming integrated into that of the imperial power.

We have seen that during the period following the emancipation of the slaves, administrative measures were taken to prevent any negotiated control of the environment. These include the destruction of the market economy by imposing obstacles on the bargaining power of workers, by granting monopolistic concessions and promoting labour emigration or depopulation.

The majority of countries in the region are at least bilingual. More exactly, they experience the diglossia described in chapter 5.

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Activities conducted in Creole generally include those that relate to private or community life and to manual work. Official languages are used in public life, particularly in politics, law, public administration, education, European religions, etc.

Since both the public and private lives of oppressed people are organized on the basis of different cultural norms and the former tends to dominate the latter, diglossia expresses a differentiated use of the two cultures. In the Caribbean, the reproduction of the social system and those who comprise it, is provided for in the management of the plantation society. A cumulative improvement of living conditions is an exclusive function of the dominance of the official language and culture. The oppressed cultures and languages are reserved for survival strategies.

The individual social mobility of the freedmen therefore involves, in either of the two possible metropolitan social projects, a new area of employment, preferably unrelated to agriculture and rural life. Since the colonial State offers no assistance for the promotion of the agricultural worker, private life is organized in such a manner as to ensure the transmission of the knowledge required for this social mobility.

Returning to the first example, if the enslaved or freedman Paul wishes to improve his condition, he can take a series of steps that would enable him to rise to higher positions. If he wishes to bequeath to his family the progress he has made, he will transfer in his private life the knowledge acquired during the process of his social ascent.

The home of the newly freed person then becomes a sort of professional school. The "imperial" language, the language of public administration, tends to become the language spoken within his family. After one or two generations, it will become the mother tongue of his descendants.

Similarly, the proper functioning of socially mobile oppressed groups gradually requires forms of organization and values that are normally part of private life in the metropolis. The dominant culture is presented as a paradigm, and all local products are looked down upon.[177]

This therefore gives rise to the emergence of generations with an effectively limited vision of Caribbean culture, able to get by without the forms of community solidarity which define this culture. These generations constitute the frontier of the colonial civil society.

The establishment in towns of freedmen and socially mobile persons marks the culmination of their "class transfer". A number of urban institutions have responsibility for consolidating the progress, to avoid the danger of downward social mobility.

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But the summit of a social pyramid is always narrow, and the dominant civilian society cannot accommodate all the aspirants. One should not therefore exaggerate the harm caused by the limited visibility of the local culture. A set of very complex phenomena operates in this milieu.

First, the dominant sectors of the population do not constitute a set of groups capable of independently pursuing their own projects of development. They are employees of the metropolis, which in keeping with its practices of racial discrimination grants undisguised preference to the *béké, mulatto,* and *French Creole* minorities.

Next, these dominant groups, even when they are successful, must safeguard their role as intermediaries by maintaining contact with manual workers under the yoke of colonialism or recently liberated from it. Finally, they soon learn from their comings and goings in the metropolis that they are second class citizens obliged to have recourse to direct forms of national solidarity.

The existence of Creole languages, as the lingua franca both before and after independence, confers a high degree of effectiveness on the oppressed cultures and renders impossible a total cleavage between the social groups belonging to opposing categories. Children and youth in the Caribbean amuse themselves only in the Creole language, which also reflects the fundamental ambiguity of the principal institution of cultural domination:

> The analysis of the "terrorist" role of French in schools, writes L.F.
> Prudent, would be incomplete if we were to ignore the reverse side
> of the coin: school is also the place where a large part of
> middle-class urban groups discover and learn Creole.[178]

Note must therefore be taken of the fact that even in the case of a socially mobile minority for whom the official language becomes the mother tongue, the child undergoes an intensive process of learning the vernacular from the time that he begins to extend his circle of interpersonal relations and to move about independently within the community.[179] Empirical studies will have to be undertaken to determine what the vernacular, as employed by groups that have detached themselves from the masses, transmits of the local culture.

In short, social pressures militate against the establishment of distance between those from the dominant or official cultures and those from the oppressed cultures. No physical or social barrier prevents interpersonal relations between individuals and groups living in these cultures.

Apart from the cases of Haiti and Suriname, the profile of the two cultural systems is high and knowledge of them quite extensive. It is perhaps this dual vision that feeds the theories of cultural miscegenation, and it must be admitted that the proposed dualism is essentially a methodological artifice.

It is necessary to determine empirically the image of the dominant society that is formulated in the oppressed culture and inversely, the image of the oppressed society as seen by the European sector of the Caribbean population. Each cultural system has its own privileged sphere of application, one public life and the other private life. Each system has its own special transmitters: the first, the dominant groups and the second, the exploited.

Today, the distance between the two poles of the Caribbean societies seems to be narrowing. The next chapter will examine how the dominant groups are forced to seek out or to accept dialogue with the subordinate groups.

The main point is that upward social mobility and more particularly, the passage to the sphere of public administration –or simply the aspiration towards such passage– is accompanied by an irrational disdain for the culture and life styles of the oppressed. This disdain is all the more marked as this culture and its life styles become integrated into the daily life of each person.

5. Civil societies

In studying the social relationships peculiar to the Caribbean, it must be remembered that one of the two civil societies –on account of the colonial system itself– does not express itself in terms of political institutions and that the State, by its very colonialist nature, has no support in the colonized civil society.

The main social categories that succeed each other in the region are imposed from outside, as are the institutions and norms that seek to preserve the kind of order on which they are based. They do not originate in the commerce between individuals and groups in the region, but from the "discourse" of the metropolises, from their societal projects.

Settlers in the colony are distributed in one way or another according to the cleavages that separate the principal categories. In the practical conduct of their day to day life, groups are established that seek to resolve the different problems faced by the population. All innovation, all creativity, all social dynamism is the result of the activities of these human groups.

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The disconnection of the two milieux of plantation and counter-plantation creates, for the latter, a constant problem of the novelty of the dominant milieu or European sector. Dominated human groups are always novices since norms may exist of which they are unaware, refelcting shifts by the European sector towards unpredictable horizons.

Effectiveness in protecting oneself from the dominant culture does not result from familiarity with a set of norms of conduct, customs, traditions and values of the West, but rather from a proper appreciation of the standards and criteria of judgement of the dominant society. The use of certain definitions of culture which would require encyclopedic knowledge of the social actors may make it impossible to understand how people who are ignorant in this regard succeed in foiling the clever strategies of the West.

The distance between the plantation and the counter-plantation is a logical one. It explains a) the vital role of the Creoles in bridging the two systems and b) the fact that the subordinate groups seek to solve their problems without the intervention of the dominant system.

For the oppressed, the plantation is an enemy system which they must neutralize or which they must at least sidestep. The fundamental attitude is the same, whether it is a case of the great destruction of the plantation society in Santo Domingo in 1803, or of the clandestine resistance in the plantation islands.

The local Caribbean culture is to the dominant culture what the counter-plantation is to the plantation. No Caribbean culture can exist without a prior culture of European origin, since it developed in response to the latter and in conflict with its postulates. The entire problem consists in identifying the terrain on which this conflict, which takes the place of reciprocal relations, will be played out.

The distribution of the population of the Caribbean into social categories reflects the presence of Europe in the region, or more exactly, the form of this presence. The principal categories divide individuals into exploiters and exploited (plantation owners and slaves, land owners and freedmen, employers and workers) and governors and governed.

The main categories in the region are distinguished from those to be observed in Europe in that they do not emerge from the evolution of the social relations in the region. They are essentially Creole and continually seek to adapt or acclimate themselves to a European discourse.

Consequently, the norms of conduct which govern the behaviour of such individuals do not correspond to those of their metropolitan counterparts –where such counterparts in fact exist. Their obligations, rights

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and privileges derive from the asymmetrical relation between metropolis and colony.

The same policeman will have two completely different attitudes towards the population depending on whether he is in France or in Guadeloupe. It would be pointless to compare the attitude of a British prime minister towards his electorate with that of a governor of the colony towards the "natives". At the same time, the autonomous distribution of individuals into groups and voluntary associations, and their respective conduct, gives rise to another history, one which is totally imprisoned within that of Europe.

One must therefore keep separate the several systems of social relations:

1. A distinction between a) the history of Europe and that of its social categories, b) the history of European projects, which gives rise to the social categories of the Caribbean, and c) the history of the local responses to these projects. There exists a notable difference and a divergence between the social categories and the human groups on both sides of the ocean;

2. The divergence between European-style civil society, which includes groups of individuals organized according to the rationale of the European project, and the civil society of the Caribbean, which corresponds to the rationale of the counter-plantation;

3. The regional and international repercussions of the two types of civil societies as well as the spaces for the promotion and improvement of their positions which are the further consequences of these regional and subsequently international repercussions;

4. The divergence between the regionalization of the social categories that perpetuates the balkanization of the Caribbean and the regionalization of groups of individuals which is heading gradually towards the formation of a Caribbean nation (the wider nationalism imagined by Williams).

Within these four systems, a whole range of social negotiations takes place, as well as the accumulation of experiences and hence specific knowledge.

The first system is a spillover from European history. A relationship is established between the metropolis and the so-called overseas territories. This relationship has its own dynamics. The metropolitan project is implemented by the creation of certain primary social categories which benefit from the support of a set of government institutions. The population reacts to the normative principles dictated by the metropolis, and human groups with diverse characteristics organize themselves.

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At a second level, the networks of interpersonal relations of the dominant and dominated groups revolve around two different types of civil society. On the one hand, the population responds to acts carried out by the colonial governments within the framework of the principles of the colony, and a whole process of negotiation is initiated which, in the long run, leads both to the formation of trade unions and of producers' associations. This is the dominant or Creole civil society.

Moreover, another civil society makes up for the omissions of the colonial system and for its shortcomings. This civil society consists mainly of groups of individuals belonging to the subordinate categories whose needs are of no interest to the dominant system. It is within this framework that there is a gradual institutionalization of relations of family, of mutual aid organizations, religions, a definition of land ownership, a practice of the rights of succession, i.e., an entire system of daily life that escapes the rationale of the colonial system.

These are the core institutions created by the local population and which are referred to in the reports of the colonial administrations as obstacles to development (metropolitan societal projects). The oppressed defend themselves within the framework of the Creole or official civil society as well as outside of it.

At a third level of observation, the Caribbean is balkanized, and a distinction can be drawn between the English, French, Spanish or Dutch groups of colonies or former colonies. Each group has its traditions and its customs. The dominant groups develop extra-territorial attachments within the framework of this regionalization imposed from abroad. The responses to the metropolitan initiatives sometimes adopt this "regional" approach and have proven to be quite effective.

It should however be noted that this space is open only to the official or Creole civil society and to its government. One may for example conceive of a federation of trade unions of the English-speaking Caribbean. To propose, however, the organization of a federation of Afro-Caribbean religions would be unthinkable even if the persons involved in the trade unions and the religious communities are the same.

Such regional ties as are developed between the institutions of strictly Caribbean origin are due to migration. Far from respecting the balkanization of the region, they constitute the basis of unity.

Finally, the balkanization of the Caribbean reflects the division of the world by the large colonial empires of the West or the vestiges of this division. Some participate in the British Commonwealth while others are part of the French or Hispanic world or of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

At the same time, the Creole civil society has its global ties, whether through religious congregations, Masonic associations, associations of professionals, entrepreneurs, etc.

At all of these levels there is a wealth of new knowledge and traditions that are useful for the control and manipulation of the milieu by both the dominant and the subordinate groups. It is unnecessary to point out that the dominant civil society is better equipped than the Caribbean civil society to take advantage of it.

The Caribbean civil society also has its international linkages and continues in the diaspora without losing its attachments to the local institutions. The repercussions of this internationalization are felt on labour relations in the regional groups, which must follow the institutionalization of the links between the Caribbean diaspora and other interest or pressure groups from the metropolises.

Just as the main social categories are a form of the presence of Europe in the Caribbean, the practice and experience derived from their activities produce a European vision of the region: a dominant discourse. This discourse has two principal dimensions which advance only slowly: one concerns the knowledge of the region and the other its system of norms and values.

Despite its appearances of objectivity, knowledge of the local socio-economic organization is essentially derived from the discoveries of the social mechanisms peculiar to the European societies which are applied *by analogy* to Caribbean phenomena. Local societies are described in a long series of "operational definitions"[180] which do nothing but fly in the face of the empirical facts.

This study has drawn attention to the concepts of slave, of maroon, deserter or runaway, of wage-earner, of trade union, political party, monopoly, working day, labour market, unemployment, purchase and sale, profit, capital, entrepreneur, etc. –all concepts which divest reality of its specificities.

This awareness serves to enhance the position of the European centres and local elites, without in any way modifying the control of the population over its environment.[181] The plans for development or decolonization grounded on such bases evidently produce neither development nor decolonization.

The system of norms and values in the region is subdivided into two realities. On the one hand, there are the written codes, laws and regulations, which evolve along the lines of the normative principles of the metropolis, with at times a considerable lag. On the other hand, while observing the

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implementation of these juridical principles, and more particularly of the rights and privileges of the individual and of all human beings, one cannot fail to identify a kind of institutionalization of scorn for the culture and socio-cultural organization of the oppressed peoples.

There seems to be a tacit code between the dominant groups. A distinction may be drawn between the civil and political rights of the European and Creole segment of the population, on the one hand, and on the other, the obligations of the oppressed populations and of all those who, by identifying themselves with them, seem to constitute a danger to the established order.

By way of example, mention may be made of the suppression of individual freedoms, or the limitations on workers' bargaining power, for the sake of a "greater democracy" or a better economic performance; the persecution and systematic discrimination against local institutions and thought, particularly against national religions; crimes of opinion, and the prohibition against the circulation of publications which are to be found throughout the world; the torture of political prisoners, the failure to punish the most notorious criminals and the protection granted them by the metropolitan governments.

It is this entire Caribbean civil society and its already deficient management of day-to-day matters that is being relentlessly persecuted. Everything takes place as if the national culture were on the bench of the accused for its capacity to subsist on the basis of infinitesimal resources scraped from here and there.

6. Conclusion

The emancipated States inherited structures of power which, by tradition, seek to ensure that communication with the outside world is more intense than with the local populations. The language of the former metropolis or a variety that is close to this remains the language of government. This provision deprives the majority of their right to respond to official proposals and imprisons them in an institutionalized "infantilism" (Price-Mars).

The solidarity of the nationalist forces of which Eric Williams dreamt is not materializing, or at least its foundations cannot resist the passage of time. Whether or not the populations understand the stakes involved in the political and economic situation, they fail to assert their points of view and to negotiate without recourse to "interpreters", that is to say, to "middle class" leaders. Because of the vulnerability of these leaders, the solidarity of the nationalist forces is always called into question.

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The administrators of Caribbean States, in their efforts to improve the living standards of the population, are faced with a veritable dilemma. Which economic reforms can both secure for the Caribbean a place on the international markets and at the same time unite in a single "governable" body the two civil societies?

There is always the risk of alienating foreign suppliers or the few exporters in the region. At the same time, the gains that have been made by the urban sectors that are integrated into the current political regime may be endangered. The very bases for the sustenance of the system, both internally and externally, may therefore be undermined.

On the other hand, the political tranquillity may be respected, by addressing the immediate and urgent demands within the current framework of the absence of a national economic system. This is only a short-term policy. It postpones a solution to the problem of social mobilization and the legitimization of power, and it must therefore be always ready to use police force to prevent political instability.

Parodying the Bible, one may therefore say that *in the beginning (of the nation) was the Word.* The only way of reproducing the societal projects which the metropolitan countries contemplate for the Caribbean is to deprive these nations "of the ability to express their thoughts".

With the failures of the current formulas for development, the defence of the right of expression of the collective national thought become more pressing as the political and economic strategies of the power of the moment are reinforced. These are interdependent processes, which at one point or another should lead to a solution or at least an equilibrium.

Price-Mars published *A insi parla l'oncle* during the third decade of the century; the proponents of Negritude turned a deaf ear to these ideas on the use of Creole, and some of them even became defenders of the French language.

More recently, after the consolidation of the new power elites in the English-speaking Caribbean, the advocates of *Black Power* are rising up in opposition to white domination and are preaching a return to Africa. This Africa unfortunately remains as distant from the masses as the metropolitan cultures are, and as close to the elites as is the Western culture.

Negritude or *Black Power* are alibis which are temporarily useful in avoiding adoption of the local culture and advancing too quickly towards a total democratization of the society. At this time when nation-States are being created in the Caribbean, it is necessary to go to the source of the ambiguities underlying the valuation of the national cultures.[182]

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For Eric Williams, the political man is a man of culture. The States of the region, however, replacing a form of colonialism which showed an utter disregard for local innovations, devote no institutionalized efforts to scientific research aimed at inventorying the cultural baggage of the population and its systematic application to development. The region has not a single school of anthropology, and certainly no regional or national cultural research centres.

Price-Mars proposes the use of Creole as the only bridge between the elite and the masses. It may be assumed that, like all languages, the national languages of the Caribbean contain virtually all styles of discourse. The fact is that these styles are neither developed nor codified, and are far from being taught systematically. It is hardly surprising, then, that the advocates of Negritude, despite their doctrinaire position, use only French and the other imperial languages to express themselves. The development of a literary, scientific, political or technical discourse and, above all, the creation of a public that is capable of participating in this discourse, constitute another collective task which will be institutionalized in the future.

The problem of the management of the region's resources transcends the efficacy of the projects aimed at ameliorating conditions and styles of living. The most well-intentioned governments, armed with the best economic development strategies –if such exist– fail to achieve the level of social dialogue capable of legitimizing their monopoly over public coercion. They are overwhelmed by popular thought and are incapable of occupying the spaces it explores.

The public institutions bequeathed by colonialism remain, as in the past, incapable of controlling the political and economic environment without using actual or potential police violence, local or imported. In current conditions, the population –and not only or even mainly the subordinate groups– lives on the look out for opportunities for migration to the rich countries.

Emigration is perhaps the only survival strategy on which all the social groups are in agreement. There is no government capable of formulating a political strategy that seeks to stem the process of depopulation, to accompany and guide domestic social changes and to accelerate the conclusion of such changes.

And it is not merely a question of good or ill will on the part of governments. The people's desire "to travel out" affects official economic development projects. In order to be the least bit effective, these projects should achieve record levels of productivity and redistribution of income. The question is how to legitimize power without providing better living standards for the population in the foreseeable future.

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Chapter 8

CULTURE AND POWER

In order to improve and preserve the styles and standards of living of the Caribbean peoples, some further reflection on the origin of the inequalities observed among them is called for. The history of systems of discrimination among categories and social groups goes back to the golden age of the slave plantation. Since that time, the exercise of political power has determined the effectiveness of mechanisms of social discrimination, especially discrimination within individual achievements. Political control is consistent with the rationale of metropolitan development, i.e., it is built into their cultures.

In the colonies, [183] a certain access to metropolitan culture was the only cumulative way of improving standards and styles of living. "Education" played a fundamental role in attaining such access and was imperative in the view of both "educated" Creoles and freedmen. The actual impossibility of memorizing and putting into practice exotic cultural content did not prevent the dominant groups from extolling the virtues of schooling, cultural dissemination and creolization.

The fallacious assimilation of culture to education, and of education to teaching –preferably in a classroom– assisted in justifying certain forms of social discrimination, and kept dominant groups in the colony from perceiving the dynamics of their own cultural creativity and of alternative inventiveness. A patent fact was thus overlooked: the creativity of the nation and the ingenuity of its survival strategies.

The original social structure was reproduced in the colonial culture by systematically disregarding the specific features of the colonized social body, or more exactly, by the imaginary elimination of these specific features. The colonial relationship interminably reproduced the divergence of these two forms of rationale –the dominant and the oppressed– and ensured that this reproduction took place largely outside the scope of social awareness.

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The discussion below attempts to describe the gradual disappearance of the colonial relationship. The deep cleavage between the social categories established by various forms of colonialism that invaded the Caribbean was slowly eroded by the action of social groupings in a tortuous process of creating nation-States to represent and defend their interests. The problem of the nation-State's viability in the Caribbean and the question of links that exist between culture and power worldwide are not addressed here. The discussion is rather confined to defining the contemporary problem of the relationship between culture, politics and power in the Caribbean.

1. Social categories

The number of inhabitants living in the Caribbean or in each of its territorial units is relatively small. Manifestly, these populations –nearly all from other regions of the world originally– have become linked together in one way or another. Presently, national societies as well as efforts to institutionalize some form of regional unity can be found.

The fact that peoples of the region became grouped together during and not before colonization means that their unique cultural dynamics –without necessarily differing from those of any other cultures– cannot be analyzed without taking into consideration the original relationship of submission and rebellion. Moreover, the fact that their cultural dynamics existed in a state of virtual imprisonment within other cultural frameworks played a crucial role in their systems and methods of knowledge.

The social organization of production in a plantation or a peasant economy impacted on the knowledge, habits, norms and values of the local population. Conversely, this spiritual heritage helped the Caribbean inhabitant to operate within this world of material relationships and possibly to change some aspects of it. The social organization of agro-export production was not established by the local population however, nor did its performance depend on the decisions of the latter. Similarly, the conditions of existence and survival of the peasant society were largely independent of peasant initiatives.

The environment surrounding Caribbean inhabitants included societal projects which were not formulated by them and to which they had to adapt. They lived in a milieu whose evolution was not a primary function of their own initiatives, but of advances made by overseas communities organized according to principles upon which they had little influence. Intervening between the Caribbean populations and their milieux, the metropolitan

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institutions assigned a role in their regional policies to these populations that could not be ignored by the latter.

The settlement of the Caribbean involved the recruitment of people into categories defining the plantation system as a socioeconomic organization without precedence in either the history and geography of the territories or in the traditions of the concerned populations. The first pair of significant categories originated in the very process of establishing the plantations and were of course, planters and slaves. The socio-political environment of a plantation society underscores its artificial nature as evidenced by the subsequent replacement of slaves by freedmen.

To say that the categories of planters, slaves and freedmen were set up by some external entity is to recognize that they evolved within the framework of a primary contradiction: the antinomy between *nèg* and *blan* of the Creole language spoken in Haiti, which in the present context, distinguishes the recruiters from the recruited. We can see that planters, slaves and freedmen all formed parts of the category "recruited".

The pair of concepts *blan* and *nèg* evidenced the impact of existing international relations on the local culture, expressing how the local system experienced its insertion into the larger structure of the major empires. The *blan* belonged to another ethnic group, subdivided into various nationalities. The boundaries between *nèg* and *blan* were clear. Identifying criteria and symbols which were not always, or at least not primarily, of a racial nature, allowed the distinction to be drawn between the two categories.[184]

Prior to emancipation the planter and his agents, with whom the State shared its monopoly on violence, were directly responsible for the workers' enslavement. This was the period of deepest societal fragmentation in the region. It is the period of the "total" institutions described by Raymond T. Smith.[185] The planter was a *blan*.

Following emancipation, whatever the inequalities existing between planters and freedmen —which the colonial State was responsible for enforcing— the interests of the metropolises and those of dominant groups in the colony grew increasingly apart. These divergences of interests formed the backdrop for the birth of national Caribbean societies, albeit still segmented yet moving towards the formulation of a minimal social contract.

Consequently, the planter ceased to be a *blan*. He participated in networks of human groups, including perhaps persons from the dominated categories and formed primarily for the purpose of surviving under colonial oppression. Public administration however, continued to reflect the local presence of foreigners.

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This split within the European segment of the Caribbean societies was especially evident in the territories occupied by England following the Napoleonic wars, namely, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Grenada and Trinidad. As the French people in these islands became part of the *nèg* group, the incoming colonial authorities, the English, represented the new *blan*.

The terms chosen to refer to the traditionally dominant groups, i.e., *békés* in Martinique, mulattos in Haiti and Dominica, or French Creoles in Trinidad, distinguished between sectors belonging to the dominant social category rather than among individual ethnic groups. These terms point up, however, a certain identification with the *blan*, or foreigners. The *békés*, mulattos and French Creoles have always been the *protégés* of all colonial administrations, i.e., of the *blan*.

2. Cultural dynamics

The primacy of the colonial relationship in the Caribbean was pervasive throughout the daily life of the population. This fact is not visible however, in a macro-social reading of the history of the region. It can be discovered only by examining the conditions in which the groups within it were established and continued to function.

An analysis of the formation of these groupings needs to focus on the tools of knowledge and judgement forged by the inhabitants. This approach is essential in territories inhabited by migrants from a host of different countries who originally belonged to heterogeneous cultural systems.

Cultural studies on the Caribbean often cite Spanish, French, British or Dutch influences as well as African influence. They do not often observe that the regions of Africa are at least as varied as those of Europe, and that references to the Spanish, French, British or Dutch Caribbean are remnants of colonialism.

Since the socio-cultural system in which the African emigrants had to operate existed prior to their arrival, this population had necessarily to adapt to it. From the beginning there was a separation between the material and normative foundations of socio-economic organization originated in Europe and the tools of knowledge and judgement used by the incoming social actors.

It was through an effort to discover how the dominant system operated, together with the successes and failures of this effort and then, through an effort to set up the channels of transmission of such discovery to the newly emigrating recruits and later generations, that Caribbean culture with its unique rationale, built its specific characteristics. The system of Caribbean thought does not derive from the overall socio-cultural context in which it was inserted and further effects no repercussions upon it.

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The original tools of understanding for the working population in plantation societies were undoubtedly African. Since African societies were no more homogeneous than those of Europe, the emigrants had to put together a new set of ideas and data. Moreover, the dominant system, by institutionalizing the enslavement of these emigrants or excessively exploiting the freedmen, destroyed any possibility of cross-fertilization between adjunct dominant and dominated world views.

The discovery of how the dominant system worked and the formulation of survival strategies were both causes and effects of the creation of a community from "the confused amalgam of individuals" disgorged from the slave ships. To decode the socio-cultural organization that absorbed him, the enslaved had to form groups of individuals or somehow become part of those groups that were equipped to accept him. Specific units –families, villages, multi-purpose groups, and networks of groupings, families and villages gradually grew out of this insertion.

The enslaved also had to invent mechanisms and systems of communication. Interpretive criteria arose which gave meaning and value to the components of the dominant socio-economic organization. The participation of emigrants in the plantation systems presupposed the formulation of their own theory of the European socio-cultural organization, incorporated in their oral tradition.

This progressive change was at the same time part of the history of the socio-cultural organization of the dominated themselves, the history of a life-style that corresponded to accidents that befell them as well as to a culture which they controlled and for which they established criteria of excellence.

> This "popular culture", born and raised under the sign of repression, remained undiscoverable outside of its relationship to power and to prevailing ideological control.[186]

The survival of the enslaved depended on their skill in setting up, on the basis of their knowledge of the dominant system, a socio-cultural organization that was able to manipulate and outmanoeuvre the system. Their system of beliefs and knowledge and the meaning they attributed to their surroundings had to perform in relation to an outside organization, i.e., within a context having its own dynamics and independent of their actions. The dominant society was not of their doing –far from it.

What is important here is not the way of life invented by the migrants,' but their survival strategies and the criteria set in motion to shield them against the effects of colonial exploitation. The admittedly modest performance of these groups demonstrates the strength of the dominant

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system; but it does not negate the social cohesion required in order to survive, nor the indomitable nature of the source of this cohesion.

The performance of life-styles that developed depended on unforeseeable circumstances. The dynamics of the dominant society were not merely the result of exploitation of the emigrants.

The life-styles of Caribbean societies differed in many more respects than did their cultures. Similarly, the tangible inequalities among various social strata were much more pronounced than were the differences among their systems of knowledge. If this point is not fully grasped, the meaning of national unity in the Caribbean and the unity of the Caribbean region itself cannot be adequately understood.

It is proper to speak of differences of behaviours, life-styles or culture, between planters and enslaved since they belonged to different social categories. But there is no need to place particular stress on the differences in the behaviours, life-styles and culture of enslaved, freedmen and maroons. These social actors came from the same class or social category.

An enslaved might have had an opportunity to escape. He might have slipped unnoticed into the city and passed for a freedman, or joined up with the maroons, or even returned to his master, depending on the individual circumstances of his escape. A whole common system of knowledge, criteria and symbols shared by enslaved, freedmen and maroons existed and *the immense variety of behaviours and life-styles separating them depended on fortuitous circumstances.*[187] It was not the culture of these three social actors that distinguished them, but the conditions in which they operationalized same.

The same was true for societies of the region. In the late eighteenth century, revolutionary France experimented with a series of domestic reforms which weakened its international position. Against this background, revolutionary disturbances transformed a number of societies of the region while others remained apparently intact.

In Martinique, for example, such changes which marked the history of Haiti, Saint Lucia, Guadeloupe and Dominica did not take place. The British occupied the island shortly after the French Revolution, from 1794 to 1802, and kept the local culture from expressing itself as it did elsewhere. Nonetheless the culture of Martinique did not differ from that of the former French colonies, in spite of historical circumstances which explained its peculiar expressions.

The dynamics of the dominant culture were similar to those of the oppressed one, only the ties that linked these cultures to either Europe or Africa varied. Here the dichotomy between *nèg* and *blan* was replicated.

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The dominant culture was inspired by European culture in its exploitation of the dominated categories, while the oppressed culture looked to its African roots to find the tools of resistance.

The observation that there were differences in cultural content does not affect the dynamics of the systems under consideration. Unlike the enslaved, the planters had little difficulty in comprehending the internal rationale of the plantation society. They remained fragments of the metropolitan society sufficiently detached from it in order to settle the colonies.

As soon as the projected path of the metropolis differed from theirs and they had to depend on their own ingenuity, the planters set up a series of interpersonal relationships to help solve the problems that arose in their new relationship with Europe. They became involved in daily exchanges whose rationality, although deriving from that of their mother country, would depart from it as time passed.

In the face of changes in the economic policy of the metropolises, the planters gradually learned to decode the world economic structure to which the plantation system belonged. They had to create a theory of metropolitan policy. They had to ensure the survival of the plantation society in the context of external dynamics whose pace and direction they could not control.

The dominant culture, i.e., the planters' system of thought, included a store of knowledge, symbols and criteria related to those of the metropolitans. It differed from that of the metropolitan culture however, in its theory of social development, which granted to the plantation system a role that no dominant group of the metropolis would endorse.

The standards used by the planters to evaluate metropolitan policies and to make decisions about the development of their plantations were set by the networks of social groups that they had established to help them in their daily lives. The dominant local culture thus possessed a rationale which could be measured against metropolitan principles.[188]

Thus, the planter carried two cultures within him: the metropolitan culture and the dominant local culture, where the seed of a national, consensus-based culture was germinating. Gradually, by ceasing to be a *blan*, i.e., a foreigner to the survival strategies of the territories, the planter, like the enslaved, had to try to reproduce himself independent of the development dynamics of the metropolis.

The planter's life evolved by negotiating a *modus vivendi* both with the colonial authorities and with the freedmen. Neither the metropolis' sympathy toward him nor his dependency upon it had any effect on his need

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to formulate criteria of judgement and action adapted to his own circumstances.

One must not jump to the conclusion, however, that the similar cultural dynamics of the dominant and dominated groups of the Caribbean led to the existence of a single cultural group and the formation of a Creole culture. The differences in principle that guided the behaviour of the planters and the enslaved are fundamental.

In order to reproduce their social groups —creators and implementors of their survival strategies—, the slaves tended to destroy or at least erode the social category to which they were assigned. The planters also had to see that the groups to which they belonged were reproduced. This task meant however that the dominant social category and its relevant colonial relations had to be both defended and strengthened.

The opposition between the dominant and dominated social categories manifested itself in the action of specific human groups formed to resolve the problems of daily life. Both of these groups made decisions autonomously on two types of common obstacles: first, the physical environment in which they had to survive and secondly, the social environment set up by external centres of power whose interests differed from those of local categories and groupings.

Both dominant and dominated groups had to separate their interests from those of the metropolises and conditions existed for discovering forms of social interaction based on criteria held in common by both types of social groups, as will be seen below.

It must be underlined however, that it was not the similarity of their cultural dynamics nor of their heritage that brought the social groups together. A relatively unified culture resulted from a common body of social practices aimed at meeting the challenges posed by the environment. Such was the way in which interpersonal relations impacted upon the systems of social categories imposed by colonialism.

3. The governors and the governed

The pairs of categories "governors/governed" on the one hand and "planters/slaves or freedmen" on the other represented two different levels of social relations. The first pair belonged to the framework of the metropolis/colony relationship, and the second to the implementation of the metropolitan project of colonial organization.

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In performing their functions, the governors maintained relations with the political and juridical institutions of the metropolis, while the planters established a relationship with the economic institutions of the latter.

When the colony lost its specifically economic *raison d'etre* and metropolitan enterprises were no longer dependent upon its products, existing political relations ensured the profitability of its agro-export activities. Metropolitan protection took the form of preferential treatment, subsidies and quotas of various types enabling the colony to continue its development independent of market forces. The relations between governors and governed thus became more relevant to an explanation of the evolution of domestic affairs.

The planter's relationship with the metropolis was more flexible than that of the public administrator with the latter. A planter might even have formed an allegiance with another metropolis. His relationship with his own plantation and workers might also vary. However, the relationships that prevailed among the colonial administrator, the metropolis and the governed were invariable. The administrator was a delegate and employee of the political system, responsible for supervising the execution of the colonial plan designed by a specific metropolis. He had to accept the rationale of colonization and a particular system of colonization.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, the main concern of the metropolises was to control and administer strategic positions in the Caribbean. After the Second World War, the Caribbean's geopolitical value changed and it found itself in the midst of the cold war between the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

An exploitation colony is incompatible with domestic social cohesion and the setting up of parameters for self-reliant control of the socio-economic structure. Outright appropriation of a strategic position is even less likely to be so.

A group of territories is made to serve a strategic function by converting the inhabitants into a disorderly herd or an inorganic crowd, to use Price-Mars' terms,[189] and by arranging for their human resources to be underemployed.[190]

If not, an endogenous economic system with its own division of labour will flourish and hence, a series of social practices tending to create cohesion and consensus in one form or another will develop.

In any society attempting to meet the needs of its members, a certain amount of experience is accumulated. Knowledge about how to control the environment leads to social behaviours whose results may be unrelated to the interests –strategic or otherwise– of the external powers.

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In colonies whose economic activity is of only marginal utility, the mechanisms for recruiting civil servants –the main avenue for upward social mobility– form the basis for an analysis of political structures. To have access to and maintain bureaucratic posts, the colonial elite had to learn the rationale of colonization.

All that remained of European culture in the colonies appeared as a caricature derived from Western culture, but it must not be confused with the criteria, knowledge and values that governed social exchanges in Europe itself.

It is this sort of European culture that is meant in referring to the dominant culture in the Caribbean. Governors and the governed, planters and freedmen abided by the *raison d'etre* of the colonial system. The actual content of the metropolitan culture escaped them however, since culture is not learned but has to be enacted.

In order to fully understand the role of the civil service before and after the Caribbean countries gained their independence, there is a need to look back to the categorization of the world system into *blan* and *nèg* by the local population. Not only was the colonial administrator the main vehicle for transmitting the dominant culture, but his governmental practices were the materialization of the colonial rationale.

The entire public and private, material and spiritual administration of the Caribbean remained consistent with the demands for total extroversion of the socio-economic organization and the series of criteria and principles guiding the appropriation of the region by colonial empires. These relationships included political and military relations, the activities of the plantation system, vocational training or on-the-job experience in the maintenance, administration and expansion of the colony, public education, teaching and practice of European religions and health services.

Communication with the metropolis was much more important to the civil service than dialogue with the population. It made more sense for the governors to explain themselves to the metropolitans than to the local people. Power was legitimized in Europe and the local culture had only to acknowledge its effectiveness.

4. The governed become part of the government: the planters

The life-styles in Caribbean communities did not develop in the direction of greater adaptation to the plantation environment. The influence of this form of organization has been exaggerated, and the region's socio-economic dynamics have thus been obscured.

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The path taken by the regional communities could have moved towards greater adaptation to the plantation if the latter, in turn, had been dynamic enough to successfully integrate the prevailing world economy. The plantation, however, had never been required to operate in a market economy. When buying its inputs it had always managed to evade the labour market while it had to protect itself against international competition when selling its outputs.

A distinction must be drawn between the intention or effort to establish and defend the plantation economy and the reality of such an economy. Past commentary on the evolution of Caribbean societies has been on the wrong track because it focused on discovering what economic solution was used to save an institution which was never a part of the economic structures in the first place. It is one thing to say that the output of the plantations circulated in the international market, and another to say that the functions of production in the plantation system conformed to some sort of economic structure.

The plantations, in response to the difficulties confronting them, formulated make-shift solutions. Since they were not organized according to market-economy principles, their possibilities for growth lay outside the scope of economic activities.

The plantation owners and administrators tried to reproduce the conditions essential to the functioning of these institutions. Their development strategy consisted of safeguarding the political climate which determined the social categories on which the system was based.

It was precisely this political climate that could no longer be reproduced in the age of the industrial revolution and the building of the great colonial empires. The plantation society had to change, organizing production in such a way that it would fit into the context of the new colonial policy.

What took place then was a dual shift —both geographical and social— in the populations. There were internal migrations by freedmen, a principal factor in the establishment of the peasant economy or the urban economy of the tradesmen. These migrations later included the movement of workers to the cities and towns of the Caribbean Basin and of the metropolises where jobs were available. For their part, the planters vied with one another for posts in the civil service, modifying the structure of the social pyramid.

The distance between the planters and the metropolis was accentuated in the nineteenth century, when it became clear that there was no inherent relationship between the administration of the colony and the development of the plantation system. The knowledge acquired in export agriculture was

no longer useful for servicing the relationship between the colony and the metropolis.

From that point on, two different rationales influenced the behaviour of the planters. One aimed at reproducing the relationship between the metropolis and its colony and the other at protecting the existing social relations within the colony. The social category was being split in two, while the human groupings remained the same.

Since the relationship between the metropolis and the colony took precedence over the social relations within the colony itself, this led to new, basic social categories. These no longer centred on organizing daily activities in the region, but concentrated instead on managing the colonial relationship.

Despite the series of measures that favoured the planters, the colonial State no longer shared with them its monopoly on violence.[191] This power was exercised directly through its civil servants, recruited on the spot if necessary. The dichotomy between the *nèg* and the *blan* expressed by the pair of local categories "governors" and "the governed", took root in the colonized society and some of the governed were invited to form part of the government.

The opening up of the civil service to the dominant groups in the region consolidated its balkanization. The autonomy of these civil servant recruits grew within the context of the official norms of the colony. The cleavages between the British, French, Spanish or Dutch Caribbean peoples became local issues. These new "middle classes" flourished as fierce partisans of balkanization and defenders of the imperial frontiers.

The plantation crisis and the shift of the Creole elite from agro-export management to service activities set off a slippage from one cultural system to another that proved to be of enormous importance in the cultural history of the region. While one sector of the plantation aristocracy participated in the governing of the colony —although admittedly not without a certain amount of conflict with the metropolitan authorities—,[192] another sector was attempting to move closer to the oppressed culture.

The operation of large plantations adapted to the colonial policy of the nineteenth century and sought to adjust itself to the development of different forms of the peasant economy. Sharecropping and piecework were compromise solutions between slave labour and salaried work. Opportunities for the creation of new human groups multiplied. These arrangements of individuals despite the persistence of forms of exploitation, thereafter brought together in the same process of social negotiation,

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persons belonging to the deeply antagonistic and original categories of the eighteenth century.

Together with the greater balkanization of the region due to the strengthening of the local political and administrative structures, the symbols and criteria of local origin contained in the oppressed culture became more generalized. A growing body of knowledge, standards and symbols developed and was shared by the entire population of the Caribbean territories –planters and enslaved, *békés* and the freedmen, *mulattoes* and *nèg noirs*–. Despite the cleavages that separated persons belonging to one or another category, this knowledge served to promote communication between an increasing number of groups and helped develop larger networks of relationships.

This process did not advance at the same pace throughout the territories however. The Study and Research Group on the Creole-speaking World (GEREC), in a publication of the Caribbean-Guiana University Centre notes the intertwining of cultural values in the subregion's history:

> In order to understand fully the dialectical functioning of the socio-cultural groups in our countries, it is useful to note that precisely at a time when the middle classes, in an alliance with the democrats and liberals of the metropolis, spurn Creole[193] in favour of a headlong rush towards the adoption of cultural values associated with the use of the French language, one witnesses among the *békés* a veritable psychological reinsertion into Creole.[194]

The social contract sketched out at that time –and still being negotiated in the region– in no way resembles the hypothetical model of a consensus that would have developed without reference to the colonial relationship. It is the world of tacit conventions and standards of the formerly enslaved which flourishes together with the peasant economy and imposes itself on the entire local population during the successive crises of the plantation system.

The dominant groups in the Caribbean learn to juggle openly with the know-how and official norms of the dominant culture. In their private lives and in the agricultural production intended for their own consumption, they put into practice the principles created by the maroons and subsequently by the peasants.

This skill in manipulating two systems of knowledge seems to be a widespread feature in the Caribbean. It permits identification of the foreigner, the *blan*, i.e., the colonial administrator to whom this sophistication escapes. The isolation of public servants who subsequently

take over from the colonial administration springs from the same need to operate within a single logical system.

The distinction then between transmitters of the dominant culture and the creators of the oppressed culture loses its meaning.[195] The intertwining of standards and guidelines of conduct that characterizes social life in the Caribbean may be viewed as a project of national unity or the creation of a unique civil society which would include planters as well as freedmen.

5. The governed become part of the government: the freedmen

With the continuing decline of export agriculture, the metropolis opened the doors of public administration to the local elites. The first wave of planters and sons of planters incorporated into the lower levels of public service was succeeded by the freedmen and their descendants.

The arrival of the freedmen on the official political scene coincided with the granting of administrative autonomy –self- government, and more precisely nominal independence. This process began with the great agricultural workers' strikes which took place between the two world wars.

With the withdrawal of the occupation army –or at least its inability to intervene without maintaining a semblance of respect for international norms– law and order relied increasingly on popular participation. This participation in the government of the colony (which is generally regarded as the beginning of the decolonization process) was not very different from the absorption of the planter class in the nineteenth century.

The difference between the rise of the freedmen and that of the planters lies first and foremost in the level of public administration accessible to them. Planters and their offspring occupied posts as subordinates of the administrators dispatched from the metropolises and freedmen held positions throughout the administrative structure.

The attitude of those recruited into public service was largely explained by the type of links which they maintained with their social groups of origin. The "middle classes" that emerged from the groups of freedmen achieved their standards of living and prestige only through the exercise of their new functions.

The offspring of planters who were absorbed by the colonial administration did not give up their ties with export agriculture and their working relationships with agricultural workers and sharecroppers. This gave rise to what GEREC refers to as "a veritable psychological reinsertion into Creole". The nationalism of the mulatto aristocracy in Dominica provides a good example of this reinvestment in the local world.

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For the freedmen, there was a phenomenon of "weaning", to use yet another term of GEREC, away from the bases and standards of national life. These "new middle classes", who lived only through public service and evolved within rigid frames of reference were transformed into beacons of civilization and champions of an increasingly more sophisticated dissemination of the metropolitan culture and its local version. It should also be noted that this group replaced the original administrators sent from the metropolis. These were the new *blan*.

This analysis led to the classification of the proponents of Negritude as part of the new *blan* and this may seem strange. It must be remembered that the doctrine of Negritude constitutes a response to the racism of the nineteenth century. According to this doctrine, the re-evaluation of that which survives of African culture is proposed as another argument in favour of the equality of the black race. Moreover, the political doctrine of these theoreticians, which took root particularly in the "French-speaking Caribbean", regards racial conflicts as class conflicts. The work of François Duvalier, his writings [196] and his actions as a statesman are proof of this.

The racial issues deriving from Western imperialists' adventures are thus reflected in the internal structure of the contemporary Caribbean and either explicitly or implicitly illustrate its cultural policies. In this view, according to Hurbon's studies:

Sharing political and intellectual power with the mulattoes is a form
of cultural reform which implies "harmonizing in our country the
two cultures –African and Gallo-Roman".[197]

The aim of the theoreticians of Negritude is to show that blacks can master culture and civilization:

The common thread that runs through this discourse is precisely the
belief that Christian culture and civilization are all cultures and all
civilizations: it is this belief that this culture can redeem blacks, and
that it will be the focus for their cultural blossoming. Through their
representatives, elites and leader, all of whom rise to the level of
power of the whites .. (...), proof is furnished that the black world
has emerged from darkness, and has earned legitimacy as a
"human", "civilized" world.[198]

At the heart of concerns of the freedmen elite –which the proponents of Negritude in Haiti refer to as "the black middle classes"– is their need to measure themselves against the metropolis, their acceptance of Western hegemony, a need for authoritarian political direction while scorning the ignorant masses and a notorious inferiority complex which we shall later refer to.

While the *béké* of Martinique reverted to the Creole language, thereby becoming reintegrated into the local culture, the "blacks" in power attempted to prove to the metropolitans that they were their equals. They set out to master the "culture" and its vehicle, the official languages of the region. In 1928, Jean Price-Mars distancing himself from that current noted:

> It is through this language (Creole) that we can hope one day to bridge the gap which makes of us (the elite) and the people two apparently different and often antagonistic entities.[199]

6. Power and creolization

Price-Mars' relationship to Negritude is an ambiguous one,[200] paralleling other theoreticians of creolization. The difference is due to the fact that both Price-Mars and the advocates of creolization belong to twentieth century schools of thought. The creolization theories themselves are transfers of anthropological doctrines on cultural dissemination into political ideology.

Negritude and creolization overlap and influence each other. They are, however, two fields of thought, two contexts and two different societal projects. Price-Mars was quoted in a 1928 text along with contemporary theoreticians of creolization such as Edward Kamau Braithwaite,[201] because of his foresight, uncovering an idea developed only during the last quarter of this century, i.e., the advent of "the inner plantation".

The theories of creolization as formulated by the first generation of citizens of the so-called English-speaking Caribbean mapped out the project of society proposed by the new power elites.[202] Claiming to be scientific,[203] they inspired a specific cultural policy.

The first rallying point of the theoreticians of creolization is the notion of cultural pluralism. The cultures that crossed the Atlantic with the African migrants were combined under the aegis of the dominant European culture, which imparted a unique and ethnocentric bias.

The reverse side of cultural pluralism is the absence of an indigenous culture in the Caribbean as a result of the genocide of the Amerindians. This idea is expressed by Eric Williams in a paper presented to the Congress of Black Writers and Artists, held in Rome in 1959. He declared that the Caribbean had no culture of its own and that the task of the political leader was as follows:

> (to promote) the conscious advancement (...) of all cultural forms and manifestations which, while not indigenous, are based on a conscious or unconscious adaptation of their European and

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American heritages to their individual personality, needs and environment. (To seek to) consciously integrate in a harmonious whole, to weave in an orderly pattern, the disparate threads of culture that make up the West Indies –the European (whether Spanish, French or English), the African, the Indian, the Chinese, the Syrian– (...).[204]

Twenty years later, Rex Nettleford returns to Williams' theses with a more detailed analysis. He examines in a more explicit manner a second point commonly held by the theoreticians of creolization. This concerns the vital importance of wielding control of political power in order to forge national unity.

> M.G. Smith describes the island of two million souls (Jamaica) as deeply segmented aggregation of descendants of European masters, African slaves and in-between offspring of both. Each group has built up cultural institutions independent of each other but each with its own inner logic and consistency. (...) "National unity" is therefore forged not by an organic cultural integration but by the concentration of coercive power in the hands of a political directorate. Needless to say, such a "unity" is sustained by a high sense of s elf-interest and survival.[205]

The idea of cultural hybridizing from which the concept of creolization emerges, is but a continuation of the concept that Europe created the modern Caribbean. On the American continent, Europe discovered civilizations which, under one pretext or another, it felt authorized to destroy. It could not help but note, however, the existence of another style of life, which was precisely what it set out to transform.

In the Caribbean, Europe (along with the theoreticians of creolization) did not have an opportunity to perceive that another world view existed or was being developed in the shadow of colonization. The Creole Caribbean would be, for its inventors, a *tabula rasa* in which elements of all the world's cultures converged.

The problem of the popular response to oppression considered in its psychological dimension, was viewed both as an inferiority complex and an expression of racial pride.[206] European culture would have created within the colonized person an inferiority complex which emasculated him.[207] "Intellectual" elites would then be responsible to select the ingredients necessary to "balance" the local culture.[208]

This messianic endeavour which the elite imposed upon itself is challenged in the above-mentioned article by Eric Williams. What is

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important for Williams is the mechanics of hybridization and the meeting of the cultures. A statesman must be a man of culture, the mirror of his own people.

Nevertheless, with hybridization, the necessary conclusion is that the combination of these fragments of cultures cannot stand up to the majesty of the European edifice. Nettleford states after a description of the instruments of popular resistance:

> But good as these instruments of survival and growth have been, none has been totally effective in bringing about the sort of liberation dreamed of by so many not only in terms of statutory freedom and constitutional autonomy but also in terms of cultural authenticity and economic control.[209]

In view of the fact that outside socio-cultural entities perform better than those of the Caribbean, the only way for the evolution of the local culture would be located in its slow absorption by these worldwide cultural entities. Since the Caribbean was cut off from Africa and Asia, and in light of Europe's ubiquitous presence, the Caribbean cultural mix, for better or worse, would increasingly become composed of elements from the West, while contributions from Africa and Asia would be gradually diluted.

It is against the spectre of the disappearance of Caribbean culture –surreptitiously announced in their own prophecies– that the theoreticians of creolization (metamorphosed into politicians) are struggling. In order to avoid this catastrophe, these shapers of the new Caribbean society[210] strive to formulate strategies for the preservation and development of African cultural values in order to keep the cultural specificity of the region alive by a continuous return to its presumed origins.

The creolizing cultural policy appears in its true light, similar to the long-suffering diligence of Penelope. The struggle against European ethnocentrism would probably last as long as Europe maintains its ethnocentrism. The proposed cultural policy would enable the State to reproduce its ideological structure indefinitely and maintain in place those responsible for its "cultural" authenticity.

The aim would be to ensure forever the control of the enlightened descendants of the freedmen –the shapers of the new Caribbean society– over the powers of the State. The interminable process of "indigenization" or "creolization" of "culture" would then transcend all political regimes and development strategies.[211]

The difference between the cultural policy proposed by Nettleford and those of the colonial empires is that in his view, the sources for the importation of culture should be more diversified. Schooling, under the

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guise of education, should become not the pillar of local culture but rather the pillar of the "local colour" of culture. Instead of confronting what is perceived as a "bombardment" of Western culture with greater creativity, Nettleford entrusts to a selective pan-Africanism the task of fertilizing the Caribbean soil.

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that these criticisms of theories of creolization clearly reflect a divergent political position. In the case of the partisans of creolization, European authoritarianism and ethnocentrism are replaced by their own authoritarianism and ethnocentrism. European ideas and paradigms dominate their thinking to such an extent that they forget the people to whom this theory should be addressed and whose role as shapers of their own society cannot be delegated.

The rejection of creolization is also the result of opposing schools of thought. The methodological position of theories of cultural dissemination fails to understand where the sources of cultural specificity lie:

> (...) Culture is best seen not as complexes of concrete behavior
> patterns –customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters– as has, by and
> large, been the case up to now, but as a set of control mechanisms
> –plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call
> "programs")– for the governing of behavior.[212]

7. Toward a new social contract

The colonial relationship, reduced to its simplest terms, is an authoritarian relationship between the governing and the governed. For the colonized, it is a relationship of a political nature and not the result of any particular performance.

What is at stake in the forms of socialization that develop is the safeguarding and collective improvement of life-styles. In societies as minuscule as those of the Caribbean, the improvement of social behaviour which comes about through an understanding of the rules of the colonial game is nullified by variegated obstacles which exist outside of the principles governing interpersonal relationships.

In the region, improvements in living standards basically result from advances in the world economic system. Progress in this world system derives from a social dynamic in contradistinction to what operates in the daily lives of the social groups of the Caribbean since the basic social categories of the world system are not to be found in the region.

The colonial State and the groups which control its institutions spread awareness of the principles and trends of the metropolitan societies. In this

view, the political factors which explained the relative backwardness of the colonized economies are given secondary importance in relation to the need to improve the styles and standards of living of the underdeveloped countries.

The colonial culture is centred on the formulation of decisions increasingly adapted to an external milieu and dynamic. Reflexion on social exchanges in the colony itself becomes an occupation for the dilettante, unrelated to economic development.

With the modification of the colonial relationship and the proliferation of formal declarations of independence, any negative repercussions of asymmetry that characterize international relations are blurred even further. The political and administrative structures put in place by the metropolises become the only channel of expression of the newly emerging national sovereignties. The relationships then, between political forces at the local level is played out in this mould created to satisfy the original colonial relationship.

By continuing the colonial strategies, local politics centres around the improvement of styles and standards of living. The negligible developmental results obtained from the exercise of nominal sovereignty are attributed to technical deficiencies of the administrative apparatus. This situation thus justifies the search for aid, again from external sources, in order to strengthen the administrative systems and thereby the performance of the national economies. This is the frantic search for economic development, conceived as improvement in life-styles.

But there is a short circuit in evidence: a) the dominant role assigned to politics in the establishment of the world economy tends to elude social consciousness; b) the rules of the world economy determine the performances of national economies; c) such performances hold the key to the legitimization of national political power.

Under the dominant culture, political rationality is divorced from economic rationality. It is necessary, however, to simultaneously satisfy the need for legitimization of the new States and to halt the decline of the national economic systems.

In seeking to hold on to the reins of power, governments advance – willingly or by force – toward the administration of the oppressed culture. The understanding and implementation of all knowledge and criteria of judgement formulated by the population becomes then an alternative to the legitimization of power through the success of economic development policies.

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Presently the key issue of the relationships between culture, politics and power in the Caribbean centres around the vulnerability of a colonially inherited State embattled by the enrichment of the oppressed culture. The local culture, as the titled depositary of national sovereignty, gradually infiltrates the negotiations between power elites.

The new "middle classes" still do not manage to penetrate, much less to successfully administer, this stronghold of culture erected by the population. Their itinerary may be summarized in the following manner:

1. The social pyramid in the Caribbean is very selective at the top, and the mechanisms of upward mobility are imported. Public service is the principal avenue used by the governed (planters and freedmen) for the cumulative improvement of life-styles.

2. The deterioration of national economies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries forced the elite in power to embark on a prudent return to the local culture.

3. The need for legitimization of power in the midst of growing economic stagnation makes it necessary to approach domestic social negotiations as well as international political negotiations from the perspective of norms and institutions created by the Caribbean nations themselves.

The vibrancy observed in the Caribbean is heightened by the repercussions of an emigration that results from the deterioration of the life-styles of the region and affects all social classes. As a consequence, the Caribbean diaspora storms the labour markets of the rich countries despite enormous social costs.

In the present situation, the impact on the region's economy of remittances from "absent citizens" become more effective than any State policy of income distribution. The metropolitan authorities therefore adopt, without success, increasingly drastic restraining measures on the flow of potential migrants, while at the same time attempting to augment international technical assistance.

The governments of the Caribbean are rapidly approaching the embarrassing situation of having to choose between the defence of their more enterprising nationals and the defence of the established international order. The legitimization of political power cannot indefinitely avoid this dilemma.

Moreover, the insertion of "absent citizens" in the political systems of the metropolis offers the governments of the region certain advantages which they could hardly refrain from using. The oppressed culture is

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reproduced in the rich countries and is capable of penetrating to the very core of metropolitan social practices.

Among the indicators of a new vibrancy and a greater intensity in the negotiation of the Caribbean social contract, mention must be made of the flourishing of local languages on the political scene. This involves the increasingly extensive use of the vehicle par excellence of national culture and of the paradigms of oppressed groups on subject matters hitherto reserved for the dominant languages and cultures.

In Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana, Saint Lucia, Dominica and Haiti, French lexicon based Creoles are already present on the political scene. A new style of discourse is emerging. The linguistic movement is less visible in those countries in which an English-based Creole is spoken, but the transformation of the political discourse has –in fact since the time of Eric Williams– been no less significant.

The situation in the Netherlands Antilles has its own particular merits. This country, which is not independent, is the only one in the Americas in which a Creole language –papiamento– is used in the House of Representatives. This is also the country in which all the official languages of the Caribbean are spoken even by humble people.

In the Netherlands Antilles one notes then, a high degree of democratization of public life, despite extreme political dependence. The negotiations with the metropolitan government and the transnational corporations, the form of federation most suited to these islands and the temporary or definitive secession from the political entity which they constitute indicate the presence of numerous obstacles which retard or maybe preclude a comprehensive political expression of national unity. There is an urgent need to undertake a study of this situation.

The difficulties faced by the Netherlands Antilles points to the existence of a basic principle which most cultural studies tend to deal with only superficially. National sovereignty is transformed into a State organization when the social project which it embodies is viable.

A State emerges from a given nation when the partners –other states– can accommodate, or are forced to accommodate, its project of society. Outside of these conditions, national sovereignty is not exercised through the State, but by other methods –which does not question its (the State's) actual existence.[213]

If we regard Caribbean culture as a system of thought elaborated in the Caribbean by its social actors then, the evolution of life-styles is partly the result of collective decisions elaborated on the basis of the community's own historical experience. This logical system, by definition specific,

maintains no relationships with other similar systems. This is the crucible of national sovereignty which forms the basis of the State, however embryonic it may be.

If the culture of the Caribbean is its system of knowledge, the role of the State –of an essentially national State– is the management of this system. It is at this juncture that the political man becomes the man of culture envisioned by Eric Williams.

For (an) example of the relationship and the interpenetration of politics and culture in ancient Greece, I turn my thoughts towards Demosthenes' attack, before the jury in Athens, on Eschine (...). It was to the man on the street in Athens, the ordinary citizen, together melded into a single electoral body, government and culture, that the powerful political exhortation of *De Corona* was addressed.[214]

NOTES

[1] Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro, the History of the Caribbean*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, pp. 103-104.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 393.

[3] Marshall Wolfe, *Elusive Development*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and Economic Commission for Latin America, 1981.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 131.

[5] Bossale = recent black immigrant from Africa.

[6] "Adam Smith, like many of his contemporaries, was well aware of the reasons which made it impossible to use free labour in new colonies with an abundance of land; the workers simply went off and became small farmers on their own account. So there is a sense in which the structure of the situation demanded a certain kind of organization and stratification; just as the development of factory organization in Britain created a certain kind of class system." R.T. Smith, "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism and Integration in West Indian Societies", *Caribbean Integration, Papers on Social, Political, and Economic Integration*, Río Piedras, P. R., University of Puerto Rico, Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1967, pp. 231-232.

[7] "We also forbid slaves belonging to different masters from congregating day or night, under the pretext of a wedding or otherwise; either on the plantation of their masters or elsewhere and even less on the main roads or in isolated places, under penalty of corporal punishment." Code Noir, Article 16, cited by Cécile Celma "Eléments pour une étude de la vie associative à la Martinique, Fin XIXè siècle, Début XXè siècle". Thirteenth Conference of Historians of Caribbean countries, April 1981.

[8] "With this we reach the heart of research into the life/meaning of the inner plantation. Our weakness/failing as scholars is that we have been, on the whole, too (and surprisingly) concerned with abstractions rather than with people: putting the cart before the horse. This, I suppose, is another inheritance from the metropolis, where the 'people' spade work has already been done as part of the steady evolution towards national identities, and where

colonies, except for those visitors who bothered, were little more than abstractions/producers anyway." Edward Braithwaite, *Caribbean Man in Space in Time, a Bibliographical and Conceptual Approach*, Mona, Savacou Publications, 1974, Pamphlet No. 2, p. 7.

[9] R.T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[10] "To speak of Guyana coastlands at this time as being occupied by a 'Guianese society' may be very misleading and it is suggested that we might regard each plantation as constituting what Goffman has termed a 'total institution'", in "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism and Integration in West Indian Societies", R.T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 229. However, Smith applies it only to what he calls the plantation society and expresses a number of very explicit reservations: "In this respect Guyana is an extreme case. In the longer settled islands such as Jamaica and Barbados, there was a more marked development of the colonial society. The plantation model is still useful for understanding many of the features of their organization." R.T. Smith, *ibid.*, footnote.

[11] E. Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[12] "(...) The real content of culture: how people organize their experience conceptually so that it can be transmitted as knowledge from person to person and from generation to generation. As Goodenough advocates (...), culture 'does not consist of things, people behavior, or emotions' but the forms or organization of these things in the minds of people (Goodenough, 1957). *The principles by which people in a culture construe their world reveal how they segregate the pertinent from the insignificant, how they code and retrieve information, how they anticipate events* (Kelly, 1955), *how they define alternative courses of actions and make decisions among them.*" (Charles O. Frake, "The Ethnographic Study of Cognitive Systems", *Anthropology and Human Behavior*, Washington, D.C., Anthropological Society of Washington, 1962, p. 38.)

[13] Roger Brown, *Words and Things*, New York, Free Press, pp. 235-241; Roger Brown and Eric H. Lenneberg, "A Study in Language and Cognition", *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 1954, 49(3), pp. 454-462, quoted by Charles O. Frake, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[14] The Portuguese indentured labourers of Guyana and their descendants are not considered as whites.

[15] This assimilation is so thorough that in Haiti the expression *neg nwè* or "nègres noirs" is sometimes used to refer to the Haitians themselves, while blacks from foreign countries are referred to as whites unless the context requires a reference to their race.

[16] "Creole: a person of pure white race born in the colonies." (*Larousse*, 1952.) "Creole: a native of a tropic dependency." (*Webster's New Universal Dictionary of the English Language*, 1976.) "Creole: refers to a child of European parents born anywhere in the world; refers to the black person born in America." (*Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, Real Academia Española, 1970.)

[17] Raymond T. Smith, "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism and Integration in the West Indian Societies", in Sybil Lewis and Thomas G. Matthews, ed., *Caribbean Integration*, Papers on Social, Political and Economic Integration, Third Caribbean Scholars' Conference, Georgetown, Guyana, April 4-9, 1966, Río Piedras, University of Puerto Rico, Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1967, p. 230.

[18] "In monasteries, this period of induction (the seasoning) is known as 'mortification', a word which indicates clearly the induced state of anxiety, insecurity and humiliation which leads to the inmate's ready acceptance of his new role as a relief from anxiety itself." R.T. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

[19] See Jean Fouchard, *Les Marrons de la Liberté*, Paris, Editions de l'Ecole, 1972.

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[20] "I have already (...) pointed to the inter-cultural process we call creolization and noted the possibility of describing it in terms not of a 1:1 give and take act of gift and exchange, resulting in a new or altered product, but as a process, resulting in subtle and multiform orientations *from or towards* ancestral originals." Edward Brathwaite, *Caribbean Man in Space and Time, A Bibliographical and Conceptual Approach*, Mona, Savacou Publications, 1974, Pamphlet No. 2, p. 7.

[21] For a more detailed discussion of this idea, see Jean Casimir, *La Cultura Oprimida*, Mexico, Edit. Nueva Imagen, 1980, pp. 72 ff.

[22] The concept of slave was evidently used in the documents of the period. Contemporary literature –especially literature that dealt with the theories of acculturation and creolization– does likewise. The term *captif* better conveys the idea of the circumstances under which Africans were implanted in the New World and aptly describes the state of militarization that was required to maintain them in captivity. The English term *enslaved* is even more illustrative, but seems to have no equivalent in French.

[23] Under certain circumstances, the slave received a form of remuneration which should not be confused with a wage.

[24] "One may study this survival of cultural traits but one cannot speak of a cultural "crossbreeding" as long as it is not proven that the direction of political and economical affairs within the framework of a society's development had acquired the same weight as matters of cuisine." Jean Casimir, *La Cultura Oprimida, op. cit.*, p. 93.

[25] See the various works of Woodville K. Marshall, *The Social Development of the Windward Islands, 1738-1865*, Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1963 and "Notes on Peasant Development in the West Indies since 1863", *Social and Economic Studies*, vol. 17, No. 3, September 1968.

[26] See A. G. Quintero Rivera, "La música puertorriqueña y la contra-cultura democrática: espontaneidad libertaria de la herencia cimarrona". Paper presented at the sixteenth Latin American Congress of Sociology, Rio de Janeiro, 2 to 7 March 1986, mimeo, subject to revision, pp. 15 ff.

[27] See Manuel Moreno Fraginals: "Plantations in the Caribbean: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in the Late Nineteenth Century", pp. 17 and 18; see also Rebecca J. Scott: "Explaining Abolition: Contradiction, Adaptation and Challenge in Cuban Slave Society, 1860-1886", p. 31, *In Between Slavery and Free Labor: The Spanish-Speaking Caribbean in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Manuel Moreno Fraginals, Frank Moya Pons, and Stanley L. Engerman. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

[28] In fact, the European and African inhabitants of the Caribbean were initiated into an autonomous social life by the Amerindians of the region, a fact which is often overlooked.

[29] "The creole complex has its historical base in slavery, plantation systems, and colonialism. Its cultural composition mirrors its racial mixture. European and African elements predominate in fairly standard combinations and relationships. The ideal forms of institutional life, such as government, religion, family and kinship, law, property, education, economy and language are of European derivation; in consequence, differing metropolitan affiliation produce differing versions of creole culture. But in their creole contexts, these institutional forms diverge from their metropolitan models in greater or lesser degree to fit local conditions." M. G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1965, p. 5.

[30] George L. Beckford, *Persistent Poverty, Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 96.

[31] *West India Royal Commission Report*, presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, July 1945 (paras. 1 and 2, p. 29). Referred to hereinafter as the Report of the Moyne Commission.

[32] Martin F. Murphy, "The History and Process of Haitian Migration to the Dominican Sugar Industry: Modern Day Slavery or Superexploitation", Paper presented to the Conference on Migration and Culture Contacts in the Caribbean, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados, 4 to 7 April 1984. Version subject to revision, which we quote with the kind consent of the author.

[33] Peter Fraser, "The Fictive Peasantry: Caribbean Rural Groups in the Nineteenth Century", in Susan Craig, ed., *Contemporary Caribbean, A Sociological Reader*, Trinidad and Tobago, the College Press, 1981, p. 328.

[34] The historian notes that the factory owners made available a portion of their land to "their workers", that is to say, to farmers who shared the produce of their farms with the factory owners. "This system of tenant farming was similar to that of sharecropping in which the farmer paid the factory owner or the lessor for the use of the land in the form of cane and through the moral obligation to work for a certain number of days on the estate." Cécile Celma, "Le Mouvement ouvrier aux Antilles de la Première Guerre Mondiale à 1939", in *Historial Antillais*, Fort de France, Tome V.

[35] The French word *engagés* was used in the original text to mean indentured labourers.

[36] Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guianese Working People, 1881-1905*, Kingston, Heinemann Educational Books, 1981, p. 34.

[37] W.K. Marshall, *The Social and Economic Development of the Windward Islands, 1838-1865*, doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 1963, p. 69.

[38] Saint Lucia, *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Stoppage of Work at the Sugar Factories in March 1952, and into the Adequacy of Existing Wage-Fixing Machinery in that Colony*, Castries, 1952, para. 78, p. 22. This document will be referred to as the Malone Commission Report throughout this study.

[39] Several quotations used in the present work expose the misconception.

[40] *West India Royal Commission Report*, op. cit., chapter 10, paras. 7-8, pp. 192-193.

[41] M. F. Murphy, op. cit., p. 38.

[42] International market forces obliged the planter to modernize his production process. See, for example, the case of British Guiana plantations documented by W. Rodney, *op. cit.*, p. 23 and ff. This was in no way incompatible with the archaic piece work system as the same writer pointed out, *op. cit.*, p. 43. This difference led to the modernization of the industrial sector as opposed to the agricultural sector. See Manuel Moreno Fraginals, "Plantations in the Caribbean: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in the Late Nineteenth Century", in Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *et al.*, *Between Slavery and Free Labor, the Spanish-Speaking Caribbean in the Nineteenth Century*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985, p. 5.

[43] "In the case of G & W's Central Romana the company presently employs labor contractors in both the Dominican Republic and Haiti to recruit temporary workers primarily along Haiti's southeastern peninsula and upon arrival these G and W contracted laborers are registered with the *Dirección General de Migración*. The recruitment and processing systems are quite similar to those of the *Consejo Estatal del Azúcar*, but with the important difference that Gulf and Western only legally employs the labor contractors and not the *braceros*. Although the *braceros* are paid directly by the company and are housed in

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company barracks, they are not employees of G & W, rather employees of the labor contractors." Martin F. Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[44] Cécile Celma, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

[45] "Workers of all categories were subjected to increased rates of exploitation by the simple device of increasing the size of the tasks. Workers had no say in appraising a task. Whether or not a task was successfully completed was a matter left to the discretion of the overseer. If he was not satisfied, he withheld or 'stopped' the pay of the worker in question. Among old workers who have survived one or other of the forms of estate employment, no grievance was expressed as universally or as feelingly as that of the 'stopping' of their expected weekly earnings when they approached the estate pay table." W. Rodney, *op. cit.*, p. 58. Indentured labourers suffered enormously from this ability of the planter to manoeuvre the length of the work day. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[46] Cécile Celma, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[47] "Once again, we note that women were worse off. Proof of this were the meagre wages paid to them, particularly to the binders (...). Women therefore had no hesitation in setting their children to work in order to make ends meet, a practice in which they were encouraged by their bosses, employers or other authorities. Children were therefore most often employed in large-scale farming, in the cane fields, in the factory, at the scales for weighing the cane and at the furnace. (...) Children were thus also a link in the chain and helped to procure the vital minimum wherewithal for the family's subsistence." Cécile Celma, *op. cit.*, p. 185

[48] L. Comitas, "Occupational Multiplicity in Rural Jamaica (1964)", in *Work and Family Life West Indian Perspectives*, L. Comitas and D. Lowenthal, ed., Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1973, pp. 163-164.

[49] "The situation described (...) for the Haitian worker in the Dominican sugar industry does not provide for those most basic requirements for human survival nor reproduction. Indirect (recruitment, housing and medical services) and direct (salaries paid) costs for contemporary employers of these Haitian workers are relatively minimal. The individual laborer and his potential replacements through sexual reproduction under this system are provided at the most minimal cost by the Haitian economy." Martin F. Murphy, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

[50] Refer to note 72 below.

[51] In fact these were often associations of exporters who call themselves producers.

[52] The Malone Commission Report, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[53] "It seems to the Commission that the attitude of the employers to their staff is best illustrated by their records of employees' earnings. There are no person records of earnings or time worked –the records are cost items debited under particular work heads. This is not to say that the employees were treated harshly or unkindly; we received many tributes from employees as to the kindness of individuals on the managerial staff. But the employees were not treated as people with a real and vital stake in the sugar industry: they were 'cost items', even if incalculable 'cost items'. In the opinion of the Commission such an attitude is most undesirable and even dangerous in the world to-day (1950's)." The Malone Commission Report, *op. cit.*, para. 60, p. 17.

[54] Testimony recorded by the Malone Commission, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[55] In Guiana, village labour was different from the work of the indentured labourers or of the former indentured labourers living on the plantation.

[56] W. Rodney, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[57] Testimony recorded by the Malone Commission, *op. cit.*, para. 18, p. 7.

[58] "When compared with other territories using indentured labor, British Guiana was also the worst offender with regard to the use of the criminal courts to enforce the rights of employers against the laborers. (...) There were exceptional instances when justice was on the side of the immigrants and when court officials felt obliged to disassociate themselves from the general position taken within the legal system. (...) Managers and overseers criticized him (Magistrate Hastings Huggings) for unduly lenient sentences such as one-dollar fine and 72 cents costs, with an alternative of seven days imprisonment for the offence of one day's absence from work. Huggings explained that this was serious punishment, because an able-bodied male indentured laborer seldom earned more than the minimum statutory payment of 24 cents per day. Therefore, the fine plus costs (totalling $1.72) constituted the exaction of seven days of unpaid labor." W. Rodney, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[59] Saint Lucia, *Report of the Commission Appointed by His Excellency the Governor to Investigate the Causes of the Stoppage of Work in the Sugar Industry During March and April 1957, the Wage Structure, the Terms and Conditions of Employment and other Matters Relating to All the Foregoing in the Industry in Saint Lucia,* Castries, para. 13, p. 5. This report shall be referred to as the Report of the Jackson Commission.

[60] Report of the Malone Commission, *op. cit.*, para. 18, p. 7.

[61] This subject is dealt with in various studies which have been quoted in this work. See also Richard Hart, "Trade Unionism in the English-Speaking Caribbean: The Formative Years and the Caribbean Labour Congress", in Susan Craig, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 59-96.

[62] Report of the Malone Commission, *op. cit.*, para. 26, p. 8.

[63] Testimony contained in the Report of the Malone Commission, *op. cit.*, para. 55, p. 16.

[64] The following has been written with respect to Jamaica: "The same peasants as wage labourers established in the 1930s a tradition of militancy which gave birth to the trades union movement party system." Terry Lacey, *Violence and Politics in Jamaica 1960-70,* Frank Cass and Co., 1977, p. 24.

[65] "While many contracted labourers came from Europe and Africa, the bulk of the new migrants came from Asia; in all, over 135 000 Chinese, nearly half a million Indians, and more than 33 000 Javanese reached the Caribbean area." Sidney W. Mintz, "Caribbean Nationhood in Anthropological Perspective", in *Caribbean Integration, Papers on Social, Political and Economic Integration,* Ed. Sybil Lewis and Thomas G. Matthews, Rio Piedras, University of Puerto Rico, 1967 (Third Caribbean Scholars' Conference, Georgetown, Guyana, April 4-9, 1966), p. 151.

[66] Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[67] "Land (...) is not essentially a capital. It is bought and sold according to budgetary management requirements and according to needs rather than as a capital investment." André Corten, *Port au Sucre, Prolétariat et prolétarisations, Haiti et République Dominicaine,* Quebec, Les Editions du Cidihca, 1986, p. 101.

[68] Walter Rodney, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[69] Roberto Cassá, "Acerca del surgimiento de relaciones capitalistas de producción en la República Dominicana", Master's thesis. Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, mimeo, quoted by Isis Duarte, in *Capitalismo y Superpoblación en Santo Domingo,* Santo Domingo, Codia, 1980, p. 129.

[70] "However, as a general tendency, the *anba fil* tend to be able to defend and provide for themselves better than the *braceros* simply through their experience in manipulating the

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existing systems in the *bateyes* and the canefields. In most cases, and especially in the Eastern region, they secure slightly better housing; although they are, as all resident of the *bateyes*, without potable water and adequate sanitary facilities, and subject to sugar industry's brand of superexploitation." Martin F. Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[71] "The creole cultural and social organization was a graduated hierarchy of European and African elements crudely visualized in a white black colour scale. To participate adequately in this system, immigrants (referring to the East Indians basically) had to learn the elements of creole life. The degree to which they adopted European cultural forms set the upper limits of their place in the social hierarchy." Donald Winford, "'Creole' Culture and Language in Trinidad: A Socio-Historical Sketch", *Caribbean Studies*, vol. 15, No. 3, p. 32.

[72] André Corten, *op. cit.*, pp. 105 and 107.

[73] Martin F. Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[74] In Saint Lucia, it is established that wages remained the same between 1840 and 1930. See C. Jesse, *Outlines of St. Lucia's History,* second edition, St. Lucia, The St. Lucia Archaeological and Historical Society, 1964, p. 44.

[75] "The movement out of the Caribbean during this 1885-1920 period was considerable. It is estimated that there was a net population loss to the English Speaking Caribbean of 130 000 during this period, the majority being from Jamaica and Barbados. As a result, with the exception of Jamaica and Trinidad, all of the islands experienced not only declines in the number of males of working age, but actual declines in total population as well. The following statistics give an idea of the size of the movements. Between 1902 and 1932, 121 000 Jamaicans travelled to Cuba to work in the cane fields. This movement ended in the 1930s with violence and forced repatriation. Between 1904 and 1914 about 60 000 Barbadians left their island for Panama. Estimates of the numbers of West Indians who migrated to the United States during this period vary, but none are less than 46 000; although one estimate for the number of Jamaicans alone who migrated to the United States at this time reaches 44 000." Dawn I. Marshall, "The History of Caribbean Migration, The Case of the West Indies", *Caribbean Review*, 1982, vol. XI, No. 1, p. 8.

[76] See *Strategy for the Caribbean Countries during the Third Development Decade*, United Nations, ECLAC Office for the Caribbean, Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee, E/CEPAL/CDCC/61/Rev.1, September 1980.

[77] Cf. Jean Casimir, "Main Challenges to Social Development in the Caribbean", *CEPAL Review*, United Nations, April 1981, pp. 129-148.

[78] When the economies of Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea are held up as models to be copied by the Caribbean, certain fundamental characteristics are left out. See Fernando Fajnzylber, *La Industrialización Trunca de América Latina*, Mexico, Nueva Imagen, 1983, especially chapter II, pp. 103-146; also Raúl Trajtenberg, "Transnacionales y Fuerzas de Trabajo en la Periferia: Tendencias Recientes en la Internacionalización de la Producción" in Fernando Fajnzylber, ed., *Industrialización e Internacionalización en América Latina*, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1981, pp. 103-140.

[79] This conclusion is perfectly valid because the case of the Caribbean is quite different from that of the Asian countries. "(...) It is interesting to note that, in the case of Korea, (...) protectionist measures favour the agricultural sector, and such measures have been increased over the past decade. In 1968 the nominal protection granted the agricultural sector was 17% as against 12% to the manufacturing sector. By 1978, however, this figure had risen to 55% for the agricultural sector and had declined to 10% for the manufacturing sector. This

progression reflects the importance which has been given, as in Japan, to food self-sufficiency for the main items of domestic consumption." Fernando Fajnzylber, *La Industrialización Trunca, op. cit.*, pp. 118 and 122.

[80] "In the countries which received investments of this kind, the workers earned more than they would have, all things being equal, in their regular jobs. However, this phenomenon should be placed in proper perspective, i.e., at the world level, where the transnational companies make decisions as to their operations and systematically attempt to replace workers with a cheaper labour force." Raúl Trajtenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

[81] S.W. Mintz, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

[82] Several colonial commissions of inquiry have requested official development assistance for the peasantry in vain.

[83] See Jean Casimir, *La Cultura Oprimida*, Mexico, Nueva Imagen, 1981, chapter IV or "Estudio de Caso: Respuesta a los Problemas de la Esclavitud y de la Colonización en Haití", in Manuel Moreno Fraginals, ed., *Africa en América Latina*, Mexico, Siglo XXI, 1977, chapter XVII.

[84] A.G. Quintero Rivera, "La Música Puertorriqueña y la Contra-cultura Democrática; Espontaneidad Libertaria de la Herencia Cimarrona". Paper presented at the Sixteenth Latin American Congress on Sociology, Rio de Janeiro, 2-7 March 1986, mimeographed document, subject to changes, pp. 20-21.

[85] *Ibid.*

[86] G. Corvington, *Port-au-Prince au cours des Ans, la Métropole Haïtienne du XIXème Siècle, 1804-1888*, Port-au-Prince, H. Deschamps, 1974. Juan Bosch, *Composición Social Dominicana, Historia e Interpretación*, Santo Domingo, Alfa y Omega, 1978.

[87] It is noteworthy that for very short periods, French administrations were superimposed on English plantocracies as in Dominica, for example.

[88] The history of religions in Trinidad is much more varied, both because of the heavy migration of Asian indentured labourers and the arrival of immigrants from the neighbouring islands.

[89] See E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, The University of North Carolina Press, 1944, and Lloyd Best, "Outline of a Model of Pure Plantation Economy", *Social and Economic Studies*, University of the West Indies, No. 3, September 1968.

[90] G. Beckford and M. Witter, *Small Garden... Bitter Weed*, Morant Bay, Ja., Maroon Publishing House, 1982, p.53.

[91] Dawn I. Marshall, "The History of Caribbean Migrations, the Case of the West Indies", *op. cit.*

[92] Intellectuals and governments instinctively understand that the Caribbean is a region which has a culture that defines it as such. Therefore, they think that they can control the evolution of the region and its culture. However, no systematic studies have been done on the origins of the Caribbean culture and region, and it is hardly surprising that regional policies have been unable to define common objectives that can be broken down into prioritized phases to be completed at specific future dates.

[93] *Saint Lucia at Independence*, Saint Lucia: Voice Press, 1979, p. 10.

[94] L. Honychurch, *The Dominican Story*, Letchworth Press Ltd., Barbados, 1975, p. 28.

[95] J. Boromé, "The French and Dominica before 1699-1763". *Aspects of Dominican History*. Government Printery, Roseau, 1972, p. 81.

[96] "Even before the European occupation of the island, Negro slaves had escaped to Dominica or been captured by the Caribs from settlements on other islands. When the French

arrived, there were already a few Maroons living in Carib villages or in their own settlements in the forest." L. Honychurch, *The Dominican Story*, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

[97] J. Boromé, "The French and Dominica, 1699-1763", *op.cit.*, p. 84.

[98] "Most of the small farmers in Dominica before 1740 did not and could not afford many extra laborers. Their holdings were worked by family and friends paid in kind. Apart from limited supplies of coffee, cotton, cocoa and tobacco, their main cash crop was ground provisions for feeding slaves in the larger French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. These islands also provided Dominica with a trade in timber needed for building ships, carts, gun carriages, mills, houses." L. Honychurch, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[99] T. Atwood's analyses of the behaviour of English planters after 1763 concluded that: "Many negroes so purchased from the Jesuits, either from their attachments to them, or dislike of their new masters, soon after betook themselves to the woods with their wives and children, where they were joined from time to time by others from different estates. When the English arrived, the captive population was leading a normal family life and was reproducing demographically. It totalled 5 872 souls, of which 2 113, or over one third, were children." J. Boromé, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[100] J. Boromé, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[101] Land is the next important thing after God.

[102] Michael Sleeman, "The Agri-Business Bourgeoisie of Barbados and Martinique", in P. I. Gomes, ed., *Rural Development in the Caribbean*, London, C. Hurst & Co., 1985, pp. 15-33.

[103] The above-mentioned events occurred simultaneously. Their order of precedence is logical and not situated in time.

[104] (...) The question to be posed concerning these Spanish-speaking territories is not why a Creole has not been reported, but rather what the conditions were that caused the relatively intense linguistic assimilation of Africans to a Hispanic norm. Indeed, the same question is to be posed in relation to English-speaking Barbados, where we find a nonstandard dialect of English whose relationship with its European ancestor is somewhat analogous to that between Spanish and the nonstandard dialect of Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Reconstructions of historically antecedent forms and documents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries confirm a Creole language for Barbados, which has now developed into a nonstandard English dialect under the strong culture-assimilatory conditions existing in that island. In fact, Barbados, like Cuba and the Dominican Republic, and to a lesser extent Puerto Rico, experienced the unbroken and relatively intense presence of only one European nationality throughout its colonial history. Mervyn C. Alleyne, *A Linguistic Perspective on the Caribbean*, Washington, D.C., The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1985, p. 5.

[105] The comments on Caribbean languages that appear in this paragraph and the next have been borrowed from an unpublished paper which the author wrote jointly with Dr. Lawrence D. Carrington, Faculty of Education, St. Augustine, University of the West Indies.

[106] F. L. Prudent, *Des baragouins à la langue antillaise: analyse historique et sociolinguistique du discours sur le créole*, Paris, Ed. Caribéennes, 1980. Jean Bernabé, "Allocution", *Bulletin de la CSTM*, No. 1, Martinique, undated.

[107] In the Dutch colonies, the dominant or official language was unable to absorb the vernacular or Creole because the latter did not have any lexical ties with it.

[108] D. Winford, "Creole Culture and Language in Trinidad: a Socio-Historical Sketch", *Caribbean Studies*, vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 31-56.

[109] B. J. Yankey, *A Study of the Situation in Agriculture and the Problems of Small Scale Farming in Dominica*. PhD. thesis, University of Wisconsin, p. 219.

[110] In the case of Saint Lucia, such publications include: a) R. A. Foreman, *Land Settlement Scheme in St. Lucia, based on a Survey of the Agricultural Land and Social Conditions of the Island*. Saint Lucia, Government Printing Office, 1955, p. 12; b) H.J. Finkel, "Patterns of Land Tenure in the Leeward and Windward Islands and their Relevance to the Problems of Agricultural Development in the West Indies", in *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean*, Ed. Horowitz, p. 299; c) D. C. Emerson Mathurin, "An Unfavorable System of Land Tenure: The Case of St. Lucia", in *Proceedings of the Second West Indian Agricultural Conference*, University of the West Indies, 1967, p. 36; d) R. S. Romalis, "The Rural Entrepreneur and Economic Development: The Case of St. Lucia", in *Caribbean Anthropology*, Ed. F. Henry, Occasional Paper Series, No. 5, Montreal, McGill University, 1969, p. 95.

[111] W. A. Lewis, "The Evolution of the Peasantry in the British West Indies"; *Colonial Office Pamphlet*, No. 656, 1936.

[112] Weirs Consulting Services Limited. *Small Farming Study in the Lesser Developed Member Territories of the Caribbean*, vol. 1(a), Country Reports. Prepared for the Caribbean Development Bank, 1976, p. 9.

[113] B.J. Yankey, *op. cit.*

[114] D.C. Emerson Mathurin, *op. cit.*, p. 4. See also R.S. Romalis, *op. cit.*, p. 95 and Small Farming Study (CDB), *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[115] N.J.O. Liverpool, *The History and Development of the St. Lucia Civil Code*. Barbados: I.S.E.R., University of the West Indies, 1977, p. 8.

[116] See Edith Clarke, "Land Tenure and the Family in four Communities in Jamaica", in *Social and Economic Studies*, vol. 1, No. 4, August 1953, pp. 81-118; and Serge Larose, "The Haitian Lakou, Land, Family and Ritual", in René Romer (Co-publication of the Institute of Higher Studies in Curaçāo, Netherlands Antilles, and the Department of Caribbean Studies of the Royal Institute of Linguistic and Anthropology at Leiden, Netherlands), 1975.

[117] E. Clarke, *op. cit.*, pp. 82 and 83.

[118] There are also other forms of land ownership. They illustrate other survival strategies without detracting from the originality and primacy of the system of indivisible collective ownership. Clarke distinguishes between "purchased lands" and inherited lands which are not "family lands", i.e., which are not bequeathed to a family group but to one or two persons.

[119] Serge Larose, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

[120] *Ibid.*, p. 485.

[121] Erna Brodber, *Study of Yards in the City of Kingston*, Mona, Jamaica, University of the West Indies, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Working Papers, No. 9.

[122] In Creole: *lakou légliz, lakou légliz Bedward, lakou ben-yen, lakou vodou.*

[123] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[124] W. K. Marshall, "Notes on Peasant Development in the West Indies since 1838", *Social and Economic Studies*, vol. 17, No. 3, September 1968, p. 260.

[125] W.K. Marshall, *ibid.*, p. 260, our emphasis.

[126] Douglas Hall, *Five of the Leewards, 1834-1870*, Caribbean Universities Press, 1971, pp. 14-15.

[127] "It is not easy to get people in Dominica to work regularly on estates; at Portsmouth an attempt was made to get some land into cultivation rapidly, this had to be abandoned

owing to the irregularity of the labour supply, they could get 100 men one week and the next week very few could come; *the people are not pressed to work by necessity; they complain of want of wages, but will not work regularly when wages are offered.*" Report of the Royal Commission of 1897, para. 541, our emphasis.

[128] Evidence presented to the 1897 Royal Commission of the West Indies by a priest who had lived for nearly 20 years in Dominica. See para. 538 of the Commission's report.

[129] In 1967, in a country where everyone could make him/herself understood in Creole, the law that granted banana monopoly to the Saint Lucia Banana Association stipulated that except for reasons of blindness or other physical disabilities, those who could not read or write English could not participate in the decisions of the Association. There are many such examples.

[130] André Corten, *Port au Sucre, op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

[131] Sidney Mintz, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[132] "The West Indian landed interest has been made the victim of selfishness of the British public and of the fiscal policy of the British Government." *Report of the West India Royal Commission,* London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1897, appendix C, part IX, Dominica, para. 514.

[133] *Ibid.*

[134] *The Sugar Crisis as a Menace to the West Indies,* speech delivered before the Royal Empire Society by the Rt. Hon. Lord Olivier, London, The Royal Empire Society, April 1830, pp. 8, 14 and 15.

[135] *Ibid.*, para. 514.

[136] The reason why the plantations of Barbados and Martinique managed to go through the nineteenth century with fewer problems than the other territories of the region, argues Michael Sleeman, is that local trade managed to finance productive activities in return for mortgages on the products cultivated, to capitalize and reinvest a greater proportion of their profits. Michael Sleeman, *op. cit.*, particularly page 17, note 4, and pp. 23 and 24.

[137] See chapter 3, note 24.

[138] It is sometimes stated that things could not have been otherwise given the small volumes marketed by the Caribbean. The argument would hold if during the eighteenth century the enormous quantities of sugar produced by the region had not been distributed through the same channels or if tiny Dominica had not been, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the world's largest lemon producer.

[139] George Beckford and Michael Witter, *Small Garden...Bitter Weed, Struggle and Change in Jamaica,* London, Zed Press, 1980, pp. 50-52.

[140] Carleen O'Loughlin, *Economic and Political Change in the Leeward and Windward Islands,* London, University Press, 1968, p. 45.

[141] It is sometimes pointed out that "the agrarian issue", which is central to the recent historical evolution of Latin America, is conspicuously absent in the Caribbean landscape. This opinion is irrelevant. See Jean Casimir, *La Cultura Oprimida, op. cit.*, p. 274. As a social category, the captives and freedmen of the Caribbean have never been dispossessed of their land. They did not fight for what they had never had. The Caribbean revolutions were carried out under the slogan of "Freedom or Death" and not of "Land and Liberty".

[142] "In 1925, the striking feature in agriculture was the relatively large number of small scale farmers which existed. (...) There is clear evidence here that the majority of farmers by then were operating on small acreages of land. The principal crops of small scale agriculture during the period 1900-1950 were mainly domestic food crops as against export cash crops in the case of estates, the principal of which was lime." Yankey, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[143] *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Conduct of the Operations of the Board of Management of the Dominica Banana Association*, August 1958, *mimeo*. Appendix 2, p. 1 (R. Milton Cato chaired the Commission).

[144] *Memorandum and Articles of the Association of the Saint Lucia Banana Growers' Association Limited, mimeo*, paragraph 66, *Profits*, p. 18.

[145] Saint Lucia Banana Growers' Association Act 1967. Preamble.

[146] Saint Lucia government. *Inquiry into the Banana Industry; Interim Report*, June 1980, chapter III, pp. 11-12.

[147] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

148 Caribbean Development Bank, *Small Farming Study, op. cit.*, p. 47.

149 J.A.N. Burra, *Report on Land Administration in Dominica, mimeo*, p. 26.

150 Yankey, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

151 *Agricultural Diversification in a Small Economy: The Case of Dominica*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, Cave Hill, Barbados, 1979, p. 19.

152 *Ibid.*, pp. 215 and 216.

153 J.M. Marie *Op. cit.*, p. 44.

154 *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

155 "This failure has had a demoralising effect on the affected growers and generated lack of confidence among the farmers in the ability of the Association to handle the industry." Government of Dominica, *An Evaluation Report of the Dominica Banana Industry*, 1981, *mimeo*, p. 8.

156 Caribbean Development Bank, *Small Farming Study, op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

157 *An Evaluation Report of the Dominica Banana Industry*, Government of Dominica, 1981, *mimeo*, pp. 34 and 61.

158 As occurred in the case of sugar producers. See Sleeman, *op. cit.*, p. 17, note 4. To avoid a recurrence of that situation in the case of bananas, agreements were signed with the metropolis.

[159] *The Laws of Dominica in force on the 31st Day of December, 1961*. Chapter 75, Banana, part II, art. 3 (1).

[160] J.B. Yankey, *ibid.*, p. 51.

[161] S. St. A. Clarke, "Production of food for consumption and export: the need to achieve optimal balance", ECLAC, CDCC/PWG:A/83/1, October 1983.

[162] Caribbean Development Bank, *Small Farming Study*, p. 32.

[163] The Milton Cato Report, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[164] The Evaluation Report, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[165] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[166] In the sector where mercantilism was strongest –the coffee sector– the very special conditions under which the product was stored (coffee may be stocked for several months before it is sold) favoured the establishment of barter relations rather than mercantile exchange. On the one hand, the peasant stocked coffee until he needed to buy a specific commodity, and since the local trader was often the purchaser of coffee (the "speculator"), trade in kind took place. On the other hand, the loans that the small farmer was forced to take made him lose control over the marketing of a substantial portion of his production, since he agreed to sell his product at a pre-established price to his lender. André Corten, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[167] Eric Williams, in *Présence Africaine* (24-25), February-May 1959, p. 90. (Congress of Black Writers and Artists, Rome 26-March-1 April 1959.)

[168] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[169] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

[170] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[171] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[172] Jean Price-Mars, *Ainsi parla l'oncle, Essais d'Ethnographie*, New York, Parapsychology Foundation Inc., 1954 (first edition, 1928).

[173] Our italics. Price-Mars refers to folklore as the genius of the people. *Ibid.*, p. i.

[174] "The most important difference between the West Indies and Africa or India in their nationalist struggle is that there is no indigenous language in the West Indies. The language of the imperial Power has become the mother tongue –in other words English in Trinidad; French in Guadeloupe and Haiti; Spanish in Cuba or Puerto Rico; Dutch in Curaçáo and Suriname. But since the process began in the days of slavery, these imperial languages were bastardized to the point where they became in each territory what is known as a sort of local patois, or Creole as it is sometimes called (...). While Creole is the *lingua franca* of each of these territories of the West Indies, because of the very nature of the West Indies, there is no Creole language of the West Indies. A two-fold problem arises here: there is no rallying point for the nationalist movement in each territory, and the absence of a common language is a barrier not only to contact and communication among the islands (...) but also to closer co-operation, at the cultural level, among all the territories of the West Indies." *Op. cit.*, p. 99.

[175] *Op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

[176] Jean Price-Mars, *Jean-Pierre Boyer Bazelais et le Drame de Miragoâne (A propos d'un lot d'autographes) 1883-1884*, Port-au-Prince, State Printery, 1948, pp. 22-23.

[177] "The homeland of the Creole (...) was not at all the same for the Indian. (...) The Indian was part and parcel of the land that had been conquered. And in the Creole's perception of the legacy inherited from his predecessors, i.e., 'what we enjoy today', the Indian is there as something that existed, together with the land and existed to work the land." Severo Martínez Pelaez, *La Patria del Criollo*, Costa Rica, EDUCA, 1979, 5th edition pp. 254-5.

[178] Jean Casimir, "El Caribe: la Estructura Social Incompleta", *Pensamiento Iberoamericano*, July-December 1984, No. 6, pp. 171-183.

[179] The problem still exists today: "(...) The older challenges of giving form and substance to what is created out of the experience and activity of all the people without a feeling of inferiority in the face of the master's expression, are still to be met." R. Nettleford, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[180] F.L. Prudent, *Des baragouins à la langue antillaise. Analyse historique et sociolinguistique du discours sur le créole*. Paris, Ed. Caribéennes, 1980, pp. 124-125.

[181] Indeed, it would be interesting to study the use of the vernacular by the new recruits of the dominant groups in the Caribbean, as a rite of passage and of initiation into adult life. The vernacular –the language of the nation– in its relations with the dominant language, is seen as the path of disobedience, of individual initiatives, of freedom discussed with friends and controlled by them.

[182] E. Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[183] Jean Casimir, "Cultura oprimida y creación intelectual". Symposium on Culture and Intellectual Creativity in Latin America, organized by the United Nations University and the National Autonomous University of Mexico, April 1979 (CEPAL/CARIB/Int 79/2 Rev.1), *mimeo*.

[184] Nettleford notes both: the existence of a generalized inferiority complex (*op. cit.*, p. 140) and quite the opposite attitude among the Rastafarians. (*Ibid*, pp. 187-188.)

[185] Note that the colonial period of Caribbean history has not yet ended.

[186] In addition to the category of planters, as opposed to that of slaves or freedmen, mention might be made of the Creoles, as opposed to *Bossales*. Between the two poles of the pair of categories "planters" and "slaves" arises that of the freedmen. Between the Creoles and the *Bossales* lies the category "creolized". The concept of mulatto is evidently situated between black and white, but it has a completely secondary racial connotation.

[187] "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism and Integration in the West Indian Societies", Sybil Lewis and Thomas G. Matthews (eds.), *Caribbean Integration*. Papers on Social, Political and Economic Integration, Third Caribbean Scholars' Conference, Georgetown, Guyana, 4-9 April 1966, Río Piedras, University of Puerto Rico, Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1967, p. 230.

[188] Laennec Hurbon, *Culture et dictature en Haiti, l'imaginaire sous contrôle*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1979, p. 27. The author reaffirms his point of view in these terms: "The evolution of popular Haitian culture cannot be understood (...) without reference to a strategy of struggle", *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[189] Jean Casimir, *La cultura oprimida, op. cit.*, p. 74.

[190] The metropolitans also elaborated a theory of their own socio-economic development. For them, the Caribbean was a group of colonies whose use varied according to the direction given to development by the metropolitan society. For the planters, the colony was above all a given socio-economic system –the plantation system, preferably composed of slave plantations–, within which they, as planters, had to reproduce themselves. Although the interests of the planters and the metropolitans may have coincided at one time or another, they were not the same.

[191] Jean Price-Mars, *Jean-Pierre Boyer Bazelais et le drame de Miragoâne (à propos d'un lôt d'autographes) 1883-1884, op. cit.*, p. 21.

[192] Jean Casimir, "Main Challenges of Social Development in the Caribbean", *CEPAL Review*, No. 13, April 1981, pp. 125-142.

[193] This is true even in the colonies where the failure of the plantation was halted by the importation of indentured servants from Asia. See Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905*, Kingston, Heinemann Educational Books, 1981, p. 41.

[194] See Jean Casimir, "Limitaciones del proyecto nacional de la oligarqua mulata de Dominica en el siglo XX", *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, University of Puerto Rico, vol. XXIII, Nos. 3-4, pp. 681-724.

[195] Meaning the Creole language.

[196] Study and Research Group on the Creole-speaking World, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[197] In this regard, Haiti and Suriname are exceptions.

[198] See François Duvalier, *Le problème des classes travers l'histoire d'Haïti*, Port-au-Prince, 1938; *Mémoires d'un leader du tiers monde*, Paris, Ed. Hachette, 1969; and *Eléménts d'une doctrine*, Port-au-Prince, 1968.

[199] Laennec Hurbon, *Culture et dictature en Haiti, op. cit.*, p. 96.

[200] Laennec Hurbon, *ibid.*, p. 100.

[201] Jean Price-Mars, *Ainsi parla l'oncle, Essais d'ethnographie*, New York, Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., 1954, p. 17.

[202] Witness his *Lettre ouverte au Dr. René Piquion, le préjugé de couleur est-il la question sociale?*, Port-au-Prince, Les Editions des Antilles, S.A., 1967.

[203] Edward Kamau Braithwaite, "The African Presence in Caribbean Literature", *Daedalus*, Cambridge, Mass., 1974, pp. 73-109; *Caribbean Man in Space and Time, a Bibliographical and Conceptual Approach*, Mona, Savacou Publications, 1974, Pamphlet No. 2.

[204] At the beginning, Negritude contested political power. In Haiti, it was born under the American Occupation. Its relationship to power is the same in the so-called French-speaking Caribbean.

[205] See for instance M. G. Smith *The Plural Society in the British West Indies*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1965, p. 5.

[206] Eric Williams, "Le leader politique consideré comme un homme de culture", *Présence Africaine* (24-25) February-May 1959, pp. 101-102. (Congress of Black Writers and Artists, Rome, 26 March-1 April, 1959), p. 101.

[207] Rex M. Nettleford, *Caribbean Cultural Identity, the Case of Jamaica, An Essay in Cultural Dynamics*, Kingston, Institute of Jamaica, 1978, p. 1.

[208] Rex Nettleford, *op. cit.*, pp. 187 and 196.

[209] Rex Nettleford, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

[210] Hurbon persuasively demonstrates the presence of this same vocation in Duvalierism: "Since the solution to our tragedy is the balance between the two elites", only a Black person, "descendant of peasants, offspring of the history of the race", but at the same time a genuinely literate person, possessing "an adequate level of intellectual culture, can save the country". F. Duvalier, *Eléments d'une doctrine*, pp. 405-408, quoted by Hurbon, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

[211] Rex Nettleford, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

[212] Rex Nettleford, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[213] Rex Nettleford, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[214] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1973, p. 44.

[215] "... The proletariat regime emerged and organized itself from the earliest moment. (It did so) in the revolutionary and in the most elementary organizations, but obviously and quite clearly in the positions of power performed by the working class. (...) From the moment that an organization acknowledged no other law but its own it granted itself some kind of incomplete sovereignty ignoring and disobeying the enemy's sovereignty. In this manner, a revolution would only be a transposition (of projects) from the consciousness of the people to the actual reality, but the "proletarian regime" would have been in existence long before, in the vanguard, when the awareness was expressing itself in the first positions of power." René Zavaleta, *El Poder Dual, Problemas de la Teoría del Estado en América Latina*, Mexico, Siglo XXI ed., 1977, p. 59.

[216] Eric Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

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