

# The Journal of Caribbean History



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Goddard, 416–30. Kingston: People's Press, 1998. For articles: Frank, Betty. "If We Could Know the Truth". *History in the Making* 34, no. 72 (2009): 63–90. For Internet sources: Zobel, Gibby. "Brazil's Slave Descendants Seek Justice", 28 November 2005. <http://www.assatashakur.org/forum/afrikan-world-news/13450-brazils-slave-descendants-seek-justice.html> (Accessed 20 January 2009).

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All articles and correspondence with the editor should be addressed to Dr Swithin Wilmot, Journal of Caribbean History, Department of History and Archaeology, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica. Books for review should be sent to: Professor Veront Satchell, Journal of Caribbean History, Department of History and Archaeology, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica.

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*Professor Bridget Brereton (Courtesy of the Office of the Campus Principal, University of the West Indies, St Augustine. Photograph by Arthur Sukhbir.)*

Dedicated to  
Professor Bridget Mary Brereton,  
whose stellar scholarship has transformed  
post-slavery Caribbean historiography





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## Introduction

BRIAN L. MOORE

No greater accolade could have been bestowed to me than to be asked to serve as guest editor for this special edition of the *Journal of Caribbean History* in honour of University of the West Indies (UWI) Emerita Professor of History, Bridget Brereton. I have been an ardent admirer of her scholarship for several decades and it, in turn, has inspired my own work. Although we are both graduates of the University of the West Indies and also took our doctorates from the same institution, I never had the pleasure to work in the same space as Professor Brereton though we did interact professionally, most significantly when she was editor of this very journal and I was its book-review editor. As one contributor to this special issue observes, our research and publication interests parallel each other: Bridget worked on the social and cultural history of post-emancipation Trinidad, and I in the same genres for post-emancipation Guyana and Jamaica. Our work, therefore, shares many commonalities, and I am delighted to have been able to benefit enormously from her considerable insights and encouragement. She was one of the main advisor-critics of virtually all of my major publications.<sup>1</sup>

Bridget Brereton has had a remarkably outstanding career, aspects of which two of the contributions in this volume address. They focus essentially on her personal life and scholastic achievements. But her professional accomplishments extend far beyond her scholarship. In a career that has spanned almost five decades, she has left a huge footprint in the field of education generally, not just in Trinidad and Tobago where she resides, but throughout the Caribbean. Additionally, her remarkable contribution to the history profession has been recognized internationally by multiple invitations to participate in conferences and professional meetings; requests by publishers to review manuscripts, and by universities to examine graduate theses and dissertations.

Except for the Fall semester of 1987 when she was a visiting professor at the Johns Hopkins University in the United States of America, Professor Brereton has devoted her entire professional life to the University

of the West Indies at St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. Since 1968 when she was appointed a Temporary Assistant Lecturer, she rose steadily through the ranks of lecturer, senior lecturer and reader, to become full Professor of History in 1995. Paralleling that, she also advanced within the administrative structure, serving on virtually all the major campus governance committees<sup>2</sup> and as Head of the Department of History (1985–1987, 1988–1994), to become Deputy Principal (1999–2002), and Acting/Interim Principal (2001 and 2007). Her influence also extended across the regional campuses of the university as she served on several of the most important university-wide committees.<sup>3</sup>

It is in the area of teaching and research that Bridget Brereton has left her most enduring legacy. Since her research is the principal subject of two contributions to this volume, I will focus on her teaching and wider professional activities. She taught a variety of courses in Caribbean, European and women's history at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In particular, the graduate programme in history at St Augustine relied heavily on her, not just for teaching, but also for supervising theses and research papers through to the doctoral level. Her record is outstanding. She successfully advised eleven PhD and six MPhil research candidates; and supervised the MA research papers of seventeen students to successful completion. In addition, within the regional university system, she served as examiner of the theses of six doctoral and four MPhil candidates at the Mona and Cave Hill campuses.<sup>4</sup> For her meritorious service to the university as teacher, researcher and administrator, she was the first female faculty member at St Augustine to be conferred with the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence (1996); and on retirement in 2010 she was honoured with the title of Emerita Professor of History.

In her capacity as a professional historian, Bridget Brereton's expertise has been in high demand by publishers of academic books and journals, and the boards of academic institutions. She has reviewed manuscripts for several book publishers including the University of the West Indies Press, Macmillan/Palgrave, the University Press of Florida, the University of North Carolina Press, Pearson, Prentice Hall, Oxford University Press, and Ian Randle Publishers; as well as articles for academic journals.<sup>5</sup> She has served on several related committees and boards in the Caribbean and abroad: for instance, the Editorial Committee of Trinidad and Tobago History Teachers' Association *Journal* (1981–1987), the International Advisory Board of *New West Indian Guide* since 1992, the Editorial Advisory Board of the Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro

Improvement Association (UNIA) Papers Project (UCLA) since 1997, the International Advisory Board of *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* since 2004, and the Advisory Board for *The Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography* since 2012. And she has had the distinction of being asked by UNESCO to edit the fifth volume in its General History series on the Caribbean that focuses on the twentieth-century Caribbean.<sup>6</sup>

Bridget Brereton has also played a major role in advancing history research and teaching in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean region beyond the classroom. As editor of the *Journal of Caribbean History* (1991–1998), she helped to preserve the mission of the UWI Departments of History to publish high quality research in Caribbean history. As one of the leading members of the Association of Caribbean Historians (ACH) whose annual conferences bring together scholars who are researching Caribbean history from all over the world, she has held leading positions on the executive committee, including Secretary/Treasurer (1977–1983), Vice-President (1992–1994), and President (1994–1997). She has also served on the association's influential Elsa Goveia Prize Sub-Committee (1986–1989, 1997–1999) which identifies books worthy of that prestigious award.

In her desire to disseminate historical information as widely as possible, Professor Brereton has shared her scholarship beyond the intellectual circles of the academy. She has given multiple talks to a wide variety of civic organizations including schools and teachers' associations, ethnic/cultural societies, and even labour unions. During the 1970s, she authored forty-four radio scripts on "Caribbean emancipators" for the Trinidad and Tobago Government Broadcasting Unit. In 2012, she published a short series of eight articles, on St Augustine personalities after whom buildings on the campus have been renamed, for the "UWI Today" feature in the supplement of the country's *Sunday Guardian* newspaper. Since 2011, she has also been a regular columnist contributing short articles fortnightly to the *Trinidad Express* newspaper about aspects of the country's history and outstanding personages in its history. This outreach has made her a household name, and it is probable that her work on Trinidad may have supplanted in the public consciousness those of all previous historians, including Eric Williams, the first prime minister (no mean achievement).<sup>7</sup>

Together with her stellar professional and scholarly accomplishments, Professor Brereton has gained the attention of successive governments of Trinidad and Tobago, which have from time to time called on her for

national service. One example of this was in relation to the controversy that arose in 2006–2007 over the national symbols, in particular the Trinity Cross, the nation's highest award. This title privileged Christianity, the religion of the majority of the Afro- and Euro-creole populations, and consequently was objectionable particularly to the very substantial Hindu and Muslim, predominantly Indo-creole, population. To resolve this thorny issue, the government appointed Brereton to chair a committee to consider the national symbols and observances, and its recommendation to change the title of the award to the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago was adopted. This was a significant honour and achievement for Brereton, and signifies the extent to which the country accepted her as a fair and knowledgeable person who could be trusted to take the lead on a matter of such national magnitude. That enduring trust has been further manifested by her appointment to several other national committees over the years.<sup>8</sup>

In her capacity as a public historian, Bridget Brereton's reach extends throughout the Caribbean and beyond. She has delivered several public lectures in Trinidad and Tobago, of course, and also in Dominica, Suriname, Jamaica, The Bahamas, Atlanta (USA), and London (UK). Very significantly, she is just one of a small handful of eminent scholars who has had the honour to deliver the prestigious Elsa Goveia Memorial lecture both at the Cave Hill (1986) and Mona (1994) campuses.

No less importantly, she has made an enormous contribution to the teaching of Caribbean history in secondary schools as a consultant to the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). She was Chief Moderator of CXC West Indian History Examinations (1990–1995), and has served in a similar capacity for the CAPE History Examination since 1998.<sup>9</sup> She has supported this by writing text books specifically for secondary school students.<sup>10</sup>

It is not difficult to discern that Bridget Brereton is a remarkable person whose life's accomplishments are outstanding by any measure; and it must be said that she has done all this while sharing responsibility for her family of three children with her spouse. This special issue of the *Journal of Caribbean History* is but a small token to honour her achievements and contributions to Caribbean history. Space constraints, however, meant that only one of her former colleagues from each UWI campus could be invited to participate so that a few members from the wider international community of Caribbean scholars could also contribute. The volume is divided into three parts: the first focuses on Bridget Brereton and her work; the second treats some of the issues

that have defined her scholarship – sugar and the plantation system, labour migration, post-emancipation adjustments, gender, and ethnic and social identities in multiracial society. The articles also reflect the regional scope of her work throughout her long career. The third part consists of a complete bibliography of Brereton's work.

In Part I, Carl Campbell and Patricia Mohammed explore the persona and scholarly achievements of Brereton. Both were her colleagues of differing duration at St Augustine and inject aspects of their own interactions with her to provide a full picture of who she is. Campbell offers a detailed analysis of her published work, discusses its growth over the decades, and assesses its place in the historiography of Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean. Mohammed takes a more personal look at Brereton, from the inside out. Crafted from an interview she conducted, her paper allows Brereton's voice to be heard which gives the reader a deeper insight into this remarkable woman and what inspired her.

Part II begins with B.W. Higman's analysis of the social life of Lady Maria Nugent who, as a British governor's spouse, lived for a few years in Jamaica at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Higman and Brereton were contemporaries at the UWI, although since he was based at Mona they did not work on the same campus. Both came from outside the Caribbean (Brereton from the UK, Higman from Australia), fully adopted their respective islands of residence as "home", and did extensive research and published prodigiously on their new homes. Nugent was a subject of Brereton's writing when she turned her attention to women's history later in her career. Higman's paper does not just treat Nugent as a subject of gender history, but undertakes a detailed examination of her journal and explores how it became an influential historical icon not only as a source for historians, but also as an important cultural item/marker of significance for other people. He examines its publication history and the changes that were made in the various editions since its first appearance in 1839, as well as how successive generations have regarded it over the years. Indeed, he argues that although attitudes towards the journal have changed over the course of its existence and several republications, it has nevertheless become part of a historical canon that cannot easily be ignored.

Woodville Marshall, who taught at Mona and Cave Hill, was a senior contemporary of Brereton. They interacted principally on university-wide committees, as leading members of the Association of Caribbean Historians, and as important members of the editorial committee of the



*Journal of Caribbean History*. Indeed, Brereton succeeded Marshall both as editor of the *Journal* in 1991 and as President of the ACH in 1994, and would publish an article on his contribution to Caribbean history when he retired.<sup>11</sup> Marshall's paper focuses on the post-emancipation period that is at the heart of Brereton's research and refutes the idea that the formerly enslaved people of Barbados, unlike their contemporaries in some larger territories like Trinidad, Guyana, and Jamaica, did not establish village settlements off the plantations after slavery. Drawing on wills, maps and other sources, he convincingly shows that there was a successful and significant village-formation movement in that island throughout the post-slavery nineteenth century.

Philip A. Howard's professional links with Bridget Brereton comes through membership of the Association of Caribbean Historians. His paper on Jamaican and Haitian migrant-workers in post-emancipation Cuba links directly with Brereton's scholarly interest in post-slavery Caribbean migration and society. He argues that the accommodation, working conditions and treatment of these workers on Cuban plantations owned and managed by white Americans closely resembled those of the formerly enslaved in that island, and reflected the racial biases of their employers. His paper reinforces observations Brereton made for Trinidad at an earlier period that slave abolition did not bring immediate or significant improvements in the status of plantation workers.

Rosemarijn Hoefte's paper extends the regional range of this special issue. Her general research on Suriname from the late nineteenth century onwards parallels Brereton's on Trinidad. Indeed, because the two societies are multiracial, there are many structural similarities which have been discussed in the work of both Hoefte and Brereton. Hoefte's paper looks at the intersection of race/ethnicity/class and politics in post-independence Suriname, and she uses recent political developments to assess the appropriateness of the plural society thesis advanced by R.A.J. van Lier in 1949. Although Brereton did take note of the plural society theory in her work on Trinidad, she did not engage it directly. Hoefte, however, does; and she argues here that although ethnicity continues to influence political alignments, it no longer has the force of old, and class interests are now more prominent in determining people's statuses and attitudes in twenty-first-century Surinamese society.

The final paper looks at the commodity that is largely responsible for the population composition of the Caribbean – sugar. Its author, Franklin W. Knight, is like Brereton a graduate of the University of the West Indies at Mona, and his continuously close relationship with his

alma mater and membership of the Association of Caribbean Historians have meant that he has had a long-standing professional relationship with Brereton. His paper looks at the fortunes of the sugar industry in the British Caribbean since 1900 and traces its resurgence during the middle years of the twentieth century and subsequent decline after independence, both due to international market conditions and to local politics. This is a topic that Brereton addressed in her 1981 *History of Modern Trinidad*. This crop, once the "king" that was responsible not just for the enormous wealth of the islands, but also for the indescribable misery of its enslaved, indentured and underpaid labour force is now, according to Knight, a shadow of itself, probably on its death bed, possibly incapable even of producing enough to maintain premium rum manufacture, let alone to play a significant role in the world market for sweeteners.

As a fitting tribute to Bridget Brereton, this volume ends with a full list of her publications in Part III. It is clearly a labour of love, painstakingly and meticulously compiled, organized and annotated by four librarians of the UWI St Augustine libraries. Together with a subject index to the list of entries, it offers readers a quick but comprehensive reference to all of Brereton's work, including her conference papers and book reviews.

This introduction would not be complete if I did not mention that one contributor was obliged to withdraw because of ill health. Professor Blanca Silvestrini was distraught at having to pull out very late in the process because she simply was not well enough to complete her paper. She and Bridget Brereton are professional contemporaries who both served on the executive of the Association of Caribbean Historians and are past presidents; and their mutual interest in Caribbean women's history rendered them very important pioneering figures in its historiography. I hope that by the time this volume appears, Professor Silvestrini will have had a full recovery.

To all the contributors, I wish to extend my personal thanks for their willing participation and smooth collaboration on this project. Finally, to Bridget, we are all delighted to honour you in this way, and we wish you the very best as you go forward with your life after retirement. I know that you still have important book projects that you are working on, and we will all look forward to them coming to fruition. For me personally, I wish to say thanks for your genuine support and encouragement over many years.

## NOTES

1. I did not ask her to read my most recent book before publication because it is dedicated to her. Moore and Johnson, *"They do as they please"* (2011).
2. Among these are the Organising Committee of the Oral and Pictorial Records Project (1982–1999), the Swimming Pool Committee (1993–2001), the Library Committee (1995–1999), the Campus Committee for Graduate Studies and Research (1996–2006), Campus Research and Publications Fund Committee (1996–2006), the Campus Appointments Committee (1996–2002), the St Augustine Academic Board Sub-committee to investigate allegations of sexual harassment by members of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture (2003), the Board of Directors, Arthur Lok Jak Graduate School of Business (since 2007), the Committee appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to Review the Non-academic Structures of the Institute of International Relations (2009), the Campus Steering Committee for Accreditation of the St Augustine campus (2009), the Committee to Select 50 Distinguished Alumni for St Augustine's 50th Anniversary (2010–2011), and the Committee to Establish a St Augustine Campus Museum (since 2011).
3. These include the University Finance and General Purposes Committee (1986–1987; 1999–2002; 2003–2006), the University Assessment and Promotions Committee (1989–1993), the University Selection Committee for Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence (1994–1995, 1998–present), the Board for Graduate Studies and Research (1996–2006), the University Appointments Committee (1996–2008), the University Archives and Records Management Advisory Committee (1997–1998; chairman, 2000–2008), the University Council (1999–2001), the Standing Committee on Ordinances and Regulations (1999–2003), the Vice-Chancellor's Special Committee to Review UWI Postgraduate Programmes (2005–2006), the Governance Review Task Force to review comments by members of University Council on the Alleyne Report on Governance of the University (2006), and the Vice-Chancellor's Committee to consider criteria and procedures for professorial promotions and appointments (2006–2007).
4. She also examined eight research projects for higher degrees at external universities, most for the University of Guyana.
5. Among the journals she has reviewed manuscripts for are the *Journal of Caribbean History*, *New West Indian Guide* (Holland), *Slavery and Abolition* (UK), *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (UK), *Signs* (UK), *Cultural Anthropology* (USA), *Current Anthropology* (USA), *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* (USA), and *Small Axe* (USA).
6. Brereton, *The Caribbean* (2004).
7. Author of the famous *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), Eric Williams was widely regarded in Trinidad and Tobago as the leading (perhaps the only) historian of the Caribbean. His *History* (1962) was for many years treated as the bible of the country's history, until it was finally eclipsed by Bridget Brereton's *History* (1981).

8. Among these are the Committee on National Cultural Policy for Trinidad and Tobago (1998), the Committee on Celebrations of the Millennium in Trinidad and Tobago (1999), the Committee on Emancipation Park (1999), the Committee on Nelson Island as a Heritage Site (1999), the Board of National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) of Trinidad and Tobago (2002–2005), the Scholarship Selection Committee of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago (2002–2007), the Accreditation Review Committee of the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (since 2007), the Trinidad and Tobago Nominating Committee for the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence (since 2007), and the Committee of Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Trinidad and Tobago) to select Inductees for the Business Hall of Fame (2012).
9. The Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) was established to provide standardized examinations for high school students in the region in lieu of the examinations administered by British universities. The replacement of the British Ordinary Level examination was simply referred to as the CXC (formally titled the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate – CSEC). The Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) replaced the British Advanced Level examinations.
10. Brereton, *Social Life* (1985); and *An Introduction* (1996).
11. Brereton, "W.K. Marshall", 3–16.

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PART I



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## Who Is Bridget Brereton?

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CARL CAMPBELL

### Background and Antecedents

It makes no sense to construct an appreciation of Bridget Brereton without telling the readers who she was, and where she came from.<sup>1</sup> She was not a black girl from Laventille, Moruga or Toco in Trinidad who experienced upward social mobility by flying brilliantly through secondary school and university education abroad by means of a scholarship, and then returning to Trinidad to research and teach faithfully at its only university. In making an assessment of Professor Woodville Marshall, Bridget Brereton had no problem about his origins relative to his country of residence; he was a native-born Barbadian and he taught history mostly in Jamaica (Mona) and in Barbados (Cave Hill). However, Gordon Lewis, if we follow Brereton, was a different matter; he was a Welshman, who took a job in Puerto Rico, and stayed a lifetime. He was a white male outsider/insider, who became a critic of the United States of America's control of Puerto Rico; a radical in the country of his adoption. His origins and his status as an outsider/insider ought to have played – and perhaps did play – some important part in his development as a thinker, researcher and writer on Caribbean history and politics, at the University of Puerto Rico.<sup>2</sup> In the eyes of Gordon Lewis, outsiders and imperialists have always done wrongs in the Caribbean.

These reflections might appear irrelevant if we forget that Bridget Brereton is also a white outsider/insider in her adopted country, Trinidad and Tobago; and in addition she is a woman, married to an untitled black middle-class Trinidadian. She wrote about race relations throughout her academic life; she wrote on women and gender after the mid-

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1980s; and surely any historian assessing her career, her writings and achievements who is not sensitive to her origins, her race and her sex would be wanting, would not in fact be applying her own recommended analytical lens on West Indian history. But to turn that lens on this "strange female" is in practice like peering through foggy binoculars. Suspicion is one thing; evidence is another. In a marvellously terse, enigmatic description of her in 1975, the poet historian Kamau Brathwaite jotted down the following: "U.K. born, Trinidad married".<sup>3</sup> How brilliantly evasive! He could have been writing about a black person, but he was not; he could have been referring to someone who merely contracted marriage in Trinidad, but he was not. Some young students of West Indian history in a class at Mona in 2005 exhibited surprise when shown a photograph of her in a *UNESCO General History of the Caribbean* book.<sup>4</sup> Not only was she white, but she was still alive! But just who is Bridget Brereton?

In her biography of John Gorrie, Professor Brereton tells us something about his parents, his siblings, his early education, and early jobs before he became a colonial official. Bridget Brereton had only one job, her first job, her career long job as a teacher and researcher of history at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad. She arrived in Jamaica at seventeen years of age, with her father who was a Professor of English literature on the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies. She herself indicated much later that she was reasonably well read in English classical literature, in Scotland and England. Her Jamaican or West Indian schooling (for such was the ethos at Mona in those days) began when she entered the BA History Honours programme at Mona and graduated in three years, with a first class degree at the young age of twenty years. She was first in the first class because she was alone in that class that year; and was in fact only the second woman in the BA History Honours programme to perform so well. The relevance of this remark was that the other female, some seven years previously, chose to continue studies and career in the field of law and politics. Bridget Brereton was not the first female from this programme to turn to historical research, but she was the first one to gain the PhD in history. So clearly, this was a young woman of tremendous talent. Her mantra at Mona was not a radicalism from the Left, but the radicalism of racial equality; and she might have floated away permanently to foreign shores had not Cupid's arrow and a Trinidad social history topic pierced her very soul.

The rise of Bridget Brereton was rapid. Appointed to a small male

dominated History Department at St Augustine in 1972, she was a lecturer by 1973, a senior lecturer by 1980, a Reader in Caribbean Social History by 1988. She was the first female Professor of History on the St Augustine campus in 1995. The key to this advancement was her outstanding talent, her research and publications. She was the first female historian appointed at St Augustine, but hardly any significance was attached to this appointment at that time.<sup>5</sup> Professor Elsa Goveia, a coloured female historian at Mona died in March 1980. She had been the first West Indian (and the first female) to be appointed to the newly established Department of History at Mona in 1952. Goveia's rise was swift among male colleagues of distinguished and considerable academic status and achievement. Bridget Brereton arrived a decade after the start of the St Augustine History "Department". She was the delayed Elsa Goveia of St Augustine. Two early books by Brereton propelled her ahead of her male departmental colleagues and later younger female entrants.

It is well known now that social history was gaining ground in the 1950s and 1960s in western Europe and North America. But to anyone looking for a thesis topic in West Indian history in 1967 or 1968, it was not clear that social history – with the politics and economics left out<sup>6</sup> – would carry the day, and become the most popular genre in the West Indies in the 1970s and 1980s and beyond. It was clear enough that social history dealt with the experiences of people, and that the way to proceed was to get into these experiences of individuals or groups, into what some later called the "lived experiences"<sup>7</sup> of people, and to attach value to their lives and ideas, even if one could not (or would not) count the people, aggregate their experiences in graphs and tables, or put what they did into any sociological, theoretical framework. This was the approach Bridget Brereton took, and for this she needed no heavy-handed academic guidance. What she needed was a rich source of material, more pregnant with life experiences than the official dispatches between governors and the Colonial Office.<sup>8</sup> She found this in the Trinidad newspapers.

## **The Evolution of Brereton's Career**

In the *History Department's Handbook* for 2012 at St Augustine, and in previous similar publications, Bridget Brereton described her major research interest as "social history, women's history, historiography". Women's history is usually social history; and her historiographical

writings were mostly in the field of social history. The flag of social history waves over the work of Professor Brereton from start to finish, and in almost every aspect. Her first research project of the 1970s not only generated her PhD thesis ("A Social History of Trinidad 1870–1900"), and her first book (*Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad 1870–1900*), but also several articles and conference papers which staked her claims to authority as the social historian of the black and coloured middle classes, and the white elite of Trinidad.

In the 1980s – the decade which separates the older West Indian historical writings from the recent writings – Brereton proceeded to widen her scope and occupy the centre, not only of the field of late nineteenth-century Trinidad social history, but of the entire history of Trinidad, backwards to the days of slavery and forward into the twentieth century. While still steering clear of Tobago in her general history book (*A History of Modern Trinidad*), she did write an article on riots in Tobago in 1876, and more so on Gorrie, whose exploits extended to the sister island.<sup>9</sup> Although the best or the worst manifestations of Trinidad nationalism – real or imaginary – had already passed in the 1960s, the outsider/insider, Bridget Brereton, obviously had strong nerves to move locally into a central authoritative position in the interpretation of the history (not the contemporary politics) of a country which had long grown accustomed to the false idea that the prime minister, Dr Eric Williams, was the only worthy historian of the West Indies.<sup>10</sup> Still the marvellous career of Williams might have rendered Trinidad the only West Indian island where the professional historian was a credible public opinion maker.

At the heart of Brereton's wider scope was her general history book, written for general readers (and for schoolchildren), but summarizing the work of various colleagues. Providentially or accidentally, the book (*A History of Modern Trinidad*) appeared the same year (1981) Williams died; but had not the incomparable Williams addressed a general history book to the general public, some twenty years previously? Williams' book, admitted by him to be unscholarly, was not meant to be criticized by scholars or by anybody. It was a political testament: a blast against imperialism and colonialism, but still a pioneering work by a professional historian. It was quietly replaced by Brereton's 1981 book. A curious fact is that there was a tendency in the Anglophone Caribbean for general history texts on specific islands to be written by outsiders; but rarely were they insiders as well, resident historian practitioners in the island – or territory – about which they wrote.<sup>11</sup> In publishing *A History*

of *Modern Trinidad*, Brereton was making a contribution to the historiography of island histories. The force of the book was magnified by the presence of the author who refreshed its contents by her classroom teaching, and by continuing to write on the topics. The book is still – some thirty years afterwards – the standard text on Trinidad's history. It can sometimes be found on Internet lists of Trinidad history books right after the old nineteenth-century classics like Lionel Fraser's *History of Trinidad* (1891, 1896), as if nothing had been written between Fraser and Brereton.

Bridget Brereton lengthened her gaze into the wider Caribbean by her *Social Life in the Caribbean 1838–1938*, written for secondary school students. The 1980s also saw two new areas of activity. She had concerns about the texts placed before schoolchildren. Considering the fact that Brereton was never herself a secondary school teacher, it was surprising and commendable that she should have taken up the defence of West Indian schoolchildren against the mistakes and misrepresentations in school text books, mostly by white foreign writers. Brereton undertook not only to criticize these writers, but to show how it should be done by her writings for schools, for example, *Social Life in the Caribbean 1838–1938* and *An Introduction to the History of Trinidad and Tobago* (1996). Bridget Brereton was not yet writing the words "us" (to include herself) and "here" (meaning in Trinidad) in the 1980s as she occasionally did in the 1990s and beyond; but perhaps it was in the defence of West Indian schoolchildren that she finally crossed the Rubicon – publicly – of Trinidadian and West Indian identity. The white outsider/insider was becoming the creolized insider.

If Bridget Brereton's broadsides against some school texts showed her readiness to challenge for reforms, it was in the emerging field of women's history that she joined her voice with the revisionists. While it was a non-tenured, part-time female historian (Lucille Mathurin) who pioneered the women's history movement in the Anglo-West Indies, and particularly in the University of the West Indies, it was social scientists who first applied these approaches to classroom teaching and programmes.<sup>12</sup> More to the point was the approach Brereton took when she began to publish on the subject. Her first piece was *General Problems and Issues in studying the History of Women in the Caribbean* (1988). She was willing to leave the gender theories behind or aside; she never did like theories; and she sought pragmatically to indicate what had not been done; what needed to be done and why it should be done.<sup>13</sup> From the mid-1980s, Brereton became a crusader for the visibility of women in West Indian history. By

this time she was such a towering figure in her History Department that other historians shied away from proclaiming the new gospel, and so space was yielded to Brereton in another field in which her historian credentials were unchallengeable locally. She became the woman's history historian among gender social scientists.

The 1990s marked the midpoint of Bridget Brereton's career; and with Eric Williams now dead almost ten years, there was no one else residing in Trinidad who was as readily associated with the history industry of Trinidad as Brereton. There are clear signs that Brereton took her achievements to new heights. There was the crowning achievement of publishing her most difficult book: the biography of Chief Justice John Gorrie (1997). This was Brereton's long distance research project; the Gorrie book was more than twenty years in her head. It was Gorrie who caused her to travel furthest off the beaten track of West Indian history to look for sources. In this case, Brereton had an important man whose career enabled her in this book to make a contribution to the historiography of Crown colony government, the historiography of the peasantry, and the historiography of Tobago. This book also took Brereton's writings onto the stage of British imperial governance; and it is not surprising that it is catalogued in the library of the University of the West Indies, not as a West Indian history book, but as a book about the British Empire.

By the 1990s, Bridget Brereton's prestige and status as a professorial historian caused her to be in demand by colleagues who wanted to go into joint research projects or joint editorships. She worked with Barbara Bailey and Verene Shepherd (*Engendering History*), but mostly with men of all races, for example, Winston Dookeran (*East Indians in the Caribbean*), Brinsley Samaroo and Glenroy Taitt (*Dictionary of Caribbean Biography*), Kevin Yelvington (*The Colonial Caribbean in Transition*), and Gerard Besson (*The Book of Trinidad*). This was also the first decade of a torrent of book reviews, now not only books on Trinidad, but on all the British West Indies. Her seniority as a historian and her links with foreign journal editors – itself a mark of her status in the profession – enabled her to get assignments to write review articles.

Brereton (along with Gerard Besson) edited a fascinating, superior, oversized coffee-table book (*The Book of Trinidad*, 1992), beautifully illustrated with photographs and matching text. It is a resplendent cornucopia of Trinidad's social history from the Amerindians to Independence, loosely but sequentially articulated, with most of the text written by Brereton herself and a superb chapter by the niche historian, Carl

Campbell. The *Book of Trinidad* is such a magnificent production that not all living contributors could be given a free copy. It was designed for well-to-do Trinidadians and for the tourist market. It signalled the arrival of Bridget Brereton as a marketable brand in the Trinidad and Tobago culture and heritage industry. Her name could sell the product.

By the early twenty-first century Bridget Brereton on the Trinidad campus had the strongest credentials as a public historian. She was well placed to identify potential national heroes of Trinidad and Tobago if the political will existed to take such an awesome step in a racially segmented society. She was well-known and highly regarded, but did not embrace opportunities to be a culture or heritage celebrity. She had already held high office and interest in the Trinidad and Tobago Teachers' Association and The Association of Caribbean Historians. She had been teaching on the St Augustine campus from the early 1970s, and knew personally some of the pioneer academics who had been on the job when ten years previously (the early 1960s), the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture was converted into the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. Moreover she had attained high management positions on the campus as Deputy Principal and Acting Principal, more crucially as Interim Principal. Who else but the campus doyenne of history was in a better position to be entrusted with the task of writing a commissioned history of the St Augustine campus?<sup>14</sup> This she completed in 2010, and much to her credit is the only publication she authored with the help of a research assistant.

Towards the turn into the twenty-first century one finds Bridget Brereton taking assignments to pass judgement on distinguished elder historians such as Dr Eric Williams (1998), Dr Gordon Lewis (1998); and Dr Woodville Marshall (2002). No less a talent than George Lamming called her to do duty in respect to Williams and Lewis. The latter was, like Brereton herself, an outsider/insider and a telling description of Lewis by her could apply equally to herself. She wrote, "Not a native son, he made the Caribbean his own through the power of his intellect and the depth of his engagement."<sup>15</sup> Bridget Brereton is sufficiently a Caribbean person and senior professional to have thrust upon her the task of rescuing volume five of the *UNESCO General History of the Caribbean*, bringing in line wayward and tardy historians from across the Caribbean region.<sup>16</sup> This volume was devoted to the Caribbean in the twentieth century; Brereton's own greatest contribution had been in the nineteenth century. But UNESCO wanted a competent and safe pair of hands, and found them in Brereton.

It might be that Bridget Brereton discovered – as historians have found in other places – that the role of a public historian often requires engagement with the recent past than a clinging to earlier centuries such as the nineteenth century. As a participant in the Oral History Project at St Augustine, Bridget Brereton in collaboration with others produced short biographies of important twentieth-century Trinidad personalities. She gave the Keynote Address to the Oilfield Workers Trade Union (OWTU) in June 2007, on “The 1930’s Agenda and the OWTU”. There had been a time in the history of the OWTU when only a radical could stand before them and speak on such a topic. Possibly by 2007, this union was willing to listen to history, not politics. In 2009, Brereton wrote surprisingly an article entitled “Oil and the Twentieth-Century Economy 1900–1962”. This is the only overtly economic title one can find in all her writings over nearly forty years. She was now a long way from race relations in nineteenth-century Trinidad; but just when one begins to think that she must surely now lose her way, one discovers that this article was not economic history, possibly it could sneak in as socio-economic history; parts of it look like disguised social history.

After the turn of the twenty-first century, Bridget became a consultant historian. Analyses of rare books of prose fiction, written by little known residents in Trinidad in previous eras, excavated, annotated and brought to life by literary specialists for the benefit of readers, had to have a historical background. Bridget Brereton was the preferred consultant historian collaborating with overseas principals to assemble the historical background. Sometimes her hand is evident in the footnotes; sometimes it is almost invisible as when Gordon Rohlehr’s powerful narrative style overran her participation.<sup>17</sup> Bridget Brereton herself knowingly did not employ Caribbean prose fiction as evidence in her social history, but she recognized its potential and was willing to underpin other academics’ research by advising on, and adding, unobtrusive historical frameworks. Hardly any other historian in the Anglophone Caribbean had achieved this status as the preferred, repeat supplier of historical knowledge to West Indian prose fiction; or to notable West Indian autobiographies. If there was a conference on the status of women in the British West Indies, Brereton would supply the historical background which she did in Nassau, Bahamas in July 2000. If there was a conference on the culture of violence in Trinidad and Tobago, she could provide the historical background to it, which she did at a St Augustine conference in 2004.<sup>18</sup> In a small West Indian society such as Trinidad and Tobago, it is not uncommon for one person in the Arts or Sciences

to become particularly associated in the public's mind with a certain expertise or skill, and usually this is a well-earned reputation. So it has been with Brereton.

It is of course improbable that after some forty years of writing, any historian will write as she or he did at the start of a career. After helping to put women and gender on the agenda of West Indian history, it was natural that Brereton in later writings would be eager to make women visible. For example, her article in 2010 on the historical background to the culture of violence in Trinidad and Tobago was not only a blast against imperial violence, but a blast against the gender violence of men against women. This article is passionate in tone, and it exhibits the sort of social anger not characteristic of earlier writings. Possibly it was the contemporary, public outcry against violence in Trinidad which drew this reaction from her; possibly there were other more subtle end-of-career influences at work. By this time Brereton had spent an academic lifetime of history research and writing on Trinidad. Maybe she was ready to make her exit with a bang.

In this connection one has to wonder what is the meaning of Brereton's post-2005 writings about various "narratives" (or interpretations) that pervaded the vulgar historiography of Trinidad. She posited that there was an Indo-Trinidadian interpretation of Trinidad's history; an Afro-Trinidadian interpretation and an Afro-Creole interpretation and perhaps others. The individuals and lobbies who push these various interpretations might not all be professional historians, but then we live in an age of the citizen historian; everybody is a historian; everybody makes history and carries history in his or her soul. The exposure of these interpretations was the most dynamic new direction of Brereton's social history writing in the post-2005 years. Was she bitten by the postmodernism bug which can shatter "monolithic history" into "tententious histories" hiding under the cover of "narratives"? Or was Brereton less tolerant of the racial divisiveness and racial rigidities of Trinidad's "rainbow" society? The tolerant optimism of *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad* (1979) which refused to ensnare nineteenth-century race relations in the prison of M.G. Smith's "pluralism" might now have given way to a more pessimistic realization that the incurable racial divisions of Trinidad were not going away any time soon. Trinidad might have looked more "pluralist" to her in 2007 than in 1979. With a new outburst of hot debates about ethnic nationalism at the start of the twenty-first century, Brereton might feel that history is disgustingly alive in Trinidad.



## Characterizing Brereton's Writings

Bridget Brereton does not like numbers. Occasionally the question of quantification arose, for example, the numerical strength of the Indian population; but it did not loom large in her practice of history. She would not buy the argument that one cannot discuss anything without counting heads. Values and behaviour, non-quantifiable materials had more significance for her. She also largely ignored the social scientists, the sociologists and anthropologists, the makers of theories about society; she turned her back on them and analysed the historical evidence in plain straightforward narrative form relying on qualitative understandings and colligation of incomplete source materials, and employing jargon free language, thus making her writings readable by scholars and by the general public alike. Most surprisingly, she left alone the indigenous, contemporary plural society school of West Indian sociology headed by the renowned M.G. Smith. Nor did she get involved in the creolization counter propositions of Kamau Brathwaite, but he was probably in the back of her mind. More relevant were Raymond Smith and Lloyd Braithwaite, Mona sociologists, who wrote on the kind of diverse societies (Guyana and Trinidad) Brereton had under her microscope. Brereton's practice of social history was in the traditional narrative mode of Elsa Goveia's book *Slave Society in the Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (1965). This appeared in print while Brereton was a student at Mona; and it might have been a subtle influence on her, although Brereton did not admit it in her writings. It is Donald Wood whom she acknowledged as the single greatest influence on her. However, her approach – and the same can be said of all the graduates of the Mona History Honours programme in the late 1950s and the 1960s – was similar to the practice of the academic staff at Mona who were not disciples of sociology.

Goveia's *Slave Society* took the total society into consideration, and made a social structure analysis of it.<sup>19</sup> The social history of groups and classes was the most common approach to social history at the time. This was the approach of another of her students, Brian Moore writing on Guyana, and it was the approach of Bridget Brereton writing on Trinidad. Goveia had written about slave society; Brereton and Moore studied post-emancipation societies. The entire field of West Indian history was so wide open that other researchers were quite justified to concentrate on smaller sections of post-emancipation societies, for example on the planters, on the peasants, the free coloureds or the mission-

aries. The researchers who chose to explicate the entire post-emancipation societies, covering all classes and colours, and including the nineteenth-century new immigrants, had a breadth of approach which placed them, and not the niche historians, strategically onto the centre ground of post-emancipation histories. By taking possession of the vertical and horizontal spaces of post-emancipation research, they came by right of prior occupation to be the colonizers of post-slavery historiography. If, as in the case of Brereton, the researcher persisted in this approach for decades, then his or her contribution to the history deepens and lengthens, and at least two generations of students by the end of the twentieth century encountered their research findings on the masses, the middle classes, the elites and the immigrants. From first to last, Bridget Brereton persisted in explicating the total society rather than becoming a niche specialist on any particular part. The whole society was more powerful than the sum of its parts.

Bridget Brereton put race and colour, not class, up front in her analysis of the society;<sup>20</sup> and in typical pragmatic style she did not allow academics' quarrels about the definition of race to stop her from plunging into race relations. She stayed long enough in this field to witness the rise of new jargon such as "ethnicity" in place of "race" (or in addition to "race") and even challenges to the concept of race. She adopted ethnicity and pressed on without blinking. Brereton started and completed the first decade of her research career (1968-1979) in the teeth of the black power "revolution" in Trinidad and the Indo-Trinidadian revanche. There were race riots going on in the United States of America, and in Britain and race war in South Africa. The origin of the racial diversity of modern Trinidad lay in its social history in the nineteenth century, especially the later nineteenth century. Studying and explicating the race relations of the major social groups in nineteenth-century Trinidad was to get to the pulsating heart of twentieth-century Trinidad. Brereton was living in it.

Bridget concentrated on race relations, with little probing into cultural manifestations; in the 1970s up to the mid-1980s, she wrote social history, not cultural history; and she left out much of the politics and the economics as well, certainly more than her friend and mentor Donald Wood did in his landmark book *Trinidad in Transition: The Years after Slavery* (1968).<sup>21</sup> Brereton concerned herself with the social factors which shaped politics, but hardly with the institutions of politics. In determining social groups she gave some idea of social origins, occasionally family origins, but she was not into genealogy. After the mid-1980s,

Brereton went more into cultural history, though she acknowledged later that it was Brian Moore and Michele Johnson who had surprised Anglophone Caribbean cultural history writing by taking it to a new level.<sup>22</sup> Of course, it is impossible for anyone to write about everything all the time, and this characterization of her social history is more an observation than a criticism. Her scope in Trinidad's social history was sufficiently impressive.

Although Brereton was the historian of all the major nineteenth-century social groups in Trinidad (not the social institutions), it did not seem that she was in a strategic position to give equal attention and evaluation to all these groups. As a white outsider/insider, Brereton had an unassailable advantage in writing about the white elites of Trinidad, either the English/British or the French Creole contingent. White people were perversely at the top of Trinidad society. Brereton did not defend them; she wrote of their racism, their social distance and discrimination against other people, perhaps more fulsomely later than in the 1970s; but without any noticeable social rage against them. Admirably, she aimed for a high level of improbable neutrality in writing about the conflictive race relations of nineteenth-century Trinidad. She made a solid and original contribution to the historiography of white people in the West Indies.<sup>23</sup> She was also attracted by her own lifestyle and life choices to the heroic potential – real or imaginary – of the black and coloured nineteenth-century middle classes; but would it not be better to leave the Indians to those Indian intellectuals who really believed that only Indians should write about Indians? Bridget Brereton might have hesitated but only for a few years; she had to rope in the Indians, leaving out the handfuls of Portuguese and Chinese; and Tobago, the misaligned sister island, better to leave it to the aggrieved Tobagonians, although over time Brereton did write about Tobago without distinguishing herself as the explicator of its black peasant temper.

Bridget Brereton did not bring any of the contemporary radicalisms (black, socialist, Marxist) to her research work. She is a liberal, a secular humanist scholar, who in her work in the 1970s did not dislike Trinidad nineteenth-century society with all its diversity and promise. If anything the nineteenth-century Trinidad drawn by her pen in the 1970s and 1980s was the incubator of the conflictive twentieth-century society, tolerable, attractive, exuberant, *sui generis*. When obliged to go beyond her historical documents to hazard a guess on what held late nineteenth-century Trinidad society together – having given no consideration to the sea boundaries around the divided island society – she went in

1979 for common values rather than force in the manner of Elsa Goveia, Raymond Smith and Lloyd Braithwaite.<sup>24</sup> Writing in the mid-1980s, David Trotman, an Afro-Trinidadian historian living in foreign parts, having researched the same period, namely the late nineteenth century, with more passion, inverted that order of integrative influences and saw everywhere the brute force of British laws, police and the courts.<sup>25</sup> However, the correctness of Brereton's social analysis was fortified, not controverted by Trotman's book.

Book reviews are not highly regarded in the historiography of the Anglophone Caribbean; and indeed hardly anyone but vexed or elated authors pays them any attention. Brereton took book reviews seriously, which meant that she took reading seriously. She did a considerable number of these reviews (not review essays), especially in the 1990s and beyond. Her characteristics as a historian can easily be identified in her book reviews. She preferred weighty to provocative conclusions. She had the greatest respect for documentary evidence, and distrusted views based on informed speculation. Conclusions which overstated the documentary evidence did not escape her rebuke; worse yet those which had no such evidence.<sup>26</sup> She is no friend to the philosophy of history which accords value to the evidence from silence. Occasionally Brereton might ask a question which has no known answer. For example, she wondered if Mary Prince, the slave woman, had failed to have children because her reproductive system had been abused by slave masters. However, Brereton herself never wrote what she would call a "think piece", meaning one in which evidence was mixed in with speculation or vice versa.<sup>27</sup> The weak performance of a few school textbook writers came in for sharp criticism; at least two little known foreign authors of academic books incurred her wrath. Noticeably she was gentler with the writings of university colleagues, or avoided reviewing their books, an interesting exception being Barry Higman's *Writing West Indian Histories*. She was quick to use highly complimentary words like "distinguished", "innovative", "pioneering", even "erudite" in describing distinguished, innovative, pioneering, erudite work, and her book reviews were so plainly written and informative that readers might feel that they no longer need to read the book.

## Historiography

It is difficult to study the social history of Caribbean or American slavery without hearing of race relations. Some historians of the 1950s,

1960s and 1970s, particularly those writing about North America, declared that they were dealing with race relations. They wrote books and articles with the term "race relations" in the title; and in respect to the Caribbean, perhaps Harry Hoetink was at the time when Brereton was an undergraduate, the foremost exponent of race relations in the Dominican Republic.<sup>28</sup> She read him; but she was not interested in the biology, sociology or psychology of race mixing. It can be safely posited that Brereton was among the first, if not the first, of the historians of the Anglophone West Indies in the late 1960s and early 1970s to declare that they were writing about race relations. However simple this assertion might appear, Brereton made the term race relations her calling card, her signature phrase, so much so that it entered the vocabulary of Anglo-West Indian historiography without being a concept or a theory. After twenty years of working the term into the history of Trinidad, she exported it to other West Indian scenes and times. It was Bridget Brereton who was asked to write on "Caribbean Race Relations" in the *Historical Guide to World Slavery*.<sup>29</sup> Brereton had applied it originally to the post-emancipation period. What she wrote in the *Historical Guide* could easily have been captured under another title. So, it can be maintained that Brereton was instrumental in putting these two little words on the agenda of Anglo-West Indian historiography. Yet hardly any other historian used the term habitually, which is another measure of its iconic association with her. It had become her brand.

In the 1968 to 1972 period when Brereton undertook her PhD research, it was still more common for scholars, including West Indians, to be more interested in slavery than in the post-emancipation years. And when research slipped beyond slavery, it tended to move to the immediate post-emancipation years, with 1865 or 1870 as the end of the real post-emancipation period. Bridget Brereton was among the early handful of young scholars to turn attention to the later post-emancipation years, that is, to the foot of the nineteenth century. Howard Johnson completed a PhD thesis on Crown colony government in Trinidad in the later nineteenth century from as early as 1969. More in line with the new vogue for social history were the PhD thesis research of Brian Moore on Guyana and Gerard Tikasingh on Trinidad. Perhaps it was the greater racial diversity of Guyana and Trinidad which attracted social historians to the later nineteenth century. The early twentieth century was perceived to be less formative than the nineteenth century, and the exciting 1930s were out of bounds because of the thirty-year archival rule. There were good reasons then to study late-nineteenth-

century post-emancipation histories; and since new immigrants were added in the later nineteenth century, it became an axiom that modern West Indian societies (Anglophone West Indian societies) received their final shapes in the later nineteenth century. Brereton can be credited as one of those who helped to extend post-emancipation studies into the "dark age" of the later nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup>

The extension of social history research to the later nineteenth century was accompanied by the greatest discovery of new unofficial local sources (some displaced to the metropole) since the start of the new West Indian history in the 1950s. There were more surviving newspapers for the nineteenth century than for the eighteenth century, and more for the mid to later nineteenth century than for the early nineteenth century. The richness of the late nineteenth-century newspapers was remarkable as more black and coloured editorial opinions could contend; the white planter view of the world no longer had a monopoly. In Trinidad for the late nineteenth century, Howard Johnson, Tikasingh, and Brereton discovered these sources and used them extensively. This was no small forward step, as in the early 1960s scholars were uneasy about the extensive use of newspapers for PhD research. They were thought to be too unreliable for political and economic histories. Newspapers as sources rose into prominence with social history. In respect to the social history of Trinidad, Brereton and Tikasingh turned local newspapers into a super source. Once this explosive new source of social history was revealed, scores of professional historians and graduate students descended on them; threatening their very existence. Neither Johnson nor Tikasingh produced a book from their original research in the later nineteenth century,<sup>31</sup> but Brereton did. Brereton's 1979 book became a landmark publication, now a classic, still not yet superseded by others. It was Brereton's comprehensive use of newspapers which led to her pioneering historical essay on the nineteenth-century Trinidad carnival; it was newspapers which enabled her to catch sight of race pride and race consciousness in some black and coloured middle-class men. The newspapers were the most potent source of her originality.

Brereton made a surprising early impact on the historiography of Indian immigration into Trinidad. She was here cutting into a field which had been ploughed up by several overseas scholars, both published authors and unpublished thesis writers, sometimes not historians.<sup>32</sup> In the University of the West Indies, K.O. Laurence, a coloured Trinidadian historian on the Mona campus, was already a senior scholar on Indian immigration to Trinidad and Guyana; but he had the disad-

vantage of not publishing fulsomely on the topic, although he had a considerable manuscript interminably delayed at the publishers.<sup>33</sup> Contemporarily with Brereton, Gerald Tikasingh, a young Indo-Trinidadian scholar, looked well equipped to become the senior resident researcher on this topic, having the immense advantage over Brereton of being able to dip sensitively into Indian culture and not just stay on the outer frameworks of Indian immigration and race relations. His work looked promising; and he had even begun to exhibit some passion, not a formal neutrality, about discrimination against Indians.<sup>34</sup> The elusive Tikasingh dropped out of sight; and left this field clear for a respectfully hesitant Brereton. Never alone in the field locally – because there were other resident Indian professional historians as spokesmen more than researchers on this particular topic, not to mention angry Indian citizen historians – Brereton realized that she could not deal with race relations in Trinidad without facing the challenge of how to bring in the Indians, even if an initial tri-colour (black, coloured, white) social structure could be analysed, with the Indians as outsiders, as an “unappropriated”<sup>35</sup> fourth sector.

The race relations Brereton wrote about were in a very segmented nineteenth-century Trinidad society. She had the advantage in historiographical impaction even over Judith Weller who had published in 1968. Weller’s book was not highly regarded; at any rate it was not on race relations. Brereton published a seminal book, also articles in journals which were accessible in Trinidad and the West Indies. In 1976, Carl Campbell published an insightful article – if I might say so myself – on nineteenth-century Trinidad Indian immigration in the *Journal of Indian History* (published in India), but this article made no impact on the historiography because nobody in the West Indies knew about it.<sup>36</sup> Brereton’s work on nineteenth-century Indian immigration to Trinidad came to occupy the centre of the historiography on this subject. Along with Laurence, Wood, and Tikasingh, she brought the disciplined professionalism of the historian to bear on a topic hitherto dominated by numerous foreign sociologists and political scientists.

It might seem too simplistic to suggest that extensive, repeated publications on a topic are likely to increase the impact on the historiography. A key to Brereton’s impact on the historiography of nineteenth-century Trinidad – her core area of research – was the frequency of publication; and the republication of articles in different places. Bridget Brereton had a lifelong dedication to the study of Trinidad’s social history, especially its nineteenth-century social history; the range of her

writings was not wide, but the intensity was remarkable. Other historians made a contribution to the historiography of Trinidad and then ran off the course like sprinters in a 100 metre race. Brereton stayed the course like a marathon runner. Beyond frequency and intensity, there is another aspect of her impact to be considered: this is the clarity and lucidity of her prose, the easy straightforward English language she employed which obviated the use of a dictionary, and made it quite unlikely that any scholar, or even the general intelligent reader, would ask: "now what does she mean by that?" It was this clarity of prose, one suspects, which made her a good writer of history texts for secondary school students. An article by her on the oil industry was quite rightly used in a *Rhetorical Reader for Tertiary Students* to demonstrate good writing skills.<sup>37</sup> There was no pretentious creole obfuscation of meaning anywhere; she used words without being in love with them.<sup>38</sup>

The availability of social history writing for schools was given a boost by Brereton's *Social Life in the Caribbean 1838-1938*. By this time she understood that social history for schools would have to concentrate on the social life of the people or, to use her words, "the lived experiences" of the people and that the people would most appropriately be the masses, and that women would have to be written into the text, even in advance of the syllabus. This was a purer form of social history; it was history from below, with the politics totally left out. Brereton was a pioneer in the historiography of the life of the common people. It is difficult to think of the professional historian of the Anglophone West Indies who had written before her on topics such as social life at home, at play; about housing, diet; family life; and festivals, dress and culture in the post-slavery West Indies.<sup>39</sup> She had moved from the public sphere into the private sphere where women were often in command. Could it be that women were then becoming more visible in a school text than in university level books?

The rise of women's history writing in the Anglophone Caribbean showed its head after the first one-third of Brereton's professional life. Like almost all the other West Indian history professionals, she was herself wrong-footed by this movement, having made her mark with social history, with the women substantially left out. Bridget Brereton wisely did not come to the subject with the revisionist heat of the feminists or the naked excitement of the young innocents. In its North American and European places of genesis, social history harboured women's history and in time launched it into academia. Brereton was not the author of any of the major articles and books which in the mid



to late 1980s put the subject of women's history on the table of Anglo-phone West Indian historiography. Credit here belongs to Lucille Mathurin, Barbara Bush, Marietta Morrissey and Hilary Beckles.<sup>40</sup> A handful of sociologists at Mona and St Augustine were also ahead of Brereton (and almost all the local practising professional historians, male and female) in their recognition of the cogency of women and gender analysis. Still, it is noticeable that Bridget Brereton was in the position of being the most senior female professional historian at the University of the West Indies (all campuses) in the mid-1980s. She was well placed to do something. Brereton made an impact on the emerging women's studies by going in two directions: first she undertook a historiographical study of how historians were beginning to make women more visible in Anglo-Caribbean writings; and second, by the 1990s she found her own original lines of research in the analysis of female written historical texts like diaries and autobiographies. These texts constituted "herstory" rather than "history". Brereton was among the first historians to hunt for specific documents written by females, and another female historian at Mona, Aleric Josephs, immediately followed in the footsteps of Brereton, this time focusing on female private letters. The historiography was told to listen to the "voices" of women and not to fall victim to ventriloquism. There was also a hint that perhaps only female historians can really understand some of the messages that these "voices" were delivering.<sup>41</sup> Not that this deterred brave males.

Brereton, then, did not go backwards to engender work she had already done as Verene Shepherd did to her previous work on Indians in Jamaica.<sup>42</sup> Brereton went forward into the search for female responses to emancipation, culminating in one of her best articles. There are historians who need only one good new idea to justify writing an entire book. Instead of a book, Brereton wrote a long article, a path-breaking contribution to the question of the withdrawal of female labour from the plantations after slavery. Raymond Smith was already on to this argument, but did not provide the historical evidence.<sup>43</sup> Already at the centre of the historiography of nineteenth-century Trinidad, Brereton, it can be said, emerged as one of the leading intellectuals in the women's history movement, though less so in gender writings which the social scientists managed better than the historians. She was the main historian on the St Augustine campus writing on women's history; and here her range extended beyond Trinidad. Additionally her local prestige and trusted white creolized insider status enabled her to gain access to two or three private or nearly private Indian and white female Trinidad

texts which natives might not have been able to get their hands on with equal ease.<sup>44</sup> Brereton then emancipated herself from the scramble to interpret the better known female public texts such as that of Mary Seacole or Mary Prince. In bringing to the public's attention for the first time the contents of less well known female texts of a few middle-class or elite Trinidad ladies (and others), Brereton made an original contribution to the excavation of the "subaltern voices" of women and the historiography of Caribbean families. The social history and the women's history of Trinidad coalesced in the lives of these ladies.

Bridget Brereton has repeatedly declared an interest in historiography, an unusual line of historical scholarship for historians teaching at the University of the West Indies. She produced no major publication on this subject, as in the case of Elsa Goveia in 1956 when the publication of historiographies of various Latin American countries was in vogue. Brereton harboured a historiographical mindset, which instinctively looked for the trends or overviews in whatever subjects caught her attention. She wrote historiographically on the nineteenth-century historians of Trinidad, on the emergence of the new West Indian history, on women's history, on post-emancipation studies. Indeed, all her post-2007 articles on "narratives" or interpretations of Trinidad history by the Indo-Trinidadian lobby, or the Afro-Creole lobby or the Afro-centric lobby - all these "narratives" were essentially historiographical exercises, even when the protagonists might not all be professional historians. Brereton might at the same time have been consistently teaching a graduate course in Historiography of the West Indies; and on the Mona campus, at least two of her historiographical essays are highly recommended to students and set aside in a Reserve Collection in the Main Library. As already hinted, the popular consumption of history is important to the construction of historiography which is not the preserve of specialists. Consumption is not possible without publication, but the latter can mean so many things nowadays. There is no point in writing things that people do not read; and here is one of the fundamental strengths of Brereton's contribution to the historiography; almost every major piece she has published has been consistently in use over the years.

Bridget Brereton's interest in, and contribution to, biographical writings increased over the years. Starting in the 1970s with the black man J.J. Thomas, and the coloured man Michel Maxwell Philip and the white man John Gorrie, Brereton needed only an Indian to add to her small bunch of personal "heroes". Of course her collaborative work

with St Augustine colleagues on a *Dictionary of Caribbean Biography*, which was not quite completed, did include Trinidadians of all races.<sup>45</sup> Later on in her post-2007 phrase, Bridget Brereton in collaboration with other colleagues did produce, for the University of the West Indies Oral History Project at St Augustine, snapshot portraits of prominent Trinidadians of the twentieth century. This work took Brereton into the new territory of oral history. Unfortunately biographical sketches, however useful, are seldom taken seriously by conventional wisdom as contributions to historiography.

Indeed even Brereton's major book on Gorrie (1997) suffered the disadvantages of biography in the West Indian hierarchy of research achievement. It probably takes a longer time for the contents of biography to be digested into the body of the historiography. Part of the problem is that there are so few biographies; and still fewer written by practitioners of the new West Indian history. Worse yet, Gorrie was incomprehensible: he was not a black man like J.J. Thomas, not even a local white Trinidadian like Captain Cipriani, but an imperial official, confusingly an agent of Crown Colony government and a self-appointed, controversial social entrepreneur. A white imperial official with good intentions and a record of helping the poor did not fit easily into the historiography; he was too liberal, some thought too radical, for his time and office. The personality of Gorrie was the unacceptable misfit in the historiography. But there were also the objective conditions of the territory. This book was the publication which gave Brereton the opportunity to make a solid contribution to the historiography of the desperate conditions of Tobago. Despairing of the lack of British metropolitan governmental support for Gorrie, Brereton administered her sharpest rebuke of imperial policies in Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed in the British empire.<sup>46</sup> She saw that the British government was not guided by moral interest, but by self-interest, a conclusion which Eric Williams had already reached before Brereton was born.

Bridget Brereton exercised a considerable influence on the intellectual landscape of her campus, the preferred site of several of her conference papers. She was fortunate to start teaching there after its first teething decade. The 1970s might well have been the golden age of the expanding, well-financed campus; and Brereton made the teaching of Trinidad and Tobago's history on that campus essential to her faculty's programme in a manner not matched by the incipient teaching of the history of Jamaica on the Mona campus in Jamaica. Brereton was often in residence, non-controversial or perhaps above controversies. She lived in

the shadow of the "big picture" prime minister historian, Eric Williams, who ignored all other West Indian historians.<sup>47</sup> However, significantly it is the writings of Brereton, not those of Eric Williams, which are mostly called upon to explicate contemporary Trinidad and Tobago. She read extensively on the history and literature of Trinidad and Tobago, not omitting even the work of the citizen historians. Her impact on West Indian historiography is through her impact on the historiography of Trinidad. This island is her bailiwick. She did cast her gaze beyond Trinidad; but left to her own choices (in other words, if not asked), she did not exhibit much comparative pan-Caribbean inclinations. After teaching for many years at St Augustine, Brereton has many grateful former students who reside in Trinidad and the Lesser Antilles and these people constitute part of the legacy of a remarkably successful academic career.

It is easy to like Bridget. Those who know her best do not have to wait until her death to speak well of her as a person. Modest about her own accomplishments, level-headed and fair minded; accessible to students and visiting academics; hard-working, prolific, Brereton is a model scholar and colleague. One wonders if in describing Chief Justice Gorrie, she was not looking in a mirror. She described him as "impressive; his legal knowledge was wide and his mind lucid. He had no tricks, stage effects or flights of eloquence; he was a plain, straightforward and honest judge".<sup>48</sup> Like some of us, Bridget belongs to a passing generation of historians not yet dead. But there is no need to believe that her work is done; her brand value might yet increase. This tribute is only a "think piece" kind of assessment, my own "participant observer, proud ex-St Augustine, Afro-Jamaican narrative", which might very well elicit Professor Brereton's dislike of informed speculation mixed into a factual one-pot Trinidad cook-up of thanks and praises for an academic past well spent.

## NOTES

1. I was unable to get hold of a few of Professor Brereton's voluminous writings. For a full listing, see the annotated bibliography in this issue of the Journal. Normally endnotes for a historiographical piece are extensive, but I have taken advantage of the bibliography to reduce mine. After completing this tribute to Professor Brereton, I realized that I had neglected her writings on how emancipation was celebrated. Slave emancipation

was a shadow topic in her writings; she evidently thought that it was a success ruined by flawed race relations.

2. Brereton, "Gordon Lewis", 262-65. Also Brereton, "Woodville Marshall and Caribbean History", 3-16.
3. See Brereton, "The Trinidad Carnival 1870-1900", 118. The first half of Brathwaite's enigmatic note should more accurately have read "U.K. bred".
4. See plate 20, in Higman, ed., *Methodology and Historiography of the Caribbean*, between pages 266 and 267. The University of the West Indies had three campuses: Mona in Jamaica, St Augustine in Trinidad, and Cave Hill in Barbados.
5. Some of the views here (and elsewhere) are based on my (black Jamaican) participant observation as a resident researcher and lecturer on the St Augustine campus in Trinidad from 1963 to 1972 and beyond as a visiting scholar.
6. This legendary oversimplified definition of social history by George Trevelyan will guide me in this discussion. See Sterns, "Some Comments on Social History", 4.
7. Brereton, "Slavery, Anti-slavery, Freedom", 97-103.
8. Brereton was predisposed to social history having written in 1968 a University of Toronto MA dissertation on sixteenth-century Scottish culture. Correspondence from Brereton to Campbell, September 2013.
9. Brereton, "Post-emancipation Protest in the Caribbean", 110-23.
10. Sometime in the academic year 1964-1965 I was giving a lecture on West Indian history at St Augustine to a large body of students, many of whom were much older than me. I was dealing with the problematic subject of the abolition of slavery. I cannot recall what I said, but a middle-age Indian man at the back of the class shot to his feet with the retort: "That is not what Dr Williams said." Since I was a young Jamaican assistant lecturer with only a renewable work permit to earn my living in Trinidad, I thought it decidedly unwise to engage in any frontal rebuttal of anything the sitting Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago (Dr Eric Williams, then in his political prime) had written. I managed to extricate myself skilfully without any damage to West Indian history. On a subsequent occasion in the 1970s, I was entering Trinidad as a visiting scholar from Jamaica, and on reaching the immigration desk at the airport the immigration officer (a black man) asked me what I intended to research in Trinidad. I answered, "the history of education." He smiled pleasantly and informed me, "Eric Williams has already done that." I chose not to answer; I was allowed in.
11. Black, *Jamaica* (1958); Carmichael, *West Indian Islands* (1961); Williams, *History* (1962); Craton, *Bahamas* (1962); Lewis, *Puerto Rico* (1963); Thomas, *Cuba* (1971); Dobson, *Belize* (1973); Dookhan, *Virgin Islands* (1974); Dookhan, *British Virgin Islands* (1975); Nath, *History of Guyana* 3 vols. (1975); Daly, *Guyanese People* (1975); Bolland, *Formation of a Colonial Society* (1977); Hoyos, *Barbados* (1978).

12. I am not unmindful of the role of Mathurin in the development of the Centre for Gender Studies. I am not aware that, in her role as historian, she led in the teaching of gendered history. See Mathurin, 494–95.
13. Brereton, "Caribbean Women in the Post-emancipation Century 1838–1938: agenda for research". Paper presented at UNESCO/UWI Conference on slavery, emancipation and the shaping of Caribbean society, St Augustine, 1988.
14. Brereton, *From Imperial College* (2010).
15. Brereton, "Gordon Lewis, His contribution", 263.
16. Oostindie, 332–34.
17. Brereton and Rohlehr, "Introduction" (2006). Brereton also wrote an article on V. Naipaul's sense of history which I was not able to access.
18. On the question of the use of Brereton's writings as background to twentieth-century accounts, it is instructive to note how editors tended to put her nineteenth-century social structure essays at the top, or at least in the middle of their collections. See Knight and Palmer, eds., *The Modern Caribbean* (1989); Higman, ed., *Trade* (1983); Yelvington, ed., *Trinidad Ethnicity* (1993).
19. Goveia, *Slave Society* (1965).
20. In one publication, Brereton seems to have reversed the order and put class up front, see Brereton, "Social Organisation", 33–55.
21. Brereton's views were different. She thought Wood's book was a model social history because it had much economic and political history. See Brereton, "Regional Histories", 587–88. Also see brief autobiographical notes on Donald Wood in Brereton and Yelvington, eds., *Colonial Caribbean*, xii–xvii.
22. Brereton, "Recent Developments", 201–2.
23. An elusive document on the nineteenth-century white elite (the French Creoles) of Trinidad is the 1961 MA dissertation (University of Puerto Rico) of Anthony Maingot.
24. Brereton, *Race Relations*, 205–12.
25. Trotman, 68–102.
26. Brereton, "Abolition and its Aftermath", 299–306.
27. Brereton once described one of my drafts on Tobago, which was not yet ready for publication, as a "think piece" which I, mistakenly at first, took as a compliment since she saw thinking in it. I never completed the piece for lack of sufficient evidence.
28. Among the leading experts in race relations were Marvin Harris, Charles Boxer, Magnus Morner. For the most relevant Hoetink book, see *The Two Variants in Caribbean Race Relations* (1967).
29. Brereton, "Caribbean Race Relations", 119–25.
30. See Brereton, "Recent Developments", 188.
31. I regret not being able to access the 1969 PhD thesis of Howard Johnson.
32. Some of the better known researchers are Morton Klass, Yogendra Malik, A. Niehoff and J. Niehoff; there were some less well-known dissertation

- writers in United States universities, for example Hugh Sampath (Columbia, 1951); John Parry (Louisiana State, 1969); and in Canada, Sahadeo Basdeo (University of Calgary, 1972).
33. This manuscript surfaced many years later as K.O. Laurence, *A Question of Labour: Immigration into Trinidad and British Guiana 1875-1917*.
  34. Gerald Tikasingh, "The Trinidad Press and the Issues of Immigration during the 19th Century". Paper presented to the Association of Caribbean Historians' conference, Barbados, 1977.
  35. The word is borrowed from the title of Jerome Handler's book, *The Unappropriated People*.
  36. Campbell, 407-39.
  37. Brereton, "Oil", 78-83.
  38. As though inspired by a remark by Higman in relation to a West Indian academic, see B.W. Higman, "Danish West Indian Slavery in Comparative Perspective: an Appreciation of Neville Hall's Contribution to the Historiography" (Association of Caribbean Historians conference paper, St Croix, 1987), 1-2.
  39. Brereton, *Social Life* (1985).
  40. The writings are Lucille Mathurin, "A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica 1655-1844" (PhD thesis, University of the West Indies, Mona, 1974); Mathurin, *The Rebel Woman* (1975); Mathurin, *Women Field Workers* (1987); Bush, "White 'ladies'", 249-62; Bush, *Slave Women* (1990); Beckles, *Natural Rebels* (1989); Morrissey, "Women's work", 339-65; Morrissey, *Slave Women* (1989).
  41. For example the women stories in Silvestrini, *Women and Resistance* (1990).
  42. Shepherd also went forward to new fields, for example, *Maharani's Misery* (2002).
  43. Brereton, "Family Strategies", 77-107.
  44. For the names of these women, see Brereton, *Gendered Testimony* (1994).
  45. Brereton and Samaroo, eds., *Dictionary* (1998).
  46. Brereton, *Law, Justice and Empire*, 324-26.
  47. The phrase "big picture" comes from Brereton, see her "Eric Williams", 270.
  48. Brereton, "Sir John Gorrie", 49. Here Brereton seems to incorporate the opinion of a newspaper correspondent.

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# Bridget Brereton

## A Life in History

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PATRICIA MOHAMMED

### Introduction

Apart from her valuable contributions to the historiography of the Caribbean and to the history of race relations in Trinidad and Tobago, Professor Bridget Brereton has also been a pioneer in the engendering of history in the region. This tribute, crafted from an interview with Bridget, connects the biographical and the intellectual in her scholarly journey.

The theoretical concept "the personal is political" was first introduced in the 1970s with the rise of the second wave feminist movement. It resonated with feminists who understood that power relations in gender, hidden in households and submerged in gender archetypes, could only be revealed through the collective pooling of individual experiences. The "personal is political" acquired pejorative meanings over time, viewed by detractors as the unnecessary intrusion of the personal and subjective in research and writing. The application of this concept led to a second theoretical insight – that of "standpoint epistemology". Standpoint theory valorized not only the work of gender scholars, but troubled the idea of value freedom in any field. It conveyed an overlooked truth – that one's class, ethnic, and cultural status in society coupled with personal experience, influenced how one spoke, interpreted data or wrote.

These early theoretical insights of gender signposted how one could

make sense of Bridget's life, to see the influence of the private in the talents she would develop, to comprehend how her excellent skills as a writer evolved, her choice of profession, and especially the subjects she would choose to write about in history. For the most part, for those who have not known her personally, I let her speak for herself, to allow the emergence of her wry humour, a sometimes self-deprecating yet confident personality, a straightforward and thoughtful honesty, and her capacity to effortlessly paint a picture in words. The interview is set out in two parts, the first concentrating on, although not restricted to, the biographical; the second part deals more with her scholarly contributions and is presented in the conventional question and response format. She also dug out family photographs, which provide a parallel text to visualize her passage through the earlier years in particular.<sup>1</sup>

## PART ONE

### Madras, India to Edinburgh, Scotland

Bridget Brereton earned the right as a scholar to speak for and on behalf of the Caribbean. It is rare to find any book or essay on Trinidad that does not make reference to her work. "*Race Relations*<sup>2</sup> is intellectually my most influential book," says Bridget. "I do think it stood up well to the test of time. *A History of Modern Trinidad*<sup>3</sup> is by far the most widely read, because it has been read by many young people, sixth formers and university students across the country and elsewhere too."

How did the British India-born Bridget come to settle in Trinidad and how did we in the Caribbean and in Trinidad and Tobago come to claim her as one of our eminent resident historians? Bridget Mary Brereton was born to Patrick and Hedda (née Friedlander) Cruttwell in a small nursing home run by Portuguese nuns in Madras (now Chennai). "That is why my second name is Mary; the nuns persuaded my father and mother to so name me." Her father had been stationed in India and served throughout World War II in the Indian Army when it was still British India. Her older brother and sister were born in different cities of India. By the time she was born in May 1946, the war was over, and her father, who was British, had been demobilized and awaiting shipment back to Britain. She was exactly six weeks old when the family left on a crowded troop ship to Britain. She has no childhood memories



Figure 1. (L-R) Susan Cruttwell, grandmother; Hedda, Bridget's mother; and Cass, great aunt

of living in India and there are a few surviving photographs of her mother who died in 1949 when Bridget was only three years old.

*Although Bridget would have been too young to accumulate influences of India, from an early age she has had to confront the idea of national identity.*

"My paternal family did have links with India. My father's father, who died when my father was very young . . . had in fact managed, apparently badly managed, a small tea plantation in Assam. So you can say

that my father's family were part of empire, and my father was actually born in Assam too which created problems for me later on because I was not entitled to normal British citizenship. I was born in India, my father was born in Assam and my mother was born in Germany."

*A childhood experience involving some displacement possibly contributed to an element of deep introspection in her makeup, a useful one for a scholar and writer. Bridget was born into a scholarly family. Before the war Patrick Cruttwell was an academic, who specialized in English literature. After the war he accepted an appointment at the newly established University College of the Southwest, later called the University of Exeter. After her mother's death, she and her sister Rachel, older by one and a half years, were sent to live with her father's mother in Joppa, Edinburgh.*

"My father felt he couldn't really cope with these two little girls, but he kept my brother Ian. So we lived in Edinburgh for the first nine years of my life, with our granny."

*While her mother's passing was traumatic, Bridget recalls that the more distressing period was when she had to leave her beloved granny's household in Edinburgh at age nine and join her father who had remarried and wanted to reunite his family in Exeter.*

"The transfer from a household where Rachel and I were the centre of existence, doted over, spoilt rotten, by a very indulgent granny who was already in her seventies, to come into this new household, with a



Figure 2. Rachel (left) and Bridget (right) at ages five and four in Joppa, Edinburgh

stepmother and two very small children – because my stepmother had recently had two children; I think perhaps that was the bigger sort of disruptive event in my childhood than the actual death of my mother. . . . We did keep closely in touch with our granny, but I think it must have been a great loss to her and it was certainly a huge shock to me.”

### Exeter, England



Figure 3. Bridget Cruttwell at age nine in Exeter, England

*The difficulty of a third adjustment had to do not just with moving from a protected space but finding a place in the new family that her father had started.*

“It was very difficult at first. . . . My stepmother was much younger than my father; in fact, she was his student so it was a student/lecturer relationship. She was . . . overwhelmed by her responsibility; she had two small children: my stepbrother, Martin, and my stepsister, Harriet. . . . My older brother, Ian, had been with my father all along, and then Rachel and I joined. So she is now in a household with five children. Looking back now, I see how impossibly difficult it was for her. . . . I have no doubt that that relationship did help to shape my personality; I have always been fairly shy and I am definitely introverted.

“I think I inherited that [shyness] from my father, but the lack of a certain amount of social self-confidence might stem partly from that difficult relationship with my stepmother. In recent decades, we have established an extremely warm relationship. She is now in her early eighties and I try to see her every year. I also adored my father; of all his six children, I was always the closest, and obviously then, there was a degree of jealousy, you know, the classic case.

“Everybody tells me my personality is very similar to my father. I have siblings who are great at mathematics or my sister who is an ento-



*Figure 4. Patrick Cruttwell, Bridget's father, circa 1958*



*Figure 5. (L-R) Martin, stepbrother; Anne, stepmother; and Harriet, stepsister. Bridget is seated holding baby Alice*



mologist, but I was the only one to pick up the humanities. We shared basic personality traits, which I think made us very close. But my father was in a difficult position; he had a new wife and a new family and so on. Looking back, I think it was a fairly fraught family situation, but I had Rachel who continued to act as my protector; and there was school, and I was good at school, so there was always a sort of sense of self confidence, in that I was good at exams and all that kind of stuff.

"Exeter is a beautiful city too. It is famous for a wonderful cathedral and old architecture, and then it became a university town. . . . Exeter was a small city. We lived in a suburb of a small city. A ten-minute walk took us into the country and the two things I did outside school was reading and walking. I was a great walker . . . and the beautiful Devon country was a ten or twenty-minute walk from our house. . . . I often walked alone or sometimes with Rachel.

"In Exeter, Rachel and I got an excellent, old-fashioned, grammar school education. . . . [It was] founded, I think, in the early nineteenth century; a well-known grammar school with a strong academic orientation. I was in the humanities stream. I did pass Maths and I think surprised my teachers . . . and I think it was compulsory that we [also] did biology at O-level [Ordinary Level examinations]. At A-level [Advanced Level examinations] when you had to concentrate, I did English and History and I was forced to do Latin, which I regret to this day because it would have been so much more sensible if I had done French, the other option; back in those days they said that if you wanted to get a scholarship to Oxford and Cambridge, and your subject was the humanities rather than the sciences, A-Level Latin was helpful. So I did two years of A-Level Latin and have forgotten all of it.

"I was an extremely reserved, bookish child. If ever there was a bookish child it was me. I grew up in a bookish household, my father was an academic in English literature and my stepmother was and is an extremely well read woman. The house was full of books. . . . Every Saturday morning . . . we walked to the Exeter Public Library. I think you were allowed two books; you changed your books and you got more. I still remember to this day, my sense of excitement when I was allowed to move from the children's section, which in those days - this is post war - was in a sort of shed, an annex of the main library, and I was allowed free run of the adult library which was in a lovely old Victorian building. I read constantly: I had library books, I had books from my father's collection, and the grammar school had a decent library too; so I had no shortage of the sources."



Figure 6. The "bookish" Bridget as grammar school girl in Exeter, circa 1962

## **Jamaica – New Beginnings**

*At age seventeen Bridget moved again with her father and his new family to Jamaica. This would be a very crucial period in her life, the awakening of a consciousness of race, gender and cultural difference, a time of personal growth and intellectual development.*

"In 1963 my father accepted an appointment as Professor and Head of what was then called, the Department of English, at UWI Mona. He was actually persuaded by Sir Arthur Lewis who was then Vice Chan-

cellor to come. My father had achieved a considerable reputation from one particular book, called *The Shakespearean Moment*, which was published in 1954 and became a famous book; so he had a reputation as a scholar, both of Shakespeare and of seventeenth-century literature.

"He accepted this appointment at Mona. I had just done A-Levels in 1963, whereas my older brother and my older sister both stayed in England and went to Cambridge where they had been accepted. I did A-Levels at seventeen. It was felt that I was too young and let's be frank, too dopey, to be allowed to stay in England.

"My stepmother particularly was convinced that my head was in the clouds; she thought I could not have coped with life on my own. She may have been right, I don't know. Anyway, some pressure was put on me – I wasn't ordered . . . to come with the family. I didn't resist the pressure. I suppose partly because I was a quiet, obedient child and generally did what I was told to do, and apparently I must have felt a certain sense of excitement. So minus my older brother and sister, the family arrived at Mona just on the heels of hurricane Flora which, after mashing up Tobago, moved up and nearly mashed up Jamaica, but instead chose to move and go to Cuba instead; . . . We arrived in September 1963 and I registered as a BA history student. On my father's insistence . . . I didn't live at home during those three years. Home, of course, was a College Common house, a house in the university-housing compound. I lived in Mary Seacole (Student) Hall for the three years, which I think was very important. I think he wanted me to make friends and become part of the undergraduate community.

"I was at Seacole Hall between 1963 and 1966. Lucille Mair was the warden then. Not that we would have even dreamt of calling her Lucille of course, we held her in great respect, almost awe. We vaguely knew she was a graduate student, but she hadn't completed her thesis.<sup>4</sup>

"There was a large portrait of Mary Seacole in the dining room; it must have made a dent in my consciousness. Looking back, Seacole Hall had a reputation of being a women's hall based on a woman who had contributed to Jamaican society. At the time, I don't think I knew about her. . . . And I was living with young women, most of them Jamaican, some of them from the Eastern Caribbean and Guyana and so on. It was quite a long time after that I really understood who Mary Seacole was and what she had done.

"My father only stayed two years at Mona. He would have loved to stay longer, but my stepmother hated Jamaica almost from day one and, I imagine, she must have put pressure on him . . . he left and went

to Kenyon College in Ohio. So for the last year of my undergraduate life, I was living at Seacole without the family at College Common to go home to on a weekend to take laundry and that kind of stuff.

"My stepmother said afterwards that she hated tropical countries which, of course begs the question, why did they agree to go to Jamaica in the first place. She felt isolated, she wasn't working, she didn't have a job. My baby sister, little Alice, was born early in 1963; so she was coping with a new baby and two fairly young children. She felt isolated. Expatriate wives didn't have a whole lot to do in those days. So there were those kinds of reasons. . . . The marriage, I think, was beginning to deteriorate. My father and my stepmother did break up not very long after they left Jamaica, so there would have been those difficulties, which I knew very little about at that time.

"In deciding what should be my special honours subject, it was clearly between English and History, the two subjects that I had done well at A-Levels and liked best. English always came very easily to me because I was an instinctive reader. Reading the set text and writing essays wasn't like work. With history you have to obviously deal with somewhat more difficult concepts; I think perhaps, I must have unconsciously felt that doing English would have been too much of an easy ride. But the main reason was a simple one: my father was Professor and Head of the Department of English, and no way was I going to be an English Major student in a department that my father headed; and I don't think he would have wanted that either, so this actually clinched my decision to do History. I was extraordinarily lucky in my time at Mona . . . Elsa Goveia, whose illness had already begun the year that she lectured to us in West Indian history, taught me, along with Roy Augier, Douglas Hall, and Keith Laurence. I was lucky to be taught by some of the major figures of Caribbean History of that generation.

"My first year was difficult from all points of view. I was a young English girl adjusting. In Seacole Hall, at first, I could barely understand anything anybody told me, and these were middle-class children in the great majority; but even a middle-class Jamaican girl speaking fast is not particularly understandable to a young English girl who had had no interaction whatsoever with West Indians or any black people of any kind back in Exeter or Edinburgh. So I was adjusting to that.

"I was [also] adjusting to the strange social situation of being in a racial minority . . . one of very few white undergraduates on campus. There were a few more post-grads. More than once I was approached by young men who were either white or light-coloured or Chinese who

clearly thought that it would be nice to have a white girlfriend or an English girlfriend, and I did go out with a couple of them. They were mostly terribly boring, and I think I was bright enough to understand that what they valued in me was my Englishness and my whiteness and not any wonderful qualities of my own personality.

"In those days, year one Special Honours history was mostly European history, which I actually knew quite a lot about because I had done a lot of that in school. . . . My year two and my year three were completely different. I was introduced to Caribbean history and you could not be introduced by anyone better than Elsa Goveia. Her lecture course was just wonderful, absolutely sensational; people came and listened to it, people who were not registered in her course.

"She wasn't flamboyant, there was nothing theatrical in her delivery, but you could tell she was a true scholar . . . her delivery was very fluent and very self-confident. She illustrated all her points with telling anecdotes or contemporary quotations and her command of the subject was clear, even to little second year undergraduates, but also, I think it was the newness of it. I sometimes marvel at how Elsa did it in '64/65. I mentally check off what had been published in '64 - virtually nothing. She constructed a year-long course - we weren't semesterized - in Caribbean history, from a bibliography which might be perhaps one-tenth of the reading list we now can routinely work with. I wasn't West Indian but I had been around long enough to appreciate the newness of it; I had other excellent lecturers too. . . . Not only Caribbean history: Douglas Hall taught us Latin American history; Roy Augier was a tutor; [and] David Buisseret, an Englishman who was in Jamaica for years taught us. . . . I felt a sense of excitement at what I was learning and that you were really at the pioneer phase as far as Caribbean history was concerned."

### **Toronto to Trinidad and "The Next Great Leap in My Life"**

"Well the next great leap in my life was . . . that . . . I fell in love with a classmate who was Trinidadian - Ashton (Brereton) - and we got married and I came to live in Trinidad. We had both done well as undergraduates and the Head of Department, Douglas Hall . . . encouraged us both to do postgraduate work at the University of Toronto. He was a graduate of that university and had close links with the head of History, so we actually both got scholarships.



Figure 7. Bridget and Ashton at a football match on Mona campus, 1966

"I got a scholarship from UWI, which in those days gave scholarships to do graduate work abroad, and Ashton got a scholarship from the Canadian government. By this time I was married to Ashton and we had our first child, Stephen, so we moved to Toronto with him. We both went to the University of Toronto and we both did MAs in History. We managed – it was easier as graduate students than if we had been working full time. We took the baby to a neighbour for four mornings a week and with different class schedules. The winter was more difficult to survive than coping with the baby and the classes. We both did our MAs and decided to come back to Trinidad. First I tutored at the Department of History for a year, but of course they all said you must do your PhD, so I signed up for a PhD at St Augustine in '69."

*The rest as they say is history. Bridget and Ashton have three children, Stephen, Michael and Christopher. She is now the proud grandmother of one grandchild, a girl named Krystal.*

## PART TWO

### Scholarly Contributions to Caribbean Historiography

**PM:** Why did you decide to do your PhD on what eventually would become *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad*?

**BB:** Well, I have to introduce here, another mentor – Donald Wood. He was a wonderful British historian who wrote an absolute classic, *Trinidad in Transition: The Years After Slavery*<sup>5</sup>. . . I fell in love with the book. I had not then met Donald; I subsequently met him and became very close to him. It was . . . so different from conventional history, it was a work of social history . . . of cultural history. I saw his sources, which were mainly researched in Trinidad, and I thought I could do something like that. . . His book covered 1830 to about 1870, so I thought that that last third of the nineteenth century might be a good chronological period to try to do the same as Donald. I consciously saw *Race Relations* as a sequel to *Trinidad in Transition*. Subsequently, Donald played a huge role in my life . . . first of all, he was the reader of the book for Cambridge and then whenever they needed someone to assess me for whatever promotion I might have been up for, Donald has always played a huge role. He was an absolutely wonderful man, which is why Kevin Yelvington and I co-edited a book in his honour: *The Colonial Caribbean in Transition*.<sup>6</sup> . . . If you are looking at a late nineteenth-century Caribbean colony and you are coming to it, not as an economic historian or a political historian, but a social historian, race relations are likely to be one of your main entry points. Although, of course, class was equally interesting to me, and what the book tried to do was tease out the interrelationships between race and class because Caribbean history, and maybe Trinidad history even more than Jamaica or Barbados, has never been black and white. It has always been far more complex and the way class intersected with race, or ethnicity as we now say, was far more complicated than at first one might have thought. I think it was actually Cambridge, which suggested the title *Race Relations*. The title of my thesis was much more bland, "A Social History of Trinidad, 1870–1900".

**PM:** You said that when you read Donald Wood's *Trinidad in Transition*, you felt that it was a different history. So you were being introduced at

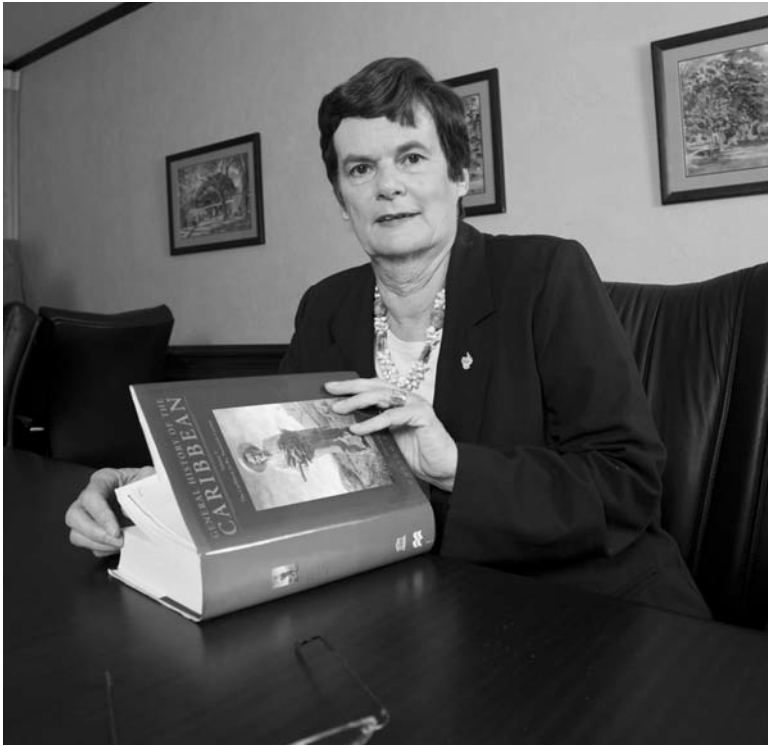


Figure 8. Professor Brereton with the publication of volume 5 of the UNESCO General History of the Caribbean

this time, at your BA and MA, to history in a particular way, history that was constitutional, economic, chronologies, narratives, and yet you were excited by a different history. What is it about your own make up, your experiences and perhaps the fact that you had been well read as a literary scholar that influenced the shape your history took?

**BB:** To be fair, it's not that I wasn't introduced to social history as an undergraduate. Elsa Goveia was primarily a social historian . . . at the University of Toronto at least one of my three courses was Social History. Nevertheless, in the sixties, the new social history, as we call it, was only just being born and conventional history was still very much chronologies, dates, wars, diplomacy, political and economic. Economic history was big because of Marxism, obviously. So it wouldn't be true to say that when I read *Trinidad in Transition* I was introduced for the first time to social history.



**PM:** But were there no previous histories in the Caribbean written like that?

**BB:** Well, perhaps Elsa's book *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands*<sup>7</sup> would have been a bit of an exception. My models were Donald Wood's book and another was Douglas Hall's book *Free Jamaica*.<sup>8</sup> Now that is mainly an economic history – Douglas was primarily an economic historian – but there was quite a bit of social history in that book. Yes, I think you are absolutely right. I need not tell you Jamaica and Trinidad are very different societies. I come now to Trinidad as a white wife married into a typical lower-middle-class black family. Ashton's family is from Sangre Grande, he is the first son and definitely the first to go anywhere near a university, a "scholarship boy" . . . I'm a member of a mixed [-race] marriage, I'm giving birth to mixed-race children. . . . I'm a graduate student and a part-time teacher at this campus in the Black Power period; I have to deal with that too. My natural political instincts – I don't think I've ever been a radical or left wing, but a liberal in politics; and yet I'm white and I'm English and I'm living in a country [Trinidad] and I'm on a campus with very strong anti-white feeling. This is late sixties, early seventies. I continually have to prove myself and I had to do that, I would say, right through my twenties, thirties and into my forties. I had to prove that I was bona fide and on the level, despite and because of being visibly white and manifestly of English origin and so on. So, yes, I think, absolutely, that would have pushed me in the direction of being particularly interested in ethnicity and race relations and so on.

**PM:** One of the things about *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad* is that it attempts to look evenly at the existence of all the different ethnic groups and classes, and it doesn't attempt to position anyone as if they occupy a superior position according to the existing race/class hierarchy, in the way you've laid them out in this book, and I think that has been important. But the other thing that is interesting . . . are your literary sensibility and your insights, as a result of this sensibility?

**BB:** I'm glad you reminded me. As I said I have always read a great deal of fiction from childhood up. . . . I am more and more interested in fictive narratives as they constitute our understanding of the past and so on; although it is only more recently I have begun to think this out in a more systematic way and write about it. I think my lifelong habit of reading fiction has also informed both my insights and I hope my writing style.

**PM:** Yes, one of your books, or at least the one you worked on with Lise Winer, *Warner Arrundell: Adventures of a Creole*,<sup>9</sup> certainly brings out that aspect of looking at the biographical and seeing in history the roots of fiction. . . . For instance, when I am reading your *Race Relations* chapters, I don't just get the feeling of people or events, but I get a good sense of how these took place, in the level of rivalry sometimes, the mood, and I think you are very good at pulling those things out.

**BB:** The trick is to try to combine the more analytical and structural approach, which is typical of social history and social scientific history, with what journalists call "Human Interest Stories", and little anecdotes which, although not in any way scientific or structural, [bring] the points you are making to life. So I think that when you are writing social history or cultural history; that is the balance that you have to achieve. . . . To see people in the structures, and the structures which are created by the people, and try to make your way through the structural approach and the more individual anecdotal approach.

## Engendering Caribbean History

**PM:** I don't want to call you a gender historian, because, I think the introduction of gender to history is another nuancing of the discipline. But what do you think accounts for your being drawn to the history of women, and to engendering history?

**BB:** It took a long time before a gender consciousness seeped into my work. In *Race Relations*, it is barely there. It may be under the surface, but it is not in any way explicit, [nor] in the book *A History of Modern Trinidad*. . . . Bear in mind, I was trained as a historian in the sixties and early seventies. . . . What introduced me to gender? It's part of the legend of the history of this institution [UWI, St Augustine]. I was one of a very small group of women gathered by Marjorie Thorpe, a pioneer here on this campus, and, one of the really important things we did was educate ourselves. That was our first objective before we attempted to educate anyone else in the university community. By the early eighties literature on gender was coming out; pioneers like Sheila Rowbotham were rewriting British History, European History, and American History. Lucille Mair's work on Jamaica was unpublished but I did read it, because we had a copy of the thesis here [UWI library]. So, by the eighties, partly because I was part of Marjorie's group and partly because literature was now available, I began to absorb it. I was one of the key

teachers and designers of our famous AR301 that we team taught. . . . It was called "Introduction to Women's Studies". History was about a six to eight-week component, which I did; Marjorie did Literature, we had Gwendolyn Williams, I think, who did Sociology, I can't remember if Rhoda [Reddock] was at St Augustine at that period. So I would say by the late eighties, gender and some of the literature were part of my consciousness. In the early nineties, if I had to give a date, it would be 1992, I designed and taught the course, which is still taught, "Women and Gender In the History of the Caribbean". Verene Shepherd taught it at Mona, various people began to teach it at Cave Hill. So you can say then, in the course of the eighties and moving into the early nineties what I came to recognize was that my early fascination with class and race and how they intersected had been missing a crucial analytical component. I recognized that gender, not always as obviously critical as ethnicity and class, was the third leg of the trinity of analytical tools that we have to use when we are trying to understand social history. I would like to hope that my work since about 1990 has had a clear gender perspective, but I will admit freely, that the earlier work hardly did.

**PM:** You have been saying that your gender consciousness took a while to seep in, but I think there is something about gender that eludes people for their entire lifetime, because it isn't part of their perception; when you started telling me about your life, two points occurred to me: First, that you've had a childhood that was constantly moving and shifting. You are always getting used to change, and adapting to that change. . . . Second, the women in your life, for instance, your mother – the death of your mother, even though you were young, would have had some kind of impact. You have lost many of the friends you naturally grew up with. Your grandmother was a strong figure; you describe your sister as a strong figure; your stepmother as, not the Cinderella stepmother, but certainly a stepmother whom you had to get adjusted to; and you had a close relationship with your father, so that you have a fundamental respect for masculinity. When you talk about Elsa Goveia, you talk about her glowingly, but you also talk about the importance of Douglas Hall and Donald Wood in your life. Then you talk about coming to Trinidad and having to adjust again.

**BB:** As a wife.

**PM:** As a wife. So there is a way in which, as a person you are open to such influences. This might come from literature; I mean fiction does

deal with gender in many ways that subliminally enter into our consciousness. So there is something about the way in which you speak that I see a gender-awareness as being continually shaped.

**BB:** I think you've put that beautifully . . . when I was growing up, and remember, I am growing up in the fifties and the early sixties, I never had a sense that I wouldn't have a life of my own. . . . I had a very academic education, it was taken for granted I would go to university. I was destined for Oxford or Cambridge. And I took it for granted that – I don't want to say that I would have a career . . . I don't know if we thought about it in those days . . . like everybody else, I thought I probably would get married and so on. . . . And my granny's influence was that of a loving nurturing person. She never worked outside the home in her whole life and she never earned any money in her whole life, but she was a strong person in her own way, and my stepmother [was] most definitely a cultured strong person. So, a gender consciousness was there; and Rachel's [sister] influence was very strong; Rachel knew from early, she wanted to be a scientist; she was much more focused than I was – she has lived in Australia for most of her professional life and she has retired as a very well-known entomologist; I agree with you, those ideas were in our heads. . . . I never doubted that I would have a life which was more than being a wife and a mother, and I never doubted that I would be able to use the intellectual gifts and the excellent education which I had got first in Exeter and at Mona. . . . I think I was lucky when I was born, in the mid-twentieth century . . . I often think about this. Women born much earlier in the twentieth century, their life chances were so much more limited, but I was born just about at the right time.

**PM:** Yes, I think the gains of Mary Wollstonecraft weren't really met until the twentieth century, post suffragettes.

**BB:** Absolutely true. When I was at my grammar school it was a very strong convention that women teachers resigned, not necessarily on marriage, but on first pregnancy; and I distinctly remember that happening with two of my beloved teachers. Now, I don't think that was the law, but it was just the unspoken understanding, and in the late fifties and very early sixties if you were having a baby, you should be home. I think there was a feeling that a pregnant woman shouldn't be on display in public, teaching, even in an all-girls school; and mine was an all-girls school.

**PM:** Do you remember your emotions, when they had to leave?

**BB:** I didn't think about the pregnancy bit, I'm not even sure if we were told that. We just knew that Mrs Clayborne had left and, of course, subsequently we learnt she had a baby. I remember missing her desperately, but it didn't strike me at that point that it was unfair that she had to. It was a fact of life.

**PM:** At one point in the history of this university, you became the first female deputy principal?

**BB:** The first at St Augustine. Marlene Hamilton had been deputy principal at Mona earlier.

**PM:** But at St Augustine in particular, you were the first female deputy principal, and then, for a short while, Acting Principal of the St Augustine campus.

**BB:** I had two short stints: between Compton Bourne and Bhoë Tewarie, and then between Tewarie and Clem Sankat. So in all I acted as principal for about a year [in] two stints.

**PM:** Were there any reasons for your selection in those periods?

**BB:** Compton Bourne was the one who chose me as deputy principal. It astonished me at the time. I think that the expectation was that it would be a dean or a former dean who would be chosen as deputy principal – I have never served as dean. I had been Head of Department for many years. . . . All Compton told me was that I was widely respected, and he thought my appointment as Deputy Principal would be met with some positive reaction. I thought hard about accepting it; I had the reluctance that any academic has, but I was persuaded that I ought to take it. . . . I accept the point that so many people told me – it is important in the cause of gender, that there should be visible women at the top of the administrative hierarchy. It was a very interesting experience. . . . What it did was force me to learn very quickly about the campus as a whole and the university as a whole, whereas previously, I had been only too happy to only really inform myself about my department and maybe my faculty at stretch. By the way, I voluntarily exited as deputy principal; people think I was fired. I was not (laughs).

**PM:** Of all the work that you have been involved in, whether self-authored books or other projects of editing, which of these do you like the best and why?

**BB:** *Race Relations*, I think is intellectually my most influential book; but the book I am most proud of . . . the one that very few people have read, is my biography of Sir John Gorrie, *Law, Justice and Empire: The Colonial Career of John Gorrie 1829–1892*.<sup>10</sup> I'm very proud of that book because I think it really is a triumph of historical research. Gorrie served all over the colonial empire. I had to research primary sources from Scotland, England, Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, the Western Pacific, the Leeward Islands and Trinidad and Tobago. In terms of empirical, archival research, that book clearly represented the most work. I think the narrative and the analysis [are] really very good. . . . It didn't make any great impression when it first came out; but in recent years, it is actually being read because there is a whole new interest in law and empire: the role of law, the role of judges, the role of magistrates, the role of scholars of jurisprudence in the empire. It got me a trip to Singapore last year when I was invited to present a paper on Gorrie to the first conference on Law and the British Empire. This is going to be the first of successive conferences. So I think as a professional historian, I'm proudest of my Gorrie; but I have to say, *Race Relations* and *History of Modern Trinidad* are my most influential books.

**PM:** You will continue to write; but, if you had, at this point, to assess what you think your major contributions to Caribbean historiography have been, what would you say?

**BB:** Well, first of all, I think, I have contributed to the general historiography of Trinidad and Tobago through *Race Relations* and *History of Modern Trinidad*, through many articles and chapters, and through the series, you mentioned *Warner Arundell*, which is one of a three-volume series on early Trinidadian literature. Second, I think I have contributed more generally to the historiography of the social history of the English-speaking Caribbean after slavery, that critical period 1830s–1930s. And third, and this is my more recent interest, in historiography and the way Caribbean history has been imagined and written, and particularly the whole post-modern notion of competing narratives and how narratives are constructed, how they are challenged, how they are contested, how they have changed. This has been my main interest for the past five, six or more years.

## The Official Historian of UWI St Augustine

**PM:** You recently completed a history of the University of the West Indies at St Augustine which also makes a statement in terms of, not just your own scope of history, but the fact that you have become very much part of the . . .

**BB:** The institution (laughs).

**PM:** . . . and your contribution to the university itself and university life.

**BB:** Absolutely. The campus principal tells me I am the official historian of St. Augustine; he doesn't pay me for it, but he tells me so. I'm proud of that book,<sup>11</sup> I'm glad we did it for the fiftieth anniversary. I'm also proud, by the way, of the historical signage: there are about ten of them. For example, one is in front of the Daaga Auditorium, one is at the entrance to the principal's house; these are beautifully designed. I wrote the text and it was my idea to have historical signage for the fiftieth anniversary; so, yes, I think institutional history is very important.

**PM:** Is there anything you would like to add before we end this conversation?

**BB:** One wonderful thing that has happened within the university over the last twenty years has been the flowering of Gender Studies. I think in my discipline we now have a rich literature, coming both from UWI scholars and from many scholars from all over the world. In 1986 at the Mount St Benedict seminar<sup>12</sup> the literature that I could have drawn on was so incredibly limited compared with what we have now, and I think UWI and the Institute for Gender and Development Studies have made a huge contribution to that. The other thing that is so good for the discipline of History generally has been the move to Social History and Cultural History. I think that suits me down to the ground. I'm not knocking the older kinds of history, they will always be critically important, but I think the fact that the discipline worldwide has come to recognize the importance of the "softer" types of history that merge into cultural studies and literary studies and all the rest, to me that is very gratifying, and I'm very glad that I lived in an era where I could be part of all that.

**PM:** Thank you very much, Bridget.

## NOTES

1. This interview was video recorded at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies in March 2013. I thank Kathryn Chan for her recording and Marcus Braveboy for the transcript. Thanks to Bridget Brereton for providing illustrations.
2. Brereton, *Race Relations*.
3. Brereton, *History*.
4. Lucille Mair, "Historical Study".
5. Wood, *Trinidad*.
6. Brereton and Yelvington, *Colonial Caribbean*.
7. Goveia, *Slave Society*.
8. Hall, *Free Jamaica*.
9. Winer, *Warner Arrundell*; and Winer, *Adolphus A Tale*. Both include an introduction by Bridget Brereton, Rhonda Cobham, Mary Rimmer and Lise Winer.
10. Brereton, *Law*.
11. Brereton, *From Imperial College*.
12. The inaugural seminar of the Women and Development Studies Project was held as a two-week residential seminar for Caribbeanwide participants at Mount St Benedict Guesthouse in Trinidad and Tobago in 1986. It was directed by Patricia Mohammed and funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat of London with the technical support of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. The papers in the edited publication remain classic first-time pieces of scholarship in the formative days of gender studies in the region, and Bridget's essay is still a valuable one for students in gender and history.

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PART II



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## Lady Nugent's Social History

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B.W. HIGMAN

Autobiographical and individual records of everyday life in the slave societies of the British Caribbean come to us almost exclusively from British hands.<sup>1</sup> It was the Briton who travelled and perhaps spent a significant part of his or her life in the islands who had the time and technologies, and the interest and inclination, to produce such personal accounts. The Creole, island-born whites seem never to have had much enthusiasm for chronicles of this sort though some of them penned abundant letters full of news and business. Enslaved people lacked almost all of the things prerequisite to personal record-keeping.

Although the surviving personal journals are few, a handful of them have been influential in the development of the historiography of the British West Indies. Until quite recently, the personal journal most familiar to modern historians has been that of Maria Nugent, wife of a governor of Jamaica, whose record covered the years 1801 to 1805. Born in colonial America, Nugent thought of herself as thoroughly British and modern scholars have generally regarded her in this light. Thus Bridget Brereton, writing in 1995, included Nugent in a group of women writers, along with Janet Schaw, Elizabeth Fenwick, Mrs Carmichael and Frances Lanaghan, who brought to their texts "a strongly British, and aristocratic (or, at least, upper-middle-class) consciousness".<sup>2</sup>

Nugent's account gained its visibility through an initial printing in 1839 and its ready availability throughout the twentieth century in subsequent editions. Best known as *Lady Nugent's Journal*, the work was used by the first academic historians of the British West Indies, and the

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vitality and lively style of Nugent's descriptive account made it one of the most frequently cited sources for studies of colonial society during slavery. It quickly became a popular choice for anthologies of travel writing and of diarizing, and entered a bourgeois branch of popular culture.<sup>3</sup> The journal's importance lies in its detailed impressions of creole life and manners in the years immediately preceding the British abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, in its contribution to a picturesque aesthetic, and in the simple rarity of personal accounts of Jamaica written by members of the governing class and by women.<sup>4</sup>

Nugent is identified in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as "diarist" and it was the journal she kept in Jamaica that ensured her longevity in the historical literature.<sup>5</sup> Thus Kamau Brathwaite in his influential work of 1971 *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820* referred to Nugent's "celebrated *Journal*" and used it extensively in his interpretation of creolization. Lucille Mathurin Mair considered that Nugent "recorded in acute detail the manners and morals of all groups in the society". William A. Green described the work as "one of the most valuable journals dealing with white society in Jamaica".<sup>6</sup> More recently, although Nugent has been generally cast as pro-slavery in her basic attitudes, a "proto-feminist" concern has been discerned in her interest in the situation of white and coloured women in creole society. In 1994, Patricia Mohammed devoted the greater part of a substantial article on Caribbean feminist discourse to a "rereading" of *Lady Nugent's Journal* "from a gender perspective", arguing that the text offered "valuable insights into the structure of class, race and gender relations as they were already entrenched in Jamaican society".<sup>7</sup> Susan E. Klepp and Roderick A. McDonald's 2001 comparison of "women's perspectives" found in the texts of *Lady Nugent's Journal* and the little known and brief unpublished autobiography of Eliza Chadwick Roberts, who spent a month in Jamaica with her ship-master husband in 1805, call *Lady Nugent's Journal* a "much-cited diary" that has become "a standard reference for Jamaican and Caribbean history".<sup>8</sup>

In view of the importance accorded *Lady Nugent's Journal* by modern historians, it is useful to trace the emergence of this interest and enthusiasm, and to attempt to chart the parallel social life of Lady Nugent's image in colonial and independent Caribbean cultures. Her visibility had something to do with her high status and the gossip-value of her record, but also depended on the early accessibility of the journal through publication.

## Publication History

The first published version of Nugent's record was privately printed in 1839 as a two-volume work, titled *A Journal of a Voyage to, and Residence in, the Island of Jamaica, from 1801 to 1805, and of Subsequent Events in England from 1805 to 1811*. The first commercial version was edited by Frank Cundall and published by the Institute of Jamaica in a single, abridged, volume in 1907, followed by a "second edition" in 1934, and a third edition in 1939. A revised version edited by Philip Wright was published by the Institute of Jamaica in 1966, and this was reprinted in 2002 by the University of the West Indies Press with a foreword by Verene A. Shepherd. In 2006 an online electronic transcription of the 1839 version appeared in a series of British and Irish Women's Letters and Diaries. In one form or another, edited forms of the journal remained easily accessible throughout the twentieth century, whereas the more complete 1839 printing was always a rare item.

How far the printed edition of 1839 was a faithful and complete transcription of the original manuscript is uncertain, because the present status of the manuscript is unknown. The book's spine, punched in gold letters, declared it "Lady Nugent's West India Journal", thus contributing to the long-term form of reference. The author was "Maria, Lady Nugent" and her portrait appeared on the frontispiece opposite. The right-hand page following consisted of a sonnet - "on reading the journals of Lady Nugent" - by R.A. Davenport, praising her many virtues. There was a list of plates, then the contents were detailed chapter by chapter using subheads that were reproduced at the beginnings of the individual chapters but not inserted in the text. No introductory remarks were included to explain who had decided to print the volumes or to provide any contextual framework for the reader. This private printing of the volumes was intended for readers who needed no introduction.

The journals of Nugent's time in India, where she was with her husband for five years, were also privately printed in two volumes in 1839, using the same font and format, and in a binding uniform with that of the Jamaican work. The full title was *A Journal from the Year 1811 till the Year 1815, including a Voyage to and Residence in India, with a Tour to the North-Western Parts of the British Possessions in that Country, under the Bengal Government*. Her portrait was the only illustration. Copies of the Indian journal are rare and it seems never to have been reprinted or to have had much impact on the historiography of colonial India.

Nugent had quite a deal to say about the original production of her text and she had no doubts that she was writing for other eyes, for posterity. The journal opens without any statement of intent but such thoughts crop up occasionally. The first occurred in October 1801, after Nugent had been in Jamaica for two months and had time to notice the heavy mortality of the population: "Very unwell; and I mean, as symptoms arise of any illness, always to mention it; because, if I should die in this country, it will be a satisfaction to those who are interested about me, to know the rise and progress of my illness." In November 1802, a few weeks after the birth of George, she wrote: "Should this book ever be read by our dearest George, he will then know that, should there be any fault hereafter in our care of him, or any mistakes in his education, &c. the errors have been those of our judgment only, or an over-anxious tenderness; for never did parents feel a more lively affection for a child, than we do for him, nor look forward to its future happiness and respectability with more anxiety than we do to his."<sup>9</sup> At the end of the second volume, about to set out on the Indian adventure and knowing that the children would not accompany her, Nugent concluded on 29 May 1811: "This book I shall seal up, and send to Westhorpe to be put into the desk, that is in the little breakfast room, where my dear children may find it, one of these days, should I not return." She put herself and her family in God's hands.<sup>10</sup>

## Cundall's Edition

Copies of the 1839 volumes entered the collection of the Institute of Jamaica soon after its establishment in 1879. The Institute's ambitious brief was to cover science and culture in all forms and to promote useful knowledge through the development of museums and galleries. From 1891 to 1937, the Institute's influential secretary was the Englishman Frank Cundall (1858-1937) and he worked to place the West India Reference Library at the centre of the institution. He bought books and manuscripts, and collected up maps and artifacts. Not only did Cundall promote the literary side of the Institute's mission but he also contributed by writing and publishing a large number of historical and general works, from biographies to tourist guides. All of these fell within an antiquarian ambit, showing little interest in what happened beyond the narrow world of government, as well as a remarkable lack of respect for the Afro-Jamaican people and the separate stream of black history writing of his time. Editing *Lady Nugent's Journal* enabled Cundall to

accord this account a place it might not otherwise have occupied in the development of the modern historiography of the West Indies.<sup>11</sup>

Where the 1839 edition acquired by the Institute of Jamaica came from is uncertain. In January 1893, less than two years after his arrival in Jamaica, Cundall had published in the *Gleaner* an article on "some recent additions to the library", included among them Nugent's *Journal*. Later, he noted that this copy contained "Sir George Nugent's autograph", so it seems most likely to have come from England. Cundall immediately declared that the journal provided "a striking picture of social life in Jamaica in the early years of the present century". But, showing that he not yet reached a good understanding of the history of the governors and the fact that most of them came to the island without wives, Cundall added "If every lady who has graced Kings House had kept a similar journal, we should possess materials for an interesting history of the development of social and domestic manners in the island." Cundall went on to say: "Mrs. Nugent's 'journal' is a curiously mixed record of daily transactions – diplomatic, political, religious, hygienic, social and domestic; of which last the health of her children forms a large part." He contended that "Portions of the diary are somewhat naïve, and were evidently not intended for publication."<sup>12</sup>

Cundall seems already to have a new edition of the work in his mind, noting that "An index, if there were one, would contain the names of nearly all the principal families in the island at the period, and a large number of the principal properties." And he quoted one of the passages that was to become among the most frequently cited in the future: Nugent's remark that "I am not astonished at the general ill health of the men in this country; for they really eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises."<sup>13</sup>

Cundall understood his edition of 1907 as marking the centenary of Nugent's journal. The spine of his book identified it simply as "Lady Nugent's Journal" and the title page declared it *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815, Issued for Private Circulation in 1839*. It was advertised as a tale of "Jamaica 100 years ago", though stretching the dates to 1815 indicated that the book also contained material (25 pages) from Nugent's time in India. Although Cundall was named editor on the title page, the notion that the work was "reprinted" from the original of 1839 certainly contributed to the persistent idea that the 1907 edition was a "reprint of the 1839 book".<sup>14</sup>

Because Nugent's journal was not originally intended for publication,



said Cundall, it made "the frankest of references to private matters". He stated that "In publishing a reprint of these journals it has been thought advisable to omit some parts which are trivial, some which it is needless to repeat (e.g. 'The morning as usual,' 'N. rode out and I wrote,' 'Only our own family at dinner,' 'To bed at eight,') and much concerning the daily health of her children, which can be spared from a book intended for public perusal." But Nugent loved "trivia" and who is to define it anyway?<sup>15</sup> Changes in the writing of social history have given some of these elements – such as the history of childhood and the history of night-time and sleep – an unpredicted significance.

Cundall regretted the brief and tantalizing character of Nugent's references to local politics, about which she was well informed, and he also thought it "somewhat remarkable" that in spite of the great beauty of Jamaica there were "but few references to the plants or scenery of the island". On the other hand, Cundall claimed to find her views on slavery "of considerable interest".<sup>16</sup> Cundall prepared informational footnotes on a variety of things and an index dominated by names. At the front of the book he provided a detailed chronology relating the events in the journal to larger events; notes on the military situation in the West Indies between 1801 and 1805; Haiti 1791–1806; the civil and military administration of Jamaica; trade and slavery; and the "parentage and life" of the Nugents.

According to the title page, Cundall's edition of 1907 was "published for the Institute of Jamaica by Adam and Charles Black, Soho Square, London". The cost of publication was paid by Colonel Dudley Mills, who was commanding officer of the Royal Engineers in Jamaica from 1904 and was nominated by the Governor to the Legislative Council in 1906. The Institute expected to make a profit from the venture, and Cundall "hoped that the Journal may prove of interest to Jamaicans and others to whom Jamaica history appeals, especially to Lady Nugent's countrymen in America".<sup>17</sup>

On 9 January 1907 the *Gleaner* published an extensive review of "Lady Nugent's Diary". The anonymous reviewer bemoaned the fact that the modern age of railways and telegraphs had made the keeping of journals and diaries less common, to the disadvantage of historians who found in them "a rich source of information especially valuable as it relates to the social history of the times".<sup>18</sup> The book was available in shops, Gardner's Tourist Agency in Kingston offering it to visitors at 2 shillings 6 pence, a rarity among the guides and views of the island and the overwhelming stock of imported literature. Many of these copies

must have perished in the great earthquake and fire of 14 January 1907 that destroyed much of Kingston. The Royal Engineers commanded by Mills played a large role in the rebuilding of the city but his contingent was gone by the middle of 1908. In 1909 tourists were again encouraged to buy Nugent's *Journal*, "A graphic description of the life of the time. By the wife of a former Governor, a New Jersey woman."<sup>19</sup>

Visitors who found Cundall's edition on the shelves of the local bookshops occasionally wrote accounts of their own journeys and began to quote from the *Journal*. In 1912 the Australian novelist Winifred James (1876–1941), then living in England, travelled to Jamaica and spent several months in the island. In her published account *The Mulberry Tree* she included a section titled "On Two Interesting Books" in which she discussed Walter Jekyll's *Jamaican Song and Story* and *Lady Nugent's Journal*, both published in 1907. James declared that Nugent's record offered "vivid glimpses of many things, many customs and not a few notable people". James followed Cundall in finding the eating habits of the whites "a continual source of astonishment", and quoted Nugent on the ill-health of the men who "eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises". And she used Nugent's well-known reference to Simon Taylor's need, after over-indulging, to "go home and cool coppers". James also spent time on Nugent's preoccupation with the deaths of those around her and the counter-balancing joy that came with the birth of her two children.<sup>20</sup>

The *Journal* soon began to reach a wider audience. Short extracts from the Cundall edition were included in Arthur Ponsonby's *English Diaries*, published in 1923, continuing the stress on Nugent's protests at the gustatory excesses of the planters. Ponsonby compared her record with that of Fanny Kemble – the British actress whose anti-slavery *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838–1839* had been published in 1863 – saying they were "both entertaining, though comparatively little known". Nugent had "no claim to special literary talent" and was "rather sentimental and intensely domestic", said Ponsonby, but offered "an intimate insight into human character" and demonstrated "a most optimistic and cheerful disposition". Ponsonby, relying on Cundall's edition, found Nugent's London journal "very much less good" while "the Indian diary showed that she no longer wrote regularly and her youthful fun has disappeared".<sup>21</sup> In Jamaica, in 1924, a *Gleaner* columnist, "Dardanella", declared Jamaica then needed "a Marie Bashkirtseff or another Lady Nugent" to produce a "daily record of impressions, speculations, intuitive revelations, conclusions and what

not". The notorious Bashkirtseff (1858–1884) was born in the Ukraine but became an artist in France, and long known for the 84 volumes of sensational diaries written in her short life, filled with passionate descriptions and confidences, that entered public debate following their partial publication soon after her death.<sup>22</sup>

Academic historians were also quick to make use of Cundall's edition of 1907. The American, Lowell Joseph Ragatz used it in his 1928 classic *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763–1833*, quoting her most fully to depict the gluttony of the planter class, and also to indicate the accommodation given by the governor's household to French opponents of the Haitian Revolution and Nugent's own reading in 1801 and 1802 of Wilberforce's advocacy for the abolition of the slave trade. He believed Nugent presented "an utterly inimitable and imperishable picture of planter society as seen through the eyes of English gentility". Her journal "had but one rival" as a source, namely Janet Schaw's *Journal of a Lady of Quality; Being a Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the Years 1774 to 1776*, which Ragatz considered "one of the most charming West Indian travel accounts in existence".<sup>23</sup> In his *Guide* of 1932, Ragatz described Nugent's *Journal* as "one of the best sources extant for a study of Caribbean society", saying it revealed "the little joys and tribulations in the lives of an official and his wife". Ragatz, who was quite open in his own racism, found "Lady Maria's attitude toward the slaves is sympathetic and great interest is shown in their religious welfare", but observed that although she was "a reader of Wilberforce" she "held that the generally accepted accounts of ill-treatment of the blacks were exaggerated".<sup>24</sup>

Cundall's edition of *Lady Nugent's Journal* sold well and as early as 1917 classified advertisements were placed seeking second-hand copies.<sup>25</sup> The "second published edition" of 1934, said Cundall, was issued "to meet a persistent demand". The title was updated to read "Jamaica One Hundred and Thirty Years Ago".<sup>26</sup> Some "additional notes" were included at the end of the preliminary pages, keyed to pages in the text, reflecting knowledge Cundall had acquired over the years and drawing particularly on the Papers of Sir George Nugent for 1801–1806 which filled three wooden boxes and nine volumes in the Institute of Jamaica's library.<sup>27</sup>

When the 1934 edition of *Lady Nugent's Journal* appeared, the *Gleaner* declared that "No one who desires to know the history of the people of this island can be unacquainted with this journal." The reviewer supported their claim that the journal formed "an entertaining and accurate commentary on the life of the period" by quoting extensively from Pon-

sonby. It now cost 7 shillings 6 pence, and it was said that this "latest edition" contained "the private journal of the wife of General Nugent, Governor of Jamaica in the days of slavery" with "short extracts of her diary in India".<sup>28</sup> The year 1934 marked the centenary of the formal abolition of slavery in Jamaica.

In 1936, the Fabian Socialist Governor Lord (Sidney) Olivier began his classic *Jamaica: The Blessed Island* by asserting that the English typically and mistakenly associated Jamaica with a romantic tradition of swashbuckling plantation life "as fragmentarily mirrored in *Tom Cringle's Log*, and with less light-hearted gusto portrayed by the gently caustic humour of Lady Nugent's heroically tolerant *Journal*". Olivier thanked Cundall for helping to introduce him to the island and listed Cundall's bibliographies, but exploited *Lady Nugent's Journal* (and Cundall's introduction) without providing a full reference. It was Olivier's assessment that the *Journal* offered, "so far as its direct observation extends, interesting evidence about the social atmosphere of the Island thirty years before emancipation".<sup>29</sup> He observed correctly that Nugent said little about the actual conditions of the enslaved on plantations – she probably lacked the experience – and recognized that her moralizing about the evils of slavery were more focused on the effects of the institution on the whites of the island. Rather than comparing her with Kemble or Schaw, Olivier bracketed Nugent's account with that of Matthew Gregory Lewis whose *Journal of a West India Proprietor* recorded his direct experience of life on his own Jamaican plantations between 1815 and 1817.<sup>30</sup>

The text of the 1939 printing matched even more exactly that of 1907. The title now referred to "Jamaica one hundred and thirty-eight years ago", moving the starting point from 1805 to 1801. Cundall had been working on its publication when he died in 1937.<sup>31</sup> He had expanded the "additional notes" considerably and the new information was integrated with that from the 1934 edition.

## Lady Nugent's Modern Social Life

Ironically, when in 1946 the General Overseas Service of the BBC commenced the broadcast of a series on "West Indian Men of Letters", the very first programme was devoted to Lady Nugent.<sup>32</sup> Now, with more governors having wives living with them in Jamaica, occasional calls began to be heard encouraging them to follow the example of Nugent in producing memoirs. Thus in 1950 rumours circulated that the popular

governor's wife, Lady Molly Huggins, about to leave the island, would publish a journal of her time in Jamaica. She denied that she had such a project in hand but admitted to keeping a diary and told a reporter "her idea is to write an account of her life similar to 'Lady Nugent's Journal' - written by the wife of a former Governor of Jamaica. She will call it 'Lady Huggins' Journal,' and the expected time of publication is not even remotely in mind at present". Farewell speeches referred to Nugent's isolation as woman and Huggins responded that she did indeed "feel like Lady Nugent" and found it "very pleasant to be in the company of so many charming members of the opposite sex". She did in fact publish an autobiography, in 1967, but her title was *Too Much To Tell*.<sup>33</sup> Huggins seems have been the first Governor's wife, after Nugent, to have been regarded as the potential author of a revealing journal.

Lady Nugent began to take a more prominent role in contemporary elite and popular culture in the 1950s, following the association made with Huggins. In 1955 celebration of "Jamaica 300", marking the tri-centenary of the English conquest, included a costume ball with characterizations of "such well-known historical personalities as the White Witch of Rose Hall, Lady Nugent and the famous pirate Anne Bonney". In 1958 an advertisement for paint included a drawing of an appropriately attired white woman with antique eyeglasses, with the caption "Lady Nugent said: I don't know nothing about art - but this is real cute." The following year, 1959, an advertisement declared: "Lady Nugent said: How now!! The River Club at old Ferry Inn (est. 1677) is for sale."<sup>34</sup> The Ferry Inn, located on the road from Spanish Town to Kingston, had been one of Nugent's regular stopping points and it was there that she observed some of the more remarkable characteristics of Creole society that have been much quoted.

Lady Nugent's visit to Ferry Inn was quoted in full by Algernon Aspinall in 1929.<sup>35</sup> Another advertisement stated under "Social Notes" that "lady Nugent regrets she will be unable to dine (properly!) after April, 1960" at the Ferry Inn. When the Ferry Inn opened under new management in 1968 it included "the Lady Nugent dining room", where one could "dine in elegant, old-world surroundings and enjoy the finest wines and foods in air-conditioned comfort". By 1975 the Ferry Inn had added a "cool, romantic Lady Nugent Terrace".<sup>36</sup> In 1984 the Blue Mountain Inn, an expensive Kingston restaurant, commenced a series of Lady Nugent dinners which celebrated "Jamaica's culinary, cultural and historical legacy", watched over by "Lady Nugent's 'Lady in Waiting'". A fashion designer produced a "Lady Nugent dress".<sup>37</sup>

In 1988, Devon House, built by George Stiebel, the coloured Custos of St Andrew, in 1881, but transformed into a popular place of entertainment after Independence, offered each Sunday "Lady Nugent's Breakfast" including "traditional Jamaican favourites" such as escovitched fish, bammy and Blue Mountain coffee. The following year Devon House offered in Secretary's Week, a special "Lady Nugent's Secretary's Tea". Devon House offered every Friday a "Lady Nugent's Tea" on the Coffee Terrace, and encouraged patrons to "bring Dad to our special Lady Nugent's Father's Day Breakfast (Brunch)". In 1990 there was also in February a "Valentine's Day Lady Nugent's Tea" and a "Lady Nugent's Christmas Breakfast", soon followed by a "Lady Nugent's Mothers Day Buffet Brunch".<sup>38</sup> "Lady Nugent" food festivals were not confined to Jamaica. In the United Kingdom, the Friends of the Georgian Society of Jamaica initiated an annual "Lady Nugent's Breakfast" in 1994.<sup>39</sup>

In 1961, the year before Independence, Radio Jamaica and Rediffusion (RJR) commenced broadcasting, at 7:30 p.m. on Sundays, a weekly serial called "Dear Lady Nugent", written by Carmen Manley – wife of Douglas, brother of Michael and son of Norman – and who had already produced "Shadows of the Great House". An advertisement declared that "The play is based on the recently re-discovered diary of Maria, Lady Nugent, . . . the American wife of Major-General George Nugent, a colonial Governor at the beginning of the 19th century." It was "a story of Jamaica's colourful past, bustling present, and bright future, all skilfully interwoven into a tale of real people". The "diary", it was said, provided a "vivid" account of Jamaica, "through the eyes of a gay Governor's wife".<sup>40</sup> The radio play continued on air until November 1961. During the period it was playing, *Lady Nugent's Journal* rose to fourth place among the "top requests at the library", coming in after *To Kill a Mocking Bird*. By 1965 readers were once again advertising for second-hand copies of *Lady Nugent's Diary*.<sup>41</sup>

## Wright's Edition

The "new and revised" edition of Nugent's journal published in 1966 was clearly intended not only to fill a persistent demand for copies but also to create a more modern version of the work for a post-Independence audience. The introduction was completely rewritten, beginning now with Maria Nugent and her perspective on a slave society. The title page was simplified to *Lady Nugent's Journal of Her Residence in*

*Jamaica from 1801 to 1805* and the spine of the book changed to "Lady Nugent's Jamaica Journal". The publisher was now the Institute of Jamaica in its own right. However, the editor Philip Wright was, like Cundall, an expatriate Englishman. Wright had come to Jamaica in 1949, worked as school teacher and headmaster and also on the staff at the West India Reference Library. He quickly developed an interest in Nugent and in 1955 made transcripts from the Papers of Sir George Nugent, first used by Cundall in his 1934 edition, and published extracts in his 1966 edition of the journal. Wright left Jamaica in 1961. As well as *Lady Nugent's Journal* he published in 1966 *Monumental Inscriptions of Jamaica*, a compilation from tombstones across the island based on a survey he had begun while a member of staff of the Institute of Jamaica. With Paul F. White he produced *Exploring Jamaica: A Guide for Motorists*, a practical handbook that included a great deal of local historical information and included many of the places described by Nugent in her journal.<sup>42</sup> The many years spent preparing these books took Wright into the back roads and overgrown yards of the island; this gave him a detailed knowledge of regional geography that enabled the creation of a new map of Jamaica showing the routes followed by Nugent on her travels.

Wright concentrated more strictly than Cundall had done on the period of Nugent's residence in Jamaica, stopping the text at 29 May 1811 with Nugent sealing up her books but retaining a similar selection of the entries made on return to England. Nothing from the Indian journal was included. Wright's edition of *Lady Nugent's Journal* was announced in February 1967, costing 42 shillings. George Panton, reviewing it for the *Gleaner*, said it would appeal to "people who prefer reading biographies rather than novels, factual stuff rather than fiction". He believed that "Many people here in Jamaica have heard about this book, and many visitors to our island have wanted to procure copies." Wright's "new and revised edition," he said, "suggests corrections for some of the mistakes in the previous edition".<sup>43</sup> It became established as the standard citation though commentators sometimes used earlier editions.<sup>44</sup>

Assessments of Nugent's perspective and social superiority shifted after the publication of Wright's edition in 1966. It was a time of political turmoil and social questioning. Sylvia Wynter's extensive review of 1967, published in *Jamaica Journal*, used the occasion to encourage Jamaicans to "come to terms with our own ambivalence to the past". While acknowledging the impossibility of sharing Nugent's perspective,

Wynter argued that "if we are to inform our society with that motive force which can transform the unjust system we have inherited, which divided and still divides us, if we are to become conscious of ourselves as a people, as an entity, then we must confront ourselves with our origins, must lay claim to and take hold of our history." Nugent had portrayed the society of her time with "terrible accuracy". Thus Wynter called for a cheap paperback edition which could be made available to schoolchildren, with a different introduction. Wright's edition, she said, was excellent in itself but "may serve the purpose only of the historian, the researcher, and the informed and interested amateur".<sup>45</sup> Even before Independence Nugent had been criticized for "the smugness of her opinions" and being "too supercilious and metropolitan".<sup>46</sup> Brathwaite in 1971 called her "quite prissy" and believed the Nugents were "upholders of British culture and tradition" and "critical of creole departures from the 'established' norm". Mathurin Mair remarked critically of Nugent's attitudes that "the kindness and smugness never fully concealed the aversion and fear that lay below the surface".<sup>47</sup>

In 1976, in the midst of Michael Manley's Democratic Socialism and following the general drift of Brathwaite's argument about the vitality of creole society, the theatre critic Harry Milner commented on performances of the Jamaican Folk Singers and the National Dance Theatre Company saying that "It is odd indeed how a sort of nostalgia for the grace of Georgian, Regency and early Victorian civilization seems to permeate our national psyche in its happier mood just as the horrors of slavery in its more tragic." He believed that further research "might suggest a rather higher cultural standard in the plantocracy than that bruited around by that rather smug and prudish American, Lady Nugent". Milner thought that "the Smollett side of West Indian 18th century life has had a great deal of airing", and that on the other hand "what is being revealed in the modern developments of both dance and song is almost a Jane Austen refinement".<sup>48</sup>

Theatre moved on in Jamaica but even as it became more rooted in the local Lady Nugent was not forgotten. In 1997, Barbara Gloudon's Christmas pantomime "Augus Mawnin" provided glimpses of slave life leading up to the August morning that marked abolition, taking scenes from modern poets as well as excerpts from Lady Nugent's journal. Reviewing the production, theatre critic Keith Noel commented on the humour applied by Gloudon "to show our ability to accept what is ours even when it has become so by force. This is exemplified in a delightful moment in which the delicacies on Lady Nugent's table are seen not to



come near to 'the wonder of nyaga bickle'.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, Nugent sometimes held her own as a critic of society, however much the world had changed. Thus in 1998 she was invoked as a relevant commentator on contemporary Jamaican society, a correspondent finding still valid Nugent's remark of 24 April 1802: "It is indeed melancholy to see the general disregard of both religion and morality throughout the whole island. Everyone seems solicitous to make money and no one appears to regard the mode of acquiring it."<sup>50</sup>

The 2002 edition of Nugent's journal published by the University of the West Indies Press was a straightforward reprint of Wright's 1966 version, though the spine reverted to "Lady Nugent's Journal". This was not the cheap version demanded by Wynter in 1967, but it was the first paperback edition and was directed particularly at a growing student market. A foreword was included by Verene Shepherd, who described the journal as "a rich source" and discussed its significance for women's history. Shepherd argued that Nugent's was one of the best known personal journals relating to Jamaica, placing it alongside the more recently famous journals of Thomas Thistlewood. Shepherd also argued that Nugent as well as Thistlewood "had become 'creolized' into the local culture in many respects".<sup>51</sup> This is an argument that varies from Brathwaite's interpretation of Nugent's British perspective. Veronica Marie Gregg, in the *Jamaica Journal* of 2005, recalled Wynter's powerful essay of almost forty years earlier but with continuing resonances, and emphasized Nugent's preoccupation with "the fraught entanglements of questions of race, gender, sex and morality".<sup>52</sup>

In 1999 Franklin W. Knight, citing Wright's edition, said Lady Nugent "wrote a candid journal depicting her stay in Jamaica between 1801 and 1805, with lavish comments on the way the local society was affected by race and class". Schaw, said Knight, left a "graphic account" of her visit. Brereton, however, regarded Schaw as "simply a 'tourist' passing through".<sup>53</sup> Although Schaw and Nugent are often paired, and Schaw is better known overall because she travelled to North Carolina as well as the West Indies and was edited for Yale by Evangeline Walker Andrews and Charles McLean Andrews in 1921, Nugent has a much larger role in Caribbean historiography.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

Nugent lived in one of the most intense slave societies in world history, near to its apogee. Like the slave-owners around her, she referred to

"Negroes" much more often than she used the word "slave". The word "slavery" appears just once in the whole journal, a week after her arrival in Jamaica, and serving as an explanation for "the want of exertion in the blackies".<sup>55</sup> Schaw similarly referred to "slavery" but once and then as a political analogy. Male slaveholders such as Thomas Thistlewood, Edward Long and Simon Taylor similarly avoided "slave" – let alone "slavery" – and commonly employed "Negro" as synonym for enslaved persons.<sup>56</sup> Nugent read Wilberforce on the slave trade, she said, but as Brereton comments, Nugent had "little to say about slavery as an institution, though a degree of sympathy for the slaves might be deduced from her constant use of the term 'poor blackies' and (perhaps) from her kindness to the King's House domestics and her concern for their spiritual welfare".<sup>57</sup> It is true that Nugent referred to "blackies" frequently (24 times) but she used the more sympathetic "poor blackies" only twice. Brereton finds in Schaw, however, a "robust callousness".<sup>58</sup> If Nugent can be placed at the "liberal extreme" of contemporary white writers on slavery, she neither argued for abolition nor developed a defence for it on the lines of Edward Long or John Lindsay, nor adopted the "aesthetic glorification" of Schaw.<sup>59</sup>

Nugent may not have expected publication but she certainly knew that her journals would be read by others, at least by her own family and soon after her death, so she needed to project attitudes and opinions with which she felt comfortable. Her approach was self-consciously autobiographical. She lived in Jamaica for only a short period and her closeted existence meant that she lacked the capacity to offer details of the everyday life of enslaved people. Her social life was thoroughly shaped by the domestic world of Jamaica's grandest great house, not the world of field and forest or the harsh regime of plantation field labour. When Nugent gathered free coloured and enslaved women around her, in her closet, she listened to their "histories" but not once did she reveal the content of what she heard.<sup>60</sup> When she commented on the behaviour of those around her it was most often the failings of white men, with whom she maintained a level of racial alliance, and these failings no longer preoccupy historians or popular opinion. In spite of this redefinition of historical focus, Nugent's text has become part of a canon, and part of a thread of common memory, not easily ignored.

## NOTES

1. The author thanks Howard Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Maria Nugent and Sue Thomas for comments on drafts of this paper. Parts of this paper were first published in B.W. Higman, "Eight Iterations of Lady Nugent's Jamaica Journal", *Kunapipi* 34, no. 2 (2012): 170-79.
2. Brereton, "Text", 64; Stubbs, 122.
3. Ponsonby, 328-31; Abrahams and Szwed, 235; Bohls and Duncan, 325-33.
4. Brereton, "Text", 64.
5. Raza.
6. Brathwaite, 109-11; Mair, 316; Green, *British Slave Emancipation*, 10 n.29.
7. O'Callaghan, *Women Writing the West Indies*, 22; Mohammed, 145-46; Hall, 141.
8. Klepp and McDonald, 637. Cf. O'Callaghan, *Woman Version*, 24-26.
9. Nugent, *Journal of a Voyage*, 1:75, 313.
10. *Ibid.*, 2:515.
11. Jacobs, "Achievement of Frank Cundall", 24-26; Johnson, 490; Knight, 216-17; Higman, *Writing West Indian Histories*, 55-56.
12. Cundall, "Institute of Jamaica: Notes on Some Recent Additions", 4; Cundall, "Institute of Jamaica: Jamaica Portrait Gallery", 4.
13. Nugent, *Journal of a Voyage*, 1:195-96; Cundall, "Institute of Jamaica: Notes on Some Recent Additions", 4; James, 127; Wynter, 26-27; Green, *British Slave Emancipation*, 10; Brereton, "Gendered Testimony", 243; Williamson, xxxi.
14. *Gleaner*, 11 January 1907, 2; Abrahams and Szwed, 423.
15. Cundall 1907 ix-x; O'Callaghan, *Women Writing the West Indies*, 66.
16. Cundall 1907, x, lvi. Cf. Bohls, *Women Travel Writers*, 52.
17. Cundall 1907, xi; *Gleaner*, 26 November 1904, 8; *Gleaner*, 8 February 1906, 8; *Gleaner*, 14 May 1908, 9; Ingram, *Manuscript Sources*, 182.
18. Anon., 4.
19. *Gleaner*, 11 January 1907, 2; *Gleaner*, 15 July 1908, 1; *Gleaner*, 23 January 1909, 6.
20. James, 123, 126-27.
21. Ponsonby, 15, 29, 35, 328-31.
22. Dardanella, 8; Wilson, *Personal Effects*.
23. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 7, 229, 273, 484, 486.
24. Ragatz, *Guide*, 231.
25. *Gleaner*, 18 January 1917, 12; *Gleaner*, 29 October 1920, 8.
26. Cundall 1934 ix. The "new" edition of 1934 replicated that of 1907 and was probably printed from the same plates or from photographs of the 1907 pages, though a raised space in the 1907 printing (page 61) disappears and an inverted "h" is turned up the right way (page 258). The title page of the 1934 edition stated that it was "published for the Institute of Jamaica

by the West India Committee" and two additional pages at the end of the volume listed the publications of the Institute and of the Committee.

27. A further five volumes of George Nugent's military correspondence are at the National Army Museum, Camberley, UK. See Ingram, *Sources of Jamaican History*, vol. 1, 360-64, 411-12.
28. *Gleaner*, 16 October 1934, 7; *Gleaner*, 28 February 1935, 13.
29. Olivier, ix, 3, 55.
30. Olivier, 58; Lewis, *Journal*.
31. *Gleaner*, 6 December 1937, 22. Probably the 1939 edition was printed from photographs of the 1907 pages, as suggested by the fact that the "h" that had been corrected in 1934 resumed its inverted character though the raised space remained suppressed. This "third published edition" was published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee.
32. *Gleaner*, 2 June 1946, 2.
33. Sherman, 6; *Gleaner*, 7 September 1950, 12; Huggins.
34. *Gleaner*, 2 May 1955, 14; *Gleaner*, 6 March 1958, 18; *Gleaner*, 22 May 1959, 6.
35. Aspinall, 221. It is quoted less fully in Fermor, 338-39; Carley, 187.
36. *Gleaner*, 15 October 1959, 7; *Gleaner*, 12 October 1968, 6; *Gleaner*, 24 May 1975, 4.
37. *Gleaner*, 26 November 1984, 6; *Gleaner*, 21 August 1984, 14.
38. *Gleaner*, 19 November 1988, 6; *Gleaner*, 25 April 1989, 22; *Gleaner*, 16 June 1989, 23; *Gleaner*, 13 February 1990, 3; *Gleaner*, 22 December 1990, 9; *Gleaner*, 9 May 1991, 35.
39. Higman, "Lady Nugent's Second Breakfast".
40. *Gleaner*, 30 March 1961, 14; M.P.H., 5.
41. *Gleaner*, 23 July 1961, 16; *Gleaner*, 21 December 1965, 26.
42. *Gleaner*, 4 September 1954, 13; Ingram, *Sources of Jamaican History*, vol. 1, 360-64; Wright, *Monumental Inscriptions*, ix; Wright and White, 20.
43. Panton, 4.
44. Occasionally recent commentators have used Cundall's 1907 edition rather than Wright's 1966 edition (for example, Burton, 35; Sussman, 236; Wilson, 255; Altink, 271-88). Others pick up whatever edition is on hand in the nearest library perhaps, Cundall's 1934 or 1939 versions (Green, *British Slave Emancipation*, 10; Buckridge, 253; Williamson, 363; Yeh, 81). Full and correct citations of the 1839 first edition are rare indeed and even those aware of its existence typically reference the 1966 edition (Klepp and McDonald, 637, refer to the "1838" edition; Carley, 205; Brathwaite, 350).
45. Wynter, 24.
46. Fermor, 338-39; Macmillan, 86.
47. Brathwaite, 110-11; Mair, 181.
48. Milner, 4.
49. Noel, A11; Reckord, 22.
50. Nugent, *Journal of a Voyage*, 1:234; Green, "Voice From the Past", A5.

51. Shepherd, xxxv.
52. Gregg, 64. See also O'Callaghan, *Women Writing the West Indies*, 136.
53. Knight, 205; Brereton, "Text", 64.
54. Andrews and Andrews; Bohls, "Aesthetics of Colonialism", 373–79; Coleman, 169–93; Bohls and Duncan, 314–33. No editions of Nugent's journals were included in the bibliography compiled by William Matthews and published in 1950, though Janet Schaw's was.
55. Nugent, 1839, 30; Higman, "Eight Iterations", 174–75.
56. Andrews and Andrews, 212; Burnard, 130–31; Higman, *Plantation Jamaica*, 203; Higman, *Proslavery Priest*, 183.
57. Brereton, "Text", 75. See also Bohls, *Women Travel Writers*, 258 n.27.
58. Brereton, "Text", 76. Cf. O'Callaghan, *Women Writing the West Indies*, 23; Hall, "Gender and Empire", 143.
59. Bohls, "Aesthetics of Colonialism", 379; Higman, *Proslavery Priest*, 188–204.
60. Shea, 178.

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## Routes to Chattel Village

### Bequest and Family Villages in Post-Slavery Barbados<sup>1</sup>

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WOODVILLE MARSHALL

The historical literature on “free” or “independent” village development in the post-slavery British Caribbean contains hardly a mention of the Barbadian experience. Perhaps, not surprisingly, that literature has focused attention on Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and, to a lesser extent, on the Windward Islands and Antigua. In all those territories, so the story goes, certain factors operated to ensure that the transition from slavery to freedom was qualitatively different from the experience of the other territories. Specifically, it is affirmed that each of those territories possessed, to a greater or lesser extent, some land outside of the dominant plantation, and that in all of the territories certain agencies, sometimes operating in combination, effectively facilitated the transfer of some of that land on freehold tenure to some of the formerly enslaved. Those agencies are identified as: the planters who recognized how self-interest could be advanced by establishing *nurseries* of labourers on plantation lands; joint or communal action by some of the formerly enslaved both to acquire land and to protect it from environmental hazard; intermediaries (mainly missionaries) who deliberately facilitated the transfer of available land; and part-time land speculators who were essentially seeking profit.<sup>2</sup>

Presumably, Barbados has been excluded from consideration and investigation because of its deserved designation as the quintessential plantation territory. On the face of it, a free village movement had little chance of taking root, because the land space was severely limited, because the plantation controlled virtually all the land, because Barbados

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was *the* "high density" territory where the numbers of the formerly enslaved were almost twice as dense as those in the other high density territories, and because the planters took early legislative action to reinforce their control of land and labour by restricting emigration opportunities and, particularly, by creating the located-labourer system that securely tied most of the formerly enslaved to both plantation labour and plantation residence.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Barbados, unlike Jamaica, did not have the benefit of the presence of non-conformist missionaries who accepted that an integral part of their mission was to facilitate the purchase of land by members of their congregation. This would allow those vulnerable and disadvantaged people to create both an independent "home" and "an asylum" that could shield them from the "treachery, scorn and trickery" of their "inveterate enemies".<sup>4</sup> Therefore, in Barbados land for purchase remained scarce and expensive, and most agricultural workers, earning at most one shilling a day, had very limited means of saving towards that desirable end.

Governors of the island and at least one visitor fully recognized that formidable constraints militated against the acquisition of freeholds and the formation of free villages. In 1858, Sir Francis Hincks virtually repeated the remarks of his predecessor when he declared: "In Barbados the labourers remain on the estates, not because they like the tenure, but because the scarcity and high price of land place freeholds beyond their reach."<sup>5</sup> William Sewell, the itinerant American journalist, neatly paraphrased those remarks when he chillingly observed that, because the island possessed an "overstocked and imprisoned population", the agricultural labourer was "virtually a slave" who "had the option of work at low wages, and on most illiberal terms, or starvation".<sup>6</sup> No doubt, it was this unanimity, perhaps substituting for hard evidence, which led William Green to pronounce: "free villages did not arise"!<sup>7</sup> Other scholars, no less impressed, have obviously concluded that evidence of the acquisition of small freeholds and of free village development in Barbados was either so "vague" or "highly unusual" as to render those issues not worthy of further investigation.<sup>8</sup>

However, there is a case for asserting that free village development did occur in Barbados. That possibility is first hinted at in the work of those social anthropologists (Sidney Greenfield, Jerome Handler, and Constance Sutton) who did field work in a number of Barbadian villages during the 1950s and 1960s. Their reconstruction of the historical origins of the sites of their fieldwork indicated that at least a modest subdivision of plantation land did occur before the early twentieth century.<sup>9</sup> Further

investigation of landownership patterns, particularly through tax rolls (mainly the parish Rate Books), did confirm both the acquisition of small freeholds by some of the formerly enslaved *and* the clustering of most of those freeholds, some at locations that carried the names of the properties from which they were detached, and others at locations with new names.

However, the issue was put beyond reasonable doubt by the contents of an 1885 document. The report of a commission, which had been appointed in 1884 by the governor "to inquire into and report on the Water Supply of the Island", included the responses to a circular that had been addressed to all the vestries (the local government agencies). Each vestry was requested to identify "the principal villages" in the parish as well as the approximate size of the population of each principal village. Both the specific request and the responses to that request were significant. First, the request itself could be regarded as the first full recognition by central government that a significant portion of the rural population did not live in plantation tenancies, that free or independent villages did exist. Second, and more important, the responses to the request that came from ten of the eleven parishes revealed, more fully than was possible by reference to an incomplete collection of tax rolls, the extent of freehold village development. The chairmen of those ten vestries reported the existence of one hundred "principal" villages (exclusive of the small towns of Speightstown, Oistins and Holetown). One of them (from St Andrew) made the distinction between a plantation tenantry and a *village*; another (from St George) expressed the opinion that "these Villages [in St George] contain about two-thirds of the whole population of the parish". Although five of the ten chairmen failed to supply estimates of the size of the population of the individual villages, a working definition of "principal village" could be deduced when it is noted that each of ten villages in three of the parishes contained estimated populations that were in excess of one thousand persons.<sup>10</sup>

This paper can be regarded as an interim report on a project on the history of Barbadian freehold villages in the century after the ending of slavery. The paper seeks to throw light on two issues. The first is the extent and dating of freehold village development in Barbados between 1838 and 1946; and this will be addressed through an overview of the phases of freehold village development in the island. The second, and more pertinent, issue that is examined is the particular agency through which some of the villages were created, and the extent to which the circumstances of origin might be said to have spawned new village

types or, at least, variants of existing types. This issue will be addressed through a discussion of *bequest* and *family* villages.

## Overview of Freehold Village Development in Barbados

Given its small size and open terrain, the two hundred years of slavery, and the plantation's virtual monopoly of arable land, Barbados at emancipation possessed, not surprisingly, very few population centres outside of the plantations and the four towns. Sketchy information, gleaned from registers of baptisms and burials and also from a few deeds, suggests that no more than twenty non-plantation settlements/village districts were scattered around the island (Table 1).

At the same time, the location of most of those settlements presents clear hints about their origins, demography and suitability for expanded settlement. Mainly located on the southern and eastern coasts and in the Scotland District, the rugged country of St Andrew, St Joseph and St Thomas, those settlements, deliberately relegated to the margins of

Table 1: Freehold Village Development in Barbados (by Parish)

	Pre-emancipation	New villages by 1880s	Total number 1946
Christ Church	2	23	54
St George	1	27	46
St Philip	5	26	43
St Lucy	1	13	42
St Michael	1	21	36
St James	2	5	28
St Joseph	2	11	27
St John	1	10	26
St Peter	1	9	20
St Thomas	1	12	20
St Andrew	2	12	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>359</b>

Source: Registers of baptisms and burials, Parish Rate Books, Militia Tax returns (at the Barbados Department of Archives); and Halcrow and Cave's *Peasant Agriculture*.

the plantation, were mainly the relics of the militia tenancies, which had been established in the late seventeenth century.<sup>11</sup> The point is, however, that although some of those settlements (for example, Below Rock, Foul Bay, Below the Cliff, Crab Hole, Pie Corner) were, comparatively speaking, substantial in size, those areas were unlikely to be perceived by the formerly enslaved as prime areas for settlement, because of the relative inaccessibility, the marginal soils and, possibly, because those settlements were visibly the preserve of the poor whites or "Redlegs". In general, then, that space for villages to accommodate all those who, for whatever reason, wished to escape the plantation tenancies, could only be found on lands that had been already appropriated and settled by the owners of plantations and small properties (*places*). The freehold villages of Barbados were therefore sited on bits of land that were released (through sale, gift and bequest) by the owners of landed property.

### **Phases of Freehold Village Development**

The statistics that are collated in table 1 give an indication of the incidence, distribution, and increase in the number of freehold villages during the century after the full ending of slavery. That information, mainly retrieved from tax rolls, wills, deeds, and official reports on the condition of peasant agriculture, confirms three obvious points. The first is that, given the perennial and harsh constraints on the acquisition of small freeholds, the establishment of more than one hundred and fifty freehold villages within fifty years of full emancipation represented a remarkable achievement by some of the formerly enslaved and their descendants. Second, the spatial distribution of the new villages indicated that the emerging settlement pattern was not of the enclave variety; rather, the spread of villages across the island more or less reflected the physical extent and population size of the various parishes. Third, there is an obvious case for identifying two distinct phases in the establishment of the new villages. One phase is the fifty or sixty years after full freedom when, because little plantation land was released, village development, though impressive in terms of the actual number of villages that were established, was relatively insignificant in terms of the amount of land that was appropriated for its formation. In contrast, the second phase, more properly defined as the first three or four decades of the twentieth century, is marked by a rapid increase both in the number of villages and in the amount of land that was acquired for this purpose.

## First Phase Village Development

The creation of independent residential spaces in Barbados, as in other territories, was driven by the determination of the formerly enslaved to actualize their legal freedom. In Barbados, as in the Leeward Islands, the exercise of options in relation to employment, employer, and residence, was severely restricted by the limited employment opportunities and, especially, by the tenancy/employment arrangements that tied the labourers to plantation labour and residence. The response of many labourers to this constraint was, first, to construct their own houses and, second, to search for controllable space on which to locate their houses, in case the ever-present threat of eviction from house and ground on the plantation became a reality. It is in this context that the chattel house emerged. The construction of the board and shingled house, the most important tangible and *moveable* asset of the agricultural labourer, not only led to modifications of the tenancy arrangements in the direction of renting rather than conditional occupancy of plantation land, but it also constituted the preparation by labourers for escape from almost total dependence on the plantation. Therefore, when labourers eventually found their own independent spaces for residence, they carried with them the essential materials for constructing the chattel village.<sup>12</sup>

Those first spaces for independent residences were established in the early 1840s. Those could be found at Rock Hall, Bridgefield, and Redmans Village in St Thomas, and at Sargeants Village and Vauxhall in Christ Church; and village formation in all of the parishes quickly replicated these initiatives. By the end of the 1850s, therefore, at least seventy new villages were in existence; and the presence of those settlements must be noticed because, having been either formed or peopled by numbers of the formerly enslaved, they were in reality *free villages*. The highest concentration was in the parishes of St Michael and Christ Church, with thirteen in each; and this could be explained, partly by the urban character of one parish and by the marginal soils in the other. But, perhaps most important, in all the first phase villages there was clear evidence of fragmentation of holdings, which testified to a continuing commitment by heads of households both to stretch a scarce resource and to ensure or facilitate the escape of kin from the plantation tenantry.<sup>13</sup>

A number of agencies featured in the transfer of land that formed those villages. Bequests and family arrangements were significant and,

in addition, isolated cases of communal action were found (at Bridgefield and at Redmans Village in St Thomas, and at Endeavour in St James). However, most of the new villages can also be classified as self-help villages, because the land on which they were located was acquired as the result of "private treaty", individualized negotiations with landowners. In some cases, land speculation was evident; and land speculators, mainly one-off operators, can be identified in the formation of at least fifteen villages. However, Peter Chapman stands out, because he was involved, directly or indirectly, in the formation of ten villages in St Michael, St George, and St Thomas. Like the other land speculators, he reaped profits of at least fifty per cent on his investment in land, but his activity spread over thirty years ensured that his useful role as intermediary brought the acquisition of residential space within the reach of some of the recently freed and their descendants. Perhaps, therefore, he fully deserved to have his name inscribed on the landscape, as did happen at Chapman Village in St Thomas.

The existence of these new villages hardly dented the plantation's control of arable land. Many of the new settlements were small, if not tiny, and in total they covered about three thousand acres, which gave an average of less than twenty acres per village. But, more important, it is evident that the land that was appropriated for the formation of most villages was the marginal lands, the hillsides, gullies, and rough pasture, which could be found on most plantations and small properties. This was the natural consequence of the land that entered the market for sale in small lots. Not one of the medium-sized plantations (200+ acres) was subdivided; and Workmans Land, the 102-acre section of the Walkers plantation in St George, was the largest single block of land that was subdivided, and even that block of land, located mainly on a hillside, could not be regarded as prime agricultural land. Moreover, it must be noticed that it was land in small properties, in the *places* and farms, which was more often than not released for the establishment of freeholds and villages. Those *places*, with a size of ten to fifty acres, were scattered all over the island, some the relics of the settlement pattern of the pre-sugar era, while others were a consequence of various inheritance practices. It was mainly this land, not plantation land, which became the sites of the first phase villages.<sup>14</sup>

## Second Phase Village Development

Freehold village development in this phase differed both quantitatively and qualitatively from the earlier phase. Nearly two hundred new villages were created and several of the older ones were expanded. Even more striking was the amount of land that was appropriated to form these new villages. Reliable estimates indicate that about nine thousand acres were appropriated for the purpose, and that nearly all of that expansion took place at the expense of the plantation. While it is evident that the plantations which were located in the heart of sugar plantation country, in the highly fertile areas of St Thomas, St George and St John, were not in general subdivided to create freeholds and villages, it is also obvious that most of the plantations, numbering about seventy, located on the shallow black soils around the coast of the island, suffered a different fate during the first three decades of the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> According to the *Agricultural Reporter*, those plantations were "sacrificed to satisfy the money making instincts of the land speculator".<sup>16</sup>

Column 2 of table 2 provides in brackets the size of the expansion in the number of villages in each parish during the second phase. Those statistics make it obvious that the greatest increase in the number of

Table 2: Distribution of All Freehold Villages, 1946

	No. of villages	No. of holdings	Acres
Christ Church	54 (+ 31)	3,038	2,362
St George	46 (+ 19)	2,129	1,313
St Philip	43 (+ 17)	2,516	2,060
St Lucy	42 (+ 29)	1,551	1,082
St Michael	36 (+ 15)	3,790	1,808
St James	28 (+ 23)	2,199	1,055
St Joseph	27 (+ 16)	798	582
St John	26 (+ 16)	723	473
St Peter	20 (+ 11)	870	496
St Thomas	20 (+ 8)	967	609
St Andrew	17 (+ 5)	1,076	992
<b>Totals</b>	<b>359 (+ 190)</b>	<b>19,657</b>	<b>12,832</b>

Source: Halcrow and Cave, table 5a.



villages (in Christ Church, St Lucy and in St James) correlated with the incidence of the *sacrifice* or subdivision of plantations that were located on relatively unproductive soils. What, however, is not revealed is that, though the expansion of village development was islandwide, most of the main or principal villages, defined as containing at least two hundred persons and/or covering at least fifty acres, were formed in five of the parishes, Christ Church, St Michael, St Philip, St James, and St George. Presumably, the explanation for the imbalance lies in the relative size of the plantations that were subdivided.

What, then, accounts for the sharp difference in the pace and extent of village development between the two phases? The general explanation is that the long-standing opposition to any large scale subdivision of plantation land was undermined during the first decade of the twentieth century because, for the first time in the history of the island, the pre-conditions for substantial land transfer were satisfied. Some plantation land became available because the long-running depression in the sugar industry had virtually bankrupted several plantations and forced them into the Court of Chancery to avoid foreclosure suits. Black labourers had access to cash because emigration to Panama and later to USA and to Cuba ensured that remittances flowed in the island, to the extent that this cash both kept afloat the depressed economy and created a large group of potential purchasers of land. Land speculators, full-time and part-time, were on hand, quick to recognize that they could make substantial profit by buying depreciated plantations out of the Court of Chancery, by subdividing the land and selling it to land-hungry blacks, who for the first time could comfortably make down payments on the purchase of one- and two-acre lots, and who also had good prospects of paying the balance on an instalment plan.<sup>17</sup>

Remittance villages could be the designation of these second phase villages. While it is evident that the land speculators played a very active role in effecting the transfer of the land that went into the formation of new villages, it is also obvious that it was the river of remittances and the desire to divert its flow into welcoming pockets which simultaneously animated their expanded commercial activity and weakened the ideological base of opposition to plantation subdivision. Profits of 100 to 200 per cent ensured that land speculation became big business during the first three decades of the twentieth century, and the lure of those profits enticed segments of the elite, lawyers, planters, businessmen and even members of the legislature, into becoming part-time land speculators. The consequence was that the *Agricultural Reporter's* thun-

dering against both the "greed" of land speculators and the "social danger" posed by plantation subdivision fell on many deaf ears.<sup>18</sup> By the 1930s and 1940s, therefore, it could be claimed that those "obstacles" to village development,<sup>19</sup> which Governor Sir William Colebrooke had observed in 1849, were to some extent being dismantled, not by legislative action nor by official exhortation, but because of market pressure.

## Bequest Villages and Family Villages

For a number of reasons, examination of the incidence and role of what might be designated bequest and family villages should properly be tied to the discussion of the first phase villages. In the first place, nearly all the villages (59 of 67 or 88 per cent) which are enumerated in table 3 were formed by the 1880s, the cut-off point for the first phase villages. Second, those designated villages constituted more than one-third of all the new villages that were formed in the time period. Third, it follows that, given the constraints on freehold land acquisition that persisted until early in the twentieth century, bequests and specific in-family arrangements for landholding played a not insignificant role in launching and sustaining a free village movement in Barbados.

*Table 3: Number and Distribution of Bequest and Family Villages*

	Bequest	Family
St Philip	5	10
St Lucy	-	9
St Thomas	2	7
Christ Church	3	4
St George	1	6
St Andrew	3	3
St Joseph	1	4
St John	1	3
St Michael	1	1
St Peter	-	2
St James	-	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>50</b>

*Source:* Deeds and wills in the Barbados Department of Archives

## Bequest Villages

A distinction must be established between what might constitute a *bequest* village and a *family* village, because the terms might not be seen as mutually exclusive. Obviously, in legal and common sense terms, in-family arrangements with respect to the inheritance of property are no different from the action that a testator might take in disposing of his/her property. The point of distinction that can be offered is this: "bequest" in the present context is a gift from an individual who is not, in a legal sense, a core member of the family of the beneficiary, or is a gift made by an individual who is related to the beneficiary through a common-law union, or is gift made by an individual whose relationship to the beneficiary is that of employer/retainer. Obviously, though, there can be overlap between bequest villages and family villages, especially where a beneficiary, as at Parris Hill in St Joseph and at Padmore Village in St Philip, proceeded to divide a bequest or gift of land among immediate family members.

The critical question is, of course, the precise contribution that the fourteen bequests and gifts made to the formation of first phase villages. But, before that question is addressed, it might be pertinent to notice the timing of the bequests and gifts, that is, whether they originated in slavery or post-slavery, and the relationship that existed between the donor/testator and the legatee(s). Eight of the bequests and gifts date from slavery times; and it might be noted, as some scholars have pointed out, that it was not exactly uncommon during slavery for some masters to make bequests of freedom and of property to their enslaved paramours and to their children.<sup>20</sup> Any apparent decrease in bequests after emancipation, it may be presumed, flowed from a perception by testators that the *blessings* of freedom had reduced, if not cancelled, their obligations to their *outside* families. However, particular notice should be taken of Nathaniel Kirton's bequests in 1858, which closely resembled those which Jacob Hinds (1832) and Robert Cooper Ashby (1837) made for the continuing support of their concubines and their several children. The bulk of Kirton's considerable estate in St Philip, containing two sugar plantations, Foursquare and Brewsters, as well as smaller properties, was bequeathed to the children and grandchildren of two women, each of whom he described as "my friend".<sup>21</sup>

The bequests and gifts comprehended two different types of relationship between the testator/donor and the legatee(s). Three of the testators, Reynold Alleyne Ellcock (1820/1840), Alice McDuglin (1827),

and Samuel Lord Hall/Caroline Sarah Briggs (1844–1851) rewarded both enslaved persons and family retainers; and in the case of Ellcock, his bequest was made to “each labouring adult” among “my Negroes”, who would have numbered 136 in 1821.<sup>22</sup> The other eleven testators made bequests to some of their sexual partners, both enslaved and free, for the support of themselves and the numerous children that they had borne them. This action may have suggested the existence of stable interracial, cross-status unions, but it must be noticed that, while two of the testators, Benjamin Armstrong and Francis Spooner, identified “my three mulatto children” and “my two coloured daughters” as beneficiaries, all the others either implied the existence of a close family relationship or took refuge in the legalism of “reputed children” and in the euphemism of “friend”.<sup>23</sup>

The fourteen bequests and gifts contributed, directly and indirectly, to the formation of fourteen or fifteen villages by providing about two hundred and sixty acres of land for smallholder occupancy. The indirect contribution came out of the Ellcock bequest. The £85 that each of eighty-three beneficiaries collected in 1840 under his 1820 will was invested by many of them in two transactions in the parish of St Thomas: the purchase of about forty acres at Rock Hall in 1840–1842, and another purchase of eleven and a quarter acres at Social Hall in 1841. The transfer of those lands led to the formation of the villages of Rock Hall and Bridgefield.<sup>24</sup> The substantial direct contributions of land came through the bequests that were made by Nathaniel Kirton (about 60 acres), by Samuel Hall Lord/Caroline Sarah Briggs (about 32 acres), by Robert Hudgwell Batson (29½ acres), and by Jacob Hinds (about 18 acres). Kirton’s bequest at his Upper Place in “the Thicketts”, St Philip, led to the creation of Apple Hall Village by the 1870s; the bequest and gifts made by Lord and Briggs to twenty-eight individuals at Long Bay, also in St Philip, created the aptly named Bequest Village by 1851; Batson’s division of the land at Greenidges in Christ Church among his three mistresses and sixteen children was the base of Sargeants Village in 1842; and Jacob Hinds’s bequests at Triopath and Morpheys in St Andrew to his favourite daughter, Jane Rose Hinds, and to some of his other eighteen or nineteen “poor unfortunate distress’d children” ensured that, by the 1870s and 1880s, villages would spring up at Triopath and White Hill.<sup>25</sup>

The other bequests and gifts made relatively small contributions to the land supply. The two separate gifts by James Vaughan and John Vaughan of the Cheltenham plantation in St Andrew, totalling eleven

acres, were the base for the formation of St Simon's Village by the 1880s. Francis Spooner's bequest of ten acres at Harmony Hall in St John to his two "coloured" daughters led to the formation of an eponymous village that was identified as "principal" village in 1885. Benjamin Armstrong's bequest of ten acres at Sea View in St Philip to his three "mulatto" children created Sea View Village by 1875. Similarly, Rebecca Jane Garnes's division of her ten-acre property at the Farm in St Philip among fifteen individuals, who may have been members of the *outside* families of her husband, Abel Lewis Garnes, was the base for the creation of Farm Road Village by 1875. Finally, Thomas Drake Barker's gift of eight acres in two instalments to Elizabeth Barker, a "free coloured woman", to support herself and two children, was the major element in the creation of Parris Hill Village, located next door to Barker's plantation, Andrews, in St Joseph.<sup>26</sup> But, it is obvious that all of these contributions, large and small, were, in the context of scanty land resources, significant to both the establishment and consolidation of the village movement in the island.

## Family Villages

The case for the existence of *family* villages rests, not on the evidence of customary land tenure, but rather on what is revealed in the wills and trust deeds. This, however, is not to suggest that there is no connection between family villages and the concept of family land tenure that has been so fully examined by Edith Clarke, MG Smith, Sidney Greenfield, and Jean Besson.<sup>27</sup> Rather, it could be claimed that the family village is the corporate manifestation of both the abandonment of the primogeniture principle *and* the adoption of "seed to seed" inheritance arrangements, which together can be regarded as the base of family land practices. What an examination of about fifty wills and deeds reveals is that the family village is a product of a number of processes that were initiated by heads of households. Those processes, all of which do not necessarily occur in the same locale or at same time, are: the simple division of blocks of property among immediate family members; a less simple division that involved the attachment of the survivorship clause to arrangements for tenancy in common and the occasional inclusion of entail settlements; and, possibly, the inscription of the family name on villages.

The formation of some thirty villages, mainly in the first phase, was the direct result of the *simple* division of blocks of land among immediate

family members, usually children. "Simple" in this context means that the beneficiaries were, for the most part, "lawful issue", that equal shares or "share and share alike" was the basis of the division of the property, and that no entail settlement was attached to the inheritance. Eleven of those blocks varied in size between ten and thirty-nine acres, while the remaining twenty blocks, ranging in extent from one and a quarter acres to nine and a half acres, had a median size of three acres. A few examples can illustrate how this particular process operated. In 1839, Samuel Sargeant of St John directed that his two-acre property, First Step, should eventually be equally divided between the nine "natural children" that three women had borne him; and this division was the base for Sargeant Street Village. In 1847, William Johnson Bowen directed that one-acre lots of his sixteen-acre property at Greenidges in St Lucy should be given to four of his children and to a grandson, with the residue being inherited by a fifth child. His six children, however, substituted an equal division of the property among themselves, and three of them immediately sold their portions outside of the family. In this way, the village of Greenidges was created.<sup>28</sup>

Clearly, at Greenidges and in other villages, the division of both large and small blocks of property created opportunities for extended village formation. This was the consequence of the proliferation of small freeholds which were a direct result both of the initial division *and* of sales of land outside of the original family unit that the division stimulated. This last point is of particular importance, because the available evidence suggests that white men constituted the vast majority of the owners of the properties which were divided. Therefore, "buy land" or "buy ground" could pass into the control of blacks only when some of the legatees were non-white and when, which is more likely, the division of the properties stimulated small-scale land speculation, as might be detected at Greenidges (St Lucy) in 1847-48, at Bayley Hill (St Thomas) after 1852, and at Roaches (St George) after 1876.<sup>29</sup>

In this context the formation of Supers Village in St Philip assumes significance. This village, with its origins in slavery, was a non-white village from the start. Patience Kennedy, self-described as a "free mulatto", was the common-law wife of her "beloved friend", Edward, an enslaved man *owned* by John Brathwaite, for whom she bore eight children. Under her will of 1795, she directed that Edward should have "direction" of her property "as in my life", for the benefit of her "natural" children, and that at his death her property should be equally divided among the eight children. In 1831, Edward, now Edward Brathwaite, a

"free black man", complied with Patience's wishes. He directed in his will that half of the property (ten acres) should be inherited by his five surviving "illegitimate" children, "born of the body of my friend, Patience Kennedy", and that the other half should be equally divided among the eleven children of himself and his wife, Margaret. By the 1870s the village was fully established on the basis of this division of the land, and the family identification with the land and the village was confirmed in the wills of two of Edward's sons, Moses and Sam. Moses bequeathed his four-acre share of the property to his eight children, while Sam bequeathed his share to his seven children.<sup>30</sup>

The eleven family villages that were formed as a result of a less than simple division of property can be subdivided into two subgroups. In the first subgroup can be placed eight villages where the land that formed the villages was bequeathed to tenants in common, with the proviso that the share of those beneficiaries who died before the age of twenty-one and without lawful issue would be divided among the survivors.<sup>31</sup> Presumably, this was a device to ensure that family property was kept together for at least one generation; and there is some evidence to indicate that five of the villages, Sunbury and Gays in St Peter, Utility Village in St Michael, Proutes Village in St Thomas, and Packers in Christ Church, did emerge several years after the division of the property was mandated. On the other hand, Bright Hill in Christ Church apparently emerged within ten years of the death of the testator, James Sealy, while at Padmore Village in St Philip and at Lead Vale in Christ Church, there is evidence of early sales of lots to outsiders.

The other three villages fall squarely inside some of the family land parameters. Heads of households in all three cases included elements of entail settlement, "seed to seed" devices, into the arrangements for the division of their property. In 1852, John Christopher Douglin of St Andrew, whose property of three and three-quarter acres became the base for the formation of Douglin Village, bequeathed an acre to each legitimate child, another acre to a male whose relationship was not specified, and the remaining three-quarters of an acre to two other children, who were probably his *outside* children. Douglin, without offering an explanation, directed that the three-quarters of an acre "must not be sold out of the family". If the two named heirs wished to sell the lot because of "dissatisfaction" between them, then refusal must be given, first to the legitimate son, and then successively to other members of the family. George Francis Holder of St George, the founder of Holders Village, went further. He bequeathed his one and a half acres to his

eight children, with the proviso: "the said land is not to be sold by none of the family - [it] is to be for seed to seeds."<sup>32</sup>

The other village in this subgroup, the Nursery in St Philip, can almost be regarded as a case study of the processes that are central to the notion of the family village. William John Nurse's will, probated in April 1861, directed that his property (about forty-five acres) should remain "undivided" until his youngest child reached the age of twenty-one, and that the property should then be "equally" divided among his eight children and a grandchild. However, he entailed the shares of his eight children: their "lawful issue" would inherit their shares, and if any of the children had no lawful issue, then that share would be divided among the survivors; and on the death of the children, their shares would be equally divided among their lawful issue. By 1875, when the division had been completed, the Nursery was an extended village. Fifteen lots, covering forty-one acres, could be identified, and another twenty-nine lots, located "near Nursery" and covering forty-two acres were listed. While the five-acre lots of five of the Nurse clan could still be identified, it was obvious that clustering had taken place around the property.<sup>33</sup> This was clear evidence of the dual contribution that the family village made to free village development. By itself it represented an expansion of smallholder settlement, and at the same time its presence on the landscape stimulated additional settlement in various ways.

Finally, the eponymous factor can be accepted as a probable indicator of the existence of a family village, but its significance in the limited context could be overstated. What the survey reveals is that about half of the villages which are identified as family villages were named for those who divided the properties which eventually accommodated villages; but, given the personal factor that was present in the division of property, it is perhaps surprising that the incidence of the eponymous factor was not higher. However, it must also be noticed that villages of whatever kind were not being established in newly opened or newly settled country, and that most segments of the landscape had already been named, usually for a plantation or by a planter. Therefore, to the extent that new names, mainly attached to all types of villages, became inscribed on the landscape, these can be regarded as evidence that contemporaries fully realized that new processes were at work, and that it was appropriate that the names of individuals should be inscribed on those portions of the landscape which their activities had positively affected.



## Conclusion

Can the bequest and family villages be regarded as distinct village types or variants of village types? The evidence, while it identifies the specific *origins* of some villages, is not all compelling about the extent to which those origins endowed the villages with particular characteristics that were sustained over time. Therefore, it is impossible to claim that these villages, in organization, function and even composition of population, had an existence that could be favourably compared with, for example, that of the mission villages of Jamaica or the communal villages of Guyana. Rather, it would appear that, within a generation or less, the bequest and family villages in Barbados were indistinguishable from other villages in the island, particularly because the lots were sold outside of the family unit. Presumably, this occurred because the owners of divided property perceived a chance to make a profit, or because members of families had alternative places of residence and were therefore keen to decamp areas that were attracting the presence of outsiders. Whatever the precise reasons for the changes in ownership and occupancy, it seems obvious that bequest and family villages deserve attention because, as bases for smallholder settlement, those divided properties operated as important agencies of transfer of a scarce resource to some of those who were in desperate need of sites for independent living space, for sites on which to construct the chattel village.

## NOTES

1. The term "chattel village" is borrowed from Mary Chamberlain's 1988 oral history project, "Chattel Village: Country Life in Barbados". I also wish to acknowledge the research assistance provided by Jenny Jemmott, Trevor Marshall, Bentley Gibbs, and the late Ronald Hughes.
2. See in particular: Paget, "Church Settlements", and "Free Village"; Mintz, "Historical Sociology", and *Caribbean*, 157-79; Douglas Hall, *Free Jamaica*, 16-26, 158-64, 182-206, 234-35; Eisner, 210-17; Holt, 143-76; Catherine Hall, 120-39; Farley, "Village Settlements", and "Peasantry"; Young, 9-23, 219-20, 223-25; Adamson, 34-41, 57-103; Moore, 93-107; Wood, 48-51; Brereton, 9, 110-51; Craig-James, 1: 83-117; Trouillot, 75-94, 185-95; Brizan, 135-41; Marshall, "Emergence", 179-83; Douglas Hall, *Five*, 41-45; Dyde, 154-56.
3. Higman, 41; Green, 193; Carter, 17-83; Starkey, 117-118.
4. Extract from William Knibb's letter of 29 November 1838 to Dr James Hoby. Quoted in Hinton, 305.

5. Parliamentary Papers (PP) 1859 xxi, Hincks to Lytton, 1 September 1858, no. 48.
6. Sewell, 32, 34, 58.
7. Green, 322. Note, however, that Starkey in 1939 (118, 122–23) found evidence of the acquisition of “peasant holdings”.
8. Levy, 79; Newton, 268. I may have misled scholars, including Melanie Newton, when I wrote in 2007 that Rock Hall was one of “a few” free villages that was established. See Marshall, “Rock Hall”, 3.
9. See Greenfield, *English Rustics*, 77–80; Handler, 45–60; Sutton, 19, 67. Greenfield’s village was Workmans in St George, Handler’s was Chalky Mount in St Andrew, and Sutton’s was Ellerton in St George.
10. *Official Gazette*, 3 November 1885, Report of Water Supply Commission, with Appendices. For reasons that are unknown, the St Thomas vestry failed to respond to the circular.
11. Beckles, 10, 114; Sheppard, 41–77.
12. See Carter, 23–29, 51–54.
13. For early evidence of these practices, see Marshall, “Rock Hall”, 43–44.
14. For the persistence of places and their role in village formation, see Marshall (2013), 21–82.
15. Starkey, 45–49; Skeete, 25–52.
16. *Agricultural Reporter*, 23 February 1911. In the late nineteenth century, the Governor, the Chief Justice, and the Master of the Court of Chancery had expressed similar views. On the other hand, the *Advocate* took the line (22 February 1911) that “the occasional cutting up of an estate affords a safety valve to the thrifty peasantry”.
17. Skeete, 6, 14–15; Starkey, 129–30, 134, 183–84; Roberts, 281–86; Richardson, 173–96.
18. *Agricultural Reporter*, 21 February 1911.
19. PP 1849 xxxiv (1126), Colebrooke to Grey, 27 April 1849.
20. See Hughes, “Sweet Bottom”, “Jacob Hinds”; Bush, 115–18; Cumberbatch, 144–94.
21. BDA, RB4/77/25, will of Nathaniel Kirton, 23 August 1858.
22. BDA, RB6/62/187, will of Reynold Alleyne Ellcock, 1 November 1820; Marshall, “Rock Hall”, 10–11.
23. BDA, RB4/75/86, will of Benjamin Armstrong, 17 January 1853; original will of William Francis Spooner, 11 November 1842.
24. Marshall, “Rock Hall”, 24–29.
25. BDA, RB4/77/25, will of Nathaniel Kirton; RB4/71/196, will of Samuel Hall Lord, 8 July 1844; RB1/315/325, trust deed executed by Caroline Sarah Briggs, 13 November 1851; RB4/67/89, will of Robert Hudgwell Batson, 8 January 1833; RB/4/67/17, will with codicil of Jacob Hinds, 1 March 1832. Hinds, in a letter written from London on 9 January 1832, committed his “poor unfortunate distress’d children” to the friendship and protection of George Hewitt, one of the executors of his will.

26. BDA, RB1/284/129, deed of gift, 15 April 1830, executed by James Vaughan; RB1/317/255, deed of gift, 19 December 1852, executed by John Vaughan; RB4/78/481, will of Rebecca Jane Garnes, 23 January 1852; RB1/285/217, RB1/296/167, trust deeds executed by Thomas Drake Barker on 9 December 1830 and 2 August 1833.
27. See, in particular, Greenfield, "Land Tenure", 165-76; Besson, 127-94; Carnegie, 83-96.
28. BDA, original will of Samuel Sargeant, 17 June 1839; original will of William Johnson Bowen, 29 April 1847; RB1/309/603, 27 July 1847, RB1/315/173, 11 March 1848, deeds recording land sales at Greenidges.
29. BDA, RB1/314/472, trust deed executed by John Bayley, 1 July 1852; RB4/82/414, will of Richard Thomas Roach, 6 September 1865; St George Parish Rate Book, 1893. For the notion of "buy land"/ "buy ground", see Greenfield, "Land Tenure", 168-69; Chamberlain, 199-208.
30. BDA, RB/6/29/574, will of Patience Kennedy, 26 October 1794; RB4/66/225, will of Edward Brathwaite, 23 April 1831; RB4/75/485, will of Moses Brathwaite, 3 November 1854; RB4/79/414, will of Sam Brathwaite, 3 April 1868. Edward Brathwaite referred to Patience Kennedy in this fashion: "whom I deemed my wife".
31. A good example of those arrangements can be found in James Sealy's will of 17 February 1857. He stipulated that his Bright Hill property should be divided, more or less equally, among his five children, with the proviso that the survivors should share the portion(s) of whichever heirs died without lawful issue. In addition, he ordered that his property was to be kept together for three years after his death; that the sugar works and distillery were "to be kept up at the joint expense of every individual who is to benefit [from] one inch of my land"; and that special arrangements should be made for the maintenance and support of an evidently incapacitated son.
32. BDA, RB4/76/370, will of John Christopher Douglin, 13 September 1852; RB4/85/274, will of George Francis Holder, 4 March 1860.
33. BDA, RB4/77/585, will of William John Nurse, 6 June 1853; St Philip Rate Book, 1875. Despite its large size, the village did not rate separate mention in the list of "principal villages" which the chairman of the Vestry identified in 1885. Presumably, he grouped it with the neighbouring district of Six Roads, which he identified as "Six Roads, etc."

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## Treated Like Slaves

### Black Caribbean Labourers in the Modern Cuban Sugar Industry, 1910–1930

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PHILIP A. HOWARD

The destruction of the sugar industry and a portion of its black labour force during the Cuban War of Independence (1895–1898) proved to be a watershed event in the social and economic history of the island. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the cultivation of sugar cane with the labour power of the enslaved African had fostered the island's social and economic development. Employing racial and ethnic hierarchies, sugar producers crafted an extremely harsh and regimented labour system under the institution of slavery. As a result, by the 1870s they had become the world's largest supplier of raw sugar. In 1886, the plantation owners, and their dependent cane farmers replaced African slavery with an industrial wage-labour system. Their racist beliefs encouraged them to continue to view the approximately two hundred and fifty thousand blacks and their descendants as natural born cane cutters. Black Cubans were poorly paid to cultivate, harvest, and process sugar cane into raw sugar.

As the industry lay in ruins after 1898, a host of Cuban, American, and European sugar companies appeared to resuscitate and expand the industry. During the US military occupation of the island (1898–1902) they received financial support from some of the most important commercial banks of the United States of America, Great Britain, Canada, and Spain. Foreign credit and capital allowed Cuban and American companies not only to rebuild the plantations and *centrales* in the traditional sugar-producing western provinces of Havana and Matanzas, but

also to purchase large tracts of land in the central and eastern provinces of Santa Clara, Camagüey and Oriente. In the latter, they constructed the most technologically advanced and largest sugar mills in the world, surrounded by thousands of acres of sugar cane.

In spite of these developments, the growing and harvesting of sugar cane remained a manual endeavour. Before the American and Cuban sugar companies could resuscitate the industry, and subsequently increase both the size of their factories' hinterland and capacities to grind cane, they required a surplus of cheap labourers. When the sugar companies concluded that native and Spanish workers were unattractive and incompetent, they convinced the government that thousands of black agricultural workers from nearby Haiti, Jamaica, as well as from the British, French and Dutch islands would solve their labour problem. Promised better wages than they could earn at home the sugar companies imported some 190,000 Haitians and 120,959 Jamaicans alone between 1911 and 1930.<sup>1</sup> Because of the preponderance of Haitian and Jamaican workers, or *braceros* as they were called by the government officials and sugar companies' administrators, their lives and conditions are the subject of this article.

How did a labour shortage specifically obtain in the sugar industry? What role did the American multinationals' definitions of race and ethnicity play in creating this problem? What systemic characteristics of sugar production exacerbated the labour problem? Why did sugar producers, particularly Americans, view black Caribbean workers as ideal *macheteros* and *carreteros*?<sup>2</sup> Finally, how did the experiences of black Caribbean workers resemble generally those of bonded men and women in the nineteenth century?

This study shows how American capital revitalized the fundamental elements of the plantation complex in Cuba, bringing together foreign capital and labour in order to produce sugar for the world economy. Once in Cuba, the race, ethnicity, and class of the black immigrant labourers determined their work and living conditions on the sugar enclaves. These agricultural landscapes were designed to reproduce a "quasi-colonial ruling class culture" that imposed a rigid class-colour hierarchy in accordance with American racial, ethnic, and class constructs, according to Barry Carr. More importantly, Carr believes, however, that the American definitions of race and ethnicity were tempered by a "paternalistic management style" that proved to be a "powerful mechanism of control" for the American sugar companies.<sup>3</sup>

This brief study, on the other hand, will show that the hegemonic



actions and policies that the sugar companies and their dependents staged publically for the *braceros'* consumption sought to regulate and exaggerate their subjugation and exploitation. The socioeconomic and cultural attitudes on race and ethnicity, along with certain institutions, and artifacts that were originally created during the era of African enslavement, but modernized at the turn of the twentieth century, appear to have influenced their lives. In other words, although the black *braceros* were considered industrial-wage workers, aspects of their social and economic lives were reminiscent of African enslavement. The racist concepts of the time period reinforced their inferior status as exploited black immigrants in Cuba. In order to control and appropriate the labour of Haitians and Jamaicans, the sugar companies also relied upon coercion and violence more than paternalism. Before we explore the lives of the black Caribbean immigrants it is important to examine how American and foreign capital became an integral factor in resuscitating and expanding the sugar industry.

Although the 1899 Foraker Amendment of the US Congress prohibited American citizens from purchasing large tracts of land in Cuba, a host of American companies and their agents appeared in Cuba.<sup>4</sup> After arriving, a US businessman reported: "In nowhere else in the world are there such chances for the success for the man of moderate means, as well as for the capitalist, as Cuba offers today. I advise the capitalist to invest in Cuba . . ."<sup>5</sup> Even representatives of the US government courted members of the American business community. State Department officials informed them that "land can be bought in unlimited quantities at from one-half to one-twentieth of its value before the insurrection . . . For the ordinarily prudent man with some capital, who is willing to work, [Cuba] has opportunities for success and wealth . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Some American journalists reported on the lack of capital and credit among Cuban sugar producers to induce their fellow countrymen to economically rescue the island's most profitable industry. In March 1899, the American sugar industry's trade paper, *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer*, reported "it is a well-known fact that the majority of planters do not own sufficient means to purchase and run a plantation, and all they possess is through credit, and any measure to weaken or do away with credit would be their ruin . . . [and] a death blow to the Cuban sugar industry."<sup>7</sup> The US Military Governor of Cuba, Major-General John Brooks' suspension of the collection of all debts and mortgages of the sugar producers failed to give them time to obtain credit. Some Cuban planters were compelled to sell their estates and mills to

American and foreign businessmen. Others watched as mostly American companies purchased large tracts of land in the central and eastern provinces to produce sugar.

The American multinational that took the lead was the United Fruit Company of Boston, Massachusetts. Having constructed its first sugar mill, the "Boston" - on the coastal plain of Nipe Bay along the northern shore of Oriente near the town of Banes in the early 1890s - it decided to locate a second mill nearby called the "Preston". It consisted of twenty-five thousand acres of land as well as another fifteen hundred acres of institutional cane fields.<sup>8</sup> The "Preston" relied upon over one hundred miles of private rail lines, seventeen locomotives, and six hundred and forty cane wagons while employing five thousand workers during the harvest.<sup>9</sup> In May 1899, a "powerful New York syndicate" had offered the owner of the central "San Miguel" Francisco Picabin, \$1,200,000 for his mill at Puerto de Padre near Puerto Principe. Picabin, however, demanded \$1,500,000 for the mill.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile the Rionda-Braga family of New York began to modernize their mill at Tuínucú that they had constructed in the early 1890s but had been destroyed during the War of Independence. In 1901, they became shareholders in the McCahan Sugar Refining Company of Philadelphia in order to develop an eighty thousand acre plantation and mill called the "Francisco" located on Camagüey's southern coast.<sup>11</sup> Possessing large sugar enclaves caused American sugar companies to complain about a scarcity of cheap fieldworkers.

In order to take advantage of a series of technological advances that revolutionized the processing of sugar cane while keeping production costs low, the companies required a large labour force. The cultivation and harvesting of sugar cane continued to be done as it had been for centuries, "by brute physical strength and by the quantity rather than the quality and technological state of labor".<sup>12</sup> In addition, the biological features of sugar cane had always made it a labour-intensive crop. After it is harvested, the amount of sucrose inside of the cane quickly declines within three days as a result of an unpreventable bacterial disease. This characteristic required the mill owners to start grinding the cane immediately and in a factory in close proximity to the cane fields. Without this immediate processing "on site", the quality of the ground raw sugar and its juice could not be shipped abroad since it spoiled before reaching a number of American refineries.<sup>13</sup> As a result, a shortage of labour power or even a disruption in its steady supply prohibited the sugar companies from coordinating the cutting and grinding of cane.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, the only way to operate a successful and profitable sugar company was to continue to grow and process as much sugar cane as possible with a large reserve army of cheap agricultural labour. Traveling through the provinces of Camagüey and Oriente in 1908, Robert T. Hill of the American Geological Survey, observed how: "These estates possess the most scientific and recent inventions for the cultivation of the cane and the extraction of its juices and their conversion into crystal . . . The great centrals, or grinding plants, are enormous establishments . . . Some of the centrals have over forty miles of private railroads leading from the fields to the mills."<sup>15</sup> Forbes Lindsay also noticed the size of the central "Preston". He discovered that "The main building, entirely of steel construction, has a . . . grinding capacity of 308,000 tons of cane a day [and] is shortly to be increased to 500,000 tons, when the factory will be the largest in the world."<sup>16</sup>

As sugar cultivation expanded into the central and eastern provinces, the labour question greatly preoccupied the majority of sugar companies and their *colonos* or cane planters. They believed that the Cuban labour market could not supply an excess of workers required to reach their ambitious goal of producing for the first time 1,400,000 tonnes of raw sugar as early as 1905.<sup>17</sup> During the first decade of the Republic, Cuban immigration laws banned the entrance of people of African ancestry. Therefore sugar producers sought to recruit labour from Spain and the Canary Islands to supplement the pool of native workers. Military Order 155 issued in May 1902 gave preference to these immigrants hoping that their arrival would help the government also to "whiten" the Republic. By 1910, more than eighty per cent of all immigrants entering the island came from Spain and the Canary Islands. Arriving with their families, 185,393 Spanish immigrants entered Cuba but found the work regime and the low piece-rate wages that cane cutters and haulers received objectionable. They preferred to make a living in the urban areas. Many also joined the pro-Spanish administration of President Tomás Estrada Palma (1901-1908).<sup>18</sup> As a result, the sugar companies voiced their concern to the government about the unsuitable nature of the European immigrants. They also emphasized that without a surplus of workers they were unable to open new land to cultivate sugar cane.

Although the majority of mill owners had previously praised the black Cuban workers, they now found them unsuitable as well. Santiago Dod, a Cuban journalist covering the labour shortage, discussed with an American administrator of a large central in Camagüey why the industry in general could no longer rely on black Cubans fieldworkers.

He paid his cane cutters ten cents per one hundred arrobas or twenty-five hundred pounds of cane cut. If they worked hard they could earn \$1.40 per day. But he complained that although they worked hard, they could work even harder, and in doing so could cut "twice or thrice that amount in the best fields, and earn very high wages, but seldom have the ambition enough to do so".<sup>19</sup> Not only did his current workers lack ambition, but also the physical stamina to constantly perform the hardest kinds of tasks. He emphasized that they "are not strong enough to endure the heavy strain for a whole week, and when no rest is given Sundays they are forced to recuperate from six to eight days every month or succumb". In the mind of this manager, "the average Cuban toiler leaves much to be desired."<sup>20</sup>

Such expressions reflected similar racist sentiments that the old nineteenth-century sugar plantocrats, and former slave owners shared during the immediate post-emancipation period throughout the plantation economies of the Caribbean. It also showed the amount of wide-ranging power the mill owners and their managers sought to wield over the issue of production on the enclaves.<sup>21</sup> It seems that the racial and ethnic definitions constructed by Cuban and American businessmen about the average black Cuban *machetero* made them unredeemable and unsuitable. They described their cane workers as "happy-go-lucky shirkers of work" with a "careless inaptitude" who "perform half the work that they should do because they are rendered useless by a pernicious ignorance".<sup>22</sup> Considered inappropriate for the level of degradation and exploitation that the sugar companies sought to impose on their pool of cheap fieldworkers, black Cubans were soon replaced by black Caribbean immigrants.

It is noteworthy that Dod's interview with the American manager occurred three years after black and white Cubans along with Spanish sugar workers staged a series of successful strikes on a number of mills located near Cruces, in the province of Santa Clara.<sup>23</sup> It is likely that the administrator's views towards black Cuban workers were intended to persuade the government to repeal the ban on black immigration. The decision to replace black Cuban workers with black Caribbean *braceros* remains hidden. Yet the history of the United Fruit Company in Latin America and the Caribbean suggests that when "the relative exploitability of [an] ethnic group has changed" because of "changing forces (economic and social) among various groups . . . distinct patterns of ethnic succession in the occupational hierarchy [has obtained] since the the turn of the century."<sup>24</sup>

Studying how race and ethnicity informed the segmented labour system on this American multinational's banana plantations in Costa Rica, Phillip Bourgois discovered that when West Indian immigrant workers, particularly Jamaicans, tried to unionize during the 1920s, the company replaced them with local and indigenous workers who were considered more submissive.<sup>25</sup> In Cuba, when the sugar companies saw their workers protest their wages and work conditions, the relationship changed, causing the companies to look for a group of workers they thought they could exploit. They concluded that a segmented labour system based upon racial and ethnic ideologies and applied to black Caribbean workers would stifle possible worker solidarity and protest. As a result, although the representatives of the sugar companies shared similar racist beliefs about the majority of black Caribbean *braceros*, their race and ethnicity never disqualified them. In fact, most American and Cuban sugar producers believed that when compared with other black Caribbean fieldworkers, the Haitians were superior *macheteros*, but nothing more. They used the Haitians' ethnicity to make this conclusion. That the Haitian *braceros* were "savages" that lacked the skills that "the races of a superior civilization" possessed, not only made them ideal cane cutters and haulers, but also natural born ones.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile, Americans used the Jamaicans' ethnic identity, including their protestant religion, familiarity with the English language, proper manners, and deference towards whites and other social superiors to privilege their labour power, offering them opportunity to not only work in the cane fields but inside of the mills as artisans.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the sugar companies along with the government officials deliberately manipulated the Jamaicans' race and ethnicity to marginalize them. The term "Jamaquino" or "Jamaicano" became pejoratives often used synonymously for "undesireable".<sup>28</sup>

As American capital continued to open more land for the cultivation of sugar cane, their racial and ethnic preferences obtained. American investment in the industry grew from \$30 million in 1906 to \$50 million by 1911. In addition, Americans spent another \$55 million on railroad construction, shipping, banking, and mortgages and credit.<sup>29</sup> It was in this context that President José Miguel Gómez in 1913 amended the immigration laws to permit the United Fruit Company and other sugar companies to import thousands of black immigrant workers. In so doing, between 1913 and 1920, most American-owned companies allocated \$50,000 to as much as \$150,000 annually to recruit and import black Caribbean workers.<sup>30</sup> The sugar producers understood that if they were going to expand their grinding capacity they needed a surplus of workers.

Such had always been the case in Cuba since the cultivation of sugar "took off" at the beginning of the nineteenth century. According to Manuel Moreno Fraginals, "The number of slaves decided the volume of production and the yield was measured in arrobas per Negro. The growth of sugar manufacturing was determined by the ability to employ labor on a grand scale."<sup>31</sup>

Once they arrived the experiences of the black Caribbean *braceros* hauntingly resembled those of their ancestors who had been enslaved more than a century earlier. And similar to that era, the historical record produced by the officials of the government and the sugar mills, consisted of metaphorical and idiomatic expressions of the workers' inferiority. How these functionaries welcomed and treated the emigrants underscored the beginning of their degradation in Cuba.

Landing at Havana, Nuevitas, Morón, Banes, Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba, the black immigrants arrived carrying their sole possessions in either suitcases or bundles of clothes wrapped with string or rope. They also carried between five and ten dollars, which were more than enough to enter the island according to the immigration laws. If they disembarked at Santiago de Cuba, Cuban officials directed them to a quarantine ground, where they stayed for two or three days in order to receive medical examinations to check "if you have any fever or any plague", according to the Jamaican named Fearon who travelled to Cuba in 1915 at the age of nineteen.<sup>32</sup>

Undoubtedly the government's concern with the health of the *braceros* reflected their assumed biological threat to society. Concurrently, the medical checkups reinforced their alien status as well. Once the doctors verified that the workers were healthy and without any kind of contagion, the workers were given a round of vaccinations. Then, Cuban officials asked the black migrant workers a series of questions that if they responded effectively to would be admitted into the country. Interestingly, some immigration officials in Havana noticed how "the labor agents have selected perfect physical specimens in order to insure that their workers were permitted to enter the island."<sup>33</sup> The preoccupation with the physical attributes of the emigrants was reminiscent of the buyers who attended the slave markets in the Caribbean during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Beyond the vigilance of the port authorities, the emigrant labour brokers either began to recruit the recently arrived immigrants who had travelled alone and without a contract, or they reassembled the contingent of workers that they had accompanied from Barbados,

Curaço, Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, and Colón and Bocas del Toro, Panama. Separated into their respective *cuadrillas* by their agents, they were marched to the train station and ordered to enter the cars that were reserved for hauling sugar cane. Transporting the *braceros* in these dirty and musty rattletraps helped the mills reduce their expenses, while painting for the workers, in no uncertain terms, the fact that they had become commodities like the sugar cane they were assigned to cut and haul.

As they travelled into the sugar growing regions of Camagüey and Oriente, they probably observed thousands of fallen trees that were once part of the vast forests of the countryside. If some had been contracted to cut cane on the *colonia* "Victoria", a plantation that supplied the central "Manatí, they would have entered an area that consisted of 1,833 acres". To establish this plantation more than half of region's trees were felled and burned. By May of 1913, 1,666 acres of the total 1,833 had been planted with sugarcane.<sup>34</sup>

For workers like John Barry who arrived alone, they boarded a train operated by the Cuban Central Railroad "that the cane cutters used to embark from Santiago de Cuba to the town of Banes".<sup>35</sup> A former Banes Division foreman of the central "Boston": vividly remembered the scene of the black Caribbean *braceros* entering the *batey* of that mill.

They came heaped inside of cane cars until reaching the final stop. Like many of them, they were collected and picked out on the side of the Calle Tráfico that was located in front of the [mill's] office. There they were organized and told to wear a number that each one received. Then the mayoral or administrator and the emigrant brokers forcefully divided them up, pushing and shoving the *braceros* causing some of them to fall. When order had been restored they were referred to as number so and so or nothing more than John Doe.<sup>36</sup>

The dramatic chaos experienced by the workers suggests that it could have been staged, since what the foreman witnessed resembled the same activities of a slave market. Then and during the 1910s, the *braceros* were treated in the same fashion in order to distract and disorientate them so the officials of the sugar mill could complete the transformative process associated with the recruitment of the workers as soon as they landed. In a matter of moments they had become a thing, identified only by a number without a name.

Lured to Cuba by the opportunity of earning better wages in exchange for cutting sugar cane, Haitian, Jamaican and other British West Indian immigrants confronted living and working conditions that reinforced their marginalization and powerlessness as black emigrant workers.

The isolated agrarian landscapes known as the sugar enclaves that the workers resided in fostered their subjugation and exploitation. Becoming what James Kunstler has called "nowhere spaces", the enclaves were "designed and regulated to fit the needs of capitalist accumulation and . . . to optimize control over labor, goods, and consumers".<sup>37</sup> Central to fulfilling these objectives were two spatial and structural artifacts from the plantation slave era that were modernized at the turn of the century, the *batey* and the *barracón*.

Barry Carr has described the *bateyes* located in Camagüey and Oriente as "the central yard[s]" where the sugar factories were located. As such, these sites "incorporated the buildings involved in the processing of sugarcane, administrative offices, sugar laboratories, foundries, carpentry and machine shops", as well as other ancillary offices and shops. He also believes that the *bateyes* acted like a small city, which offered its inhabitants the goods and services typical of an urban centre.<sup>38</sup> But the *bateyes* also became the sites where the *colonos*, mill owners and their cohort exercised their domination over the black Caribbean workers. During African enslavement, the *batey* became the central plaza of the sugar plantation that was surrounded by *casa viviendas* (the homes of owners, and managerial staff), *bohios* (thatch-roofed peasant homes), and the *barracones* (the slave barracks or quarters). The infirmary and the mill itself also enclosed the *batey*. The *batey* became the site where the enslaved were collected in the morning and commanded into the fields. This space became the site where they were punished violently.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, the enslaved African themselves were permitted to employ the *batey* for social functions such as to celebrate the birth of their children, mourn the death of loved ones, and meet with each other to sing, and dance.<sup>40</sup>

A degree of uniformity among the plantations and *bateyes* in Cuba as well as in other Caribbean islands occurred after the abolition of slavery and the advent of wage labour.<sup>41</sup> They became part of more regimented enclaves so that the owners, managers, and later company officials could closely supervise and control the spaces and behaviour of their workforce. An "international style" of the plantation enclave emerged at the turn of the twentieth century when a host of multinational corporations became the primary producers of sugar worldwide, according to Samuel Martínez.<sup>42</sup> For example, the majority of sugar companies used the *batey* as the principal site where they recruited and hired seasonal and day labourers.

To control their workers, the owners of the central factories estab-



lished commercial businesses that catered to the needs of their employees. "La tienda mixta", or company store, became one of the most important instruments to govern and retain sugar cane workers. The company store situated on the *colonia* "Victoria" part of the central "Manatí's" properties, sold food like "tasajo" or jerked beef, and Jamaican rum, shoes, hats and clothing as luxury items. During the *zafra*, the fieldworkers reportedly purchased between \$200.00 and \$400.00 worth of merchandise per day. Many workers also went to the company store to supplement their daily food rations as well, or when they wanted to eat "a little more rice and beans that cost them a few centavos . . . [But] they often did this only during the *zafra* when they could pay their bills in full".<sup>43</sup> When their wages ran out, many workers went into debt, purchasing what they needed on credit.

It is noteworthy that on a noticeable number of *bateyes*, it was common for the labour brokers who were sent throughout the Caribbean to recruit the *braceros* to operate the mills' company stores. In addition, the *braceros* also had to deal with numerous loan sharks who worked with the shopkeepers in order to filch the workers out of their savings and wages. Unable to pay for food and other items, the moneylenders positioned themselves in front of the stores and waited for potential victims. Presenting themselves as sympathetic patrons, they made cash readily available to workers. They also issued "vales" or coupons printed by the companies that were only redeemable at their stores. But the mechanism that forced many workers to rollover their debt every month was the usurious rates of interest imposed by the stores as well as their duplicitous moneylenders. For example, in order to borrow small sums of money, the loan sharks charged between twenty to thirty per cent interest.<sup>44</sup>

The *barracón* was another edifice that shaped the landscape of the *bateyes*, and reinforced the subordinate status of the *braceros*. Designed in the nineteenth century to house the plantation slaves, the *barracón* was constructed along the lines of a jail. During and after the slave era, plantation owners used it to gather the manual workforce under one roof in order to scrutinize, and effect control. The front of the *barracón* became the site where the overseer counted the work gangs as they went to cut cane in the morning and returned at night. Unlike the *senzalas* or slave quarters of Brazil, access to a Cuban *barracón* was through only one outside door. The *barracón* had no windows. The single entrance ensured that the enslaved would not escape unnoticed. The *barracón* also contained a common kitchen and bathroom, designated simply by a pit latrine dug into the dirt floor.<sup>45</sup>

By 1910, the mill owners in Cuba and elsewhere slightly altered the architectural style of the *barracón*. Now a large rectangular building, the size of which was determined by the number of workers set aside to labour in a particular cane field, these common dormitories often consisted of fifteen rooms that five or more *braceros* were forced to share. In order to provide the workers with a sense of freedom, the doors of all of the rooms were now positioned on the outside of the building.<sup>46</sup> The conditions inside of the *barracones* were critical for the physical and psychological well-being of the workers. They hoped that their living quarters would be clean and hospitable in order to reduce the physical and mental stress from cutting cane for as long as sixteen hours a day. Nonetheless, providing adequate housing became a divisive issue for some companies.

As long as the sugar industry required black immigrant labourers, and the competition between the companies for their labour power continued, the housing for workers proved problematic. One manager insisted that his employer help him solve his housing problem. Asking for funds to construct more living quarters for the company's field-workers at the height of the industry's prosperity, engendered by World War I, the manager of the "Manatí" made it clear to the directors of Cuba Cane in New York that "[W]e already have . . . a number of employees and laborers who are living under very bad conditions on account of our not having buildings where to lodge them."<sup>47</sup> His solution was to increase the mill's budget for housing so that he could begin constructing better lodgings to accommodate the growing field workforce.

At the start of the harvest of 1919, Gerard Smith, the manager of the central "Francisco" in Camagüey, also complained to Manuel Rionda who was then residing at the central "Tuínucú" in Las Villas, that the company's *colonos* were providing poor housing for the cane cutters. The quality of the *barracones* were so awful that he concluded that even the Chinese government officials in charge of recruiting Chinese emigrants for the company would never agree to bring and lodge them in such dreadful barracks that the majority of their *colonos* had available.<sup>48</sup> Estimating that it would cost only thirty dollars per man "to build the required number of buildings, and to provide proper barracks", Smith advised Rionda "that the company needs to make sacrifices in order to better the labor conditions which now are becoming almost unbearable".<sup>49</sup>

Because of the internationalization of the sugar enclave, a process

that encouraged multinational sugar producers to adopt similar architectural designs for all of the buildings located on their *bateyes*, the intolerable living conditions that the black *macheteros* and *carreteros* endured on the "Francisco" likely resembled those that some Haitians *braceros*, working in the American-dominated sugar industry of the Dominican Republic, experienced as well. In Maurice Lemoine's historical novel, when the *braceros* returned to their *barracón* after cutting cane, they were hit by

an odor of mustiness and shit. It was a habitation, twenty feet wide and two hundred feet long, divided off every twenty feet by a partition. Each room so demarcated had a door with a number. [They were] empty, windowless cells, practically devoid of aeration in this climate. A cot or two, a bunk bed here and there, none with mattresses, made up a vague semblance of furniture. And that was it. Really, nothing else at all. They were herded in and assigned four to each cubicle . . . four walls. Not a table, not a chair, nothing in the way of hygienic facilities, not even a sink. . . .<sup>50</sup>

The description of this American built barrack dramatically presented by Lemoine, and undoubtedly reminiscent of the slave quarters of a century earlier, gives substance as to why so many *braceros* returned home in poor health at the end of the *zafra*. While working for the central "Preston", a Jamaican *bracero*, S.O. Gayle, revealed that the living quarters for the workers were intolerable. He believed that the mill's *barracones* caused "diseases among the laborers sometimes consumption, sometime fevers, and [as a result] deaths take place regularly".<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile at the central "Algodones", a former manual labourer remembered "the poor, the workers, those who produced everything lived in humble homes or in the inhumane barracks".<sup>52</sup> Even a foreman on the central "Boston" noted the miserable housing for the Haitian *macheteros*. "How did they live, [he was asked]; In the *barracones* . . . but this was no life, having only a few *barracones* for thousands of Haitians, heaped together like pigs in a corral. Many became very sick and later died."<sup>53</sup>

A typical workday for these black migrants usually began between 3:00 and 4:00 in the morning. After they enjoyed a little breakfast of rice and beans or bread, the foremen separated the workers into teams of four men and guided them into the cane fields. As they walked into the fields of sugar cane that stood ten feet high, the black Antillean *braceros*, who worked for the central "Cunagua" situated near the town of Morón, confronted 30,525 acres of cane to cut. Meanwhile, the *macheteros* who left the barracks of the central "Chaparra" in Oriente,

once managed by the President of Cuba, Mario Menocal, looked in awe to see 75,900 acres of sugar cane.<sup>54</sup>

The *macheteros* not only cut cane but were also responsible for gathering and stacking it so that the cuttings could be picked up by the *carreteros*. This task seemed insurmountable given the size of the fields they worked. Yet this job had to be completed before the workers could receive their pay. The wagon driver hauled the cane back to the *batey* and presented it to the "pesador" who weighed it. It was then that the cane cutters realized how much cane they had produced for that day. The majority of mill owners calculated that a good industrial cane worker could produce between 3.5 and 4.5 tonnes per day of mature and healthy cane.

The racial and ethnic hierarchies crafted by the companies allowed some Jamaican immigrants and other British West Indians to work in the mills. They often worked as carpenters and masons. Others gained employment as mechanics, electricians, mill feeders, and boiler attendants, while others bagged the raw sugar. The segmented labour system usually denied Haitian workers from working in these occupations. Their ethnicity and language disqualified them. At the same time, the English language and other attributes ascribed to the Jamaicans privileged them so they could obtain a degree of vocational mobility working inside as skilled craftsmen. Together with agricultural workers, black Caribbean workers assisted in increasing the average production of the mills located in the central and eastern provinces by over 400 per cent between 1904 and 1919.<sup>55</sup>

The fieldworker earned between seventy cents and five dollars per one hundred *arrobas* of cane cut (one and one-quarter tonnes) between 1912 and 1917.<sup>56</sup> The geographical expansion of the industry's hinterland, the competition for black Caribbean workers, the increase in the subsequent production levels, along with the relatively high price of sugar encouraged by World War I after 1914, helped to increase the wages for the cane cutters. After the collapse in the price of sugar in the fall of 1920 (the price dropped from 22.5 cents in May 1920 to 3.75 cents in November 1920) the piece-rate wages cane cutters and haulers received never exceeded \$1.50 per 100 *arrobas* in the 1920s.

Because the companies could never resolve the problem of their sugar cane growing at a faster rate than the island's supply of native workers, as well as their imported workforce, they tried to appropriate as much labour from the *braceros* as possible. According to Jorge Ibarra, the drudgery that became their lot during and after the *zafra* resembled

that of the enslaved blacks during the nineteenth century. "For the miserable salaries, the macheteros continued working ten, twelve, and fourteen hours daily, the same amount of time during the colonial era. That is to say, the condition and life of the machetero had not fundamentally changed since the abolition of slavery. . ."<sup>57</sup> And the companies' demand for a surplus of workers encouraged them to use coercion to retain and control their black immigrant workers.

As the companies expanded their grinding capacities to supply the Allied nations with sugar, many *braceros* demonstrated that they would not accept being exploited. They attempted to leave those companies that paid them poorly and search for better wages and living conditions. In the spring of 1918, many planters reported that although Jamaicans and Haitians were still being imported into the eastern part of the country, "some trouble is [being] experienced in holding the laborers in any one place, due to the high cost of living. The men work just enough to get enough money to take them to another place in search of cheaper living conditions."<sup>58</sup> They moved from one mill to the next after learning that cane cutters could earn between \$1.20 and \$1.40 per one hundred arrobas, while most *colonos* and mill owners promised \$2.80 a day for skilled labourers. Many of these workers also decided to remove their labour from the sugar industry altogether, and work on the coffee farms.<sup>59</sup> To combat their workers' agency, the most anxious and non-competitive sugar producers locked the entrances of the *bateyes* to prevent their flight.

The claims that the companies were physically constraining the *braceros* with their guards and the rural police were reported in Jamaica and the other islands. In the spring of 1919, the *Daily Gleaner* of Kingston, Jamaica published a letter from a *bracero* named Demme disclosing to his brother that labourers were paid \$1.50 for cutting cane. He also informed him that, "they are treated like slaves." Demme alerted possible migrants like his brother that if they were coming to Cuba they would not be able to leave whenever they wanted. "All entrances to the estates are guarded by armed men and the only way to escape is by stealth, a forty mile flight through the woods."<sup>60</sup>

When the administrator of the central "Manatí" arrived in Kingston in March 1919 to recruit and contract more emigrants, he vehemently denied Demme's claims. His refutation did not dissuade the Jamaican newspaper from reporting other stories of coercion and abuse. On 20 April 1920, the *Daily Gleaner* revealed that most immigrant labourers were suffering while they worked under armed guards.<sup>61</sup> This became

a common experience for the *braceros*. On the central "Algodones" one worker remembered how the manager and his foremen threatened them daily to inspire fear and insecurity in order to control and intimidate them. "The fear of being fired without any explanation, and if you protested the conditions you were imprisoned or killed. Many times I saw my fellow *braceros* rounded up and handcuffed as their honor and pride were reduced by the glare of the unjust manager."<sup>62</sup> During the early 1920s, the mistreatment of the black Caribbean workers, particularly from Jamaica became so pronounced that government officials in Jamaica and Great Britain had to address their situation.

This article has revealed how after 1900 some American sugar companies were responsible for the resuscitation and expansion of the Cuban industry. Manipulating the race and ethnicity of people of African descent, they encouraged replacing black Cuban workers with black Caribbean immigrants. To subjugate and exploit the latter, especially Haitians and Jamaicans, certain ideologies, artifacts and institutions of the slave era were modernized. When the workers contested their status and conditions the sugar companies used force and intimidation to control their workers. It is not surprising that some black labourers believed that they were treated like slaves. As a result, it seems that the companies' use of paternalism was never as influential as some scholars have claimed.

## NOTES

1. Secretaria de Hacienda de la Republica de Cuba, *Inmigración y movimiento de pasajeros* (Havana, 1903–1930), 142.
2. Cuban sugar producers employed the terms *machetero* and *carretero* to refer to a cane cutter and hauler, respectively.
3. Carr, "Omnipotent and Omnipresent", 275.
4. Foraker, 42. Ferguson, 249–50.
5. *Cuba Buletin*, 2 February 1904, 12.
6. Hyatt and Hyatt, 95.
7. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXII, no. 12 (25 March 1899): 187.
8. Jenks, 129–30. In the late 1880s the Tropical Trading Company owned by Minor C. Keith merged with Lorenzo Dew Baker's and Andrew Preston's Boston Fruit Company in order to buy the banana plantations of the Banes Fruit Company. It obtained 3,000 *caballerias* or 99,000 acres located along the Nipe Bay. See James Figueredo, 57–59.
9. Wright, 470.

10. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXII, no. 21 (27 May 1899): 326.
11. Jenks, 129–30.
12. Moreno Friginals, 31.
13. Dye, 72.
14. Secretaria de Agricultura, Comercio y Trabajo de Cuba, *Memorandum: Condiciones de la industria azucarera en Cuba* (Havana, 1915), 10. This report was written by the leading sugar scientist of the time, F. Noel Deerr.
15. Hill, 77.
16. Lindsay, 172.
17. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXXIV, no. 1 (7 January 1905): 9.
18. See, *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXXIV, nos. 6 and 7 (11 February 1905): 88 and (18 February 1905): 103. Alvarez Estevez, 24–25.
19. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXXIV, no. 2 (14 January 1905): 28.
20. Ibid.
21. Beckford, 74.
22. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* XXXIV, no. 2 (14 January 1905): 28.
23. Dumoulin, 3–66.
24. Bourgois, 218–19.
25. Ibid., chapters 5–7.
26. Quoted Casey, 8–10.
27. See H.G. de Liser, 149–50; McLeod, 599–623.
28. Giovannetti, 252.
29. Quoted in Jenks, 164–65.
30. See Rionda-Braga Papers Collection. Correspondence of Díaz Ulzurrun. Record Group II, Series I, 1897–1917, Box 26, letter of 18 May 1917 and 10 August 1917. Academia de Ciencias de Cuba, *Indice historico de Camagüey* (Havana, 1979), 16. James Figueredo, 176; Hoernel, 120
31. Moreno Friginals, 15.
32. "Life in Jamaica in the Early Twentieth Century", Vol. Parish of Clarendon, "Man Boy", 5CMB, 14, recorded April 1975.
33. "Cuba May Keep Out Jamaicans: Thousands of our Labourers are Pouring into the Big Island", *Gleaner*, 13 April 1916, 1.
34. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* LIII, no. 3 (18 July 1914): 45.
35. "Life in Jamaica in the Early Twentieth Century", Vol. Parish of St. Thomas, "John B.", 75StTMA, 8, recorded February 1975.
36. Quoted in James Figueredo, 179.
37. See Kunstler, 1993. Quoted in Martínez, 33.
38. Carr, "Omnipotent and Omnipresent", 262.
39. Francisco Pérez de la Riva (1952), 12. Also see Moreno Friginals (1976).
40. See Miguel Barnet, *Biography*.

41. Martínez, 36.
42. Ibid., 36–37.
43. APC, "Informe [histórico] de la industria azucarera de Camagüey", "La historia del central Brasil".
44. Nuñez Machin, 28–29 and 19. How the company stores and moneylenders in Cuba treated the *braceros* is reminiscent of the patterns of deceit that similar institutions used to make black sharecroppers indebted to white landlords after emancipation in the United States of America. See Litwack, 130–42. Could the American sugar companies have taken this white southern strategy to Cuba in order to control and appropriate the labour of black Antillean workers?
45. Francisco Pérez de la Riva, 65–66. Also see Harrison, 8.
46. Francisco Pérez de la Riva, 77. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* LIII, no. 3 (18 July 1914): 45. Martínez, 37.
47. Rionda-Braga Papers, RG II, Series 10-a-c, Box, 9, Rionda sub-files 1911–1943, Letter from Díaz Ulzurrun to Directors, 12 May 1919.
48. Rionda-Braga Papers, RG II, Series, 10-a-c, Box 8, 1911–1943, Letter from Gerard Smith to M. Rionda, 5 January 1919.
49. Rionda-Braga Papers, RG II, Series, 10-a-c, Box, 8, 1911–1943, Letter from Gerard Smith to Rionda, 5 January 1919.
50. Lemoine, 58.
51. "Position of Jamaicans in Cuba", *Gleaner*, 25 January 1918, 16.
52. APC, Informe [historico] de la industria azucarera de Camagüey, "Mis historia es tu historia".
53. Quoted in James Figueredo, 179–80.
54. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* LXII, no. 23 (7 June 1919): 362 and XLVIII no. 16 (20 April 1912).
55. Juan Pérez de la Riva, 84 and Jerez Villarreal, 312.
56. Zanetti and García, 241; Hoernel, 124; and *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer*, XLIX no. 26 (28 December 1912).
57. Ibarra, 166.
58. *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* LX, no. 10 (9 March 1918): 150–51.
59. "Barbados Recruiting Agency, Cuba's Rival Attractions", *The Workman* 7, no. 34 (27 March 1920): 2. See Carr, "Identity, Class, and Nation", 77–108. Carr argues that large numbers of Haitians sought better wages and conditions on the coffee farms of Oriente after the mid 1920s. It appears that their display of power began when their labour was viewed as critical to the expansion of the sugar industry during World War I.
60. Quoted in *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer* LXII, no. 12 (22 March 1919): 185.
61. Quoted in "Protection for Jamaicans in Cuba", *The Workman* 7, no. 38 (24 April 1920): 1.
62. Archivo Provincial de Camagüey, La historia del central Algodones, "Mis historia es tu historia".



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## Mama Sranan's Children

### Ethnicity and Nation Building in Postcolonial Suriname

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ROSEMARIJN HOEFTE

Paramaribo, June 2013: banners and giant posters congratulate the Surinamese population with the anniversaries of 140 years of Hindustani (East Indian) immigration, 150 years of the abolition of slavery and 160 years of Chinese immigration. The heading of the banner reads "As nation . . . forward together / However we came together here." This is the third line of the National Anthem of Suriname. The festive decoration of the statue of "Mama Sranan" (Mother Suriname) holding her five children, symbolizing the population of Suriname, seems to underline this message. What does this tell us about nation building in Suriname in the early years of the twenty-first century? Is there a genuine effort to create a Surinamese nation or are ethnic and cultural pluralism still defining forces in society?

In the historiography of Suriname, ethnic dimensions often are foregrounded, while class is frequently linked to ethnicity. Traditionally, skin colour, ethnic origin, descent and legitimacy, occupation, and thus financial assets, gender, educational and cultural background and individual comportment ordained one's place in society. A classic historical study is R.A.J. van Lier's *Samenleving in een grensgebied*, first published in 1949 (translated as *Frontier Society: A Social Analysis of the History of Surinam* in 1971). Van Lier's analysis is based on the concept of pluralism. He argued that "Surinam is probably one of the finest examples of a plural society."<sup>1</sup> The colonial state functioned as the arbiter between population groups of African, British Indian and Javanese descent. Without this "neutral arbiter" chaos would ensue.

Suriname is a prime example of a Caribbean colonial creation, built under European hegemony by enslaved Africans and Asian indentured labourers and their descendants. As in many postcolonial societies the state preceded the nation. History plays an important socioeconomic and political role, and in the words of Bridget Brereton, the past in Trinidad and Tobago is "a key arena for contestation" in a dynamic and complex society.<sup>2</sup> In Suriname, original presence or the time of arrival, economic contributions, suffering and hardship, and loyalty are arguments to support claims on the nation by different groups. Ethnic hierarchizing and positive self-ascription, while disparaging other groups, are all part of ethnic strategies.<sup>3</sup>

The idea of a plural society is largely a colonial creation as well. Ethnicity was institutionalized through colonial policy as various policies by the colonial government and economic enterprises served to establish, legitimize and maintain ethnic boundaries, whether to "divide-and-rule" or to "safeguard the culture" of different population groups. The replacement of Creoles by British Indian and Javanese contract labourers after the abolition of slavery led to the emergence of a division of labour along ethnic lines. The state functioned as a recruiter of labour and a distributor of the spatial location of work and land.<sup>4</sup> In colonial times, the state never acted as a neutral arbiter of interethnic relations, as the pluralists would have it, and in the postcolonial era the state remained an actor in ethnic conflict because of its varied institutions, including schools.

An important aspect of sociocultural policy is language. In Suriname, nineteen languages are spoken.<sup>5</sup> The main ones, besides the official Dutch, are Sranan Tongo, an English-based Creole and the lingua franca, Sarnami-Hindustani and Surinamese-Javanese. Contract immigrants were at first not required to learn Dutch, rather officials were supposed to learn Hindi or Javanese. Language is used not just to communicate within the group but also to divide and exclude. In order to communicate with people outside their own language group, most people will speak two or more languages. Place, occasion and discussion partners often determine which language is used. Social class is an important element in the choice of language. As Eithne Carlin puts it, "in spite of the apparent linguistic chaos in Suriname, uniformity as well as social norms are to be found and constantly being adhered to."<sup>6</sup>

This article focuses on the making of the nation, and ethnic loyalties and claims in postcolonial Suriname. It sketches developments from the first nationalist stirrings during World War II, through autonomy

and independence, until the first decade of this century. It addresses two interrelated questions: how does Suriname present itself as a nation and, is the importance of ethnicity still as dominant as described by Van Lier? Two recent critics of Van Lier, Ruben Gowricharn and Jack Menke, consider the plural society model a Eurocentric ideological construct that uses state power to arrive at homogeneity and a uniform culture.<sup>7</sup> Menke ventures that the "plural society concept is inappropriate to analyse dimensions of unity between ethnic groups and common values across these groups."<sup>8</sup> Menke and Gowricharn argue that the harmonious relations between the population groups disprove Van Lier's predictions and thus give a positive twist to the theory. Rather than focusing on the power of the state, they point at the power of society, resulting in the creation of harmonious ethnic diversity. They discuss the supposed link between multi-ethnicity and conflict. Gowricharn states that "notwithstanding the sizeable fluctuations in political and economic conditions, ethnic relations in Surinam remained conspicuously stable" and attributes this to friendships among ethnic leaders, an ideology promoting the acceptance of cultural diversity, the failure of a unifying nationalism and the demographic composition of the country.<sup>9</sup> To illustrate the last point, a short overview of demographic changes and ethnic categorization in the postcolonial period will be given first.

## **Demography and Ethnic Categorization**

Suriname population censuses tend to homogenize and sanctify ethnic categories.<sup>10</sup> In 1972 the census takers apparently felt compelled to defend the counting in ethnic categories: "Time and again the question is asked why in every census we divide the population according to national character (meaning ethnic groups). We feel that we differ so much ethnically [and culturally] that simply ignoring this aspect of our society would mean that we are disregarding the presence of an area of tension in our community."<sup>11</sup> For political and ideological reasons ethnicity was not registered in the last twentieth-century census taken in 1980. The first census of the next century, in 2004, for the first time included the category "mixed", accounting for 12.5 per cent of the population.

The censuses reflect changing social and political ideas about race / ethnicity; particularly the term Creole, which could mean different things at different times. It always included the urban Afro-Surinamese population ("Negroes"), up until 1963 it could also include Maroons (or

Table 1: Population of Suriname According to Ethnicity 1950–2004 in Percentages\*

Year	Creoles	Hindustani	Javanese	Maroons	Amerindians	Mixed
1950	41.8%	35%	18.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a
1964	36%	35%	14.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
1972**	30.7%	37%	15.3%	10.2%	2.6%	n/a
1980**	31.5%	38%	15.7%	9%	1.5%	n/a
2004***	17.7%	27.4%	14.6%	14.7%	3%	12.5%

\*The registration of the population according to ethnicity is complicated as through the years the categories changed.

\*\*Extrapolated by the author (1972) and Suriname Census Bureau (1980).

\*\*\*6.6% refused identification in one of the ethnic categories.

Sources: Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek 1967, [1972], [1992], 2006.

"Bush Negroes"), and, until the latest census, individuals classified by the census takers as "mixed". Thus it is not easy to do a side-by-side comparison of census data from different years.

## Developments from World War II to the Turn of the Century

The decades between the beginning of World War II and independence were a time of economic progress and increasing political and cultural awareness in Suriname. Ethnic relations changed when geographical and social separations became less strict and new economic opportunities presented themselves. Another outcome of the war was the restyled relationship with the Netherlands. The decreased involvement of the exiled Dutch administration coupled with economic growth stimulated nationalist feelings among the light-skinned, educated Creole population. In this small group, social and political advancement was closely intertwined with a Dutch cultural identity. The wartime experience allowed this circle to take pride in both their Surinamese and Dutch identities. The goal was to gain more autonomy within the existing political structure. They founded Unie Suriname (Union Suriname) with the goal to

unite all population groups; in reality it became a vehicle for the interests of the light-skinned Creoles, who viewed themselves as the legitimate heirs to the Dutch. This intellectual and political elite firmly based its plans on the Dutch colonial heritage.

In 1954 Suriname became autonomous, with independence following in 1975.<sup>12</sup> With the introduction of universal suffrage in 1948, political parties were organized.<sup>13</sup> They emphasized ethnic belonging and loyalty rather than ideology. Parties were formed around authoritarian personalities with popular appeal to their own ethnic group.<sup>14</sup> Personal feuds and ambitions caused breaks and the founding of new (ethnic) parties, leading to a proliferation of parties. The main goal was to guard the interests of their "own" population group, leading to patron-client relationships between politicians and their voters. Given that no single population group or party was in a majority, coalitions were always necessary to govern. These coalitions were and are not based on compatible party platforms but on opportunism and pragmatism.

A coalition of Creole, Javanese and Hindustani parties governed Suriname in the late 1950s and 1960s. These political alliances linked class and ethnic emancipation as they advanced the interests of the Afro-Surinamese working class, the Javanese and the Hindustani. This broad emancipation was based on patronage – providing housing, jobs, licences and land – and expanding educational opportunities, a major vehicle of upward mobility.

From the 1950s, nationalist politics moved away from the elitist Creole desire of political autonomy within the Dutch (cultural) orbit to the establishment of an independent republic or at least a dominion status for Suriname.<sup>15</sup> In the late 1950s this ideal filtered through to the ruling ethnic parties, which adopted a more nationalist stance. The cooperation between the Creole Nationale Partij Suriname (NPS, National Party Suriname) headed by Johan Adolf Pengel, and the Hindustani Verenigde Hindostaanse Partij (VHP, United Hindustani Party)<sup>16</sup> under the leadership of Jagernath Lachmon, was labelled "fraternization politics".<sup>17</sup>

The administration of Prime Minister S.D. Emanuels (1958–1963) was the first to actively promote nation-building by adopting a flag, a national anthem and a coat of arms.<sup>18</sup> A year later, in 1960, it introduced July 1, the abolition of slavery, as a national holiday with a new name, Day of Liberties (Dag der Vrijheden).<sup>19</sup> Yet at the same time, political and socioeconomic emancipation also encouraged demands for cultural and religious equality. Claiming religious freedom and equality between Christian churches and Hindu and Muslim congregations, Hindus

and Muslims founded their own religion-based schools and other social organizations, while temples and mosques appeared throughout Paramaribo. In 1970, Hindu and Muslim holidays were officially acknowledged.<sup>20</sup>

In 1961, the VHP backed out of negotiations with The Hague on the possible expansion of Suriname's autonomy. A majority feared that the Creoles in their effort to gain more freedom from the Netherlands would threaten the position of other parties / population groups who preferred to remain under Dutch patronage.<sup>21</sup> Lachmon in particular considered the Dutch as impartial arbiters who would protect the social, economic and cultural emancipation of the Hindustani. Lachmon's sentiments found resonance in Suriname where demonstrations against independence were also fuelled by racial conflicts regarding independence in Guyana and Trinidad.<sup>22</sup>

As a result, the NPS, valuing fraternization and afraid of accelerating independence, put the sovereignty issue on the back burner. Thereupon Creole nationalists, headed by Eddy Bruma, founded the *Partij van de Nationalistische Republiek* (Party of the Nationalist Republic, PNR). The PNR was closely aligned to the cultural nationalist movement *Wie Eegie Sani* (Our Own Things - hereafter WES). The PNR gave the nationalist movement overt political goals. It failed, however, to attract a multi-ethnic following, as it was seen as a Creole party.

Things changed dramatically when Henck Arron succeeded Pengel as leader of the NPS. Arron reversed Pengel's policy by making the PNR an ally rather than a foe of the NPS. In the elections of 1973, the NPS and PNR formed an electoral combination and together with another small Creole party and a Javanese party managed to form a government without Hindustani participation. Arron proclaimed in February 1974 that Suriname would become independent in 1975. Independence was not a problem for the Netherlands, ready to cut its constitutional ties with its Caribbean territories, but it was in Suriname itself where it was seen as a "Creole thing",<sup>23</sup> supported by only the smallest parliamentary majority. The spectre of Guyana's racial turbulence provoked by that country's independence in 1966 haunted many in Suriname and emigration to the Netherlands increased. In the period 1970-1980, 120,000 migrants left for the metropolis.<sup>24</sup> A much smaller number of people, often well educated, however, returned to Suriname to help with building the new nation.

This political nationalism was grounded in a cultural nationalist movement sparked by WES. The first nationalist organization, *Unie*



Suriname, assumed that its members would quietly take the place of Dutch officials if self-rule became a reality. They did not long for changes beyond the realm of politics. Dutch civilization and Christianity would be the norm for Hindustani, lower-class black Creoles and Javanese. WES, founded in 1950 by Surinamese students in Amsterdam under the leadership of Bruma, strove for the emancipation of all population groups. However, it was usually regarded as a Creole organization promoting Creole goals. It emphasized the value of Suriname's own culture, including the lingua franca Sranan Tongo, and history. Knowledge of the Dutch language still was an essential requirement for upward mobility, if only because it was the language of instruction. According to WES, Sranan Tongo was the main vehicle for the unification of all population groups. Its focus was the preservation and refinement of Sranan Tongo and the proclamation in 1960 of rules for regulation of this language "stands out as a marked success of Suriname cultural nationalism" as it put it culturally on an equal footing with Dutch.<sup>25</sup>

The Hindustani slogan "unity in diversity" challenged these Creole nationalist sentiments by pleading for Dutch as the language of unity and a binding social agent.<sup>26</sup> Successive Surinamese governments never made Sranan Tongo the official language, however, because the Asian population groups in particular feared Creole dominance; rather, in 1986 the government awarded Sarnami-Hindustani and Surinamese-Javanese the same status of "cultural language".

In 1973 Prime Minister Jules Sedney spoke at the one hundredth anniversary of Hindustani Immigration and squarely addressed the issue of ethnic fragmentation:

For too long mistrust and jealousy have created an unsteady foundation for the formation of mutual understanding and cooperation between these large population groups - Creoles and Hindustani. For too long each group has excluded the other, while claiming the right to be called "the true Surinamer". It would be good to reflect on this tonight and to ask what being Surinamese entails and who is a Surinamer. The answer to this question is not to be found in our skin colour or hair; not in the country of origin or the date of arrival. Whether we are a Surinamer or not is determined by the degree to which we are ready to carry this country's burden of history and to identify ourselves with its past; of the degree in which we are prepared to solve today's problems, and finally the degree to which we are prepared to accept the challenge of the future and accept our own future.<sup>27</sup>

Sedney's words did not find much resonance during the bitter fight surrounding Suriname's independence. Just a few days before the official

proclamation of independence, the Creole and Hindustani leaders, Arron and Lachmon, openly reconciled. Nationalist sentiments triumphed in the political arena, but there was no official vision on how the new republic was to proceed as a nation, even though cultural nationalism was increasingly interwoven with political nationalism.<sup>28</sup> The fact that political and cultural nationalism were considered Creole interests made Suriname a case study of the uneasy marriage between decolonization and nation-building. On November 25, schoolchildren formed a giant Surinamese flag on the renamed "Independence Square". Those were two of the few visible signs marking the transition to independence.

The first years of the republic were marred by socioeconomic unrest and political infighting. To the surprise of many, a coup by sixteen non-commissioned officers on 25 February 1980 terminated the political wrangling. The military period (1980–1987) included revolutionary experiments, gross human rights violations, guerrilla warfare, economic implosion and the protracted process of redemocratization.

At first the military coup was greeted with relief as fresh faces were expected to make a clean sweep. However, what was at the time presented as a brief interventionist phase became a self-proclaimed revolution as the top brass institutionalized their political position with Desi Bouterse as their leader. When the promises of democracy waned and repression increased, the army leaders started to lose popular support. Open protest against the regime ended when fifteen prominent men, accused of staging a counter-coup, were executed in December 1982. After protracted negotiations with trade unions, business organizations and the previously underground "old" ethnic parties represented by their "old" leaders, elections were held in 1987. This democratization process that had started in 1984 ran partly parallel with an armed revolt by a group of disgruntled Maroons in the interior. Guerrilla leader and self-proclaimed liberator of Suriname, Ronnie Brunswijk lacked arms, men, and discipline to defeat the National Army, but he managed to control large parts of eastern Suriname. Violent counter-guerrilla actions by the army claimed hundreds of lives, while thousands fled the interior to French Guiana or Paramaribo, often a place of transit to the Netherlands or the United States of America. Only in 1992 was peace signed with the Maroon guerrillas and Bouterse was forced to resign as chief commander.<sup>29</sup>

What is often overlooked when discussing the military period is the reshuffling of class that took place because of the economic crisis that accompanied the political turbulence. Several interruptions of financial

support from the Netherlands, falling bauxite revenues, and policy failures crippled the economy well into the 1990s. For most Surinamers the downturn led to a sharp decline in their standard of living, because prices went up much faster than wages.<sup>30</sup> Real income was halved in the years 1982–1987; the absolute number of jobs decreased by ten per cent. Stores were almost empty, and in 1986 long lines formed when state-subsidised vital provisions went on sale. A lively black-market economy developed offering basic necessities at famine prices. Survival strategies included (informal) jobs to increase income, material support by networks of relatives abroad, and a decrease in consumption. But in the end, the great majority of households were stretched to the limit. Devaluations of the local currency wiped out savings if they were not held in US dollars, Dutch guilders or valuables such as gold. Local credit dried up as well, as banks and credit unions no longer could furnish loans to businesses and private clients. Only people with access to foreign networks were able to take out small loans. The crisis battered both middle- and low-income groups.

De Bruijne and Schalkwijk divide the population according to the possession of consumer durables.<sup>31</sup> The small elite, including expatriates, managers, some local producers, international businessmen and highly educated professionals, changed in composition between 1980 and 1992. High-level civil servants dropped out, while a select group involved in international and currency trade became part of a new business elite; some trafficked drugs or weapons as well. Quite noticeable was the sudden wealth of some army commanders or individuals connected to them.<sup>32</sup> This group had extensive transnational connections and experience.

In real terms, low-income groups, making up more than sixty per cent of the population, suffered most as their already vulnerable position eroded even more because of poor opportunities to make money, rising prices and limited access to foreign or domestic networks. According to De Bruijne, "poverty that was present in the 1960s had disappeared during the 1970s, but returned in the 1980s" when people lacked money for food, clothing, or housing.<sup>33</sup> Comparatively speaking, however, the middle class was hit hardest by the crisis.<sup>34</sup> Up to the 1980s this group, including teachers, public servants and most entrepreneurs, was able to save for emergencies or leisure and had access to good-quality education, health and housing. Because of the crisis, consumption levels were reduced, reserves were depleted and access to adequate social services declined. In particular, people who were dependent on state

employment could not keep up their standard of living unless they received overseas assistance. The middle class shrank in size because of downward mobility and the emigration of younger, educated people. Hebe Verrest argues that even though similar processes took place in Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, the case of Suriname was different as the ruin of the middle class was not so much caused by loss of employment as by a decline in real income.<sup>35</sup>

With the return to democracy, ethnic politics came back with a vengeance. The military regime had tried to overcome ethnic differences. The creation of a true "Surinamese man", somewhat analogous to Che Guevara's "New Man" after the Cuban Revolution, was an example of this new ideology. At Paramaribo's main square, Cuban-style propaganda signs depicting the nation's history of struggle and resistance, stressed national rather than ethnic unity. Ironically, these nation-building attempts had the opposite effect and made Surinamization a contaminated issue for years to come. Tellingly, in 1993 the government refashioned 1 July, the Day of Liberties, to *Keti Koti* (Breaking the Chains) thus making a national holiday identifiable with the Creoles.

The new ethnic coalition called *Nieuw Front* (New Front), headed by NPS and VHP, handily won the first postmilitary elections and quickly re-established traditional ethnic power structures. Former dictator Bouterse, of Creole and Amerindian descent, did not leave politics, however, and formed his own political party in 1987. The National Democratic Party (*Nationale Democratische Partij*, NDP) is the first major panethnic political party, yet like other parties, it lacks a clear ideological base.

## Suriname at the Turn of the Century

So where did these socioeconomic, political and cultural transformations leave Suriname at the turn of the century? The various economic downturns and the rising inflation rate in the late twentieth century realigned the existing social structure. New mercantile elites emerged, while the vast decline in real wages unsettled the middle and lower classes. Education has traditionally been the engine of socioeconomic emancipation, but this is no longer true for women. Despite the fact that they participate more than men in secondary and tertiary education, there is no corresponding increase in female labour-force participation. Women's legal position has formally been equated with that of men, but when comparing women and men with similar educational backgrounds,

women still rank lower in the class hierarchy. Women on their own merit have not been able to gain access to the upper echelon of society.<sup>36</sup>

The economic crises hit all ethnic groups as there were fewer specific ethnic occupational niches, and they affected intra-ethnic equality, particularly among Hindustani, because the income gap between the new urban trading elite and rural smallholders grew most conspicuously. Migrants are traditionally located at the lowest rung of the social ladder. In the early twentieth century it was the incoming Asian labourers who faced the greatest socioeconomic obstacles; presently migrants from the interior face similar hurdles. The socioeconomic development of the Indigenous and Maroon peoples is obstructed by their limited access to education and other services.<sup>37</sup>

In contrast to the "old" migrants, it is much easier for "new" international immigrants to maintain relations with their place of origin. Internet and other telecommunication facilities as well as air travel make it easier to keep in touch. Many migrants, from for example Brazil, China or Haiti, invest more in ties back home than in personal relationships in Suriname. According to Marjo de Theije and Ellen Bal, the "new" immigrants, in this case Brazilians, do not form a community anymore but a "category" or network, "to emphasize the relatively feeble and instrumental character of the ties they maintain with one another".<sup>38</sup> The majority of current migrants will probably not settle permanently but instead use the money earned in Suriname as a stepping stone for setting up businesses in their country of origin or for migration to other countries. Thus it is uncertain whether these new immigrants will become a permanent part of Surinamese society.

Politically, ethnicity may seem in decline: in the elections of May 2010, with a high turnout of seventy-five per cent, the Mega Combination led by the panethnic NDP achieved a plurality, but not a majority. In August, Bouterse became president after some byzantine political dealings with his former foes but current allies: former Front minister Paul Somohardjo, the leader of the Javanese party *Pertjajah Luhur*, and Ronnie Brunswijk, the chairman of ABOP (*Algemene Bevrijdings- en Ontwikkelingspartij*, General Liberation and Development Party).<sup>39</sup> Wheeling and dealing, opportunism and power play thus remain common.

Despite the fact that the (New) Front coalition was in charge in the first decade of the twenty-first century, election results in the postmilitary period seem to indicate that traditional ethnic politics are losing

their pull, particularly among younger voters. In 2010, the former powerhouse NPS only won four out of a total of fifty-one seats, down from eight in 2005. The VHP did better with eight seats in 2010. This loss can in part be explained by demographic changes. It may also be a reflection of changes in the economic balance of power. The new economic elites are often part of the NDP or in the case of the Hindustani, the VHP. The NPS is the main victim of this realignment. In addition, the NPS is affected by the decline of the "old" middle class suffering from the crises of the 1980s and 1990s. It is not the conventional politicians but Bouterse, the self-made millionaire, who is the idol of many in the Creole electorate.<sup>40</sup> His NDP deftly positions itself as an anti-elite party.<sup>41</sup>

Another factor that may play a role in the decline of the traditional strongholds is that these parties, including the NPS and VHP, have held on to the proven leaders who had been active for decades and who showed little inclination to make room for young politicians. It is notable that Bouterse, although born in 1945, and a national figure since 1980, is frequently hailed by his voters as a "young" politician. Bouterse, however, dominates his party just like his political rivals and while a master at conducting mass meetings, using common language, he does not leave much room for his supporters nor has he designated a successor.

In Suriname politics, electoral alliances are of vital importance in gaining political influence in a country consisting of minorities, but the different parties still fly their own flag in these coalitions.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, both Bouterse and the Front coalition use the image of a flower garden to positively reflect on the cooperation between different parties.<sup>43</sup> Clientelism, whether ethnic or socioeconomic in character, remains the driving force in politics; it is a system that grants many people access to politicians and the offices of state.

The electoral victory of the Front-parties in 2000 and 2005 may have turned out to be a last hurrah for traditional ethnic parties as voters flock to other parties. But it may be too early to declare ethnic voting a thing of the past. Even Bouterse's acclaimed panethnic NDP is a careful mixture of different ethnic backgrounds, thus enabling voters to choose a candidate on the basis of ethnic preference.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, new ethnic political parties, particularly among Maroons, have appeared on the scene in recent decades. Their demographic growth and increasing self-awareness account for the strong electoral performance of Maroon parties promoting the emancipation of their own group. The inhabitants

of the interior are the late arrivals in the political arena, as they were enfranchised only in 1963, and thus have more catching up to do. Bouterse's election to the presidency was contingent on the support of two mono-ethnic political combinations representing Maroon and Javanese interests, who used this opportunity to accelerate their emancipation. However, given the first census results of the twenty-first century, with the unexpectedly large "mixed" and "unknown" groups, ethnic voting could become less prominent in the years to come.

Connections with the Netherlands remain strong, even though the political and financial influence of The Hague is waning. One factor is the size and influence of the Surinamese diaspora: Suriname counts approximately 560,000 inhabitants, while the Surinamese community in the Netherlands counts 350,000 people.<sup>45</sup> After independence, Dutch remained the official language. In addition, Dutch (and Flemish) television programmes, including the national news, can be seen on a daily basis in Suriname. The position of the Dutch language has even been strengthened in a formal sense with the inclusion of Suriname in the (inter)governmental *Nederlandse Taalunie* (Dutch Language Union) in 2004, and at the practical level with Dutch as the language most spoken in Surinamese households.<sup>46</sup>

The position of Dutch as the language of government, education, and the majority of households is likely to remain unchanged despite the influx of new immigrants from China and Brazil in particular. Often the children of these migrants go to school in Suriname where Dutch is the language of instruction, thus the increasing multi-ethnicity might strengthen rather than undermine the position of the one common language that is not the language native to any specific group.

## **Diversity and Harmony**

Neither the prediction of Van Lier nor the hope of Jules Sedney has materialized in present-day Suriname. The first expected that decolonization would lead to the disintegration of the plural society into anarchy. Van Lier contended that the various ethnic groups meet, but do not mix. The outcome of the 2004 census, in which 12.5 per cent of the population self-identified as mixed and another 6.6 per cent refused to name an ethnic category, is the clearest refutation of this view. Sedney's call for "the Surinamer" has not yet been answered as persistence of ethnic claims and loyalties "hinder the development of a common Suriname identity".<sup>47</sup>

Diversity is a potential source of social and cultural tension, but also very much a source of pride as Suriname likes to portray itself as a United Nations in miniature, pointing to its peaceful and harmonious relations. A popular image is the *mamio*, a quilt, typifying the variety of populations and cultures. The VHP's slogan "unity in diversity" has now become more generally accepted. The Creole NPS too has "adopted cultural pluralism as the sole attainable strategy, balancing the ideal of acculturation with the actuality of ethnocentrism".<sup>48</sup>

Menke introduces the concept of nation-creation, referring to "the collective efforts of (cultural) groups in the nation-state to develop a/the society based on solidarity, mutual respect and a harmonic interaction between ethnic groups and their cultures".<sup>49</sup> He underlines that this is a positive, bottom-up, fairly organic evolution undermining nation-building, defined by Menke as a Eurocentric concept and a top-down strategy by the state aimed at monocultural uniformity. He thus makes a clear distinction between state and society.

The question is whether such a clear line of demarcation between state and society really exists, or even existed in colonial times.<sup>50</sup> Is the state really not participating in this process? Also, Menke presents Suriname in a vacuum in a globalizing world; given its large transatlantic community and the country's recent regional integration in, for example, CARICOM and UNASUR, the question is what positive or negative effects these processes will have on the nation.

Menke emphasizes the role of societal groups, dismissing the role of the state, but I argue that the state does actively participate in this process, if only by acknowledging and accommodating sociocultural processes. Suriname's ethnic diversity is part and parcel of official representations, including the national calendar which in 2013 counted more than twenty holidays as every group has specific days to celebrate its religion, culture and history.<sup>51</sup> In line with the official banners celebrating the three anniversaries in 2013, the message of the Minister of Transport, Communication and Tourism, Falisie Pinas, in Suriname's "Official Tourist Destination Guide" of 2012 lauds the country's "many colours, cultures, cordiality and exuberance!" He promises a unique holiday experience and assures that "you will profusely enjoy our traditional cultures, the wonderful nature and the culinary diversity of the different Suriname populations." In the next pages, the Tourism Board explains that "Suriname is also called a large melting pot of different cultures where the roots from their own soil are mixed with those from far away, which have merged to become the harmonious people of



Suriname. Indigenous, African, Indian, Chinese, Indonesian and European descendants all live together in peaceful harmony."<sup>52</sup> The concept of harmony features in two consecutive sentences. The state thus seems to have embraced the unity-in-diversity concept by clearly pointing to the different population groups making up the nation.

The country presents itself to the world as a model for coexistence, yet in a culture of tolerance it is vital to note that a culture of intolerance may lie just below the surface. The coexistence of peoples with different national, cultural and religious backgrounds is a source of cultural enrichment, but it can simultaneously be a source of profound social tensions. Suriname has managed to keep these tensions to a minimum, a feat that is also attributable to the dominant ethnic political leaders; their cooperation was successful when in times of economic prosperity it facilitated the socioeconomic and cultural emancipation of their own group. Culture and religion are domains where respect for each other's traditions and holidays has been obvious in the postwar era after decades of struggle by all groups to gain recognition for non-Dutch cultures and non-Christian religions. In contrast, in politics ethnicity still is a decisive force. This is also a function of the personalistic, autocratic, and clientelistic character of Surinamese politics. It is enlightened self-interest to vote for a candidate who promises economic or social perks to the individual or the group. This clientelism may be undermined by the recent blossoming of civil society, often against the wishes and interests of politicians.<sup>53</sup> (International) non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also increasingly provide social services that used to be the preserve of the state, and thus of politicians.

Ethnic, class and gender positions have shifted since World War II, but all three phenomena have remained essential mechanisms in structuring Surinamese society. In postcolonial Suriname, socioeconomic position rather than ethnicity increasingly determines one's place in society. Or phrased differently, "class position is no longer as strongly correlated with belonging to a particular ethnic group or having light skin colour."<sup>54</sup> The backgrounds of the new elites show that since the last decades of the previous century, socioeconomic class is not necessarily linked anymore with descent and legitimacy, occupation, educational and cultural background, and individual comportment. Financial assets are the main determining factor in the socioeconomic pyramid.

The postcolonial era has witnessed a shift from ethnicity to socioeconomic position as the guiding principle in the country's social organization, but in twenty-first century Suriname that presents itself as a

harmonious nation, ethnicity continues to be a force to be reckoned with. The first census of the new century points to a growing willingness to self-identify as "mixed". That is not to say that Suriname is beyond ethnicity; rather it is rooted in, but not restricted by ethnicity. Multi-ethnicity increasingly becomes a source of pride rather than of divisiveness and thus the basis for the further development of the nation. Mama Sranan is still embracing all of her children.<sup>55</sup>

## NOTES

1. Van Lier, *Frontier Society*, 11.
2. Brereton, 170.
3. Brereton; see Meel, "Towards a Typology"; and De Koning, 260 for Suriname.
4. See, for example, Garner, 67-69 for British Guiana.
5. See Carlin for an inventory and typology of these languages.
6. Carlin, 231.
7. Gowricharn, "Ethnicity"; Menke.
8. Menke, 201.
9. Gowricharn, "Ethnicity", 224.
10. See De Koning, 261-62 on the role of official statistics in solidifying and naturalizing ethnic categories; also Menke, 210-11.
11. Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek, *Voorlopig*, 4.
12. See Oostindie and Klinkers for an analysis of Suriname's decolonization in English.
13. On publications on Surinamese politics in English see Dew, *The Difficult Flowering* and *The Trouble*; Ramsoedh, "Playing".
14. See Gowricharn, "Ethnogenesis" for the importance of leadership in the ethnogenesis of immigrant groups in the Caribbean.
15. Dominion status would entail that Foreign Relations would become the concern of Paramaribo rather than The Hague.
16. In 1973, the party changed its name to Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij (Progressive Reformation Party), thus omitting the ethnic reference.
17. See also Gowricharn, "Ethnicity", 234-35.
18. See Meel, "Towards a Typology" for a review of political and cultural nationalism.
19. See Van Stipriaan for a history of the celebrations of 1 July.
20. Jap-A-Joe, Sjak Shie and Vernooij, 208-10.
21. Meel, "Verbroederingspolitiek", 643-44.
22. Ramsoedh, "Playing", 97; Dew, *The Difficult Flowering*, 129-31.
23. Van Westerloo, 220; Oostindie, *Paradijs*, 167.
24. Bosma, 151-52.

25. Meel, "Towards a Typology", 263.
26. This notion/ideology was introduced in Suriname by Jnan Adhin, a leading Hindustani intellectual. It is also the motto of, for example, Indonesia, South Africa, and the European Union.
27. Nationaal Archief Suriname, "De Realisering van Het Mogelijke, 1969-1973, een greep uit de prestaties van de Regering-Sedney", 220. Translation by author.
28. Meel, "Towards a Typology", 262-64.
29. Suriname has not been able to fully digest this past yet. The prosecution of the December murders in 1982 has been protracted for years by indecisiveness and legal manoeuvring.
30. See Verrest; and Hoefte, chapter 6 for the impact of this crisis on the household level.
31. De Bruijne and Schalkwijk, *Kondreman*, 13; Schalkwijk and De Bruijne, 58-60. In this scheme, based on 1992 figures, the elite (owning air conditioning, a car, television, washer, and refrigerator) make up 6.5 per cent of the population of Greater Paramaribo; the middle class (television, refrigerator, washer, car) 27.7 per cent; the "popular" class (television, refrigerator, washer) 49.9 per cent; the "under class" (with a television or refrigerator at best) 15.9 per cent.
32. Schalkwijk and De Bruijne, 62.
33. De Bruijne, 30; see Kromhout for the gender effects of the economic crisis.
34. Schalkwijk and De Bruijne, 57-83.
35. Verrest, 16.
36. Wekker, "Of Mimic", 175.
37. De Bruijne and Schalkwijk, "The Position", 259-60.
38. De Theije and Bal, 67.
39. Brunswijk is now a wealthy businessman on account of his involvement in, inter alia, the gold and timber industries, see Buddingh', 432-47; Evers and Van Maele, 150-212. Bouterse announced his candidacy only after the parliamentary elections; Ramsোধ, "Vertrouwen", points at the unpredictability of political leaders, who lack any coherent plans, and are only interested in power and the entitlements political influence brings.
40. Rumours abound on Bouterse's fortune, but there is no official confirmation on his (sources of) wealth. Buddingh' (386) points at the strength of Bouterse's NDP in lower-class Paramaribo neighbourhoods. Wekker ("Bouterse", 169-73) identifies Bouterse as a wakaman-koni (a trickster), who holds out the promise that he will help the poor and proves that street smarts trump education. See also Jaffe, 192-19 on Bouterse's wakaman lifestyle that ties into popular culture.
41. See Buddingh', 380-83; and Evers; and Van Maele, 97.
42. Blanksma, 163.
43. Menke, 208.

44. Jaffe, 192 states that "the NDP owes much of its popularity to the fact that it is the only significant pan-ethnic, or rather, trans-ethnic party". However, Blanksma, who attended and analysed 22 campaign meetings in 2005, concludes that not ethnicity but the difference between "old" politics versus the oppositional combinations was the deciding factor in the electoral campaign. Ethnicity now served as a demarcation between partners within an electoral combination. The electoral system, based on both regionalization and proportionality, forces parties to present candidates of different ethnic backgrounds or to form a coalition with other parties (Buddingh', 478).
45. Oostindie ("The Study", 225) concludes that this transnational community is geographically and ethnically fragmented, a topic beyond the scope of this paper.
46. The outcome surprised the census takers: "we had not expected such a large margin of victory for Dutch" (Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek, *Report*, 29).
47. Meel, "Towards a Typology", 274.
48. *Ibid.*, 270.
49. Menke, 197; Menke uses "Ala kondre dron" (drums of all ethnic groups and cultures) as a literal example of this harmony and of nation creation (214–15).
50. See Hoefte, chapter 2, arguing that the late colonial state in Suriname did not have a single sociocultural policy, but changed course several times.
51. There are two truly national holidays: Srefidensi Dey (Independence Day) and Dag van de Revolution (Revolution Day). The latter is politically charged as many Surinamers link it to the military dictatorship. Many monuments in Paramaribo have the same ethnic function: for example, the statue of Kwakoe (1963) celebrates the abolition of slavery, while the statue of Baba and Mai (1994) represents the first arrival of Hindustani migrants in 1873. Mama Sranan (1965) is one of the very few national monuments, see Meel, "Towards a Typology" and De Koning.
52. "Suriname, The Green Caribbean: The Official Tourist Destination Guide 2012" by the Tourism Foundation Suriname.
53. Buddingh', 481.
54. Wekker, "Of Mimic", 174.
55. Obviously the statue / image of Mama Sranan is reminiscent of Eric Williams's often quoted "A nation, like an individual, can only have one Mother. The only Mother we recognise is Mother Trinidad and Tobago, and Mother cannot discriminate between her children" (Williams, 279).

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## The Struggle of the British Caribbean Sugar Industry, 1900–2013

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Modern sugar production – if modern can be applied to an industry that has had very few mechanical innovations over the millennia of its existence – has always been a precarious business. That was true even in its heyday of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The sugar cane is a fickle plant and growing and processing it are extremely complicated. Slight modifications in the weather, especially in the timing of rainfall, can result in sharp differences at the time of the harvest. Mechanical breakdowns in the factory can virtually ruin an entire harvest. The particular variety of sugar cane cultivated and the sucrose content of the juice are also important factors. Then there are the vicissitudes of labour, politics and the international sugar market. The history of sugar, therefore, has been a history of inevitable crises. So the history of the Caribbean sugar industry in general and the British Caribbean sugar industry in particular reflects closely the recurring crises of a sensitive plant and a vulnerable process of production and marketing.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century it was abundantly clear that the world sugar market had become unstable and unpredictable. Until the French revolution, commercial sugar came from the sugar cane plant and the international commercial sugar market was mostly supplied by Caribbean sugar producers whose labour force comprised mainly enslaved Africans and their descendants.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, significant changes began to transform the sugar market. With the eruption of the revolution in the French colony of Saint Domingue on the western part of the island of Hispaniola in 1789, a slow disintegrative process began that ended a hundred years later in



1889 with the complete abolition of slavery throughout the western hemisphere.<sup>3</sup> In the long transition, the agricultural labour force gradually became supplemented by hundreds of thousands of freely contracted or indentured labourers imported mainly from China, India and other places.<sup>4</sup> Technical innovations boosted production everywhere, most dramatically in Cuba; and the establishment of central factories separated the agricultural and industrial processes of sugar production.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, beet sugar production rapidly expanded to capture the greater share of the sugar market, further complicating the situation for small-scale producers such as the British Caribbean islands and British Guiana. So the twentieth century would, not surprisingly, be an extremely difficult time for all Caribbean sugar producers, regardless of the scale or sophistication of their process of manufacture. And the agony continues.

Indeed, by 1900 it was becoming increasingly obvious on both sides of the Atlantic that the entire British Antillean sugar industry was in a severe crisis. Although the crisis was not equally acute in all the sugar producing zones of those declining imperial outposts, impending failure hung like a heavy low cloud that blanketed the area in common. The decline had been slow and steady since the halcyon days of the middle of the eighteenth century when the British Caribbean was described as "sugar islands" and Caribbean sugar producers exercised inordinate influence in the British Parliament, the centripetal centre of British imperial political administration. If the abolition of British Caribbean slavery was a long, drawn-out affair, the demise of the British Caribbean sugar industry was an even slower process. It muddled through the aftermath of the free trade acts of the middle of the nineteenth century and adopted a series of desperate ad hoc measures to keep itself afloat throughout the twentieth century.

Despite the frequent commissions of enquiry into causes of the decline and fall of British Caribbean sugar production after the end of the nineteenth century, the ominous interrelated causes were not comprehensively appreciated either among the local colonial sugar producers or by the metropolitan political and economic managers.<sup>6</sup> While they could all see some clear symptoms of the long-term problems, and often announced ad hoc measures to address them, the situation was irreversible. Moreover, they remained pathetically bankrupt of bold new ideas. The Caribbean sugar industry was beyond the pale of salvation largely because the viability of the industry lay beyond the control of local producers and marketers.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless both in the metropolitan

centre, London, and in the various Caribbean colonial capitals, sugar production was viewed as the magical litmus test for territorial economic well-being. Without sugar exports, it seemed, there could be no viable local economy. So the focus was always on how best to increase sugar production while lowering the cost to the manufacturer even when that meant rolling back wages and lowering the price paid for small farmer produced canes.

In essence, there were four major challenges to British Caribbean sugar production. The first was the general scale of regional production, although there were significant variations from territory to territory, and indeed, even within a single territory. The second was a stagnant or declining volume of sugar cane and sugar production in the British Caribbean. The third was the expanding national sugar beet production in North America and Western Europe that eroded the important re-export market from Great Britain for refined Caribbean sugar. The fourth was the changing political power relations at the local regional level between producers and governments. British Caribbean sugar producers and their supporters were keenly conscious of these challenges and tried to resolve them in ways that seemed best at the time. But they failed every time because they invariably sought final solutions to circumstances that were constantly changing. It was akin to fighting the previous war.

## Overall Regional Production

The first major challenge to the British Caribbean sugar producers was the scale of regional production at a time when overall world sugar production was increasing exponentially and free trade was gradually eroding those preferential barriers that had served to prop up imperial producers for a very long time. In the early 1900s when the Cuban sugar industry recovered from the effects of the war for Cuban independence, a single sugar producer like *Central Constancia* in Cienfuegos, Cuba could easily produce more sugar in one year than the total sugar production of the island of Jamaica. This was also true, at mid-twentieth century, of a sugar mill like *La Romana* in the Dominican Republic.<sup>8</sup> What was true for Jamaica was even truer for many of the other smaller British Caribbean islands as well as Guadeloupe and Martinique.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, technological developments in the process of sugar production, as noted before, had separated the industrial component from the agricultural component – recognizing *centrales* and *colonos* – as separate spheres

of activity, although most *centrales* everywhere continued to engage in extensive sugar cane cultivation.<sup>10</sup>

By 1900, British Caribbean sugar cane acreage had reached its zenith. Some 988 factories employed about 226,086 workers during the reaping season to harvest approximately 254,103 acres (approximately 102,834 hectares) of sugar cane. But the scale of production was clearly against British Caribbean production, even in the better endowed British Guiana. As Eric Williams noted, the area available for sugar cane cultivation in most British Caribbean territories could not compare with sugar lands in neighbouring Cuba, Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.<sup>11</sup> The entire island of Barbados had a maximum area of 52,000 acres devoted to sugar cane. The US-owned South Porto Rico Company had more than 75,000 acres under sugar cane in the Dominican Republic alone – more than it cultivated in its home base of Puerto Rico.

With the sharp fall in sugar prices after 1900, consolidation took place among British Caribbean sugar producers with a consequent sharp decline in the number of factories. By 1913, Jamaica was exporting only about 5,000 tonnes of raw sugar, made in just about 77 factories.<sup>12</sup> The First World War pushed up the price of sugar and gave a short-lived opportunity for boosting production until the middle of the century. But even with increased production the British Caribbean producers were falling even farther behind in the scale of production. The largest British West Indian factory in 1939, the Usine Ste. Madeline in Trinidad produced 41,000 tonnes of sugar. The average American-owned sugar mill in Cuba, employing a network of railroads and modern centrifugal crystallizing procedures, produced more than 150,000 tonnes per harvest.<sup>13</sup> That year, the total world sugar market reached more than thirty million tonnes, with beet sugar contributing more than thirty-six per cent. Cuban cane sugar production, despite self-imposed limits, accounted for more than fourteen per cent of the world cane sugar market and over nine per cent of the combined cane and beet sugar market.<sup>14</sup>

Apart from the technical complexities of production and productivity, marketing became very important. Changes in prices and tariffs could, and did, seriously affect production in various areas including the British Caribbean.<sup>15</sup> Keener market competition developed but the British Caribbean producers failed to anticipate those changes. They proved incapable of responding well to the ongoing challenges of the twentieth century, especially in creative responses to the changing international market situation. They were slow to adapt to large-scale producing cen-

tral factories and they never considered higher wages as an incentive to boost their labour supply.

## **Stagnant Production**

The second general challenge to the Caribbean was the stagnant or declining volume of sugar production among the British Antillean producers, especially among the older producers in Barbados, Jamaica, and St Kitts and Nevis. These islands that pioneered the introduction of large-scale sugar making in the Caribbean in the seventeenth century but by the early twentieth century they had almost exhausted their prime agricultural lands.<sup>16</sup> In any case, the relatively small size of those island territories imposed a finite limit to expanding the acreage under sugar cane. Moreover, the decline in the older producers such as Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua and St Kitts was too steep to be offset by newly introduced areas of modernized production in newly acquired places like Trinidad, and British Guiana (later Guyana).

By 1900 the pioneer producers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had exploited all their best sugar lands. Maintaining high production required fresh capital infusions that seemed not to be worth the investment. Buffeted by erratic and usually falling prices, some islands abandoned sugar production for export. This happened in Grenada in 1890; in Dominica and Tobago in 1900; and in Montserrat, Nevis and St Vincent by 1920. Saint Lucia limped on but by 1950 had abandoned serious sugar-making as a remunerative industry.<sup>17</sup> The consequence of the retreat from sugar as the basic territorial export was a significant decline in the economic conditions of the workers. By the middle of the 1930s sugar cane workers everywhere comprised a highly restless and extremely dissatisfied group that agitated vigorously for economic and political change. Since sugar production represented the largest employment sector, the declining economic condition of the British Caribbean sugar industry played a major role in the regional political uprisings that affected the entire Caribbean in the decade of the 1930s.<sup>18</sup>

## **Beet Sugar Production**

The third challenge came from the expanding area of beet sugar production, especially in Europe. Increasing domestic beet sugar production on the continent undermined the market for the re-export of raw cane

sugar or even of refined cane sugar. Even the United States with its booming population was turning increasingly to beet sugar as its main sweetener source. By 1970 world beet sugar production was almost equal to cane sugar production.<sup>19</sup> Cultivating beet was simpler than sugar cane; and the growing season was half the time.<sup>20</sup> Utilizing a slightly different technology, beet sugar producers achieved astonishing productive efficiencies. Compared with the highest cane sugar factory production yields in the early twentieth century, beet sugar factory yields appeared astonishing. The average cane sugar factory in Jamaica produced only about 140 tonnes of sugar before the First World War. The average Barbadian factory produced about 115 tonnes of sugar. The average Trinidad factory produced about 1,200 tonnes of sugar; and the average Guyanese factory produced 1,570 tonnes. By comparison, the average US beet factory produced 4,170 tons of sugar per harvest. The average German or Austrian beet factory produced more than 4,000 tons; and French beet factories produced 2,024 tonnes per harvest.<sup>21</sup>

By the 1950s British Caribbean producers began to adjust to the three principal challenges of the early part of the twentieth century – acreage of sugar cane under cultivation, the scale and method of production, and the competition from beet sugar producers. All three challenges were confronted by attempting to reduce the cost of production, especially the labour cost, and by significantly augmenting productivity with the technologies of the central factory that greatly expanded the volume as well as the quality of sugar. The increase in overall production, however, failed to improve the world competitive position of British Caribbean sugar producers. The British Caribbean simply could never achieve the volume required to make them a significant force in the world sugar market. Yet the British Caribbean producers and their allies never gave up.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century – in 1897 – after another of the recurring crises in the Caribbean sugar-producing colonies, the British imperial government established the Imperial Department of Agriculture. Its principal task was to find ways to protect the sugar planters and their small, non-representative class. Then in 1922 the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture was founded in Trinidad and began to research seriously all aspects of sugar cane cultivation and sugar manufacture. In 1932, a British West Indies Central Sugar Cane Breeding Station was established in Barbados, regularizing the practice of cross-pollination and developing new and improved varieties of sugar

cane that had already been introduced earlier in that island as well as in then British Guiana. Eventually the Barbados breeding station would supply scientific information on optimal varieties of sugar cane for the different soil types of different islands across the British Caribbean. Some of the improved volume of sugar production after the 1950s resulted from the persevering efforts of the Trinidad and Barbados technical research institutes.

## **Changing Power Relations**

If before 1940, British Caribbean sugar producers could neglect the local population and deal only with the British government (or occasionally the local British-appointed governor), after the Second World War they would have to come to terms with a rising sentiment of local nationalism and the emerging political independence of the major British Caribbean states after 1962. Sometimes that relationship was relatively harmonious. At other times it was not. Sometimes individuals like Jock Campbell working for Bookers Brothers in Guyana or Robert Kirkwood initially working for Tate & Lyle in Jamaica made a huge difference in smoothing the contentious relations between parties of mutually exclusive or antagonistic interests. The Great Depression of the 1930s, the increasing militancy of workers, and the reluctance on the part of sugar producers to recognize collective bargaining along with poor wages, intolerable working conditions and prevalent epidemic diseases not only made production more difficult but also brought the metropolitan state more actively in the overseas relations between workers, growers and producers.<sup>22</sup> As Nigel Bolland demonstrates, the Caribbean workers found their voices in the decade of the 1930s.<sup>23</sup>

By the late 1930s two new developments were impacting the British sugar operations in the Caribbean. The first was the arrival of the multinational enterprises that infused much-needed capital as well as new attitudes to workers in the sugar industry. The second was the expansion of independent small-scale cane farmers.

## **The Multinationals**

In the first place the British Multinational, Tate and Lyle, having lost their domestic beet sugar factories in Britain, acquired several sugar estates and refineries in Jamaica and Trinidad.<sup>24</sup> In Jamaica they bought a large number of small factories near Monymusk and Frome, and later

consolidated them as the West Indies Sugar Companies Limited, or WISCO. In Trinidad they acquired the Caroni Sugar Estates and the Waterloo Sugar Estates, consolidated as Caroni Limited. After 1940 Tate and Lyle as well as Bookers Brothers McConnell in Guyana dominated the sugar business in the British Caribbean. Both conglomerate operations in Jamaica and Guyana were nationalized in the 1960s and 1970s.

### **Small Farmers**

In the second place, the proportion of sugar cane grown by small farmers increased everywhere except in Guyana. The movement to expand the non-estate component of the sugar cane cultivation had two immediate objectives. One was to relieve the labour costs as well as the labour management of the reduced number of large sugar estates operating their individual mammoth central factories. The other was to provide alternate employment for the growing population who could no longer find work on the estates. After all, estate consolidation made many sugar estate workers redundant. Nevertheless there were opportunities in the agricultural side of the sugar business that seemed to be a win-win situation for everyone involved – estates, redundant workers and government. With incentives from local government – in the form of land distribution and support services – as well as from the estates with guaranteed purchases of entire harvests, along with supplemental provisions of schools and health services, throughout the British Caribbean small farmer sugar cane cultivation expanded significantly.<sup>25</sup> By the middle of the twentieth century the sugar industry at large depended heavily on the production of independent small sugar cane growers.

In 1968 about 9,700 small farmers in Trinidad produced thirty-three per cent of the sugar cane milled. In 1972 Jamaica had more than 20,000 independent small farmers growing sugar cane.<sup>26</sup> Between 1975 and 1999 small farmers out-produced the consolidated sugar estates (then nationalized) in overall sugar cane output in Jamaica. In 2012 Jamaica still had more than 9,000 small farmers producing more than forty per cent of the sugar cane grown on the island. But by that time the Jamaica sugar industry was in a death spiral.

Multinational corporations also stimulated technological advances in cane types and in boosting the sucrose content of canes, and altogether optimizing general sugar yield per acre. Both private multi-nationals and small sugar cane growers derived considerable support from the

government-supported research-based institutions in Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica.

To a certain extent these structural modifications to the industry proved efficacious for a short time. Everywhere gross sugar production increased, sometimes dramatically. Jamaican sugar production increased from about 5,000 tonnes in 1913 to more than 250,000 tonnes in 1960 and achieved more than 400,000 tonnes in 1972. Barbados increased output from more than 120,000 tonnes in 1930 to more than 176,000 tonnes in the 1950s before falling in the late 1960s. British Guiana, largely based on the Bookers Brothers McConnell Estates, almost doubled output to 258,000 tonnes. Trinidad and Tobago went from 140,000 tonnes in the 1930s to 235,000 tonnes in the late 1960s - with Tate & Lyle producing ninety per cent of the island output.<sup>27</sup> In 1952 the Caribbean Sugar Manufacturers signed a Commonwealth Agreement that stabilized the normally fluctuating price of raw sugar and partially insulated the producers. At the same time it set aside a special fund to attend to the welfare of the sugar industry labourers, to attend to industrial development and to compensate individual factories for their losses.

But in retrospect, the decade of the 1960s proved to be a significant turning point for the British Caribbean sugar industry. A number of factors coincided to reverse the upward expansion of production and productivity that the industry had experienced for almost three decades. While the factors were all interrelated, their coincidence and impact appeared at different times in different territories.

The three major factors that catastrophically impacted the industry were the long-standing competition with the beet sugar market; the development of high fructose sugars as substitutes to both cane and beet sugar; and the political changes that led to nationalization of the industry in Guyana (1976), Jamaica (1968) and in Trinidad (1975).

## **Beet Sugar**

Ever since Napoleon Bonaparte introduced beet sugar to France as a war response to the British embargo in the early nineteenth century and made that country independent of colonial cane sugar producers, the industry developed rapidly to become, for a short time during the later nineteenth century, the major component of the world sugar market. As we have indicated earlier, this complicated the production and marketing of sugar. But until the early twentieth century, beet sugar production costs were generally higher than those of cane sugar and



the successful producers enjoyed special protective subsidies and other financial incentives from their national governments. The failure to break into the domestic beet subsidies had driven Tate & Lyle to the Caribbean.

By the middle of the twentieth century, however, beet sugar production costs were almost equivalent to those of cane sugar.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, beet sugar producers – unlike cane sugar producers – could depend on direct subsidies and other forms of protection from their own countries to maintain the viability of the industry. Sugar from cane and beet continued to be important in the international sugar market but by the 1970s the market had a new rival – artificial sugars and high fructose concentrates, especially from corn. Thereafter, things would never be the same in the sugar market.

## High Fructose Concentrates

For more than a century the British Caribbean cane sugar producers competed with beet sugar producers for a share of the international sugar market. During that time those sugar producers suffered the erratic fluctuations in prices as well as the progressively increasing cost of production. Even more, they had to contend with periodic political interventions in a market in which they already encountered severe disadvantages. When world sugar prices (along with other commodities) dramatically increased about threefold in the early 1970s, an immediate response was to expand the area of cultivation of both cane and beet. In addition, new technologies boosted both production and productivity.

But the sugar market experienced an even more severe transformation with the entry of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), glucose syrup, and dextrose as well as other natural and artificial sweeteners.<sup>29</sup> When major sugar purchasers such as Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola and Hershey's Chocolate Factory switched from natural sugars to HFCS in the early 1970s, the international sugar market went into a continuous slump. Today, in recognition of the new commodities, the term "sugar market" has been replaced by "sweetener market".<sup>30</sup>

In 2010, high fructose corn syrup and other caloric sweeteners accounted for almost fifty per cent of the US sweetener market. The proportion of the market is expected to increase as HFCS prices continue to fall below the production cost of cane and beet sugar.<sup>31</sup>

## Political Changes and Nationalizations

No major industry, such as the sugar industry that accounted not only for a major component of the Caribbean agricultural labour force but also a major part of the local gross domestic product, could remain isolated from the political winds of change. Decolonization in the British Caribbean inevitably impacted the sugar industry since that industry was the largest employer of labour and until late in the twentieth century, a major contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>32</sup> As political power moved away from the often unholy alliance of sugar manufacturers, multinational corporations and imperial administrators to local assemblies elected by universal adult suffrage, the working classes belatedly found not only a voice but also the instruments to effect deep social and economic changes within their individual territories.

Between 1930 and 1960 workers succeeded in getting the legal right to form trades unions, political parties as well as associations of small farmers. Moreover, the masses got the electoral franchise that allowed them to vote for governments sympathetic to their causes. Not surprisingly these governments became responsive to the masses who voted them into office. These governments reflected the varied ideologies and personalities of the time.<sup>33</sup> With sugar industry workers and sugar cane farmers providing a significant proportion of the electorate, it was just a matter of time before the industry found itself under attack. Eventually the sugar industry was nationalized in Trinidad and Guyana, and partially nationalized in Jamaica.<sup>34</sup> In each case the process of nationalization was slightly different.

In Trinidad, Prime Minister Eric Williams used the windfall profits from the oil industry to gradually nationalize the sugar industry during the 1970s by acquiring the Tate & Lyle Holdings. Despite massive state capital infusion, like elsewhere in the Caribbean, the industry failed to become financially self-sustaining and was eventually dismantled in 2007.

The Jamaican government under Michael Manley nationalized the Tate & Lyle holdings in 1973 and for a number of years operated four of the six sugar producing facilities on the island. Sugar production plummeted – although more slowly in the privately held Appleton Estates and Worthy Park Estates – as manufacturing costs increased. In 1965, the island produced 516,825 tonnes of sugar. In 2010, the production was 121,806 tonnes. Finally, the government sold their operation

to the Chinese government with the charge that they boost production by 2015 to more than 200,000 tonnes – well below the production of the 1960s.

Barbados did not nationalize its industry but suffered comparable declines to the neighbouring Caribbean. In 2013, the government opened negotiations with the Japanese Maruben Corporation to invest in the island to reinvigorate the sugar sector. By that time several Barbadian sugar estates had been converted into golf courses.

Forbes Burnham nationalized the Booker Sugar Estates Limited, Tate & Lyle, and Jessels Holdings Enterprise in 1976 and placed them under a single public company, the Guyana Sugar Corporation. Since then the history of sugar production in Guyana has been dreadful. Recently Guyana was forced to buy foreign sugar to meet its export quota to the European community. With production costs almost twice the world price for sugar, Guyana loses a considerable amount on every tonne of sugar exported. In 2004, the Guyana government entered into negotiation with China National Technology Import and Export Corporation (CNTIC) to rebuild and restructure the sugar industry. Sugar that once had been the symbol of Caribbean prosperity had become an albatross around the necks of many Caribbean states.

## **General Observations**

Between 1900 and 2013, the British Caribbean sugar industry manifested three overlapping phases, although significant variations appeared across the region. The first phase lasted from roughly 1900 to the 1930s. It was a period of consolidation of estates to improve efficiency and increase profitability. In Jamaica and the smaller Eastern Caribbean islands production declined (Barbados) or ceased altogether (Grenada, Dominica, Tobago, Montserrat, St. Vincent, Nevis and Saint Lucia). But where the industry survived, a consolidation of production took place with the introduction of central factories. In newly acquired areas like Trinidad and British Guiana, with their extensive virgin lands, robust expansion took place.

The second phase lasted from the late 1930s to the 1970s. Two developments took place. One was the participation of multinationals like Booker Brothers McConnell in Guyana and Tate & Lyle in Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana. During this period a vigorous expansion of small cane farmers took place, aided by the big plantations and local governments desirous of relieving the large producers of some of the labour

cost of production as well as management problems associated with large numbers of labourers growing canes on estate lands.

The third phase spread from the 1960s to the present. It was characterized by a move toward nationalization and then a denationalization, or re-privatization, with the industry moving into foreign government control. State intervention and nationalization resulted in the virtual collapse of the industry. In 2004, Guyana entered into negotiation with China to revitalize its dismally performing sugar operation. Trinidad abandoned sugar production in 2007. Jamaica re-privatized and invited the Chinese to take over the public sector production in 2010. The Belize Sugar Industries sold itself to the American Sugar Refining Corporation in 2012. And Barbados invited Japanese interests to restore the industry in 2013. How successful these changes will be only time will tell.

British Caribbean cane sugar producers remain at a severe disadvantage, not only against other cane sugar producers worldwide but also beet sugar producers and the new HFCS introduced to the expanding world sweetener market. The British Caribbean, even including Guyana, simply does not have the available land room to produce enough sugar at competitive prices to re-enter the world sweetener market. It cannot develop new technologies that will optimize production and productivity. Sugar cane costs more to grow and process than either beet or corn. That widening difference in the cost of production does not augur well for Caribbean sugar producers.

As a source of sugar, then, the Caribbean region is not promising. Even Cuba struggles to produce enough sugar for domestic consumption. But the region still needs to grow sugar cane if it is to continue to hold on to its reputation as a source of premium rums.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, even that might be a fading dream as more and more Caribbean rum producers import their raw material from Brazil and other major alcohol producers. As for sugar production, time seems to be running out on the industry.

## NOTES

1. A version of this chapter was presented in Spanish at the Asociación de Historia Económica del Caribe (AHEC), Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 26–29 June 2013. The best general account of this history is Deerr, *The History of Sugar*. See also, Parker, *The Sugar Barons*; Abbott, *Sugar: A Bittersweet History*; Albert and Graves, eds., *Crisis and Change*; Albert and Graves, eds., *World Sugar Economy*.
2. For the development and expansion of the Caribbean sugar industry, see Rodríguez; Morel, *Orígenes*; Schwartz, ed., *Tropical Babylons*; Sheridan, *The Development of the Plantations to 1750*; Carrington, *The Sugar Industry*; Knight, ed., *Slave Societies*; Knight, *The Caribbean*; Palmié and Scarano, eds., *The Caribbean*.
3. Knight, "Slavery in the Americas", 146–61.
4. Look Lai, *Indentured Labor*; Wilson, ed., *The Chinese in the Caribbean*; Yun, *The Coolie Speaks*; López, *Chinese Cubans*.
5. For the transformation in Cuba, see Iglesias García, *Del ingenio al Central*.
6. Until almost the middle of the twentieth century many of the Caribbean sugar producers were absentee, especially in the case of British Guiana.
7. Albert and Graves describe the world sugar economy after 1914 as being in "endemic crisis" in *World Sugar Economy*, 21.
8. Higman, *A Concise History*, 224–25. La Romana, however, did not quite out-produce the combined new producers of Jamaica in 1940. See also, García Muñiz, *Sugar and Power*.
9. Comparative sugar production figures for the Caribbean may be followed in Williams, *Columbus to Castro*, 428–42.
10. Colonos were independent cane farmers who sold their product to a nearby sugar mill.
11. Williams, *Columbus to Castro*, 430–31.
12. Parker, *The Sugar Barons*, 63; Albert and Graves, *Crisis and Change*, 85–93.
13. Williams, *Columbus to Castro*, 432–33. See also, Zanetti and García, *Sugar and Railroads*.
14. Calculated from Thomas, *Cuba*.
15. See Dye, *Cuban Sugar*.
16. The sugar cane was introduced to the Caribbean by the Spanish and it was cultivated extensively in the Caribbean and in Mexico in the early sixteenth century, but the commercial potential of sugar as a major Caribbean export developed only toward the middle of the seventeenth century. See, Rodríguez Morel, *Orígenes de la economía de plantación*; Crespo et al., eds., *Historia del azúcar en México*.
17. Williams, *Columbus to Castro*, 368–73.
18. Bolland, *Politics of Labour*.
19. Thomas, *Cuba*, 1057.
20. Normally beet plants are set in the ground in April and harvested in the

fall. Sugar cane requires from eleven to eighteen months depending on the climatic zone.

21. Williams, *Columbus to Castro*, 370–88; Hagelberg, *Caribbean Sugar Industries*, 40–41.
22. Albert and Graves, *World Sugar Economy*, 20–21; Seecharan, *Sweetening Bitter Sugar*, 116–50.
23. Bolland, *Politics of Labour*, passim.
24. Hugill, *Sugar and All That*, 108–25.
25. Bookers in Guyana and Tate & Lyle in Jamaica built schools on their estates and provided health clinics that were instrumental in eliminating malaria and significantly reducing hookworm and other epidemics. The general health in their production zones was better than that of the states in which they operated.
26. Hagelberg, *Caribbean Sugar Industries*, 39.
27. *Ibid.*, 111.
28. Abbott, *Sugar*, 302–10.
29. "Sugar and Sweeteners", <http://ers.usda.gov/topics/crops/sugar-sweeteners> (Accessed 21 June 2013).
30. Schmitz, *Sugar and Related Sweetener Markets*.
31. "High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS) in the US Caloric Sweetener Supply, June 2011. <http://cornaturally.com/pdf/hfcs-in-the-us.pdf> (Accessed 21 June 2013).
32. Bolland, *On the March*; Bolland, *Politics of Labour*; Higman, *The Caribbean*, 251–326; Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 172–202; Post, *Strike the Iron*; Palmer, *Eric Williams*; Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan*; Seecharan, *Sweetening Bitter Sugar*, 588–603.
33. See, Craton, *Pindling*; Charles, *History of the Labour Movement in St. Lucia*; Palmer, *Eric Williams*; Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan*; Palmer, *Freedom's Children*.
34. The industry in Belize remained in private hands with 5,300 sugar growers supplying the single processor, Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI), which in late 2012 sold almost 80 per cent of its stock to American Sugar Refining (ASR), a US conglomerate. Barbados also did not nationalize the industry but in 2014 the industry was limping along with only two factories.
35. Smith, *Caribbean Rum*.

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PART III



## An Annotated Bibliography of the Works of Bridget Brereton

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NIALA DWARIKA-BHAGAT, KAREN ECCLES,  
MICHELLE GILL, MARSHA WINTER

### Introduction

"Assembling the Fragments" was the theme of the conference hosted by the Liberal Arts Department at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, in August 2011. The conference was in honour of three distinguished academics, one of whom was Professor Bridget Brereton, a scholar who has had a long association with the University of the West Indies. Professor Brereton's vast scholarship on Caribbean history spans over three decades and any student of Caribbean history should be familiar with the name of this eminent historian. As part of the conference, librarians from the Alma Jordan Library were formally approached to compile an annotated bibliography of her scholarly writings. The librarians opted for a partial annotated bibliography in order to satisfy the stringent word limit. It is hoped that the bibliography would be helpful to researchers and students of Caribbean history.

### Scope

In order to compile a document which truly reflected the intellectual output of Professor Brereton, several decisions were taken. It was agreed that whereas all her writings would be listed in the bibliography, annotations would be prepared for the following: (a) authored or co-authored books; (b) chapters in books; (c) journal articles; (d) edited books.

The bibliography also contains conference presentations and book reviews.

## Methodology

The compilation of materials for Professor Brereton was undertaken by four librarians with the assistance of Dr Glenroy Taitt, a senior librarian attached to the West Indiana and Special Collections Division at the Alma Jordan Library, and his staff. The author's curriculum vitae was used as a starting point for compiling the annotated bibliography. However, extensive efforts were made to ensure the accuracy of the bibliographic information. Published works were checked using various bibliographic tools including the Alma Jordan Library's Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) together with Online Computer Library Centre's (OCLC) Worldcat, the world's largest library catalogue. In the case of unpublished conference presentations, reputable internet sources were consulted to verify the accuracy of the entries.

## Organization of Entries

The entries are arranged into (a) monographs (b) chapters in books (c) published articles (d) edited books (e) book reviews and (f) conference papers. The entries for Professor Brereton were compiled using the *Chicago Manual of Style* 15th edition Documentation style for Humanities. The annotations, written by the librarians, are brief summaries of the chapters, published articles, authored and edited books. A few of Professor Brereton's works appear in various versions. In cases like these, the main entry is the original version therefore the annotations are based on the first appearance of the work; however the researcher is pointed to the subsequent versions.

A challenge was to acquire the articles and books which were not all readily available. Therefore, it was necessary to consult libraries located on other University of the West Indies campuses, utilize the British Library's Interlibrary Loan Service and in some cases items were sourced from the author herself.

Part of the intellectual aspect of preparing the annotations included adding Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) to capture the content of the work being annotated. (*Note: the LCSH uses American spelling, however the compilers converted the subject headings to British spelling to satisfy publisher requirements.*) To improve access to the annotations, a subject heading index to the annotated works was created.

The work that follows could not have been accomplished without the assistance of the following persons: Dr Glenroy Taitt for his unstint-

ing support, encouragement and valuable suggestions which went a long way in shaping the bibliography; Ms Claudia De Four, the Deputy Campus Librarian of the Alma Jordan Library, for inviting the librarians to work on the project; and the staff of the West Indiana and Special Collections Division of the Alma Jordan Library for assistance with locating the items.

## Monographs

1. *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad, 1870–1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

In this publication which emerged out of Brereton's PhD thesis, the evolution and inter-relations of the heterogeneous society of Trinidad in the last three decades of the nineteenth century are examined. Chapters are devoted to the social positions and status of each major ethnic group, as well as education and mobility, the urban population and the black rural masses.

Trinidad and Tobago – Race relations – History

Ethnic groups – Trinidad and Tobago – History

2. *A History of Modern Trinidad, 1783–1962*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981.

This book, according to the author, attempts to provide a scholarly and interpretative account of the history of Trinidad since the 1780s. It traces the late development of the island as a plantation economy, the changes in the agricultural sector and the emergence of oil production, and constitutional reform up until Independence in 1962. It also contains a chronology of major events from 1498 to 1962.

Trinidad and Tobago – History – Economic conditions

Trinidad and Tobago – History – Social conditions

3. *Social Life in the Caribbean, 1838–1938*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1985.

This 65-page text is geared towards secondary level students preparing for the CXC examinations. It gives a brief overview of social conditions over a hundred year period from emancipation in 1838 in the British Caribbean and discusses the hierarchical structures which shaped society at the time.

## Caribbean Area – Social life and customs – History

4. *The Book of Trinidad*. Trinidad and Tobago: Paria Publishing, 1992.  
With Gerard Besson.

Provides a history of Trinidad with numerous historical photographs and images, and accounts of events are given as they were written at the time. A number of topics are addressed on the social development of the island and there is also an epilogue which Brereton wrote. This is a sizable book in terms of physical dimensions, with over 400 pages on the historical development of Trinidad from the times of the Amerindians. The uniqueness of this historical account is the portrayal of history with photographs and images, with accounts on events included as they were written at the time. Images are presented as drawings or later on as actual photographs taken by contemporaries of the various eras. The book also includes images and the names of men who served in the First World War.

Trinidad and Tobago – History – Textbooks

Trinidad and Tobago – Study and teaching – History

5. *An Introduction to the History of Trinidad and Tobago*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1996.

This textbook, written for students of lower forms of secondary schools, provides an overview of the history of Trinidad and Tobago. It starts from the island's first sighting by Christopher Columbus and its colonization by Europeans. It also highlights the social life on the island after slavery, the coming of indentureship and the discovery of oil before independence of the island.

Trinidad and Tobago – History – Textbooks

Trinidad and Tobago – Social conditions – History

6. *Law, Justice and Empire: The Colonial Career of John Gorrie, 1829–1892*. Barbados: University of the West Indies Press, 1997.

In this biographical work, the career of John Gorrie, a Scottish lawyer who served as a judge in several British colonies and Chief Justice in Trinidad and Tobago during the second half of the nineteenth century, is discussed. Central focus of the book is Gorrie's public life and his career as a crusading colonial judge who displayed a partiality for the masses when it was not popular to adopt this view.

Colonial administrators – History – 19th century

Caribbean Area – Officials and employees – Biography

7. *From Imperial College to University of the West Indies: A History of the St Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2010.

Provides a historical account of the history of the University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, focusing on the significant milestones in the campus' fifty-year history. It traces the development of the St Augustine campus from its early beginnings as the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA) to its renaming in 1960 as the University College of the West Indies (UCWI), then its evolution as the University of the West Indies (UWI) in 1962, and subsequent development up to 2010.

Universities and colleges – Trinidad and Tobago – History

University of the West Indies – History

## Chapters in Books

8. "The Experience of Indentureship, 1845–1917". In *Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians in Trinidad*, edited by John Gaffar La Guerre, 21–30. London: Longman Caribbean, 1974. Republished at St Augustine, Trinidad: UWI Extra-Mural Studies Unit, 1985; and in *Calcutta to Caroni and the Indian Diaspora*, 3rd rev. ed., edited by John La Guerre and Annmarie Bissessar, 29–44. St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago: UWI School of Continuing Studies, 2005.

The reasons for Indian indentureship after 1838 are discussed in this article. It focuses on Trinidad and includes statistics on the numbers and particular castes of East Indians who came, as well as the regulation and organization of the system and the attitude of the government and general public towards indentured immigrants.

Indentured servants – Trinidad and Tobago – History

East Indians – Trinidad and Tobago – History

9. "The Development of an Identity: The Negro Middle Class of Trinidad in the Later 19th Century". In *Social Groups and Institutions in the History of the Caribbean*, 50–65. Puerto Rico, 1975. Republished



in *Caribbean Freedom: Society and Economy from Emancipation to the Present*, edited by Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd, 274–83. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1993.

Describes what constituted the Negro middle class in Trinidad, the criteria for ascendance to this class and their economic, social and political activities. The author asserts that whereas there were those who subscribed to the notions of some white racist concepts, there were many who embraced their African heritage and promoted racial pride.

Africans – Trinidad and Tobago – 19th century

Ethnic groups – Trinidad and Tobago – History

10. "The Birthday of Our Race: A Social History of Emancipation Day in Trinidad, 1838–1888". In *Trade, Government and Society in Caribbean History: Essays Presented to Douglas Hall*, edited by B.W. Higman, 69–83. Jamaica: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.

Examines how August 1st was recognized and celebrated as the day of emancipation over a fifty-year period from 1838 to 1888 in Trinidad among different sections of the population.

Slaves – Emancipation Day – History

Caribbean Area – Anniversaries etc. – History

11. "Trinidad and Tobago". In *Research Guide to Central America and the Caribbean*, edited by Kenneth J. Grieb, 357–60. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

Brereton looks at sources of historical information on the Commonwealth Caribbean housed in Trinidad and Tobago. She mentions a number of institutions, and notes their location, the various historical documents they contain and the periods they cover.

Caribbean Area – History – Sources

Trinidad and Tobago – History – Sources

12. "Caribbean History in Schools: A Critical Assessment of Recent Writing for Secondary Schools in the Anglophone Caribbean". In *Freedom Road*, edited by Ivan Pérez Carri n, 239–65. Havana: Jose Marti Press, 1988. Republished in *Freedom Road*, edited by James Millette, 192–212. Kingston: Arawak Publishers, 2007.

Assesses the weaknesses and strengths of post-1979 history textbooks, published by metropolitan publishers and written by Caribbean and non-Caribbean authors, in providing teaching and academic support for the Caribbean Examination Council's Caribbean history syllabus in the 1980s.

History – Textbooks – Criticism and interpretation

Caribbean Area – History – Study and teaching

13. "General Problems and Issues in Studying the History of the Women in the Caribbean". In *Gender in Caribbean Development*, edited by Patricia Mohammed and Catherine Shepherd, 119–35. Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies, Women and Development Studies Project, 1988.

The author discusses the possibilities and difficulties involved in studying women's history in the Caribbean while providing a literature review of studies done on Caribbean women from the days of slavery until the time of her writing. She also discusses the issue of modern feminism from which there was the emergence of women's history.

Women – Research – Caribbean Area

Historiography – Women – Caribbean Area

14. "Society and Culture in the Caribbean: The British and French West Indies, 1870–1980". In *The Modern Caribbean*, edited by Franklin W. Knight and Colin A. Palmer, 85–110. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Summarizes the economic, social and cultural development of the British and French Caribbean territories in the post-emancipation period. The author looks at the legacies of slavery, notably race relations and the plantation system and analyses the social structures in terms of class stratification, social mobility and the changes made with the addition of new immigrants to society.

Caribbean Area – Social conditions – History

Slaves – Emancipation – History

15. "Social Organization and Class, Racial and Cultural Conflict in 19th Century Trinidad". In *Trinidad Ethnicity*, edited by Kevin Yelvington, 33–55. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press; London: Macmil-

lan, 1993. Republished in *Histoire et identités dans la Caraïbe : trajectoires plurielles*, edited by Mamadou Diouf, Ulbe Bosma, and Roger Meunier, 163–90. Amsterdam: Sphix; Paris: Karthala, 2004.

Describes the complex social composition of the Trinidadian society in the nineteenth century. The article accounts for the different social groups which existed in Trinidad at that time, the whites, the coloureds and free blacks as well as the former enslaved. It also looks at the immigration of Portuguese from Madeira, of Chinese and of East Indians, and its impact on the society.

Social classes – Trinidad and Tobago – History

Ethnic groups – Trinidad and Tobago – History

16. "Gendered Testimony: Autobiographies, Diaries, and Letters by Women as Sources for Caribbean History". Mona: Department of History, UWI, 1994. Republished in *Feminist Review: Special Issue "Rethinking Caribbean Difference"* 59 (1998):143–63; and in *Slavery, Freedom and Gender: The Dynamics of Caribbean Society*, edited by Brian L. Moore et al., 232–53. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001.

Looks at the memoirs, diaries and autobiographies of women from the 1830s to the 1930s. In examining these works, Brereton attempts to uncover their gendered testimonies as evidenced in the writings of these women. This paper underscores the value of these types of records as rich sources of data on motherhood, health, sexuality, domestic life and household management, and the rearing and education of girls.

Caribbean Area – History – Sources

Women – Research – Caribbean Area

17. "Historians of the Commonwealth Caribbean". In *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, Vol.1, edited by Eugene Benson & L.W. Connolly, 665–67. London: Routledge, 1994.

Surveys the historical works written about the Caribbean from the seventeenth to twentieth centuries. It points out the absence of writings prior to late 1930s on important aspects of the region's history. A significant shift came about with the publishing of *Black Jacobins* by C.L.R James in 1938, *Capitalism and Slavery* by Eric Williams in 1944, and with the Department of History in the University of the West Indies in

the early 1950s. The article highlights significant historical works which focus on key aspects of the region's history.

History – Caribbean Area

Historiography – Caribbean Area

18. "Independence and the Persistence of European Colonialism in the Caribbean". In *Crossroads of Empire: The Europe–Caribbean Connection, 1492–1992*, edited by Alan Cobley, 53–83. Bridgetown, Barbados: Department of History, University of the West Indies, 1994.

Examines the decolonisation in the Caribbean by European colonial powers since World War II and traces the historical relationship that Britain, the Netherlands, France and Spain had with the Caribbean. It looks at the remnants of the empire under the control of these countries and considers the present situation of Europe's relationship with its former colonies.

Decolonisation – Caribbean Area – History

Caribbean Area – Foreign relations – History

19. "A Social History of Emancipation Day in the British Caribbean: The First Fifty Years". In *August 1st: A Celebration of Emancipation*, edited by P. Bryan, 27–44. Kingston, 1995. Republished in *Inside Slavery: Process and the Legacy in the Caribbean Experience*, edited by Hilary Beckles, 78–95. Barbados: Canoe Press, 1996.

Provides a comparative social history of 1 August 1834 and 1838, which documents the responses of the former enslaved, free blacks and coloureds, and whites to this landmark occasion in the British West Indies. It is said, generally, the day was marked by religious services in some territories, while some viewed the day purely as a secular holiday. There did not seem to be much interest between the 1850s and 1887, until the fiftieth anniversary, the year of Jubilee in 1888, when there appeared to be a resurgence of interest in the day.

Slaves – Emancipation Day – History

Caribbean Area – Anniversaries etc. – History

20. "Text, Testimony and Gender: An Examination of Some Texts by Women on the English Speaking Caribbean from the 1770s to the 1920s". In *Engendering History*, edited by Verene Shepherd, Bridget

Brereton and Barbara Bailey, 63–93. New York: St Martin's Press, 1995. Republished in *Engendering Caribbean History Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Student Reader*, edited by Verene Shepherd, 835–58. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2010.

Looks at the women in Caribbean history as depicted through nine texts written between the 1770s and 1920s. Five of the authors were women from Britain resident or visiting the Caribbean. The other four were Caribbean women who reflected the broad ethnic and class diversity in the nineteenth-century Caribbean. These texts provide a vital first-hand perspective of life and the experiences of women during that period.

Caribbean Area – History – Sources

Historiography – Women – Caribbean Area

21. "Family Strategies, Gender, and the Shift to Wage Labour in the British Caribbean". In *Gender and Slave Emancipation in the Atlantic World*, edited by Pamela Scully and Diana Paton, 14–21. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997. Republished in the *Journal of Social Sciences* IV, no. 2 (1997): 32–55; *The Colonial Caribbean in Transition* (1997): 77–107; *Del Caribe*, translated by J.L. Hernandez, no. 33 (2000): 71–78; and in *Engendering Caribbean History Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Student Reader*, edited by V. Shepherd, 569–92. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2010.

Brereton discusses the question of women's withdrawal from estate labour in the British Caribbean and examines the family strategies the formerly enslaved used to secure their independence and economic security.

Women agricultural labourers – West Indies, British

Women – West Indies, British – Economic Conditions

22. "Caribbean Race Relations". In *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*, edited by S. Drescher and S.L. Engerman, 119–25. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Looks at race relations in Cuba, Haiti and the Dominica Republic after the abolition of slavery. The article discusses the way in which skin colour operated as a means of social control and the ways in which social distance was maintained between blacks and whites.

Social classes – Caribbean Area – History

Ethnic groups – Caribbean Area – Social life and customs

23. "Teaching the Caribbean: An Assessment of Texts for the CXC Caribbean History Syllabus". In *Before and After 1865: Education, Politics and Regionalism in the Caribbean*, edited by Brian L. Moore and Swithin R. Wilmot, 88–98. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1998.

Updates Brereton's article written in the 1980s on the same subject and highlights the contribution of Roy Augier in developing the Caribbean history syllabus. She critically examines the content of key Caribbean history textbooks and their strengths and weaknesses in support of the Caribbean history syllabus.

History – Textbooks – Criticism and interpretation

Caribbean Area – History – Study and teaching

24. "The White Elite of Trinidad, 1838–1950". In *The White Minority in the Caribbean*, edited by H. Johnson and K. Watson, 32–70. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1998.

Analyses the white elite class from the end of slavery to the 1950s in Trinidad. The article focuses on the origin of this social group, their economic and business concerns, the positions which they held in society, their views on social status and specifically the women in society at that time. Finally, it examines the relationship between whites and non-whites.

Whites – Trinidad and Tobago – History

Whites – Social conditions – History

25. "Eric Williams, Anti-Colonial Historian". In *Enterprise of the Indies*, edited by George Lamming, 268–71. Port of Spain: Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies, 1999.

Discusses the academic achievements of Dr Eric Williams and his strong anti-colonial sentiments as reflected in his work such as *Capitalism and Slavery*. The author discusses Williams' use of history as a powerful tool to communicate profound ideologies in his capacity as a scholar in public education, as party leader and as statesman.

Prime ministers – Trinidad and Tobago – 20th century

Williams, Eric, 1911–1983

26. "Gordon Lewis: Honourable Member of the Family". In *Enterprise of the Indies*, edited by George Lamming, 262–65. Port of Spain: Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies, 1999.

Pays tribute to the intellect of Gordon Lewis who was born in Wales in 1919. The author discusses Lewis' contribution to Caribbean studies and though he was an "outsider", lauds his profound understanding of the colonial and postcolonial condition, describing him as a superb analyst of the modern political development of the region.

Lewis, Gordon K.

Caribbeanists – 20th century

27. "Regional Histories". In *Methodology and Historiography of the Caribbean*, edited by B. W. Higman. Vol. 6 of *General History of the Caribbean*, 308–42. London: UNESCO Publishing, 1999.

Regional histories of the Caribbean from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries are explored and the meaning of "regional histories" is interrogated. The shortcomings of the works of early Spanish writers and the factors which led to the emergence of more significant histories of the region are discussed. The author anticipates that there will be even further stimulus to the writing of Caribbean history because of the efforts of the Association of Caribbean Historians and the universities within the region.

Historiography – Caribbean Area – History and criticism

Research – Caribbean Area – History and criticism

28. "The Historical Context of Moreton's (1790) Attack on Slavery and Matthews' (1793) Response". In *St. Kitts and Atlantic Creoles: The Texts of Samuel Augustus Matthews in Perspective*, edited by Philip Baker and Adriene Bruyn, 59–62. London: University of Westminster Press, 1999.

Presents two opposing views of the slave trade and the West Indian Creole through the work of J.B. Moreton, and Samuel Matthews. Moreton's work published in 1790, titled "*Manners and customs in the West India Islands*", identifies him as a secular humanitarian with no religious pretence, and one who opposes the slave trade yet is not a friend of the Negro. Conversely, Matthews' work published in 1793, titled the "*Lying Hero*", stoutly defends the slave trade and the West Indian Creole.

Slave trade in literature

Slavery – Caribbean Area

29. "Gender and the Historiography of the English-Speaking Caribbean". In *Gendered Realities: Essays in Caribbean Feminist Thought*, edited by Patricia Mohammed, 129–44. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2002.

Examines the body of work that has been researched and published on women and gender in the history of the English-speaking Caribbean.

Feminism – Caribbean Area

Feminism and literature – Caribbean Area

30. "Woodville Marshall and Caribbean History." In *In the Shadow of the Plantation: Caribbean History and Legacy*, edited by Alvin O. Thompson, 3–16. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2002.

This article in honour of Professor Emeritus Woodville K. Marshall discusses his career and his contribution to Caribbean historiography. She organizes his body of work into three categories: the history of the Windward Islands and Barbados between 1834 and 1865, the evolution of peasantries and villages in the British West Indies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the development of historiography of the Anglophone Caribbean. She also explains his contribution to the *Journal of Caribbean History* and the Association of Caribbean Historians.

Caribbean Area – History

Historians – Caribbean Area – History and criticism

31. "The Trinidad Carnival in the Late Nineteenth Century". In *Carnival: Culture in Action – The Trinidad Experience*, edited by Milla Cozart Riggio, 53–63. Routledge: London 2004.

A compact and comprehensive account of how the sophisticated middle/upper-class carnival of the late nineteenth century was transformed into a "jammed" carnival complete with Canboulay rioting, violence, and sexually explicit behaviour of the lower classes. The social context of carnival is analysed as well as the socio-cultural contestation that gave rise to various legislations. The rise of the calypso tents is also addressed.

Carnival – Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad – Social life and customs



32. "Recent Developments in the Historiography of the Post- Emancipation Anglophone Caribbean". In *Beyond Fragmentation: Perspectives on Caribbean History*, edited by Juanita de Barros, Audra Diptee, and D. Trotman, 187–209. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006.

Examines the historiography of the British Caribbean in the post- emancipation period, and stresses the significance of this watershed era. The author looks at trends as well as gaps in the written histories of particular countries and concludes with a discussion on the recent developments in this historiography.

West Indies, British – Historiography

Caribbean Area – Historiography – History and criticism

33. "Haiti and the Haitian Revolution in the Political Discourse of Nineteenth Century Trinidad". In *Reinterpreting the Haitian Revolution and its Cultural Aftershocks*, edited by M. Munro and E. Walcott-Hackshaw, 123–49. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2006.

Also appeared as: "Hé Saint Domingo, Songé Saint Domingo: Haiti et la révolution haïtienne dans le discours politique trinitadien au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle". In *La révolution et l'indépendance haïtiennes : autour du bicentenaire de 1804, histoire et mémoire : actes du 36<sup>e</sup> colloque de l'Association des historiens de la Caraïbe, Barbade, mai 2004*, edited by Jean Casimir, Michel Hector, and Danielle Bégot, 201–3. Gourbeyre: Archives départementales, 2006.

In this publication of papers presented at the 2004 Haitian Bicentenary Conference in June 2004, Brereton discusses the Revolutionary years from 1791 to 1815. She looks at the fear in the Americas of the "seeds of revolutionary ideas and focuses on how the Haitian Revolution influenced the political climate in Trinidad.

Haiti – History – Revolution, 1791-1804

West Indies, French – History

34. "Oil and the Twentieth Century Economy, 1900–62". In *Blooming With the Pouis: Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum: a Rhetorical Reader for Caribbean Tertiary Students*, edited by P. Ramsay et al., 78–82. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009.

The pioneering effort that gave rise to Trinidad's oil industry in the nineteenth century is the subject of this expository essay. Brereton affords due credit to the early pioneers, describes existing constraints and traces how British wartime activities increased the demand for Trinidad's oil and promoted its dominance over agriculture as a major export product. Attention is paid to the growth and development of inland wells and oil refineries.

Petroleum industry and trade – Trinidad and Tobago – History

Oil fields – Trinidad and Tobago – 19th Century

## Journal Articles

35. "The Trinidad Carnival 1870–1900". *Savacou* 11–12 (1975): 46–57.

Describes the changing features of Trinidad carnival in the last decades of the nineteenth century. She examines how the formerly enslaved lower classes in society came to dominate in the revelry of carnival, resulting in the withdrawal of the upper classes. She then describes the latter's subsequent re-entry at the end of the period when the perceived scandalous behaviour of the lower classes was somewhat forcibly stamped out.

Carnival – Trinidad and Tobago – 19th century

Festivals – Trinidad and Tobago – History

36. "John Jacob Thomas, an Estimate". *Journal of Caribbean History* 9 (May 1977): 22–42.

Assesses the ways in which John Jacob Thomas, a son of ex-slaves who lived in the second half of the nineteenth century was, in the author's opinion, remarkable. It traces his career as a primary school teacher until his promotion to the clerkship of Cedros, and discusses his writings in detail.

Trinidad and Tobago – Officials and employees – Biography

Colonial administrators – History – 19th century

37. "Finding Aids for Studying the British Caribbean". *Latin American Research Review* 4, no. 1 (1979): 252–55.

In this study of historical sources on the British Caribbean, Brereton

mostly critiques the publications of three authors, William Lux, Harvey K. Meyer, and John A. Lent. She is in particular critical of Lux's work, but more favourable to the information Meyer provides on Honduras as well as to the bibliography on mass media on the Commonwealth Caribbean by Lent. She also assesses other notable source books and affirms their value to historical research on the Caribbean.

Caribbean Area – History – Sources

Historiography – Caribbean Area – History and criticism

38. "Sir John Gorrie: A Radical Chief Justice of Trinidad (1885-1892)". *Journal of Caribbean History* 13 (1980): 44-72.

Examines the career of Sir John Gorrie who was known as a radical reformer. He served in Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, the Leeward Islands and lastly in Trinidad where he was Chief Justice from 1885 to 1892. The article highlights Gorrie's philosophy and his achievements as an administrator whose views of non-whites were more liberal than many of his white contemporaries.

Judges – History – 19th century

Caribbean Area – Officials and employees – Biography

39. "Post-emancipation Protest in the Caribbean: The 'Belmanna Riots' in Tobago, 1876". *Caribbean Quarterly* 30, nos. 3-4 (September-December 1984): 110-23. Reprinted in *Caribbean Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (December 2008): 111-28.

Looks at the post-emancipation period and highlights some of the issues which arose, particularly in Tobago. Also discusses the similarities between the labour unrest in Tobago and the other Windward Islands.

Labour – Trinidad and Tobago – Tobago

Slaves – Emancipation – History

40. "Review Essay: Abolition and its Aftermath". *Slavery and Abolition* 7, no. 3 (December 1986): 299-306.

Reviews two publications, *Abolition and its Aftermath: the Historical Context 1790-1916*, edited by D. Richardson; and *Out of Slavery: Abolition and its Aftermath*, edited by J. Hayward, which were both published in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the passage of the Emancipation Act in the British parliament and the death of William Wilber-

force. Brereton discusses the authors' interpretations of the historical issues and summarises their contributions to historical scholarship.

Slaves – Emancipation – West Indies

Antislavery movements – Congresses

41. "Michel Maxwell Philip, 1829–1888: Servant of the Centurion". *Antilia* 1, no. 3 (1987): 6–20. Republished in *Michel Maxwell Philip: A Trinidad Patriot of the 19th Century*, edited by Selwyn R. Cudjoe, 104–24. Wellesley, MA: Calaloux Publications, 1999.

Traces the life and career path of Trinidadian, Michel Maxwell Philip, who became the first non-white mayor of Port of Spain in 1867. The article sheds light on some aspects of his personality and analyses some of the opinions expressed about him at the time.

Trinidad and Tobago – Officials and employees – Biography

Colonial administrators – History – 19th century

42. "Searching for the Invisible Woman". *Slavery and Abolition* 13, no. 2 (August 1992): 86–96.

Critically reviews three full-length monographs published between 1989 and 1990 which explore the experience of black women during slavery. The strengths and shortcomings of each book is carefully discussed: *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* by Hilary Beckles focuses on one territory but provides sound information on the plantation life in the New World; *Slave Women in Caribbean Society 1650–1838* by Barbara Bush examines enslaved women in the British Caribbean with some reference to other slave colonies; and Marietta Morrissey's *Slave Women in the New World: Gender Stratification in the Caribbean* has the widest scope by incorporating the experiences of enslaved females in the French, Dutch and Danish colonies.

Women – Research – Caribbean Area

Historiography – Women – Caribbean Area

43. "The Other Crossing: Asian Migrants in the Caribbean, a Review Essay". *Journal of Caribbean History* 28, no. 1 (1994): 99–122.

Analyses the work of four scholars whose writings examine Asian migrant experiences in the Caribbean namely, K.O. Laurence's *A Question of Labour: Indentured Immigration into Trinidad and British Guiana*,

1875–1917; Walton Look Lai's *Indentured Labour, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese Immigrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918*; Marianne D. Ramesar's *Survivors of Another Crossing: A History of East Indians in Trinidad 1880–1946*; and Verene Shepherd's *Transients to Settlers: The Experience of Indians in Jamaica*. Brereton notes that while these books have much in common, they differ in the periods they examine and the aspects of the migrant experiences they explore.

Asians – Caribbean Area – History

Indentured servants – Caribbean Area – History

44. "Slavery, Antislavery, Freedom". *New West Indian Guide* 76, nos. 1–2 (2002): 97–103.

Slavery, anti-slavery and freedom are the trilogy of themes reviewed in a quartet of books published in 1999 and 2000 that examine the slavery and anti-slavery movements in the Atlantic world. Brereton pays attention to the states of transition from slavery to post-emancipation. The reviews are interwoven due to common underlying themes in the texts.

Slaves – Social conditions

Antislavery movements – West Indies

45. "QRC and the Political Development of Trinidad and Tobago". In *QRC 2004*, edited by Garth O'G Alleyne, 348–63. Trinidad and Tobago: QRC Committee, 2004. With Doddridge Alleyne.

Discusses the historical role that Queens' Royal College (QRC) men played in the political transformation of Trinidad since the establishment of the school in 1870.

Queens Royal College (Trinidad and Tobago) – Trinidad and Tobago – History

College graduates – Trinidad and Tobago – History

46. "Naipaul's Sense of History". *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*, no. 2 (2007). <http://anthurium.miami.edu/home.html>.

Examines V.S. Naipaul's world view and views on history, and discusses the central point throughout his work, that individuals need to have a greater understanding of their past and confront their personal, national and regional histories.

Literary reviews

Historical criticism (literature)

47. "Contesting the Past: Narratives of Trinidad and Tobago History".  
*New West Indian Guide* 81, no. 3-4 (2008): 169-96.

Identifies and discusses the various historical narratives (interpretations) of Trinidad and Tobago, namely, the colonial, Afro-creole, Afrocentric, Indocentric and Tobago.

Trinidad and Tobago – History

Trinidad and Tobago – Civilization

48. "Resistance to Enslavement and Oppression in Trinidad, 1802-1849". *Journal of Caribbean History* 43, no. 2 (2009): 157-76.

The enslaved and newly freed people in Trinidad and their response to oppression and enslavement is the focus of this article. Brereton also discusses marronage in Trinidad and the 1849 Port of Spain riots.

Slaves – Social conditions

Slaves – Emancipation – West Indies, British

49. "'All Ah We Is Not One': Historical and Ethnic Narratives in Pluralist Trinidad". *Global South* 4, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 218-38.

Discusses the hegemonic narratives (interpretations) of Trinidad (Tobago is not included) that emerged from the period of colonialism onwards and asserts that the more dominant Afro-Creole and Indocentric narratives are competitive and oppositional in nature due to a heightened ethnic awareness by these two groups over time.

Cultural Pluralism – Trinidad and Tobago

Multiculturalism – Trinidad and Tobago

50. "The Historical Background to Violence in Trinidad and Tobago".  
*Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* (2010). <http://sta.uwi.edu/crgs/february2010/journals/BridgetBrereton.pdf>.

Highlights the history of violence in Trinidad and Tobago from as far back as the pre-Columbian times to the mid-twentieth century.

Violence – Trinidad and Tobago

Violence in popular culture – Trinidad and Tobago

**Edited Works**

51. *East Indians in the Caribbean: Colonialism and the Struggle for Identity*. New York: Kraus International Publishers, 1982. With Winston Dookeran.

This volume consists of edited conference papers which were originally presented at a symposium on East Indians in the Caribbean at the University of the West Indies in 1975. Following an introduction by the celebrated author, V.S. Naipaul, it examines different aspects of the East Indian presence including the British policy towards East Indian indentured labourers, the East Indian post-indentureship experience from 1873 to 1921, the East Indian population in Trinidad between 1900 and 1921, and the labour experience of East Indians in the 1930s.

East Indians – Caribbean Area – Congresses

52. *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995. With V.S. Shepherd and B. Bailey.

Examines Caribbean women's history. Although many of the contributions focus primarily on the Afro-Caribbean woman, other ethnicities are also highlighted. The text is divided into six sections, all significant in reconstructing a complete picture of women's history. The first section provides the theoretical underpinnings of the book; the second looks at the gender aspect of the history of the Caribbean; the third analyses the experience of women during the period of slavery in the Caribbean; the fourth examines the post-slavery experience; the fifth looks at the role that women played in protest movements and politics; and the sixth provides a comparative view as it looks at women's history in different parts of the world.

History – Women – Caribbean Area

Historiography – Women – Caribbean Area

53. *Dictionary of Caribbean Biography, Volume 1: Trinidad and Tobago*. St Augustine, Trinidad: Department of History, University of the West Indies, 1998. With Brinsley Samaroo and Glenroy Taitt.

A historical biographical dictionary which highlights well-known persons in Trinidad and Tobago's history until the end of February 1998. The

book includes names like Ralph Abercromby, a British military commander born 1738; and Zu Zule (fl. 1793–1820), an enslaved woman who was born in Guadeloupe and worked in the household of Jean de Boissière, a successful merchant in Port of Spain in the latter part of the eighteenth century. She later became de Boissière's mistress.

Trinidad and Tobago – Biography – Dictionaries

54. *The Colonial Caribbean in Transition: Essays on Post-Emancipation Social and Cultural History*. Barbados: University of the West Indies Press, 1999. With Kevin A. Yelvington.

This is a tribute to the life and work of historian Donald Wood. The essays explore broad themes and the way in which they shaped colonial society in the Caribbean. Themes include the experiences of the freed people after emancipation, their relations with the planters, immigration, and the influence of the United States of America in the Caribbean.

Wood, Donald

Caribbean Area – History – Colonies

55. *Warner Arundell, the Adventures of a Creole* by E.L. Joseph. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001. With L. Winer, R. Cobham, and M. Rimmer.

This novel forms part of the Caribbean Heritage series; composed of four novels which were published between 1838 and 1907, and forms part of Trinidad's literary tradition. The editors' introduction provides the historical, social and linguistic context of this nineteenth-century novel written by E.L. Joseph. The author tells the tale of Warner Arundell, a white Creole of British origins, who was born in Grenada but grew up in Antigua and Trinidad. After he was defrauded by lawyers he went off to seek his fortune.

Trinidadian and Tobagonian fiction

Historical fiction

56. Introduction to *Adolphus, a Tale (Anon.) and The Slave Son*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2003. With L. Winer, R. Cobham, M. Rimmer and K. Snachez-Eppler.

In the introduction to this volume containing two novels, the literary tradition of Trinidad is discussed while the situation of the free coloureds



and the enslaved people is placed in historical context. Both novels are set in Trinidad during the last two decades of slavery, and the editors speculate on the authorship of the novel *Adolphus, a Tale*.

Trinidadian and Tobagonian fiction

Historical fiction

57. *The Caribbean in the Twentieth Century*. UNESCO General History of the Caribbean, vol. 5. Paris, France: UNESCO, 2004.

The editor's introduction summarizes the eighteen chapters of this work by leading scholars such as Rex Nettleford and Carl Campbell, among others, who wrote on various issues of twentieth-century Caribbean history. Major social, political, economic, gender, demographic and cultural historical events or issues covering the Caribbean as a whole (such as the turbulent 1930s) or on individual countries (such as the Cuban Revolution) constitute the lengthy chapters of this volume.

Caribbean Area – History – 20th century

58. Introduction and Annotations to *Rupert Gray: A Tale in Black and White* by S. Cobham. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2006. With L. Winer, R. Cobham and M. Rimmer.

Set in Trinidad in 1907 and based on interracial relationships, this novel is placed within its historical literary tradition, while there is a discussion on what little is known about the author, Stephen N. Cobham. The historical, social and political environment is discussed, and the status of the ethnic group and social class to which the author belonged is also highlighted.

Trinidadian and Tobagonian fiction

Interracial dating – Trinidad and Tobago – Fiction

59. Introduction to *Horizons: The Life and Times of Edric Connor*, by Edric Connor. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2006. With Gordon Rohlehr.

Provides the social, and to a lesser extent economic and political context, for this autobiographical work by Edric Connor, a Trinidadian cultural icon who died in 1968. It discusses the influences on his life and his career, from his humble beginnings in Mayaro to the theatres of London. Connor's wife, Pearl, who contributed an essay to the book on her life and times with Edric Connor, is also discussed.

Singers – Trinidad and Tobago – Biography

Actors – Trinidad and Tobago – Biography

60. Introduction and Endnotes to *Looking Over My Shoulder: Forty-Seven Years A Public Servant, 1885–1932*, by Percy L. Fraser. Port of Spain: Lexicon Trinidad Ltd., 2007.

Provided are details on the historical and social context in which Percy L. Fraser, a French Creole of the upper class who served as Superintendent of Prisons from 1907 until his retirement in 1932, wrote his autobiography. The work is summarized while the lack of focus on women of his class is explained. The endnotes provide additional historical information, give definitions for words used at the time and provide further reading.

Trinidad and Tobago – Officials and employees – Social conditions

Trinidad and Tobago – Officials and employees – Biography

## Book Reviews

1. *Slavery Days in Trinidad: A Social History of the Island from 1797–1838*, by Carlton Robert Ottley. *Your History Guide* 1, no. 1 (March 1977): 3–7.
2. *Caribbean Certificate History*, by Robert Greenwood and Shirley Hamber. *History Teachers' Journal* 1 (1982): 41–43.
3. *Presbyterian Missions to Trinidad and Puerto Rico*, by Graeme Mount. *Your History Guide* 18, no. 2 (1983): 82–85.
4. *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, by Franklin Knight. *Journal of Caribbean History* 18, no. 2 (1983): 85–89.
5. *Caribbean Migrants: Environment and Human Survival on St Kitts and Nevis*, by Bonham C. Richardson. *Your History Guide* 19, no. 2 (1984): 231–33.
6. *Cross and Crown in Barbados: Caribbean Political Religion in the Late 19th Century*, by Kortright Davis. *Your History Guide* 19, no. 2 (1984): 227–30.
7. *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, by Michael Craton. *Jamaican Historical Review* XIV (1984): 59–61.
8. *The Years Before*, by Anthony de Verteuil. *New West Indian Guide* 58, nos. 1–2 (1984): 22–24.
9. *Caribbean Contours*, edited by Sydney W. Mintz and Sally Price. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 66, no. 2 (May 1986): 356.
10. *Jamaican Historical Review* 15, *Minorities in Jamaican History*, edited by Carl Campbell. *Newsletter of Jamaica Social History Project* 13 (July 1986): 20–22.
11. *Emancipation I: A Series of lectures to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of*

- Emancipation*, edited by Alvin O. Thompson. *Bulletin of Eastern Caribbean Affairs* 12, no. 6 (January–February 1987): 57–59.
12. *Crime in Trinidad: Conflict and Control in a Plantation Society*, by David Vincent Trotman. *Journal of Caribbean History* 21, no. 2 (1988): 184–87.
  13. *The Toiler of the Sees: a life of John Mitchinson, Bishop of Barbados*, by John Gilmore. *Newsletter of Jamaica Social History Project* 17 (June 1988): 7–10.
  14. *Trinidad and Tobago: Democracy and Development in the Caribbean*, by Scott B. MacDonald. *New West Indian Guide* 62, no. 1–2 (1988): 83–85.
  15. *A History of Diego Martin 1784–1884: Begorrat-Brunton*, by Anthony de Verteuil. *Caribbean Affairs* 2, no. 2 (April–June 1989): 163–67.
  16. *Elma Francois: the NWCSA and the Worker's Struggle for Change in the Caribbean*, by Rhoda Reddock. *CAFRA NEWS* 3, no. 1 (March 1989): 12–13.
  17. *The Plantation Slaves of Trinidad 1783–1816: a Mathematical and Demographic Enquiry*, by A.M. John. *Slavery and Abolition* 11, no. 2 (September 1990): 247–48.
  18. *Colonial British Caribbean Newspapers: a Bibliography and Directory*, by Howard S. Pactor. *New West Indian Guide* 66, nos. 1–2 (1992): 157–59.
  19. *100 Years of the Catholic News (1892–1992): Memories and Milestones*, by Marie Therese Retout. *Catholic News* (August 16, 1992): 8, 14.
  20. *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650–1838*, by Barbara Bush. *Journal of Caribbean History* 24, no. 1 (1992): 115–20.
  21. *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938*, by Thomas C. Holt. *New West Indian Guide* 67, nos. 3–4 (1993): 305–7.
  22. *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823*, by Emilia Viotti da Costa. *New West Indian Guide* 70, nos. 3–4 (1996): 309–12.
  23. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, by Michel-Rolph Trouillot. *Journal of Caribbean History* 29, no. 1, (1995): 88–91.
  24. *The Life and Times of Henry Clarke of Jamaica, 1828–1907*, by James Walvin. *Jamaican Historical Review* 19 (1996): 56–57.
  25. *A Return to the Middle Passage: The Clipper Ship "Sheila"*, by W.H. Angel. *Caribbean Affairs* 7, no. 6 (1997): 185–87.
  26. *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso: Traditions in the Making*, by John Cowley. *Slavery and Abolition* 18, no. 2 (August 1997): 140–43.
  27. *From Chattel Slaves to Wage Slaves: the Dynamics of Labour Bargaining in the Americas*, edited by Mary Turner. *New West Indian Guide* 71, nos. 3–4 (1997): 95–100.
  28. *The Bahamas from Slavery to Servitude, 1783–1933*, by Howard Johnson. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26, no. 3 (September 1998): 115–17.
  29. *The Rise of the Phoenix: The Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society in Caribbean Economy and Society 1840–1990*, by Cecilia Karch. *Journal of Caribbean History* 32, nos. 1–2 (1998): 190–93.

30. *Economy and Environment in the Caribbean: Barbados and the Windward Islands in the late 1800's*, by Bonham Richardson. *Slavery and Abolition* 20, no. 2 (August 1999): 160–61.
31. *Writing West Indian Histories*, by B.W. Higman. *Slavery and Abolition* 21, no. 1 (April 2000): 174–76.
32. *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*, edited by Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod. *Journal of American History* (March 2001): 1486–87.
33. *Remnants of Conquest: The Island Caribs and their Visitors, 1877–1998*, by Peter Hulme. *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* (April 2002). <http://enterpemuse.press.jhu.edu/Journals/Jcch/>.
34. *The Elusive Eric Williams*, by Ken Boodhoo. *Trinidad and Tobago Review* 24, no. 5 (May 2002): 26.
35. *Guide to Manuscripts, Special Collections and Other Research Resources for Caribbean Studies at the UWI, St Augustine Campus Libraries*, by Margaret Rouse-Jones. *St Augustine News (STAN)* (April–June 2004): 19, 39.
36. *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor vs. Slavery in British Emancipation*, by Seymour Drescher. *New West Indian Guide* 78, nos. 3–4 (2004): 313–15.
37. *Masters, Servants and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, edited by Douglas Hay and Paul Craven. *Journal of Caribbean History* 40, no. 1 (2006): 159–63.
38. *No Bond but the Law: Punishment, Race, and Gender in Jamaican State Formation, 1780–1870*, by Diana Paton. March 2006. <http://www.h-net.org/review>.
39. *A Proslavery Foreign Policy: Haitian–American Relations during the Early Republic*, by T. Mathewson. *Jamaican Historical Review* 23 (2007): 72–74.
40. *Contesting Freedom Control and Resistance in the Post-Emancipation Caribbean*, edited by Gad Heuman & David Trotman. *Slavery and Abolition* 28, no. 1 (April 2007): 150–52.
41. *Paradise Overseas: The Dutch Caribbean*, by Gert Oostindie. *New West Indian Guide* 81, nos. 1–2 (June 2007): 136–38.
42. *Post-Emancipation Race Relations in The Bahamas*, by W.B. Johnson. *Journal of American History* (September 2007): 552–53.
43. *The McShines of Trinidad*, by Anthony de Verteuil. *From the Bookshelf: Catholic News Supplement* (February 11, 2007): 1–2. Also reviewed in Trinidad and Tobago. *Sunday Guardian*, 10 June 2007, UWI Today Supplement.
44. *Archibald Monteath: Igbo, Jamaican, Moravian* by M. Warner-Lewis. *Caribbean Review of Books* (May 2008): 34–36.
45. *Flight to Freedom: African Runaways and Maroons in the Americas*, by Alvin O. Thompson. *Journal of Caribbean History* 42, no. 2 (2008): 327–30.
46. *Mobilizing India: Women, Music and Migration between India and Trinidad*, by T. Niranjana. *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 65 (2008): 230–32.

47. *New Negroes from Africa: Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean*, by R. Adderley. *Journal of British Studies* 47, no. 1 (January 2008): 218–20.
48. *Rites of August First: Emancipation Day in the Black Atlantic World*, by Jeffrey R. Kerr-Ritchie. *Journal of Caribbean History* 42, no. 2 (2008): 316–19.
49. *The Changing Society of Tobago, 1838–1938: A Fractured Whole*, by Susan E. Craig James. Trinidad and Tobago. *Sunday Guardian*, 24 August 2008, section B8. Also reviewed in *Trinidad & Tobago Review*, 1 September 2008; and *Journal of Caribbean History* 43, no. 2 (2009): 294–97.
50. *Breaking Down the Walls: An Evolution of the Extra-Mural Department: The University of the West Indies, 1947–2000*, by Howard Fergus, Lennox Bernard, Judith Soares. *Caribbean Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (September 2009): 87–90.
51. *Engendering Whiteness: White Women and Colonialism in Barbados and North Carolina, 1627–1865*, by Cicily Jones. *Slavery & Abolition* 30, no. 1 (2009): 147–49.
52. *Eric Williams: The Myth and the Man*, by Selwyn Ryan. *Trinidad & Tobago Review*, 4 May 2009.
53. *Golconda: Our Voices Our Lives*, edited by Lawrence Scott. *Trinidad Express*, 25 November 2009, sec. 2.
54. *A History of Trinidad & Tobago in the 20th Century*, vol. 1, 1901–1925, by Michael Anthony. *Sunday Guardian*, 7 February 2010, section B.
55. *Gordon K. Lewis on Race, Class and Ideology in the Caribbean*, edited by Anthony P. Maingot. *New West Indian Guide* 85, nos. 3–4 (2011).
56. *Elusive Origins: The Enlightenment in the Modern Caribbean Historical Imagination*, by Paul B. Miller. *Caribbean Quarterly* 56 no.1 (March 2011): 73–77.

## Conference Papers

- "The Reform Movement in Trinidad in the Later 19th century". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Trinidad, April 1973.
- "Changing Racial Attitudes in Trinidad: Slavery and After". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Jamaica, April 1975.
- "The Liberal Press of Trinidad, 1860–1895". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Barbados, April 1977.
- "Caribbean History in the Schools: a Critical Assessment of Recent Writing for Secondary Schools in the Anglophone Caribbean". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Barbados, April 1984.
- "Race Relations and Society in the Non-Hispanic Caribbean, c.1870 to c.1950: An Overview". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Nassau, Bahamas, April 1986.
- "Caribbean Women in the Post-Emancipation Century (1838–1938): Agenda for

- Research". Paper presented at the UNESCO/UWI Conference on Slavery, Emancipation and the Shaping of Caribbean Society, St Augustine, 1988.
- "The Role of the Association of Caribbean Historians in Caribbean Historiography over the last 20 Years". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Guadeloupe, March 1989.
- "Eric Williams, Historian". Paper presented at the Conference on Capitalism and Slavery, Fifty Years Later: Eric Williams and the Post-Colonial Caribbean, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, 1996.
- "Family Strategies, Gender and the Shift to Wage Labour in the British Caribbean". Paper presented at the Conference on Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World, Tulane University, 1996. Also presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Martinique, April 1997.
- "The Historiography of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana: The Last 30 Years". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Suriname, April 1998.
- "That Cane the Judge will Grind it: Sir John Gorrie and Tobago, 1889-92". Paper presented at the Conference on Tobago and Trinidad: 100 Years Together, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, October 1998.
- "The Status of Women in the English-speaking Caribbean: An Historical Overview". Paper presented at the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association Conference, Nassau, July 2000.
- "The Historical Background to the Culture of Violence in Trinidad and Tobago". Paper presented at the Seminar on the Culture of Violence in Trinidad and Tobago, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, May 2004.
- "Hé St Domingo, Songé St Domingo': Haiti and the Haitian Revolution in the Political Discourse of Nineteenth-Century Trinidad". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Barbados, May 2004. Also presented at the Haitian Independence Bicentenary Conference, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, June 2004.
- "Recent Developments in the Historiography of the Post-Emancipation Anglophone Caribbean". Paper presented at the Conference on a Pan-Caribbean Perspective on the Atlantic World, York University, Toronto, October 2004.
- "A Tale in Black and White: Sex, Race and the Mother Country in Trinidad, 1907". Paper presented at annual Eastern Caribbean Island Cultures Conference, Tortola, British Virgin Islands, November 2004. With L. Winer, R. Cobham, and M. Rimmer.
- "Contesting the Past: Narratives of Trinidad & Tobago History". Paper presented at SEPHIS Historians' Workshop on The Master Narrative Challenged: Dominant Histories and Emerging Narratives, Cebu City, The Philippines, February 2007. Also presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Kingston, Jamaica, May 2007.
- "Naipaul and History". Paper presented at Symposium, V.S. Naipaul: Created in the West Indies, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, April 2007.
- "Different Trajectories of Freedom in the Anglophone Caribbean". Keynote

address, Conference on Trajectories of Freedom, Faculty of Humanities and Education, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, May 2007.

"The 1930s Agenda and the OWTU". Keynote address, Oilfield Workers Trade Union Anniversary Conference, San Fernando, Trinidad, June 2007.

"Our Cross to Bear: The Trinity Cross, Heritage and Identity in Trinidad & Tobago". Paper presented to the annual Conference of the Society for Caribbean Studies, Edinburgh, July 2008.

"A French Connection? Resistance to Enslavement and Oppression in Trinidad, 1802-1849". Paper presented at the annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, Guadeloupe, May 2009.

"'All Ah We Is Not One': Afrocentric History in a Pluralist Nation". Paper presented at the annual Conference of the Society for Caribbean Studies, Southampton, July 2010. Also presented at the International Conference on Black Power, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, September 2010; and the workshop on Remembering Africa and its Diasporas, Carleton University, Ottawa, October 2010.

"Ethnic Histories: The Indocentric Narrative of Trinidad's History". Paper presented at the International Conference on the Global South Asian Diaspora, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, June 2011.

"Jubilees: How Trinidad Remembered the Jubilee of Emancipation (1888), the Centenary of British Rule (1897) and Victoria's Jubilees (1887, 1897)". Paper presented at the annual Conference of the Society for Caribbean Studies, Liverpool, July 2011.

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