

THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA REVIEW OF BOOKS



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Tim Hector at Brown University

Tim Hector on Gregson Davis

Gregson Davis on Tim Hector

Lawrence Jardine on Tim Hector

Tim Hector on Jamaica Kincaid

Dorbrene O'Marde on Tim Hector

Joanne Hillhouse on Dorbrene O'marde

Hazra Medica on Marie-Elena John

Tim Hector on Novelle Richards

Edgar Lake on Henry Redhead Yorke

Charles Ephraim on Tim Hector

Lowell Jarvis on Tim Hector

And Much Much More ...

THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA REVIEW OF BOOKS

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Editorial Board: Ian Benn, Joanne Hillhouse, Paget Henry, Edgar Lake, Adlai Murdoch, Ermina Osoba, Elaine Olaoye, Mali Olatunji, Vincent Richards

Paget Henry, Editor

The Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association was founded in 2006 with the goal of raising local intellectual awareness by creating a field of Antigua and Barbuda Studies as an integral part of the larger field of Caribbean Studies. The idea for such an interdisciplinary field grew out of earlier “island conferences” that had been organized by the University of the West Indies, School of Continuing Education, in conjunction with the Political Culture Society of Antigua and Barbuda. *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books* is an integral part of this effort to raise local and regional intellectual awareness by generating conversations about the neglected literary traditions of Antigua and Barbuda through reviews of its texts.

Manuscripts: the manuscripts of this publication must be in the form of short reviews of books or works of art dealing with Antigua and Barbuda. Thus reviews of works by writers and artists from Antigua and Barbuda such as Peregrine Pickle, Mary Prince, Tim Hector, Ashley Bryan, Novelle Richards, Gregson Davis, Jamaica Kincaid, Edgar Lake, Althea Prince, Keithlyn Smith, Adlai Murdoch and others will be particularly welcome. We will also welcome commentaries on reviews we have published. Reviews should be no longer than six double-spaced pages, with minimal if any footnotes. Submit reviews to Paget Henry, editor, as word documents at Paget_Henry@Brown.edu for consideration.

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DEDICATION

The Editorial Collective of *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books* dedicate this special issue of our journal to the members of the ACLM, but especially to **Lowell Jarvis**, who departed from this life last year. As his paper in this issue makes clear, Jarvis was committed to a cooperative socialism. In addition to being a leading ACLM member, Jarvis was a distinguished architect, who worked at incorporating the vernacular architecture of Antigua and Barbuda into his designs. Like several of his ACLM colleagues – Corthright Marshall, George Goodwin, James Knight, and Radcliffe Robins – Jarvis studied in Cuba and returned home after receiving his degree in Architecture.

As we celebrate the work of Jarvis, the ACLM, and the thought of Tim Hector in particular, let us continue the practice of taking some time out to ponder the mystery of the passing of both Jarvis and Hector. Even though what we feel in these moments of silence, we often find it so hard to articulate, nevertheless they remain of the utmost importance as these moments of silence speak eloquently to our humanity.

Paget Henry

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BUILDER, PAST THE CATAFALQUE

(For Lowell Jarvis)

Bier of polished chrome
Perpendicular to sheen;
Pall-bearers halt
To disappointments -
No longer relevant;
Protractor is Roundabout:
The circle, halved

Builders hurry little;
True to cornerstone:
assembling laughter
Hinged on Goodwill
Such is Earth, Mortar

Bracing for collapse,
We buttress defeat;
To the Contest, true! -
Homage least to rivalry
If congress to forge, a
Corner-post, due mortise

So, now, cortège is deed
Wagon-wheel is catafalque
The shattered beam
Is nought else, scaffold
If the expected odds
Be trumped as asset

Duty is Doxology:
The Builder, past catafalque
Let the thorny
Pentimento hold:
wreath, to faded rose;
Whisper, only: "Brother,"
portals due, to hinge

Edgar O. Lake
2/23/14

Table of Contents

Editor's Note	7
---------------------	---

Tim Hector: In His Own Voice

What is Socialism?	12
--------------------------	----

Tim Hector

Cricket and Decolonization	17
----------------------------------	----

Tim Hector

The Art of Carnival and Carnival of Art	23
---	----

Tim Hector**Portraits of Tim Hector (1996-2002)**

Tim Hector: A Man For All Seasons	32
---	----

Conrad Luke

Tim Hector: A Brief Personal Tribute	36
--	----

Gregson Davis

Tim Hector: A Misunderstood Genius of Our Time	38
--	----

Charles Ephraim

Tim: Not Just For Knowledge Sake, but for Humanity	42
--	----

Lawrence Jardine

L. Tim Hector: Caribbean Visionary and Leader par Excellence	48
--	----

Corthright Marshall**Essays on Tim Hector: From the 2013 Conference**

Tim Hector: Fanning the Flame to Transform the Caribbean	55
--	----

David Abdulah

Tim Hector and the Alternative of Cooperative Economics	74
---	----

Lowell Jarvis

Leonard Tim Hector: Egalitarian and Visionary	83
---	----

George Goodwin, Jr.

Politics by Other Means: Tim Hector on Arts and Culture	87
---	----

Dorbrene O'Marde

Tim Still Fans the Flame in Africa	96
Edith Tomlinson-Oladele	

The Socialist Legacy of Tim Hector	109
Paget Henry	

Wisdom is Plentiful Among Ordinary People to Govern:	132
A View of Antigua's Tim Hector and Guyana's Eusi Kwayana	
Matthew Quest	

A Very Special Feature Essay

Re-introducing Henry Redhead Yorke: 18 th Century	164
Barbudan Journeyman	
Edgar Lake	

Feature Poetry With Edith Tomlinson-Oladele and Alvette (Ellorton) Jeffers

Edith Tomlinson-Oladele	
... Murder, Murder, Murder, Woi!	191
4 Just One Word!	194
... Back Home in Africa Land	195
I Met the Men	196
If I Say	197
Who Will Admit	198
At the Touch of a Lover	199

Alvette (Ellorton) Jeffers	
The Trance	200
I Will Remain	202
Field of Lilies	203
How Would I Know	204
Nude in the Basin	205
Couldn't Make Love Tonight	206

Book Reviews

Dorbrene O'Marde's, *Nobody Go Run Me* 208

Joanne Hillhouse

The 'Meaning of her Skin': Carib[bean] 217

Revision in Marie-Elena John's, *Unburnable*

Hazra Medica

Freedom is a Multifaceted Condition: 237

Denise Smith-Lewis', *Emancipation Come*

Valerie Combie

Autobiographical Reflections: 241

Valerie Knowles Combie's, *Lots of Laughter*

Paget Henry

Reviews by Tim Hector: A Selection

Elizabeth Hart Thwaites: Our Prime Historical Woman. 247

In Salute to Ambrose – Bert Williams 254

Novelle Richards: Our Literary Foundation 261

Arnold Prince: An Artistic Home Coming. 268

The Alarm Has Been Sounded: George Weston 275

Our Most Astonishing Figure: J. Oliver Davis 282

Notes on A Native Son and Negritude: Gregson Davis 290

The Genius of and From Antigua: 298

Ralf Prince and Jamaica Kincaid

Jamaica Kincaid: Prophet of the Future 304

A Small Place – Large Vision 310

A Remarkable Writer and Childhood: Jamaica Kincaid 314

...

5

...

Another Antiguan Writer Emerges: Elaine Henry Olaoye 320

Viv Richards: More than Batsman,
More than Master Blaster 323

Antiguan Makes Great Contribution to 329
Overcoming Underdevelopment: Paget Henry

Antigua Has Reached a Fork in the Road: Paget Henry 335

Not by Spirits, but by the Knowledge of Ourselves 340
and Our own Creation Through Struggle: Paget Henry

Dr. Paget Henry and African Philosophy 347

"To make Themselves Masters of the Country" – 357
250 Years After: Barry Gaspar

"To make Themselves Masters of the Country" – 364
250 Years After [Part 2]: Barry Gaspar

A Native Baldwin Will Come: Scholz & Stevens' 373
History of Antigua & Barbuda

Antigua Then – Antigua Vision, Caribbean Reality: 381
Margaret Lockett

Notes on Contributors 388

A Partial List of Antiguan and Barbudan Books 390

EDITOR'S NOTE 2015

It has been very difficult containing my enthusiasm while putting together this issue of the *Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books*. There is just so much in it that furthers the goals of the *Review* and its parent society, the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association. In particular, the goal of re-constructing what Edgar Lake has called our “nascent literary tradition”. Not only does this issue contribute to this important goal, but it does so through the celebration of the thought of one of our major scholars and political activists, the legendary and irreplaceable Tim Hector. In the selection of Hector’s reviews of our writers presented here, we can see quite clearly the features of this nascent literary tradition of which Lake has consistently reminded us. This is an important link between these two men that we need to keep more in mind.

At the risk of breaking the flow of these introductory remarks, I cannot resist noting here that Tim Hector was my teacher at the Antigua Grammar School between 1961 and 1964, along with Gregson Davis, Henson Barnes, Lloydston Jacobs, Franklin Bennet, Reginald Samuel, Mr. Walling, Errol James, and of course Father Brown and Dr. Alfred Blackett. What more could I, as a young man, ask for? With this team, I left the Antigua Grammar School with the confidence that I could hold my own anywhere in the world. In many of Tim’s essays included here, you will hear the teacher in him come out in expressions such as, “Read it again” or “Grasp the branch of the point and not the leaves”.

As a scholar and a writer, Tim was the master of the essay. At home here in Antigua and Barbuda, or across the wider Caribbean, it is hard to think of his equal in this particular genre. The essay was his gift and he was a master of its form. The proof of this is the far-reaching impact of his now infamous “Fan the Flame” column in the newspaper, *Outlet*. Not surprisingly, as a scholar, Tim has left us a large body of essays from this column, which covered such a wide range of topics that they defy easy classification. These essays flowed continuously from the mid-1970s until shortly before his death in November 2002. To grasp the full scope and impact of these essays, we must find a way or ways to organize them, so that we can see clearly Tim’s claims, his arguments, his positions, and the continuities as well as the changes that took place over time.

One way in which we can grasp this body of essays is by organizing them under the following headings: 1) Essays on trends in the global political economy; 2) portraits of great Caribbean figures; 3) essays on

Caribbean political economy; 4) essays on Race and Pan Africanism; 5) essays on Caribbean Cricket; 6) essays on Antiguan and Barbudan political economy; 7) essays on Antiguan and Barbudan culture; and 8) reviews of books on Antigua and Barbuda. In each of these categories, the essays extended over the decades of Tim's writing career. Thus they can be very usefully looked at as a series of attempts to address different or changing aspects of their subject matter. This is certainly a good way to look at Tim's essays on V.C. Bird and George Walter, his essays on Antiguan and Barbudan political economy and Caribbean integration, as well as his writings on Caribbean cricket, and on socialism. These were topics to which he returned many times, looking at them from different angles.

Scholarly essays could be written on each of these groups of Tim's essays. For example, a very scholarly essay is waiting to be written on the many ways in which Tim's cricket writing has extended the theory of organized sports developed by CLR James in *Beyond A Boundary*. In short, I am suggesting that it is only by grouping Tim's extensive body of essays, and looking at them in this organized way that we can really see and appreciate the full scope and magnitude of his contributions to our nascent literary tradition.

In this issue of the *Review*, our coverage will primarily focus on two of these categories – socialism and Tim's reviews of books on Antigua and Barbuda – with less detailed coverage of the areas of culture and Pan Africanism. Because Tim was such a larger than life figure, it has taken a more than ordinary issue of our *Review* to celebrate his thought and its impact. To adequately honor his contribution, we have pulled from many sources. We open the issue with three essays by Tim, to let him speak in his own voice and introduce himself. Following these opening essays are five short pieces on Tim, which were written between 1996 and the months shortly after his death in November 2002. The authors of these essays were his close friends and colleagues: Conrad Luke, Gregson Davis, Charles Ephraim, Lawrence Jardine and Corthright Marshall.

The next set of essays in this issue are all new pieces that were written for the 2013 conference that was organized to mark the 10th anniversary of Tim's passing. This conference was a joint effort by the ACLM/ Leonard Tim Hector Memorial Committee, the University of the West Indies (Antigua), the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association, and the Oilfield Workers' Trade Union of Trinidad and Tobago. The papers presented here from this conference have been carefully revised for publication but remain very close to the substance and spirit of what was delivered

at the conference. The authors of these papers are David Abdulah, Lowell Jarvis, to whom this issue is especially dedicated, George Goodwin, Jr., Dorbrene O'Marde, Edith Tomlinson-Oladele, Matthew Quest and Paget Henry. Abdulah, our keynote speaker, emphasized the regional aspects of Tim's thinking and practice, O'Marde the cultural dimensions, Tomlinson-Oladele the Pan African elements, while the papers by Goodwin, Jarvis, Quest and Henry deal with the socialist aspects of our dear friend's thought.

Immediately following the section with the papers from the conference is our feature essay. This feature essay is indeed a very special one – in fact, a historic one. It is an essay that you don't want to miss, especially if you are from Barbuda. This essay by Edgar Lake re-introduces to our community the long-forgotten 18th century author from Barbuda, **Henry Redhead Yorke**. He was the author of six books, including *Reason Urged Against Precedent* (1793), *The Trial of Henry Yorke for a Conspiracy* (1795), and *Elements of Civil Knowledge* (1800). Our thanks must go once again to our inveterate archivist, poet, novelist and playwright, Edgar Lake, who will be making this re-introduction. Given the dates of his books, Yorke is now the second published author from Antigua and Barbuda, after ex-slave Moravian evangelist, Rebecca Freundlich Protten. When Edgar called to tell me about his work on Yorke, we both remarked on how wonderful it would be if Tim were still with us so that we could have given him the task of making this re-introduction of our long lost Barbudan author. Yorke will be featured much more fully in the next issue of our *Review*.

Our feature essay is followed in this issue by a poetic interlude that is filled by Edith Tomlinson-Oladele and Alvette (Ellorton) Jeffers. We have already met Ms. Tomlinson-Oladele in her role as contributor of a paper to the 2013 conference. Here in the role of poet, she continues to articulate in a very powerful way the Pan African tradition of thought, particularly in its Christian framing. Mr. Jeffers, a former Vice Chairman of ACLM, appears here in a very different role – that of romantic poet. You must check out this new face of the Vice Chairman!

As this publication is a review of books, we must have some new reviews of books for you. The authors of the reviews in this issue are Joanne Hillhouse, Hazra Medica, Valerie Combie and Paget Henry. I should add here that Hazra Medica, is one of our most recent PhDs. She received her degree from Oxford University last year with a dissertation on Antiguan and Barbudan literature.

Normally, this is the point at which I would end my introduction to previous issues of our *Review*. But that will not be the case this time. Indeed, we are just getting started. I told you, Dear Reader, that it would require a more than ordinary issue of our *Review* to present and celebrate the thought of Tim Hector. Over the decades, no one has reviewed more books by Antiguan and Barbudans than this indefatigable writer of the essay. So in the section immediately following the new reviews, you will find a selection of Tim's reviews of books on Antigua and Barbuda, which stretch from 1984-2002. The last of these, written just a month before his death, was of Margaret Lockett's, *Antigua Then*. It carries that distinctive punch and flair that we associate with Tim. This collection of reviews is both a real treat and a most valuable gift for all who are interested in our nascent literary tradition. They not only reveal Tim's unique role in cultivating and maintaining this tradition of writing, but also the power and range of his scholarship. Even this limited sample of his reviews remains unsurpassed in its coverage of Antiguan and Barbudan writing. For this important contribution, we will for very long be indebted to Tim.

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Coming out over several decades and often being read individually, it has been difficult to fully appreciate the coherence and threads of continuity between Tim's many reviews of Antiguan and Barbudan writers. However, assembled as they are here, we can see these vital threads of continuity and coherence much more clearly. With this greater visibility, we cannot but be impressed by the monumental proportions of Tim's contribution to the appreciation and evaluation of our nascent literary tradition. Not only do they significantly contribute to the life of this tradition, but they also contribute to the expanding of this literary tradition into a field of Antigua and Barbuda Studies – and thus to a very important major area of study that should be offered by the University of Antigua and Barbuda. Tim's place in such a field of study is simply undeniable.

In the case of his reviews of my work, they extend from 1984 to 2000. It was only in the course of re-reading them together for inclusion in this issue that I got the full import of Tim's critical engagement with my work. We had spoken on several occasions about the individual reviews and got into a lot of specific details about our history or our politics. Somehow we never got around to discussing the more comprehensive cultural thrust of his reading of my work. It really was only with this re-reading that I grasped how early Tim had recognized the cultural turn in my work and how it lead to my examination of African and Afro-

Caribbean philosophy. Our exchanges regarding the place of metaphysics in Afro-Caribbean philosophy were among the most delightful ones I have had since I started working in this area of Caribbean thought.

Although I have been teaching in the U.S. for several decades, my summers I spend in Antigua and Barbuda, in an effort to stay abreast of things. Vital parts of these summer sojourns have been my visits with Tim and Conrad Luke. I last saw Tim in the summer of 2002. He was back from his heart surgery in Cuba. His eyes were different, not as sharply focused as they had always been. I was a little concerned. We spoke about my book on Afro-Caribbean philosophy, *Caliban's Reason*, during which he apologized for not reviewing it yet. I knew then that he was not fully back. What I did not know was just how ill he really was.

In spite of all the changing scenes of his life, Tim remained a socialist to the end, convinced that only the coming to power of a self-organized working class would end the exploitation, the inequality and poverty that is still the lot of the vast majority of mankind. In one of his last articles, written from his sick bed in the Instituto de Cardiologia in Cuba, Tim penned another meditation on the health care system of Antigua and Barbuda, comparing it with that of Cuba. He also included glimpses of socialism he saw in those attending to him. He wrote: "socialism, I reminded myself, ... is the withering away of the state by working people assuming management of production and the state. By working people taking the same management out of the hands of the elite, who feel that by education and culture, if not social power, they have a right to rule.... The free and full development of humanity could only come with the disappearance of this dominant class, which sought to establish and maintain, in both production and society, hierarchical relations" (Outlet, April 26, [2002] p.8).

Before I depart, I must say thanks to the Heimark Fund for their continued support of our *Review*, to the department of Africana Studies at Brown University, and to my very careful editorial assistant, Janet Lofgren.

To the world of Tim Hector! Engage and enjoy.

Paget Henry

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

Tim Hector

Some weeks ago I wrote a couple of articles about Guyana. I had visited there en route to Suriname. But short as the visit was, I knew with a certainty born of experience that something was happening in Guyana. I do not refer here to the call for national unity off and on, or on and off when Cheddi Jagan has made a call for a government of national unity as a political solution in Guyana, and now Burnham has responded. I refer to something else. A profound stirring and searching among the people of Guyana. It so engaged my attention that I did not see close political friends and colleagues when briefly there. I tried desperately to come to terms with what people were thinking on any subject, political or otherwise.

Now I have had confirmation of what I felt in Guyana. I have just read one of the profoundest, most brilliant, most significant documents it has been my privilege to read. It has come out of Guyana. And it could only come from there because there people seemingly quiet are asking themselves serious questions seriously. It comes now in the form of a speech by that redoubtable, that untiring fighter for human freedom, Eusi Kwayana, compared to whom the entire Caribbean has few if any finer personalities. When the Caribbean finds itself, it will find in Eusi Kwayana's simplicity of life style, his unfailing humility which is never servility, a new model of being, in a vigilant commitment to human freedom. Few people I know in any culture, from any clime, of any race, in whose presence there is that unmistakable moral authority, as in the presence of Eusi Kwayana. He is a rare Caribbean man, and therefore exemplary.

I want to say something else. The speech from which I am going to use quotations should be read by any and every person, who is anxious to understand the Caribbean and willing to change it. For a piece of its type it has no equal that I know of. Eusi Kwayana is speaking as a panelist at a forum sponsored by the Crichtlow Labour College in Guyana, and he is speaking on the subject "SOCIALIST GUYANA—THE WAY FORWARD AND UPWARD".

As is typical of him he begins with the subject without beating about the bush. Says Eusi: "We are discussing socialism in Guyana at a time when EXPERIENCE in Guyana has mobilised wide sections of the working people AGAINST it. This includes sections which in previous times

have been attached to the idea". Lucid and precise with the honesty as patent as daylight. Eusi will not give an inch, nothing but the truth. Committed socialist as he is, he says with refreshing candor that the working people by their own experience, can no longer be attached to the idea because of what passes for socialism in Guyana in constitutional and daily political rhetoric. Nor does he leave us in any doubt as to the nature of the experiences the working people of Guyana have made which have detached them from the idea of socialism. Eusi continues: "In the name of socialism they have experienced more high-handedness, more bullying, more neglect of their best interests, more lack of interest in their suffering, less freedom of choice, more lack of power and a wider gap between their money wages and the cost of keeping them alive than ever before".

No one can refute that concise analysis of the political process in Guyana. And so Eusi states with equal boldness of formulation "This panelist can give no support to the legal and propagandistic fiction that Guyana is socialist or is in transition to such a system, except in the sense that historically the world is in transition." The world is in transition indeed. Socialism has been done irreparable harm by the puerile apologists who make every kind of society which has nationalized some property into some variation of socialism, even dubbing them Workers and Farmers States when the workers and the farmers are a million miles from power, and are the hapless victims of a State system which squeezes more and more surplus value out of the workers and farmers for all sorts of inhuman purposes. Eusi Kwayana will have none of it. And rightly so. Consequently, Eusi Kwayana tells the world, and many a so-called socialist ought to take note, serious note that "Imperialism must be extremely happy with a country in which the DAILY PRACTICE of rulers who proclaim socialism has had the effect of discrediting socialism". So indeed. I need not elaborate.

But Eusi Kwayana is no mere critic, far less a cynic by no means given to that cynicism which plagues the Caribbean intelligentsia, who make a few empirical observations to justify their lack of commitment to anything. They are busy day in and day out, acquiring their little dues of barley and of wheat, forever anxious to make it up the bureaucratic ladder, by fair means or foul, and invariably by both. To them, lest they cite him as evidence Eusi gives no aid and comfort. For he states his own commitment. Says he "It is my view that mankind has not yet conceived any system which is SUPERIOR, humanely speaking, to genuine democratic socialist society, in which the most oppressed social classes of the old society, by popular and democratic means take CONTROL of the State

and introduce DEMOCRACY for all". You will find nowhere in socialist literature a more apt definition of socialism for under-industrialised countries without a large industrial proletariat.

Eusi Kwayana, though the most modest of men it has been my pleasure to meet, leaves me in no doubt that in the Caribbean TODAY there is an urgent need to define or re-define what is a socialist movement. Says Eusi "A socialist movement must have a strong moral commitment—and in that I say everything. It must dedicate itself to the side of the poor and oppressed of the old society. In this process the mighty will be put down from their seat and the lowly and meek will be exalted". I interrupt to point out that Eusi Kwayana does not use Biblical language here in order to be populist. On the contrary. He uses that language in a philosophical sense to show that this is part and parcel of the age-old vision—Hegel's world spirit if you prefer—that impels humankind to classless freedom, impels society to leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom.

Continues Eusi, on the socialist movement "It must provide for the full and free development of the human being and the highest level of freedom possible in any age of technology. This means it MUST permit and accommodate the struggle for greater freedom". It is this last sentence which says everything. I am immediately reminded of Rosa Luxembourg's famous aphorism that "freedom is for one who thinks differently". Eusi's point is similarly profound. Socialism means greater means of expressing ideas, for it is this expression and contention of ideas which is the well-spring of creativity and forward movement. Without it, nothing. With it, everything.

To be fair, though Eusi might not want me to say so, Grenada suffered from nothing more and nothing worse than the absolute lack of ideas, a total absence of public debate, therefore there was little enlightenment, and a mass of people went along in emotional commitment to a leader whom they knew was sincere. In the end the mass un-enlightened embraced his every opposite—US invaders. Nothing else can explain this phenomenon, than the absence of the free flow of ideas in an open political contention.

And now Eusi Kwayana using history gives us the beacon to which and on which every socialist must keep his eye and his purposes fixed, with the fixity of the North Star: "A socialist movement may start with a SMALL band but along the route it must become the movement of the majority of the population who must have a fair opportunity to IM-

PRESS their WILL. As one of its main actors declared, the October Revolution could not be successful without the display of INDEPENDENT CREATIVE SPIRIT by the majority of the population and primarily the MAJORITY OF THE TOILERS. The Guyana experience has made this for me an unshakable rule, almost a dogma”.

This passage is so simple because it is so profound. Socialism is not nationalisation. Socialism is not a vanguard party in power. Socialism is not the commanding heights of the economy brought under State control. Socialism is not state decrees. Socialism is not ‘Benefits’ for the masses. Socialism is the independent creative spirit of the mass of the population given the room and the opportunity to create new institutions at work, for the re-organisation of production in the interest of the majority of the toilers and so creating popular democratic organs of self-management in society and therefore a new culture.

I want to end without further comment, for Eusi Kwayana it can be said:

‘Tis much he dares
And to the dauntless temper of his mind
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour.

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For too, Eusi has seen and heard much murder done in the name of socialism and seen.

There the murderers
Steeped in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore
And having seen has had to say

Who could refrain
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to think and re-think socialism a new.

And so I conclude with Eusi Kwayana without further comment: “By definition, and by historical necessity, socialism cannot be built by proxy. Nor can there be socialist revolution by proxy, one that does not flow from the energy of the masses of working people and bears the stamp of their will. My argument is that this will can be expressed in a revolutionary upsurge of the masses, by armed revolution or by peaceful agitation. In theory this can also be achieved by fair, free and genuine elections in certain circumstances. Even a fair and free election UNLESS

it is fought on that basis, does NOT empower a government to put an end to a historical epoch without prior detailed examination of the path to be followed.

“If the majority of the population does not indicate its will by upsurge, then even genuine socialists will have to await this political development.... It will come when the majority of the producers, indicates that it can not exist in the old way and takes a certain collectivist attitude to productive property and the existing institutions of government. One political precondition, then, is that the people, not an elite, must lose faith and hope in the existing capitalistic order and this is so whether that elite is well intentioned or not. To stress the main point, socialist revolution must come about through the independent historic initiative of the majority of the working people and the whole population, dramatically expressed. Assuming that the initiative is taken elsewhere, it must become the initiative of these historic forces or else it is stillborn. This is making allowance for those who think they can carry out a socialist revolution by proxy. This is a restatement of the Rodneyist principle of self-emancipation.”

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16

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I cannot end this here. Eusi’s wonderful prose and insightful emphasis on the essentials of socialism brings to mind lines from one of the finest Caribbean and modern poets, Kamau Brathwaite’s “Poem for Walter Rodney” which states in part

“that politics should be like understanding of the floorboards of your house swept clean each morning: built by hands that know the wind and tide and language from the lopps within the ridges of your footprint to the rusty tinnin fence of your yard

so that each on his cramped restless island on his backdam of land in forest clearing by the broken river where berbice struggles against slushy ground

takes up his bed and walks

in the power and the reggae of his soul/stice from the crippled brambled pathways of his vision to the certain limpen knowledge of his nam”

Outlet, April 12, 1985

CRICKET AND DECOLONISATION

Tim Hector

I was recently in St. Kitts to attend a very fine Cricket Awards dinner organised by the St. Kitts Cricket Association. I must express my thanks, deep and abiding, to the President of the St. Kitts Cricket Association, Dwyer Astaphan and his Association for the invitation to be the Feature Speaker, and for the splendid organisation of the function and my most pleasant and pleasing, but all too brief visit. By the time you read this I will be somewhere in Europe and then to Africa. Unfortunately I would have missed Montserrat due to a sudden call in Europe and Africa. Late and soon, said Wordsworth, the world is too much with us. I was forced to think of Leewards Cricket, of the Leewards people and by extension, of the Caribbean in response to this St. Kitts visit. I think it was T.S. Eliot, the famous modern English poet who wrote this:

*A people without history
Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern
Of timeless moments.*

Elsewhere, in the introduction to a notable book on cricket in the Leewards, by the equally notable Austin Eddy I wrote:

If I were also to say that the people of the Leewards derived their identity—a sense of belonging in time and space—not from sugar which enslaved them, not from British Parliamentary democracy to which they are attached, some will pause suspecting hyperbole. But once again, after reflection they would concur. For the Leeward Island Tournament which began 75 years ago can lay claim to be the oldest surviving institution promoting integration in and of the region.

None can dispute that. And yet no history of Leeward Islands Cricket has been written. Hence I began with the quotation “*A people without history/ Is not redeemed from time.*” However, and this too cannot be disputed. It is Leewards Cricket which **led** the decolonisation of the Leewards.

Let me begin with an Antiguan example to substantiate this point. Perhaps I too am making history by delving into these matters. The largest demonstration held in Antigua in the 1950's was a mass demonstration about Cricket. It took place on a **Sunday**. Masses of people converged

from all over Antigua and for the first time, a hymn was publicly rendered on pan by a full steelband which was in that self same demonstration.

What was it all about? The M.C.C. were coming to play for the first time in Antigua vs the Leewards. This was the first visit of M.C.C. to these parts since 1893 when Lord Tennyson's team visited. The Cricket Association was then dominated by the Planters and their Black Collaborators, as they too dominated Legislature, Commerce, Sugar, and therefore the economy. Over Politics, Economics and Sports the Planters and their Black Collaborators were absolutely dominant. They ruled by fiat. Antigua's Hubert Anthonyson should have been playing for the West Indies as the opening fast bowler. He was the fastest bowler in the West Indies, Frank King inclusive. He could swing the ball, with wonderful accuracy, either way.

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18
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In 1953 he had gone, along with St. Kitts' Stanley Thompson—the finest wicketkeeper ranking only with Alec Reid of Dominica, and Jackie Hendricks of Jamaica and the West Indies—along with the redoubtable Austin Eddy etc. for a West Indies trial in Guyana. Anthonyson, I think was playing for Robert Christiani's XI vs Stollmeyer's XI. In his first three overs he removed the great man himself—Jeff Stollmeyer. Stollmeyer himself told me of his dismissal. Anthonyson gave him a sharp in-ducker from outside the off-stump. Another in-swing from close to the stumps. One, another inswinger pitched middle and leg which, that master of leg side play, sent careening past fine-leg. The other again outside the off-stump which straightened and held its own delivered from close to the stumps. Stollmeyer played and missed expecting in-swing. From the same spot but with a trifle more length and more pace, Anthonyson bowled the out-swing, and Stollmeyer seeing the fuller length elegantly drove. The ball took the edge and flew to second slip. End of story.

Anthonyson disposed of Bruce Pairaeau after one reared at him and nearly guillotined him, and then Neversen had had his middle strump uprooted. Anthonyson had made it. So it seemed. Posted at third-man after his opening burst, Anthonyson used his boot to stop a ball, tread on the ball and twisted his ankle. That was the end of him. The West Indies selectors pretended they couldn't see class and quality and overlooked Anthonyson. Ability was slaughtered on the altar of insularity.

Needless to say, Thompson, behind the stumps outclassed McWatt, then the West Indies keeper. The Guyanese crowd noted Thompson's excellence. Eddy too bowled well, but could not dislodge Ramadhin after his feats of

1950 in England. It would take 20 years before a Leewards player could leap over the Mt. Everest of insularity into the West Indies team. The next two Andy Roberts and Vivian Richards were not just Test Class when they made it but world-class. So too Richie Richardson. So too Curtley Ambrose. The Leewards wept about Anthonyson in Nevis as in Antigua, in Montserrat as in Antigua, in St. Kitts perhaps even more so than in Antigua.

Now in 1954 everybody hoped Anthonyson, on his home ground would rout the M.C.C. The Planters and their Black Collaborators knew what Anthonyson's success would mean. It would mean a lot to our own self-awareness as a people, and we would not be prepared to continue in subordination to white Colonial planters.

A man became my friend that year, and has remained so ever since. He was Noel Crump, the most avid of cricket fans. He held court everywhere and with everyone. Anthonyson, John "Ounces" Gonsalves and George McMahon were his heroes. He anticipated their exploits against the glorious uncertainties notwithstanding, but he was certain that Anthonyson would establish beyond all doubt that we belonged in the major leagues. The Planters and their Black Collaborators conspired to drop Anthonyson! Can you believe it?

I cannot say that Noel Crump led the demonstration. I knew he went to Mr. Bird, (now PM Bird). I know he was in front of Hell's Gate as they marched up Newgate Street playing "Abide with Me". People came from everywhere. "No Anthonyson, no play". "Anthonyson for West Indies pick." "Anthonyson bowl Len Hutton" were the slogans held aloft. I sneaked away from home, got a licking on return, not for joining the demonstration, but for not asking. Nevertheless I began at age 11, my political career. My grandfather and I wrote a letter protesting Anthonyson's omission to the *Workers Voice*.

Demonstration or no demonstration, the threat of Lepers leaving the Leper home to come to town and stationing themselves outside the Recreation Ground gates to touch, and if need be, to spit upon would-be spectators did not deter the Planters and their Black Collaborators who were selectors. They were, though, frightened out of their wits, they announced that Anthonyson had "water under his knee". They lied. Anthonyson was as well as ever. That lie undermined their moral authority. People thought nothing of them. (Soon thereafter, I think, someone would slap the head of one of the planters and spit on him, in broad daylight. The Planters were finished.)

To add insult to injury, the Planters and their Black Collaborators as cricket selectors, also dropped the best batsman in the Leewards, George McMahon, then holder of the Leeward Islands batting record 167 scored when he was 19 years, I think, in 1946. Best fast-bowler, best batsman both omitted! The St. Kitts Planters and their Black Collaborators had seen to MacMahon's exit against M.C.C. Best fast-bowler, best batsman omitted. It is obvious, blindingly so, that the Planters knew that excellence on the cricket field would have lifted the black population to a new awareness of ourselves, and engendered an unstoppable movement to be rid of the colonising planters as leaders, in economics, politics, cricket and social life in general.

But this spontaneous self-movement of the Antiguan population in 1954 had its antecedents in history. Willie Gore, Leo Gore, Sammy Henry and Malcolm Richards, before the War, refused to play with or under a white planter Captain Bob Smith. They were told that the West Indies had a white captain, so why not play. They replied that they were against that too. They knew too, that in challenging the white Captain, they were throwing down the gauntlet to white Plantation rule. The challenge marked them down as the most dangerous of all persons in colonial society, **"trouble makers"**. Planter dominance over all aspects of life meant that they were risking their own chances of advancement in their society. Challenging the white planter Captain, and refusing to play under him, was in fact, a challenge to white planter rule.

If that all-important statesman Robert Bradshaw's papers can be found, the archivist will find a long letter written years later in 1951 I think, where Bradshaw bases his argument against any other white Governor, coming to the Leewards on the actions of these cricketers, and also his refusing to accept Governor Blackburne. In Warner Park, Bradshaw who had mobilised the St. Kitts population to resist Britain sending another white Colonial Governor, Sir Kenneth Blackburne, to preside and rule by way of Crown Colony decree over us, the incomparable Bradshaw had referred to the rejection of white captaincy by Willie Gore, Leo Gore, Sammy Henry and Malcolm Richards, as the cricket precedent for his political action. Cricket laid the foundation and stimulus for decolonisation. Incidentally, both Bradshaw and Bird had agreed that after Baldwin, there would be no more British Governors in the Leewards. Bird reneged on the agreement and accepted Blackburne. Bradshaw held out alone until he had to accept the unacceptable.

Everybody knows, or ought to know, that Rising Sun and Rivals represented the working class in cricket. St. John's the middle strata, and A.C.C. the Planters and merchants. This pattern of the conflict of social forces reproduced itself in cricket all over the Leewards. In Antigua, for many years, whenever St. John's met Rising Sun or Rivals it was Test Match time. The battle was intense, between privileged middle strata St. John's Cricket Club and underprivileged Rivals and Rising Sun. But, whenever St. John's, Rising Sun or Rivals met Antigua Cricket Club, (A.C.C. the club of the planter-merchants Scott Johnson etc. their sons, and representatives) the intention was to defeat them by an innings.

A.C.C. got so many hidings that they had to recruit the great Sydney Walling, born dirt poor, but excelling all as a batsman, on a unanimous vote, to buttress their sagging fortunes. If the Planters and their representatives could be beaten at cricket, they could be beaten in all other aspects. From the cricket fields, and by osmosis, this would take hold of the masses long overburdened and made penurious in the service of Colonial Plantation Society. Cricket exalted the lowliest and made them outclass the mightiest. The poor were inheriting the cricket earth. Prophecy was being fulfilled.

I heard Lionel Hurst, that outstanding Trade Unionist, politician and statesman argue that point in 1951. Lionel Hurst, everyone knows was an architect, the chief builder, or if you prefer the foreman, of Antigua's decolonisation as part of that remarkable trio, V.C. Bird, E.H. Lake and Lionel Hurst, the leading stars in the decolonising process, with Luther George and Leonard Benjamin going before. To their dying day, Lionel Hurst and Leonard Benjamin (perhaps the finest orator of all) would season a political speech with a cricket metaphor.

Two last points. The first goes to Arundel "Babats" Joseph. Babats played and had to play under white Captains. As a mark of dominance and pre-eminence of the white-planter captain, and to institutionalise the subservience of the black players, they were expected to address the captain as Mister (Mr.) on the field. Babats called no captain, however white, Mister. McSeveny as captain he simply called Mac. Others followed where Babats led in striking this blow against colonial subservience on which the whole edifice of subjection rested.

Finally this. West Indies Test Cricket and that great body of literature, known as West Indian Literature came into being at the same time. It is therefore no accident that while Leewards cricket is in its Test Cricket ascendancy, the Leewards have produced two of the finest novelists in the English language today. They are Jamaica Kincaid of Antigua and Caryl Phillips of St. Kitts.

All that Leewards cricket needs now is a new leap. May I suggest that English County Teams be invited to tour the Leewards after the English Season, in the winter months. Since English County Cricket is excluding us let us include them. After all, our players need more competitive cricket. After that, the Caribbean will find itself making the quantum leap—to Pan-Caribbean nationhood

Outlet, December 7, 1990

THE ART OF CARNIVAL AND THE CARNIVAL OF ART

Tim Hector

When I spoke to an important person in Carnival and Calypso, I found the person, to my surprise, quite dismissive of **Calypso Jim's** very fine calypso "Exercise". Because the person is an official, I did not want a debate lest it be felt that I was trying to influence him or her on behalf of **Calypso Jim**.

I asked questions though. Do you think the song is social commentary? Not by a long shot, came back the answer, with complete confidence. What category would you put the song in? I asked. "Road March, but it is really very trite" came back the reply, even more confident. I was amazed. I will not give other things that were said for it might be felt that I intend to reduce Carnival officialdom to the point beyond caricature.

Now Calypso Jim's calypso, "Exercise", is, without a shadow of a doubt, based on, and is in fact an attack upon **obesity**. It is the number one health problem in Antigua and Barbuda, bigger even than the AIDS scourge. That Calypso Jim did not use the straight, instructional, didactic form is a tribute to his artistic sense. He used wit, double entendre, imagery as well as physical images. The double entendre in the song, is so wonderfully done, that it seized the popular imagination at once. At once then, the public was made to confront the problem of its own obesity. The protagonist of **Calypso Jim's** song being a massive 338 pounds who has been medically diagnosed with the problem of obesity and required to shed more than half her weight—200 pounds by Calypso Jim's hyperbolic diagnosis. Alarmed, the protagonist sets out on a rigid programme of **Exercise**, which, in Calypso Jim's masterly handling, becomes **sexercise** as well.

That "Exercise" by Calypso Jim has distinct Road March possibilities makes it all the more admirable. A Road March calypso which says something of value, is rare. That in fact and in net effect, means that Calypso Jim could have thousands on the road dealing with a programme of exercise, in aerobic dance, enjoying themselves while shedding weight and increasing their life span. This is not art imitating life but art as practical manifesto for change in living life.

I contend, that to the average person, that should have been immediately obvious. To categorise Calypso Jim's "Exercise" as "trite" is not only to miss the point, is not only a failure to see, it is to evince that arrogance of ignorance which holds that what is popular, is automatically base and trite.

This has deep roots among us. It conditions the taste of the assimilated and educated. For centuries European missionaries came here and kept up an unrelenting war against all things African, stigmatising, in their ignorance and their determination to make all of African descent feel inferior, and veritable “sinks of sin”, every creative expression of the people. The movement of the hip and waist in dance, they said was vulgar, because it suggested sex. But in truth all dance, event the ballet, or moreso the ballet, is a refinement of sex, and its ennobling, as a creative and pleasurable human activity. Sin, in-eradicable sin, was attached to the dance here. All dances, except European waltzes, were vulgar and therefore sinful. As was the benna and the calypso. The respectable, that is, those assimilating European ways and norms, stood on the side, in prim observance, and could not shake their bodyline—rigidly steelbound in affected primness and religiosity. The drum was outlawed here, too. And more importantly, the African conception of life and living. People had to struggle to restore these things as part of the struggle to restore our very humanity, which had been assaulted on all sides by State and Church, by force and terror. And, not least, with the hell fire of eternal determination.

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24
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It is my view that the most significant aspect of the African view of life which survives here, survives in carnival. What exactly is that? You are quite entitled to ask. It is the willingness of ordinary people, to spend money to get the most elaborate carnival costume as Mas, and to enjoy themselves to the max, and then discard the costume when their unexpurgated joy in life is done and over. That view of life, says simply and profoundly, that money is a means to an end and not an end itself. And not just that. It says, too that the end to which all life must tend is the realisation and liberation of self through individual and collective, creative effort.

Those then who so loudly aver, that Carnival should be “profitable” in money terms, are once again imposing a European way of seeing all human activity, as the bottom line of balance sheets. It is the most specious way of seeing. To allow people, to express their creative abilities, is, I repeat, the essence of life and living. And each and every person either, is endowed, or has creative capabilities. Society by dividing itself into the dominant minority and the sub-dominant majority, denies the creative capabilities of the dominated majority. Carnival is the Festival, which attempts, for just a brief period, to release those creative possibilities of the dominated majority, in song, in dance, in wit, and not least, in the art of the Mas. (I will return to that later.)

I want now to move to the politics of art, since there is a determined effort to make us believe that politics diminishes art, when art, in fact, is politics by other means. Politics is the means by which we regulate our relations, (economic, religious, legal and social relations) one with another, in society. It is the way we see the world and our place in it. Art is the effort to interpret the world and to make people see how their place in it is being either endangered or enhanced. All art either seeks to accommodate us to the world as it is, or to move us to change the world as it is, for the better. Therefore then, is all art, politics by other means. Those then who seek to take politics out of art, are, in truth, taking art out of art.

Let me illustrate the point. One of the most horrendous incidents of the 20th century concerned Antigua and an Antiguan. It took place in the 90's, in our time, in 1997 to be exact. However, it concerned Antiguan, other than the immediate family, not at all, neither at home nor in the diaspora. The artist, had to rework this incident in art, namely literature, to get us to see the meaning of that horrendous event, and our relation to it. Here is the artistic, and truthful rendition of that event:

“The visage and form of the Reverend Accelyne Williams, **seventy-five**, seems to exude the peace of a biblical scholar who found escape and solace in quiet study of the texts. His peaceful elderly presence in his apartment home was shattered in late March [1997] under the boots of the Boston Police SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) squad, when they kicked in his door. When the gentle clergyman fled in terror into his bedroom, that door too was kicked in, and the heavily armed thirteen-member team wrestled the old man to the floor, cuffing his hand into immobility.

“Reverend Williams, writhing in terror at the armed intrusion died of a heart attack.

“Boston’s SWAT teams attacked the Dorchester apartment after a confidential informant supplied them with information about where a large cache of cocaine, marijuana and guns could be found. Turns out the informant gave the cops the wrong apartment.

“Rev. Williams, a retired Methodist minister, was a native of Antigua, a tiny island nation in the eastern Caribbean, who came to America with his wife Mary to be with their child, who attended college here.

“What they found instead was rampant Ramboism, a jack-boot against the door, all in the name of a “war” against drugs that seems to be a war

on the poor and the Black. Boston's mayor and police chief, upon confirmation of Williams' identity and the failure of the SWATers to find the alleged cache of drugs and guns, issued an apology. Thomas Menino attended Church services in a Black Baptist church and called for "healing".

"For Rev. Williams, there will be no healing for "the dead know not anything, neither have they anymore a reward" (Ecclesiastes 9:5) Although unintended, Rev. Williams' death, and especially its manner, point to the folly of the way the paramilitary "war on drugs" is being waged. For the question immediately arises: what if the Rev. Williams was in possession of drugs? Are the state's methods—paramilitary strikes, humiliating arrests, draining trials, corrosive imprisonment—really designed to help someone? Is it more show than substance?

"**Everyday, the liberty of thousands is stolen** because they have used a substance dubbed illegal by the government. Every year, the lives of thousands are lost because they have used a substance considered "legal" by the government. There are approximately 6,000 to 7,000 deaths annually attributed to cocaine. There are approximately 400,000 deaths annually attributed to cigarettes. Guess which one is illegal? Guess which one funnels billions to government tax coffers?

"The Reverend Accelyne Williams' violent and ignominious death at the hands of over a dozen armed agents of the state pint to a ludicrous war on **reason**, not on drugs."

There is one of the finest pieces in the last decade of the 20th century—spare, clean with a logic so beautiful as to be resplendent—a writer on Death Row in Philadelphia, brings to the world the horror which Antigua and Antiguan, except for *Outlet*, little noted. Here not a drum was heard, not a funeral note. The Church, on the ignominious death of a Churchman, for all its pulpiteering, was silent. It could not challenge the mighty on their thrones, about the Ramboist assault on a citizen, by a well-armed state, mistakenly or otherwise, targeting a single peaceful man. Arawaks, we were stupidly taught and still taught, were peaceful, while Caribs were war-like. The Caribs apparently deserved to die at the hands of the marauding Europeans stealing the Caribs' homeland. Neither Carib nor Arawak deserved death. Least of all, Rev. Accelyne Williams. There for the grace, in the place of Rev. Williams, go you and I, at the hands of the modern state, heavily armed with special weapons and death-dealing tactics. It is the modern condition—if daily barbarism.

It took Mumia Abu-Jamal, on death-row, in Philadelphia to make us in Antigua see through his art, what we blinded ourselves to, in order to continue to live our happy-go-lucky existences.

Even King Smarty, writing about **Black Rage** in this season of the calypso art, ignored the horror of Rev. Accelyne Williams' ignominious death, swatted like a bothersome fly into his grave. There is then to me, something inauthentic about Smarty's **Black Rage**. It is more commercial in intent and content, than about the genuine Rage which should seize a people and galvanise us into action, when one of our own is so brutally exterminated.

Obviously, as another fine artist, Martin Carter, profoundly aware of the political aspect of **all** human behaviour, wrote: "**Badly abused we fail to curse/Our fury pleads**".

Nothing, just nothing, is more true of Antigua and Barbuda today. Let me illustrate, in what I consider to be the finest calypso of the 2000 season. **King Fiah** gives us a litany of woes and abuse which we feeling now. "**We feeling it**" we really feeling it, and instead of urging us to "curse" and therefore act, his fury pleads, repeatedly, "God will provide". Not even the more important divine injunction: "Take up you bed and walk," but a supine inertia: God will provide.

But get the point, King Fiah is **not at fault at all**, in my view. As artist he rendered faithfully the real condition of life here, the poor man and woman crying, "**We feeling it**". But, our "fury pleads": God will provide. It is at once emblematic and symptomatic of the times. The truth is **King Fiah** is singing of a social reality, produced by the economics of dispossession and the education for dislocation, which the economist and prose-poet supreme, Lloyd Best, describes as a structurally adjusted, post-independence decline in which we are as a social whole "a frightened terrorised, panicked people, with gratuitously low self-esteem. We are rootless, feckless, strolling players temporising and compromising. Inveterate, scheming, picaresque, smart-men, perpetually playing games of individual advancement, willing to make a deal at the expense of the collective." Rulers and ruled ever ready and willing to make a deal at the expense of the collective. In those godless circumstances, "God will provide" becomes a constant refrain. But, patent hypocrisy nonetheless.

As everyone here knows there is a concerted effort to drive the political out of the calypso art, either by force, namely, censorship, or by less crude

coercion, rewarding the sugary in competition by placing them as high as possible. So, not a few calypsonians, currying favour, have resorted to the “patriotic”. One even plagiarising Lord Canary’s 1958 winning Calypso King song “Gem of the Caribbean”—and still being placed as a semi-finalist, plagiarism notwithstanding! I need only remind the Establishment of the great Samuel Johnson’s well known aphorism: “Patriotism is often the last resort of scoundrels.” Nuff said on that.

I move now to a more uplifting subject, the political origin of all art. I am going to confine myself largely to the West Indies or the English speaking Caribbean. The father of West Indian sculpture is in truth a Mother—Edna Manley. (Since according to the prevailing male chauvinist mythology all things began with the Father, I have chosen in this instance to abide, my own opposition forgotten for the moment.) Edna Manley, 1900–1987, was in the thick of the nationalist movement which rocked the entire Caribbean from Cuba the largest, to St. Kitts, the smallest nation-state in the world. Edna Manley’s husband, Norman, led the nationalist movement in Jamaica, and led the only all West Indian party, the West Indies Federal Labour Party, which governed the Federation. Edna Manley, as part and parcel of that momentous political movement, produced the first modernist works of sculpture ever in the English speaking Caribbean. Her *Beadseller* (1922) has been acclaimed by the critics “as probably the most radical modernist work created in the Caribbean at the time and reflects her interest in vorticism.” It was inspired by a market scene, and made central the despised and dispossessed ordinary folk.

As the masses of the English speaking, not only “cursed” but took up arms against the sea of colonial troubles that assailed them, by rioting up and down the region, from 1935–1938, in probably the only known example of the domino effect, Edna Manley artistically predicted and perhaps precipitated this mass movement, in art, with her magnificent sculpture *Negro Aroused*. It is the undisputed high point in art of West Indian nationalism. And the profoundly national, as with all art, became the universal, as Edna Manley was exhibited with, and ranked alongside, the great Henry Moore.

For me personally though, Edna Manley’s great work of that period is her *Horse of the Morning*, 1943, which to me shares with Carlos Enriquez *The Abduction of the Mulatas* 1938, and with Pablo Picasso’s greatest painting of the modern era *Guernica*, the centrality of the horse as symbolism, of the creative possibilities of the ordinary people. I quickly

remind that *Guernica* is the universally acclaimed greatest painting of the modern era. Its origin is political. It is statement as art is political and intentionally so.

The Fascists had bombed a small village Guernica, in Picasso's native Spain. The village was decimated. Picasso aroused by this political horror depicted his response in the painting. He shows the masses **aroused** through a bull, challenging the old order with their special weapons and tactics. And over the whole struggle, Picasso places a Greek face, bearing an ancient Greek lamp symbol of the triumph not of Parliamentary democracy, but of **mass democracy**. *Guernica*, as art, is political, overtly so, from beginning to end.

I do not think, that I overstate the case when I say that all great art is singularly political. As Eusi Kwayana, in the finest essay I have read, in the last 25 years, in the class of Hazlitt and T.S. Eliot's *Essays in Tradition and Individual Talent*, so wonderfully shows in the June 2000 *Kyk-over-Al* itself a collector's item—that the Psalms political in origin give us “some of the finest images of the Bible as in Psalm 114: The sea saw it and fled: Jordan was driven back/The mountains skipped like rams and the little hills like young sheep”. “But” says Eusi Kwayana “it is in part a poem dealing with the liberation of the Jews from Egypt” and “from a people of strange language”. An activist, a political activist, probably wrote that Psalm, as many another of rare beauty, fueled by political liberation.

Those who wish to hound the political out of art, be it calypso, poetry, psalms, sculpture, dance or painting, really wish to murder art, and therefore the creative capacities of the people, in which we have our very being. It being Carnival, I wish to end with carnival. Carnival in the eastern Caribbean, including Trinidad and Tobago of course, is the greatest exhibition of the visual arts. The master of that genre is Peter Minshall, born 1941.

Minshall it was who challenged the stereotypes of sequins, lamé and feathers, which, following Wilfredo Lam, I call *costumbrismo*, and in its place brought a new social and therefore political consciousness to the festival—carnival. (Incidentally, I contend against the obscurantist aesthetes, that **all** art began in popular festivals. Those who dispute can challenge. Their demolition is assured.) Minshall in his unusually large troupes, virtually, collective art, involves as many as two thousand, in what are essentially modern Morality Plays. The form, to me, at any rate, is cinematic, but popular cinema, live. Artist Minshall and mass participants making art collectively. It is new.

Minshall in his stunning and definitely spectacular King and Queen costumes employ kinetic constructions, animated by the wearer and sometimes by modern technological devices such as the electric compressor in the King costume *Man-Crab* (1983). This compressor pumped blood over a canopy of white silk. Minshall's band, in this Morality Play, with *Man-Crab* as an allegory for the destructive power of modern life—such as destroyed Reverend Accelyne Williams—and the Queen—*Washerwoman*, who was the embodiment of purity and harmony. *Washerwoman* was killed, a surprising victory of Evil over Good. It is a stunning piece of visual collective art.

In a way, that triumph is replicated in this 2000 Antigua Carnival with the defeat of the political in popular art. We have as a matter of fact eliminated our Emancipation from slavery, which is profoundly political, out of the very Carnival, which emancipation, Carnival itself was created to celebrate. It is a temporary triumph of Evil. The sea flees and Antigua is driven back.

Outlet, July 28, 2000

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PORTRAITS OF TIM HECTOR (1996–2002)

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31
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TIM HECTOR—A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Conrad Luke

Fifty four years ago, this very month, November 24, 1942, Leonard Tim Hector saw the light of day and almost since then he has been shedding light and making a difference, a positive difference in the lives of people, nationally, regionally and internationally. Born on Lower Newgate Street to the late Mable Hector, from a very early age Tim distinguished himself as an exceptional student at St. Mildred's School, the St. John's Boys School and the Antigua Grammar School. He would later be regarded for his acuity of mind when he studied at the Universities of Acadia and McGill of Canada.

A product of his environment, Tim was greatly influenced by his grandfather, whose love for knowledge was insatiable. The name 'Tim' he carries is a shortened version of 'Timoshenko', the name of a well-known Russian General of the period, with which his grandfather had dubbed him. In his grandfather's home, forever the centre of ardent discussion on World Affairs, Literature, Sports, in particular Cricket, and Music, young Hector was exposed early to the cut and thrust of debate and the marshaling of information and facts by the autodidacts of the day. It would make a lasting impression on his alert and fertile mind.

At a later stage this vast interest from Anthropology to Dominoes, from World Politics to Boxing, so typical of the Renaissance man, would be further enhanced by what Hector himself on several occasions has fondly referred to as the "University of Chelsea". At this 'Chelsea University', at the corner of Newgate and Thames Streets, the progressives then, constantly debated Caribbean Integration, the Cuban Revolution, the anticolonial struggle—raging at the time, Trade Unionism and a host of other topics. His passion for Journalism would be fired at the same time when as a stripling he would write for the *Workers' Voice* and engage in discussions with the likes of the late Novelle Richards, Lionel Hurst and McChesney George at 46 North Street. Later he would be a contributor to the *Antigua Star* newspaper and eventually its Editor in Chief.

On finishing his High School Certificate at the AGS he became one of the youngest teachers ever at the school. With his usual verve and tenacity of purpose, he set about, as a mere youth, to counter the colonial education of the times by introducing his students to a new world of learning. For the first time students were exposed to new ideas and thinkers. Far

and wide today, his former students acclaim the indelible mark he has left in creating in them a genuine love for knowledge, and a hunger and thirst for justice. Awarded a scholarship, Hector studied in Canada up to 1967 eventually breaking off his postgraduate studies to return home where he felt his contribution was most needed at this particular juncture of Antigua's social and political development. A protégé of the internationally acclaimed thinker and political activist C.L.R. James he was intent upon introducing a New Order in Antigua and the Caribbean and immediately became active in politics. In a very short while his organizational and journalistic abilities were fully utilized. He became the Chairman of the Progressive Labour Movement (PLM), and executive member of the Public Service Association and the Antigua Workers Union (AWU). His stamp on the Trumpet, organ of the AWU is still recalled today.

A founder of the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM) in 1968, he would struggle relentlessly for the next two decades as one of its leaders for the social, political and economic transformation of Antigua-Barbuda and the region.

Not by politics alone, Tim was a man of many parts and plunged himself with equal fervour into the development of sports. A sports analyst, commentator and administrator, he has been recognized globally for his tireless work in this field. Forever keen to equip himself in whatever discipline, he attended an advanced university program for Sports Administrators at Sussex University sponsored by the International Olympics Committee. As usual his outstanding administrative ability and knowledge of Sports in general were noted.

On his return in 1967, in addition to his political activities he devoted time and energy to one of his first loves—Cricket. He was most instrumental in the reorganization of Cricket in Antigua, the Leewards and the West Indies. He served at every level of cricket administration in the region, from executive member of the Antigua Cricket Association, to the Leewards Board, to Manager of the Combined Islands, rising to the very top as a member of the West Indies Cricket Board where he was greatly respected. To this day his ideas on the development of Cricket in the region are widely sought after. During his tenure as cricket administrator, a number of Leeward players rose to prominence as Test players for West Indies. He has appeared on several occasions on TV in the region and in the U.K. discussing the game of cricket in all its facets.

A tireless worker, he also developed a keen interest in Agriculture, to the point where he owned a farm and sought to address the question of production in our society. This experiment in reorganizing agricultural production was aborted by a most tragic domestic event. He continues to read widely, familiarising himself with the subject, convinced that the reorganization of Agricultural Production holds the key to the transformation of Antigua-Barbuda.

Tim has been the recipient of numerous awards for his contribution to Journalism, Sports and Education. Respected internationally for his incisive and thought-provoking articles, as Editor of the *Outlet* newspaper, he is renown for his investigative reports and has won acclaim the world over for such investigative work as the exposure of Space Research Corporation (SRC) in sending arms to South Africa, and the transshipment of guns via Antigua to Medellin Cartel in Columbia. For his journalistic work, PEN, an international writers' organization gave him an award. A most fitting tribute by a most prestigious body.

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34
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An invitation to address the United Nations on the Space Research Corporation issue was a notable high point in his illustrious career, and would have to be one of the proudest moments, in that he was able to go beyond the awful shame of Antigua-Barbuda's involvement with SRC by ensuring the Liberation and Freedom of Southern Africa with the exposure of this heinous affair.

He has fought relentlessly and unflinchingly for press freedom and the freedom of speech in Antigua and the wider region. He has suffered harassment and incarceration in order to maintain press freedom. Perhaps his crowning glory in the struggle for a free press was when the Privy Council in 1990, in a landmark decision, ruled in favour of democracy and press freedom by overturning an insidious and unconstitutional Public Order Amendment Act. A blow, over and above partisan politics, was struck here for a fundamental human right.

As an Educator, Tim has been invited by some of the leading international institutions of learning—Cornell, Brown, Columbia, University of Toronto and others to lecture on a wide range of topics. In the early 90's he lectured at the University of Miami in Caribbean, African and Latin American Literature at post-graduate level. As a teacher in his homeland he has done yeoman service having taught at the All Saints Secondary School, Antigua Girls High School, Princess Margaret School, Teachers Training College and Hill Secondary School.

A man of indefatigable energy he exudes the same confidence, and boundless energy with which we have come to associate him after decades of making a most vital contribution to life in Antigua and Barbuda. One could essentially sum up Tim Hector with the phrase “out of one - many”—Journalist, Educator, Sports Administrator, Political Activist and Intellectual—indeed a multi-faceted person.

Antigua-Barbuda, the region and the international community owe Tim Hector a debt of gratitude and therefore salute him for his contribution to the development of humanity. May he and his family continue to enjoy health and happiness in the pursuit of his noble ideals and goals.

November 1996

TIM HECTOR—A BRIEF PERSONAL TRIBUTE

Dr. Gregson Davis

With the untimely death of Tim Hector, Antigua has lost a unique and inimitable voice. His outstanding achievements in the public sphere—most notably as journalist and political activist—will no doubt be the subject of many well-deserved eulogies in the coming days and weeks. In offering my own brief tribute here, I shall focus on a few aspects of Tim’s career that may be less commonly acknowledged than his more visible contributions to the political debates in which he participated. I write as a longstanding friend and, I might add, a former teacher, of Tim’s (I had the pleasure of having had him as a student in the sixth form during my brief stint as a teacher at the Antigua Grammar School in the early 1960s). His idealism, ebullience and thirst for knowledge were already fully evident in that phase of his education.

Tim Hector was *sui generis*. He was far more than an astute political commentator and a gifted investigative journalist. He was also a genuine intellectual. By that I mean that he cultivated the life of the mind and thereby exemplified the famous dictum of Aristotle that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” Long after the conclusion of his formal education abroad he continued to read widely at home in history, literature, philosophy, and the social sciences. To a far greater extent than most of his educated compatriots, Tim was deeply enamoured of ideas, and he never hesitated to interweave his political columns with insights gleaned from his extensive reading. In this respect, he clearly strove, with some measure of success, to emulate the Caribbean intellectual whom he most admired, the great polymath and radical political thinker, C.L.R. James.

As a journalist committed to unveiling the truth at all costs Tim displayed a courage that is especially praiseworthy in view of the climate of repression in which he managed that great mouthpiece of free expression, the *Outlet*. For decades *Outlet* bore the major brunt of the governmental assault on the fundamental rights of the citizens of Antigua and Barbuda. Again and again Tim was prepared, in defense of freedom of the press, to face the punitive wrath of those who cynically manipulated power in postcolonial Antigua. The personal cost he paid was truly steep—far steeper, in fact, than most of us who share his principles and ideals have been willing to pay. The catalogue of this high cost is long: it includes not only physical threats to himself and his family, but also arrest, incarceration, and the destruction of the *Outlet* building. Through it all Tim

showed a remarkable resilience, steadfastness and indomitable spirit. His solidarity with those who suffered blatant injustice was brought home to me in very personal terms when he gave critical support to the teachers in the educational reform movement of the late 1970s—a protest movement in which several of the striking teachers, including members of my family, joined the long list of victims of a repressive and hypocritical regime.

Tim Hector had a grand vision of liberation for the underprivileged masses of the entire Caribbean. His perspective was never merely insular in scope: instead, he thought in ambitious, cosmopolitan terms, always aware of the connections between local politics and events in the global arena. He worked hard at enlarging the boundaries of political discourse in the region, while at the same time relentlessly exposing the corruption of our civic institutions and the corrosive greed of those who betray the public trust for the sake of self-aggrandisement. It is to Tim's credit that even as I seek to describe his substantial merits as a polemicist I find myself echoing his impassioned language.

A certain exuberance of style was Tim's hallmark, whether he was engaged in conversation or in journalism. There were times indeed when this admirable trait came close to obfuscating the very information that he had so brilliantly extracted from his sources. At his best, however, his well-documented muck-raking was a welcome antidote for a society that continues to disguise its complicity with the most poisonous elements of unbridled capitalism—the “culture of avarice” that led to such scandals as Space Research Corporation, to name just one example of a major *Outlet* exposé.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention Tim's generous acknowledgment of the contributions of others to the national legacy. Over and over again he wrote articles in the pages of *Outlet* in praise of Antiguan of earlier generations who had achieved success in various professions on the national and international scene. His excursions into local history served to honour the memory of many men and women who would otherwise have remained “unhonoured and unsung.” Let us hope that we who have survived Tim will, in our turn, render due homage to his memory and achievements in the same ungrudging spirit in which he honoured those of his predecessors and contemporaries.

Outlet, November 22, 2002

TIM HECTOR: A MISUNDERSTOOD GENIUS OF OUR TIME

Prof. Charles Wm. Ephraim

In his relatively short life—three score years less a matter of days to be precise—Tim acquired vast knowledge of the world and its affairs, and it is this deep and wide acquisition that rendered him at once enviable, and seemingly unchallengeable, by the majority of his peers. His wide-ranging intellect made him formidable as a personage. Indeed, for many he was an intimidating intellectual, and this, not surprisingly, won him many adversaries.

Tim took to heart the Baconian maxim that knowledge is power, yet he was profoundly cognizant of Lord Acton's warning that power corrupts, and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. That Tim sought power can never be denied on reasonable grounds, even by his friendliest of friends; his endless search for knowledge attests to this. In fact, he was manifestly indefatigable in the search for power, but for a reason transcending the mortality and fatality of the selfishness of ordinary men. And Tim was no ordinary man. For whereas it can safely be argued that most men seek power for their own self-aggrandizement, Tim sought power for the more grandiloquent aim of altruistic appeasement. That is to say, he sought power as the means, as the necessary condition, for the possibility of the alleviation of human suffering *simpliciter*. Than this, there can be no greater moral purpose; and it was for this purpose primarily that Tim lived.

I wish to suggest that it is precisely here, in this grand and overarching moral purpose, that one can most readily locate Tim Hector's ineradicable socialistic inclinations, and, as a consequence, his pedagogy as well. For Tim was at heart an everlasting pedagogue, an educator in the most radical and meaningful sense of this term. In the manner of Paulo Freire, for example, Tim understood and urged unceasingly the crucial need for a "pedagogy of the oppressed," a consciousness-raising pedagogy by which and through which alone the all-too-many "wretched of the earth" would come to understand the source of their unmerited misery. And would move against it with a kind of death-defying conviction, and with an unimpeachable certitude of the rightness of their cause. In this sense, Tim, the soft-hearted individual that we know, was paradoxically both an idealistic visionary and a realist.

As a visionary, Tim saw quite clearly and articulated most vehemently the end he sought, namely: the redemption of the downtrodden masses in general, and of Caribbean peoples in particular. He recognized with unerring accuracy that the common thread running through the various experiences of these people was their oppression and exploitation, a degraded, Janus-face condition necessitated most of all by the cupidity of European and Euro-American imperialists obsessed with a passion for self-aggrandizement. And he taught this lesson from pillar to post wherever he went, as undeterred as that ancient gadfly, Socrates. Precisely because his understanding of this critical bit of history was incompatible with the prevailing Eurocentric sermons, which speak of white benevolence bestowed upon the non-white world. Tim was viewed by many “traditionalists” as an incorrigible political outcast. His contention, however, has never been refuted—not, at any rate, on empirical grounds.

As a visionary, Tim was convinced that the cure for what ailed the downtrodden, particularly Caribbean peoples, consisted principally in a transformation of the colonial socio-economic system. But such an undertaking, which would entail a redistribution of wealth, would by no means be easy.

First of all, as Tim has rightly affirmed, Caribbean societies, despite their putative independence, still depend to a large and unspoken extent on the so-called “beneficence” of European and Euro-American philanthropists. And Caribbean politicians, pretending to be hard-nosed philosophical pragmatists, have vowed never to bite the hands that feed them. But such thinking misses the point of Tim’s contention. Tim’s argument—put forward much earlier by Marcus Garvey—was that no people can seriously claim to be independent insofar as they rely on the philanthropy of others. Self-help, Tim argued, is the only way to independence, the only way for a people to shape the contours of their destiny, the only way for them to humanize themselves. And the first necessary step towards independence for Caribbean peoples is what he has termed “regional integration.” Tim was under no illusion that this would be easy: he had experienced with heart-wrenching disappointment the untimely demise of the West Indies Federation, which he thought was fundamentally misguided in its focus. But he remained convinced that regional integration—political, economic and cultural—is the only way for Caribbean peoples if they are to survive in a globalised world. Such integration is the only source of strength for Caribbean peoples. And he argued passionately that such integration would be possible if, and only if, Caribbean peoples would find a way to end racial and ethnic

antagonisms and begin to put their house in order as human beings bent on survival in a world that has been historically inimical to them. He believed that an understanding of their shared experience of oppression and exploitation at the hands of the same enemy should be sufficient for Caribbean peoples to come together as one people—in the struggle for survival. And he believed that the Caribbean has the necessary potential, namely, a highly intelligent human resource pool, to rise to the occasion as an existential imperative. But to rise to the occasion as required is to engage in revolutionary activity. To understand Tim's appreciation of this is to understand the revolutionary character of his thinking and his discourse. He understood that freedom is never given but must, at all times, be won.

As a realist, Tim understood like Frantz Fanon that the attainment of the end he sought would entail the very real probability—nay, even the necessity—violence and death. He understood, in short, that freedom for the world's oppressed and exploited masses could never be won without an overthrowing of the oppressor. For he was thoroughly and justifiably convinced, by the historical lessons of *Realpolitik* in general and by the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism in particular, that imperialistically driven power-brokers, motivated largely by greed and self-aggrandizement, would never ever yield to moral suasion, would never willingly surrender their hold upon the oppressed and exploited—without a struggle to the death. As Chairman Mao has colourfully stated it: "The enemy will not perish of himself. Neither the Chinese reactionaries nor the aggressive forces of U.S. imperialism ... will step down from the stage of history of their own accord." Indeed, Tim had read Hegel, particularly the *Phenomenology of Mind*, and he understood the dialectic of the master/slave dilemma, which he interpreted along Marxist lines, thereby surpassing the passive, conservative synthesis of Hegel and opting for the revolutionary conclusion of Karl Marx. The unwillingness of the master to yield his hold upon the slave, as Hegel construes it, consists in a single essential fact: the master recognizes himself as master if, and only if, he recognizes the slave as slave. Similarly, the slave recognizes himself as a slave if, and only if, he recognizes the master as master. This mutual recognition, once conceded, yields the solution for those who will be free.

Tim understood the intricacy of this dialectic, and relished its implications for authentic existence on the part of the downtrodden. To win his freedom, Tim knew, the slave has no alternative but to refuse to recognize the master *qua* master; he must sever the relationship once and for all—by any means necessary. The great refusal is, on any interpretation, as revolutionary move. It is precisely at this point that violence may become necessary. To invoke another passage from Chairman Mao: “A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.” But this violence, inevitable or not, would not be violence for the sake of violence. Rather, as Fanon has taught us, it would be a well-needed catharsis to revitalize the humanity of the all-too-many oppressed and exploited. And Tim appreciated this. For Tim, this was not only the legitimate Marxist interpretation of the Hegelian dialectic with respect to the master/slave dilemma, but it was also and fundamentally the only realistic premise from which to move for the gathering of power to the downtrodden.

By analogy, the Caribbean peoples can win their freedom and independence if, and only if, they refuse to recognize themselves as slaves to European and Euro-American masters. And this great refusal is possible. They need only harness their potentials *as a people* and work towards a common goal, namely their own self-uplift. Such working towards a common goal would itself be a revolutionary move by all those who have been historically subordinated. Only then will they win the degree of respect that induces cooperation with other independent nations; only then will they be able to sit at the bargaining tables of the world, however globalised it will become.

Thus taught Tim Hector.

Outlet, November 29, 2002

TIM—NOT JUST FOR KNOWLEDGE SAKE, BUT FOR HUMANITY

Lawrence A. Jardine

A Tribute to My Friend and Mentor—Leonard Tim Hector (November 24, 1942 to November 12, 2002)

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42
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In a world where we glorify quantity—how much money one has or how much knowledge another has acquired, it is easy to appraise, admire, or sometimes even revere Tim for the latter, but certainly not the former. For of course by any such quantitative analysis, Tim was an academically brilliant man, of possibly both the rarest and finest type. His knowledge covered many disciplines; but sports and agriculture gave him special joy. Tim's desire for knowledge and conversely his aversion of ignorance were truly exceptional and phenomenal. However, this aversion though self-imposed was not contemptuous of others. His capacity for listening, reading, learning and retention was remarkable, and perceivably may have been second to only a few. His analytical and critical mind astonished those of us who knew, engaged and interrogated it. He possessed an ability to walk through a labyrinth of social and political problems and manufacture new ideas and solutions void of partisanship or tailoring to his personal political ambitions. He dwarfed us in intellect and ingenuousness. With that, many of his Antiguan contemporaries and detractors had great difficulties accepting and living.

Tim's writings and activities against racism, apartheid, white supremacy, imperialism, tyrants, dictators, and sycophants are well documented. So too is his vision and contribution toward Caribbean social, political and economic integration, and West Indies cricket. His efforts as chairman of Martin Luther King Jr. International, and his work as secretary of Mathaba, an African organization for the unity and advancement of Africa and African peoples across the black diaspora are also of note. His invaluable inputs to the development of sports, culture, education and politics, here in Antigua and Barbuda, are also well chronicled and hailed. And therefore, I must leave it to his contemporaries and others who are better suited, positioned and gifted to examine his works—to enumerate and expound his academic, intellectual, social and political achievements, and his significance to Antigua and Barbuda, the Caribbean and the world at large.

I have been close to Tim for the last seventeen years, visiting and engaging him for most weekends over that period. It was my secret mission

over the years to quiz him for inconsistencies, for his personal ambition—to understand the inner workings of his mind. And what I liked about this man was the philosophical layer on which his intellectual curiosity was built. In one word it was Tim's humanitarianism. Frankly, I remained Tim's friend and avid follower not for admiration of his knowledge, intellect or oratory prowess, but for his sincerity, and unshakeable faith in and love for humankind, especially the ordinary man and woman. Interestingly, Tim's early ambition as a young man was to be the first black pope (then, he was apparently unaware that there were already popes who were classified as black). He told me that he read the Holy Bible from cover to cover at least five (5) times. I think he was the most single-minded and single-hearted person I have met. He believed with unflinching conviction that the poor would inherit the earth, and to that end he breathed, lived and engaged. For years, it has been rumoured that he was a communist and, "If you have two houses, Tim Hector will take away one." That statement is as profound as it is absurd and false; but it is indicative that foremost in the consciousness of Antiguan, they clearly understood that Tim was about the establishment of social equity and justice.

I once asked him why he spent so much time and energy reading and educating himself, and he replied, "If you want to represent people you must have knowledge." That, I think, is the summary of why Tim sought knowledge.

Tim insisted that knowledge was a social commodity, only to be used and shared to liberate all humanity from ignorance, greed and poverty. Knowledge and power used for personal aggrandizement or pursuit at the expense of others were, in his view, an exhibition of profound vanity of the worst type and tantamount to "froth", the word he would have used. Here is Tim in an ACLM (Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement) internal document, entitled *Finding Ourselves in CLR James' Caribbean*, to members:

'All of self and none of thee' sings the Calypsonian Obstinate in 1993, 25 years after the foundation and formation of ACLM. He was, of course, referring to a petty-bourgeois state leadership, using the state as the means of accumulation, since the petty-bourgeois by definition, cannot accumulate capital by means of industry, banking, commerce, or large scale agriculture. That is the province of the bourgeois, not of the career professional, be he the lawyer, editor, professional politician, teacher, priest, intellectual. It is this class which the bourgeoisie, in our case absent and international, that is, imperialism, uses to (mis)lead the masses in their individuality.

Mark you, all of us in ACLM are members of this class exhibiting all its strengths and weaknesses. The one essential difference, as organization, between Them and Us, is that we attempted to make intellectual property (knowledge) public property in the interest of the masses, as an essential tool in their becoming, moving from mass to class, conscious of itself as opposed to the Other, and defending and advancing its own interest in opposition to the Other.

This is just one example of Tim's forthrightness and mission as visionary and leader of ACLM.

In 1992 at one of UPP's (United Progressive Party) St. John's City South branch meeting, Tim said, "This first responsibility of a leader is to educate new leadership." He educated himself to be a leader, and consistently, he was preoccupied with providing scholarships for the up and coming.

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44
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Tim was for education that underscored enlightenment and self-esteem. He had a phobia of bigotry and patronage. This was evident in the way he shunned personality politics. He had great difficulty and discomfort conducting house to house political campaigns—"marketing himself"—as endorsed by conventional politics. He was no actor; he could not conceal the edginess and uneasiness he experienced on visiting a constituent to ask for the vote. In 1989 General Election campaign and canvassing, Arah, his first wife and I were told by him on some occasions "Go ahead, I will come later." He was concerned about the employment of progressive ideas, programmes and policy to build solid institutions, by which the people would be free of the all-pervasive politicians. In small island states in particular, he was adamant that personality politics was the spawning and perpetuation of the inseparable twins—political patronage and corruption.

For Tim the emphasis was on enlightenment—here he is: "*The entire object of True Education is to make people not merely to do the right things, but enjoy them; not merely industrious, but to love industry; not merely learned, but to love knowledge; not merely pure, but to love purity; not merely just, but hunger and thirst after justice.*" That was printed on the exercise books he gave to children during the General Election campaign in 1994.

If I had to select the disciplines that made Tim intellectually special, they would be history and anthropology. He was very perceptive and appeared

to have already seen and understood all human conflicts and struggles. It was most disheartening at times when you approached him with your best ideas, only to be told that a man or woman by the name of such and such, some thousands of years ago, in the year, month, day of such and such period, tried that, and “it failed miserably”, and here is why, and this is what he or she should have done, and here is what I suggest you should do.... That was typically Tim, and he must have intellectually terrified a number of weak and competitive souls by that. You had to be studious, honest and brave to return with another “best idea”. How could an historian and small islander with much knowledge of human failings sustain such optimism and enthusiasm in humankind? This, at times, I had great difficulty understanding. But he loved the song “One Day We Shall Overcome”, especially when done by Louis Armstrong. Sir Leonard, as we called him, was the epitome of an independent and untrammelled mind, and a thinker of impeccable logic. He was acutely conscious of his sense of justice and need for fair play. And he propagated these throughout ACLM.

He had no intent on cultivating “yes men” around him. He subscribed to Confucius’, “Give a man a fish you give him a meal, teach a man to fish, you feed him for life.” He encouraged all ACLM members to be educated and independent of thought. Nonetheless, I cannot recall Tim really coercing anyone to do anything. His style was to drop the suggestion or information at your feet; you had to pick it up and act according to your understanding, commitment and conscience. This was his *modus operandi* in his writings and electoral politics. In my view, he did not possess an authoritarian gene in his body. (He did not believe in the so-called beating of children, he felt that it contributed to domestic violence, particularly by men.) But somewhat unusual, during his last conversation with me on the telephone from his hospital room in Cuba, he said, “Jardine, I have just read *Nickel and Dimed*. I have never insisted that ACLM members read anything, but when I come home, I will ask everyone of you to read it.” I immediately ordered two (2) copies and in the process another book of similar subject that I thought would be of interest to him. The books have not yet arrived—and true to form, he won’t be insisting that I read anything....

But Tim had a sullen glare and contortion of the face when he was called an intellectual. He was somewhat embarrassed to be associated with that group—for he felt that the so-called Antiguan intelligentsia had betrayed the Antiguan people—“for a few dollars more”—as he would have said on many occasions. Tim was first and foremost a man for the people—for the development of people, institutions and industries.

During the enquiry into Medical Benefits, I saw him in his bedroom on his toes, shadowboxing against corrupt politicians (he had actually called names); for whom he had great disdain as exploiters of the people's resources. He was vehement in his convictions; but he did not espouse hatred. He was not a moralist or idealist; and certainly he did not view his political opponents or anyone with whom he disagreed as eternal enemies. However, as a Caribbean nationalist and anti-colonialist, he was most irate when legal luminaries here insisted that the Governor General could unilaterally call a Commission of Enquiry—thereby promoting the unelected over and above the elected. He said, "They fooling the people." For this opinion, and after having unearthed and published evidence of Medical Benefits' mismanagement for nine (9) long months and having stated that the costly enquiry was not in the best interest of the country, he was accused of being a turncoat, to which he replied, "I don't mind being an opposition of one." This was Leonard Tim Hector to the core—he uncompromisingly stuck to fundamental principles, which he believed.

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46
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He had an obsession about publishing the truth in the *Outlet* newspaper; he was most indignant whenever he was accused of wittingly doing otherwise. One day I asked him about the wisdom and timing of publishing an article that apparently feathered the ALP government, considering all that was being misperceived about him. He stared at me and quoted Lenin, "You must always speak the truth, regardless of whose interest it serves, even when it appears to be serving the interest of your enemy."

Tim described himself as an independent socialist. Why 'independent'? He abhorred the former Soviet Union's adulteration of socialist principles, which he referred to as state capitalism. In that light, his vision was for a distinctive Caribbean Socialism, of which his short term optimism was to make Antigua and Barbuda a beacon model. After sacrificing ALCM as an electoral entity in 1992 to join other opposition forces to form the UPP, and the results of the 1999 General Elections, Tim had no illusions. He had confirmed to himself the inapplicability of the Westminster model of government, the electoral process, and the futility of adversarial politics in these small island states. True to form, having failed to defeat the ALP government in 1994 and 1999 at the polls, he resigned as deputy leader of the UPP, and in 2000, when the UPP leader unjustly removed him from the Senate, Tim threw in his political towel. I asked then, as I had done many times in previous years, if he had any regrets succumbing ACLM to the UPP. He was most unrepentant. He said, "I did what appeared necessary at the time to move the Bird govern-

ment.” But concurrently, he was emphatic, “The seven (7) years I spent in the UPP was the worst period of my life, I achieved nothing and it was a period of intellectual stagnation.”

Most dearest to his heart and our pet subject was Education and especially the application of modern technology and teaching aids in the classroom. He confided in me a deep sense of regret and agony that partisan politics did not permit him to collaborate even with an ALP government to rescue and modernize the education system, an area where he was best suited, for the children’s sake. Antigua and Barbuda is the poorer for it. He said that he would remain on the periphery as a sports administrator, where he could positively advance the cause of young people, without being perceived as being too close to the ALP government. He was indeed between a rock and a hard place. He also said that he decided at the end of his active political career to dedicate the rest of his life to advancing the Caribbean, both regionally and internationally, regardless of who had political power. As such, he did not refuse when the Prime Minister asked him to be an advisor on regional affairs.

This was the heart of the beloved man we respectfully called Sir Leonard. The heart, which surgeons in Cuba had two opportunities to see and feel. Tim’s heart must have been a sight to behold and a joy to touch.... Many persons would like to remember Tim as a politician, educator, writer, thinker, journalist, sports commentator, analyst, black power activist or historian. But in my view, these were just the vehicles for what he truly was. **I would like to remember him as the liberator who has not yet succeeded.** He came unto his people but they recognized him not, but in time to come....

And so in closing, let me give this good man, who dwelled amongst us; leaving a difficult road—but a mapped and instructive path for us to travel, and whose spirit will remain forever in our hearts, the final say:

“It is the community and our grounding in our community which will replace unstable tenderness, the lack of real kindness, the timidity of our joy, the hollowness of our memories, with the real thing. And so create those sentiments that bind man to man, and make our leaders feel automatically accountable to the community—and if so to the nation.” (1987)

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L. TIM HECTOR: CARIBBEAN VISIONARY AND LEADER PAR EXCELLENCE

Corthwright Marshall

Leonard Tim Hector, born 24 the November 1942, died on 12th November 2002, at the age of 59. Tim, as members of the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM) affectionately called him, was by far the most significant intellectual and political personality of the English speaking Commonwealth Caribbean. Like his political mentor, and close friend CLR James, Leonard Tim Hector, through his political and intellectual work, has left the people of Antigua & Barbuda in particular, and the region as a whole, an enormous body of ideas of where we are, and where we must go, if we are to survive as a people, a nation, and as a region, in the global economy.

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48
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This work is not intended to be a biography of L.T. Hector. I do not think I am capable or qualified to undertake such a task. Nor do I intend to write an account of his political struggles. I do not know it all. Leonard Tim Hector has left such a rich legacy of his life, and struggle, that it will take the collective effort of all his friends, here and abroad, to attempt such a work. I am hopeful that it will be done, and soon rather than later.

I first met L.T. Hector in 1978 when I joined the ACLM. Even then, given his rich political history, it was as if Tim had been struggling against political nepotism and corruption for over fifty years. But that was not possible, for he was still a very young man. He was then, only thirty-six years old. I could not be otherwise but be impressed with his intellect, and the sharpness of his mind. His political intellect and his analysis of national, regional and world events were incisive. Like most, if not all members of the Movement then, I came away from those meetings with a remarkable understanding of the issues of the day. This knowledge and understanding of world events would help to shape my view of the world. And until 1981, when I left for University, on an ACLM scholarship, to study economics, I never missed an ACLM membership meeting. And although ACLM students in Cuba would read the *Outlet* newspaper, we always looked forward to Tim's visit to get a first hand account of national events. Almost twenty years later, having completed my studies in Cuba, and returned to Antigua to continue the struggle and work closely with Tim as Political Coordinator, campaign manager of ACLM 1989 election, and later General Secretary of the ACLM, up until 1992, when the party joined the then United National Democratic Party and the Pro-

gressive Labour Movement to form the United Progressive Party (UPP), I would not feel good if I missed Tim's *Fan the Flame*. As a post-graduate law student in Trinidad, at the beginning of 2000, I would rush home either between or after class to see if the latest *Fan the Flame* was posted on the Internet. Even if I had an exam that day, or the next day, I had to read Tim's article before doing anything else. They were instructive and brilliant. His pen was indeed his greatest weapon, although he was by far the greatest orator in the country, and perhaps the finest in the region, save and except for Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Early after my return from study in Cuba, I came to see Tim, not only as a historian, politician and cricket commentator, but the region's finest social scientist. He was a truly multifaceted person, who could discuss any topic, be it history, economics, politics, cricket, farming, tennis or psychology. He was indeed the country's and the region's foremost philosopher, social scientist and intellectual. And my conviction of this increased when I worked with him as his campaign manager in the 1994 and 1999 election in the Rural South Constituency, and in our collaboration in producing the party's manifestos for those elections. Tim was indeed an intellectual giant of the 20th century.

For example, during one of our many discussions when we worked on the 1994 UPP Manifesto, Tim and I were concerned about the disadvantageous position that the country and the region were in as a result of the removal of preferential treatment to the region, and the increasing movement of capital away from the region to Eastern Europe. A way out had to be found. And then Tim came up with the brilliant idea of the establishment of an Economic Intelligence Unit and a Small Business Administration. These two institutions would help to create and harness the entrepreneurial skill and talent of the people of the country, as well as provide necessary information on market and product quality. Only by so doing, the country and indeed the region can start the process of re-positioning itself in the global economy. These two ideas became central to the party's economic policy position. It would take at least a further eight years, for the OECS, not Antigua, for up to now, the leadership of the country has not come to grips with these concepts, to advocate for the establishment of an OECS Economic Intelligence Unit.

Tim also devoted much political and intellectual energy to the debate for political and economic independence, even at a time when neither of the two established parties in the country showed interest in the subject matter. In two decisive works, "**From the Old Wreckage to a New Society**"

and “**Independence yes, the old mess no**” Tim marshaled his intellectual power to pen two of the finest documents ever produced on the political history of the country. Tim was quite clear that independence was the only means to clean up the mess left by three centuries of colonialism and imperialism. Neither of the two other parties wanted political independence much more to create economic independence for Antigua and Barbuda. Antigua would eventually obtain its political independence in 1981.

Tim was therefore, accustomed to articulate positions, which were not politically fashionable in Antigua and Barbuda, or indeed in the region. He was intellectually years ahead of his political contemporaries. He had an understanding of the region that was not common and very rare in the political personalities of his generation. His vision for the country and the Caribbean Region was pellucid. When in 1980, Tim as leader of the ACLM, accepted the offer to send Antiguan students to Cuba to study, he was criticised and vilified. But he was not daunted. He knew then, unlike others, that the most important resource of the country in the latter part of the 20th century, and beginning of the 21st century, would not be the sun, sea and sand, but the people. Therefore, training the people, in the use and understanding of modern technology, management techniques, and in science, would become central to the country and the region’s development strategy. He accepted and sent students, not only from Antigua, but also St. Kitts and Trinidad to study at Universities in Cuba. Today, twenty years later, both ruling and opposition parties, have students studying there, even though up to this day, the government has failed to employ some of the first Antiguan graduates from that Caribbean country.

Although Tim was nationally regarded as the leader of the ACLM, the party had always practiced the philosophy of collective, as opposed to joint leadership. Tim was clear that the quality of the party was reflected through the people in and around it. He was clear in his mind that all members of the organization must become leaders in their own right. Members were therefore assigned topics to research, and present to the executive and general membership. Members were given the opportunity to chair executive and general membership meetings, even though Tim was present. And too, responsibility had nothing to do with friendship. Members’ abilities were recognized and responsibilities duly assigned, without any fuss or quarrel. ACLM was truly democratic in nature and outlook. It could not be otherwise, for Tim thoroughly revolutionary, was immensely democratic. For L. Tim Hector, the struggle was about creating a government of the people, by the people and for the people. In so doing the oppression of some by the other will come to an end.

When in Trinidad I heard about the Opposition Leader's 'appoint and disappoint' speech. I was concerned, though not worried. After years of internal study and discussion, developing and clarifying ideas among ourselves, nine out of ten times, an ACLM member in China if asked a question would respond almost the same way as one in Alaska to whom the same question is put. And without reading the *Outlet* or speaking to Tim I understood his position. Tim for all his life has been first and foremost an internationalist. He was concerned with the suffering of the people in any part of the globe. He would condemn the Soviet Union's State Capitalism, and was equally critical of the Grenada Government's closure of the *Torch Light* newspaper during the revolution. He would criticize V.C. Bird's totalitarian and corrupt practices, and still recognize his contribution in a particular field or period of time. He was fair-minded, at all times, to both friends and foe. He held malice towards none, nor was he envious of their position in life. Indeed, he went to great lengths to position Baldwin Spencer as a leader, even when others would not even think of doing so.

Throughout his political career Tim was certain of two things, and these would become even clearer in the last few years of his life, especially in light of the increasing globalisation of the world. First of all, Tim was clear that for the country to make any headway within the global economy, both government and opposition leaders must move away from what now seems to be perpetual electioneering and use their influence to mobilize and integrate all the people in the task of nation building. It is true that the government is elected to govern, and they are indeed expected to take initiative in the best interest of the country, in doing so. Equally true, is the fact that it is the duty of the opposition to oppose the government, although constructively, and in so doing formulate alternative policies for the better management of the economy and the enhancement of good governance. But, the responsibilities of both parties must be carried out in an atmosphere of dialogue and consultation. The watchword must be the country's interest, and not the competing interest of political parties or blind personal ambitions of political leaders. Government and opposition must realize that they have a greater responsibility to the nation, and that such responsibility exceeds that owed to their members.

Early in his political career Tim called for the creation of a National Planning Council. The National Planning Council, in a tri-partite partnership between government, opposition and civil society will debate, formulate and draft a long-term plan for economic and social development

of the country. Meaningful and sustainable development is only possible when all stakeholders become truly involved in decision-making. It is self-evident, that if a government employs only its supporters, then half of the country's most important resources will be wasted, as it is not utilized in nation building. It is therefore critical for the country's development, for the government to act responsibly in providing meaningful employment for all, irrespective of the political colour or affiliation. The right to meaningful employment was central to Tim's political philosophy. Equally, it is the civic duty of each and every individual to perform at his or her best, whether or not he or she supports the government of the day.

Secondly, it became increasingly clear to Tim that the nation-state in the context of the global economy is not a viable entity. No matter how good the intention or policies of the government or opposition, intellectuals or academics, the nation-state is now not a viable entity in today's global economy. The only way out is to unite the Caribbean, and thereby create a United State of the Caribbean.

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52
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Having examined these two situations, Tim came to the decision that he could make a greater contribution, if he concentrated his efforts on the struggle to create a United State of the Caribbean. He therefore had no difficulty in speaking as a member of the Antigua and Barbuda delegation, on the regional education strategy for Caribbean development, once the Antiguan government had no objection. The Caribbean Government since 2000 had already approved of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation in Economic Development (CGCED) Draft report "A Caribbean Education Strategy". The report called for reform of education and training systems as pivotal in preparing Caribbean people to address the new market demands and to capitalize on emerging opportunities. It was not a report on Education in Antigua. And he was not putting forward a position of the Antiguan government. The meeting was to see how best the U.K. could help in financing the project. The Caribbean delegation was there to sell a Caribbean initiative, and Tim happened to be there, having gone to Tripoli with some of the region's leaders, who had to stay in the UK for the conference. He was not part of any Antiguan delegation, or left Antigua as part of an Antiguan delegation. And although Tim later functioned as adviser to the Prime Minister, after he was 'disappointed' by the Leader of the Opposition, his duties were only in relation to Caricom affairs.

As adviser to the Prime Minister on Caricom affairs, Tim would first represent the country at a UWI conference on West Indies cricket. He was respected as an outstanding cricket administrator, and had participated

in numerous conferences on the development of West Indies cricket. His second assignment was in St. Lucia, where OECS leaders were discussing the way forward for the regional economies. Tim had earlier proposed the development of a Caricom Stabilization and Economic Transformation Programme (CSETP), as an alternative to the IMF/World Bank financial package under its Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP's). The CSETP was on the agenda for discussion, and it was felt that Tim's presence would be decisive for the approval and establishment of such a programme. He therefore attended the St. Lucia meeting to discuss the CSETP which for the first time in the history of the region provided a regional fund to assist Caribbean countries in meeting revenue shortfall, and an opportunity to structurally adjust regional economies without going through the harsh IMF measures. A Caribbean Institution for Caribbean development was established, first called for by L. Tim Hector, and spearheaded into reality by Prime Minister Owen Arthur of Barbados.

Tim's vision for the development of Antigua and indeed the wider Caribbean was not shared by all. And at times, decades passed before the leaders of the country and the region, and the people would come to terms with them. But Tim, the great revolutionary, as he was, was never daunted. Someone must be prepared to provide light in a period of darkness. Tim was indeed the bearer of such a light and Fanned the Flame for Caribbean Liberation in the country and the region. I only hope that it will not take another twenty years, before government and opposition realize that development in today's global environment is possible only through dialogue between government, opposition and civil society.

In concluding, Leonard Tim Hector, will forever remain a central figure among 20th Century Caribbean radical intellectual, and political theorists. The Caribbean and international community recognized his political worth long before 1992. His awards were numerous, and although he never won political office, his historical significance will remain a beacon of hope for oppressed people the world over. He was indeed one of the nation's finest sons. L. Tim Hector will forever remain a good friend, comrade, brother, father, and mentor. His legacy, like that of his friends, Rosie Douglas, Walter Rodney and C.L.R. James will forever guide the people of the region in their quest for self-determination, political and economic independence, and sustainable livelihood in a global world.

Outlet, December 6, 2002

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54
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ESSAYS ON TIM HECTOR FROM 2013 CONFERENCE

"TIM HECTOR: FANNING THE FLAMES TO TRANSFORM THE CARIBBEAN"

FEATURE ADDRESS BY DAVID ABDULAH

GENERAL SECRETARY, OILFIELDS WORKERS' TRADE UNION
AND POLITICAL LEADER, MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Chair, distinguished representatives of the University of the West Indies Open Campus, the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association and the Leonard Tim Hector Memorial Committee, sisters and brothers all, good evening,

I would first like to very sincerely thank the Organisers of this very important Conference for the signal honour which they have given me by inviting me to deliver the "keynote address" at this the Opening Ceremony of the Conference – "Tim Hector, Caribbean Politics and Economic Development". I am sure that there are people more deserving and better able to deliver this address than I am, so I am faced with an extremely daunting responsibility. I truly hope – for Tim's sake that – that I can do some measure of justice to the task to which I have been assigned.

Secondly, I would like to express in my capacity as the General Secretary of the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU), our congratulations to Paget, Lukie, George and Ian for organizing this activity. The OWTU and Tim had a relationship of being comrades in the struggle for more than three decades and he never failed to agree to participate in activities which we organized. We are indeed indebted to him for the contributions that he made to our work and therefore the least that we could do is to agree to have the Union associated with this Conference as a co-host. We would have liked to do more!

In offering our congratulations I also must make the point that activities such as this are vitally important in this region, which has so little sense of our history and of those who contributed to our development. Our education system is designed to keep us uneducated about our past, especially that past which is about the struggle to transform our reality from persistent poverty and injustice. Thus, if we were to ask the average West Indian 25 year old if they know anything about Maurice Bishop or Jackie Creft or Walter Rodney, we would get a blank stare. But for my generation these were central figures on the regional landscape. It's

almost impossible to conceive that ten years have elapsed since Tim's sudden and untimely passing. I suppose that this loss of measurement of time is a sign of advancing years, but it does mean that in another ten years, what for my generation is a blink of an eye, the average West Indian youth aged 25 will be blank when asked if they know of Tim Hector.

Activities like this one, and I will keep on referring to it in its political sense as an activity and not merely a conference or an event, are thus vital to keep alive the ideas and to inform and educate others of the work and contributions of Tim and others like him. And, in the process, stimulate new waves of activism. For this then, we in the OWTU congratulate the principal organizers! I will return to this political task of organizing activities, but suffice it to say that I have had the distinct pleasure of collaborating with Paget on similar projects. I refer to the OWTU joining with Paget's university – Brown and the UWI (Centre for Caribbean Thought, Mona and the Department of History and/or the Faculty of Social Sciences, St. Augustine) to organize two important activities – CLR James at 100, the Conference to mark the centennial of his birth and the Conference on George Padmore, also to commemorate the centennial of his birth.

Chair, if you would permit me, I would like to start off by a somewhat personal reminiscence. It is actually not new, but was my tribute to Tim as written for my column in the Sunday Newsday. For some 12 years or so, between 1998 and 2010, I wrote a column in the Sunday Newsday. It was entitled, not as provocatively as Tim's "Fan the Flame", "David Vs. Goliath". This is what I said in my column of November, 17th 2002:

"The Caribbean lost a giant of a man and I lost a good friend and comrade. Leonard (Tim, as everyone knew him, was short for Timishenko the nickname his grandfather gave him) Hector passed away early on Tuesday morning and when I first got the news I wished that it was but a rumour. Sadly, that was not the case.

I last spoke with Tim on Saturday September 21st. I called to inform him that another friend and comrade Lyle Townsend had suffered a serious heart attack the day before and underwent major surgery which began the night before and ended in the early hours of Saturday morning.

I first had to apologise to Tim for having taken so long to communicate with him after his own heart surgery some six months earlier, and expressed my concern that I had also heard that he was not well. He casually

dismissed my concerns and related the problems that the medication he was taking was giving him. In fact, he said he was traveling to Cuba that very week-end to have this problem checked out and he felt confident that it was a relatively minor difficulty which would be easily sorted out.

Tim quickly moved past my apologies and concerns and asked about the elections, General Elections in Trinidad and Tobago being due in a matter of weeks. He reminded me that I was “spot on” in my analysis of the December 10th, 2001 elections and so wanted my predictions about October 7th.

In December 2001 we were together in Havana attending the Sao Paulo Forum. There was quite an English speaking Caribbean delegation there – Bobby Clarke and David Denny of Barbados, Terry Marryshow of Grenada, Ian Munro of Dominica, Dr. Beri Persad of Guyana, Renwick Rose of St. Vincent, Antonnette Haughton – a friend from my days as a child in rural Jamaica and, of course, Tim and Jennifer, his wife. We discussed many things – informally while listening to some great jazz music at a club whose manager had a close relative – a brother I think it was – who lived in St. Kitts and whom Tim knew well, or in a formal meeting where we discussed the need to bring progressive people in the Caribbean together. This was his pet project – the building of a network of progressive Caribbean people. He had proposed a name for it at earlier meetings. It was – One Caribbean – in memory of Maurice Bishop.

We also discussed the politics in Trinidad and Tobago. I was telling all that the elections would be exceptionally close with the odds on 18-18. Tim found this hard to believe and so when we spoke on September 21st, he laughed and said “you had it right, you were spot on”. It was not a matter of who read the elections correctly and who did not, it was simply two comrades finishing a discussion begun nine months before in another place.

So I told him that October 7th would also be close but that I expected the PNM to win 19-17 or perhaps 20-16, but that the margins would be small in terms of votes so that it was very difficult to predict accurately. We inevitably talked of the One Caribbean project and the fact that some of the things that that we had agreed upon in Havana – including my circulating a letter of invitation to people in the region (another mea culpa) – did not happen. It was not a very long conversation – it lasted all of ten minutes – but we also enquired of our respective families and promised that we would continue it when he returned from Cuba.

We last saw each other in Cuba in December and last spoke when he was on his way back there. Perhaps that was appropriate because he had an enormous amount of respect for what Cuba has achieved and for what Cuba has done in terms of solidarity with those in struggle elsewhere – especially their offers of medical personnel and scholarships to other countries and, of course, the military support for the people of Southern Africa in the battle against apartheid and colonialism.

Our friendship spanned just 20 years, but it was a valued and sustained collaboration over those 20 years. I don't recall our very first meeting – but I do vividly remember November 20-22, 1982 – almost 20 years to this day! – in Grenada at the first “Conference of Caribbean Intellectual Workers”. We were both part of the group that George Lamming had assembled – Intellectuals for the Sovereignty of the Caribbean.. Tim Hector possessed one of the best minds that I know. He saw things with great clarity. He was not just a journalist, but a brilliant writer who understood the power of the pen and the need to educate people on all matters, not just the political, so that they could organize themselves politically. He spoke eloquently and passionately about the region and its people. Indeed he was undoubtedly one of the finest orators in the Caribbean. His talk on “CLR James: radical politics and the contemporary world” at the CLR James Centennial Conference held here in Trinidad in September 2001, was an absolute masterpiece of clarity, analysis and vision.

Tim was also a fantastic conversationalist. A group could sit for hours with Tim talking about everything, though inevitably the subject turned to cricket and to West Indies cricket. He would often regale me with anecdotes about this cricketer or that. Tim loved to talk, but he was not a talker. He walked the talk. He was an intellectual and a writer, but not an arm-chair theoretician. After all he went to jail – on more than one occasion for his convictions. He opposed his country's government for its corruption and exposed it, but he attacked with even greater strength all the petty Caribbean politicians who focused on their little kingdoms and who presided over failure after failure.

Tim was an avid reader and absolutely loved to read the Trinidad and Tobago newspapers. In fact he had a love affair with the Trinidad media. He told me that as a young boy in the 1950's he used to listen on the radio to the Legislative Council debates and be in awe of Williams, Lionel Seukeran and Winston Mahabir. He also used to get copies of the T&T newspapers, and could probably tell you more about what was being written in the Trinidad press than the average Trini. And so whenever I went to

Antigua I would be sure to buy every single newspaper for him. Indeed, at a Special Tribute to Tim organized some years ago by his friends and close associates and at which I had the very special honour to be an invited speaker, I ended my tribute with the only gift I thought he would appreciate – a package of that day's T&T papers.

Tim was a man of great courage. He made huge sacrifices. He could easily have been an outstanding academic, comfortably ensconced in some Ivy League University. Instead he chose to tough it out in a small island where, once you have strong beliefs, you're not only bound to make enemies but sure to be unable to hide from them. So he was persecuted and harassed, jailed and oft times misunderstood. Sure he had his weaknesses and I have no doubt that he made errors – political and personal. But then is there any without sin who dares to cast the first stone? Perhaps in death, Antiguan will better appreciate what they had in Tim Hector.

Throughout his trials and tribulations he stood stoic and firm. I vividly recall several crucial events. His first wife Arah was brutally murdered in May 1989 by a person whom Tim had tried to help by giving him a job. It must have been extremely traumatic for Tim. Yet within hours of burying Arah he came to Trinidad for the funeral of his mentor – CLR James. It was a horrific double blow, yet Tim was able not only to be here for Nello's funeral, but to read at the Funeral a tribute to him done by Viv Richards. I recall too, my wife and I taking him, shortly after that, to a play at the Central Bank. I don't remember its name but I had not done the research about the theme. It was a very heavy play that dealt with, of all things – death. I was terribly concerned because Tim was visibly disturbed by the images it must have generated. I quietly asked if he wanted to leave and he said no. Afterwards, when I apologized for an inappropriate choice, he responded by saying that perhaps that was what he needed to confront the death of Arah. He was almost grateful.

And then there was the arson at the "Outlet" a few years ago. I was in Antigua shortly after that incident and we spoke of the trials through which he was going. He was as philosophical as ever. But the tone in his voice betrayed the brave face. I know that he was deeply wounded by the burning of the "Outlet" (as he was by the assassination of Maurice and comrades in Grenada and the destruction of that revolution, and the sudden death of his old friend Rosie Douglas last year). Yet he summoned all his energies and the paper was not silenced. In a very real sense, just as the "Outlet" could not be stilled, Tim's voice will never ever be silenced, for his is a voice of conscience.

I believe that the last few years of his life were good for him - in spite of all the pain and grief - mainly because of his family. His sons and step-daughters and, of course Jennifer. He seemed very boyish when Jennifer was around. I remember their being in Trinidad for Carifesta and he was obviously very happy. His sons made him proud, though he would confess that they surprised him by what they were achieving. And Jennifer's daughters were very much his own. To his family I offer my solidarity.

We all feel a very deep sense of loss, for he had so much still to contribute. There is only one thing for us to do and that is to bring about the "One Caribbean" that he so correctly believed would be one of the keys to humanising this space that we all call home. Tim Hector – it was a privilege and honour to have known you and to have shared your friendship!"¹

To illustrate just how valued and sustained our collaboration was (and this was not simply personal, but organizational though the two are never completely indistinguishable) there was hardly a year that we did not engage in a joint effort in the enterprise of building consciousness and thus creating a movement to transform the Caribbean. I had actually forgotten some of the details and so did a partial check and this is what I found:

- November 1982 – the aforementioned Conference of Intellectuals for the Sovereignty of the Caribbean in Grenada
- December 1983 – the Memorial Service for Maurice and the Martyrs and related meetings organized by the OWTU
- 1984 – March the Third International Bookfair of Radical Black and Third World Books and Bookfair Festival in London; the Second Conference of Intellectuals for the Sovereignty of the Caribbean held at Mt. St. Benedict in Trinidad; a Forum on Africa, Europe and the Caribbean hosted by the OWTU
- Meetings of the Standing Committee of Opposition Parties of the Eastern Caribbean (SCOPE) in the mid-eighties
- June 1989 - The Celebration of the Life of CLR James
- October 1990 – Tim delivers the Feature Address at the Installation of Executive Officers of the OWTU

- November 1994 – Tim is a participant and speaker at the 4 day training seminar organized by the OWTU for senior trade union officers.
- July 1992 – Tim delivers the Feature Address at the OWTU's Annual Conference of Delegates
- June 1995 – Tim delivers the Feature Address at the Labour Day (June 19th) Rally
- June 1999 – Tim delivers the first CLR James Memorial Lecture, which lecture series is organized by the OWTU

This list is partial since it does not include our meeting at other events in Cuba – the Sao Paulo Forum; and several meetings of political activists in the mid to late 1990's at Bobby Clarke's home in Barbados, or when I visited Antigua to mobilize for the Assembly of Caribbean People or to interact with/address the Antigua Workers' Union (AWU) as it was then known. But the solidarity between the OWTU and Tim predate my own. Let me share some examples.

I am sure that Tim's understanding of Trinidad and Tobago, of the labour movement and of radical politics would have contributed to the founders of the AWU seeking the support of George Weekes and the Rebel leadership of the OWTU as they started along the daunting journey of establishing and building a trade union that would challenge and rival the old Antigua and Barbuda Trades and Labour Union. Indeed, as the historians will no doubt chronicle, the AWU and its leadership learnt a lot about unionism at the Paramount Building, the headquarters of the OWTU.

In 1977/78, when Tim informed the OWTU of what was happening with Space Research in Antigua and the attack by the Bird government on dockworkers, ACLM members and others who opposed SRC's operations in Antigua and its shipping of arms via Antigua to the apartheid regimes in southern Africa, George Weekes responded immediately. The OWTU, through its members on the waterfront at Texaco's Pointe a Pierre refinery imposed an oil embargo on Antigua. This was an extension of the embargo of any oil products that the OWTU effected against South Africa in conformity with an international campaign by oil and dockworkers in solidarity with the liberation movements. Some 17 oilworkers were suspended by multinational Texaco (which had active economic ties with the apartheid regime) for their action against Antigua, but their sacrifice was not in vain as SRC eventually had to leave Antigua and Barbados as well.

In 1984 the OWTU sent a cable to Prime Minister Bird in solidarity with Tim when he was jailed for publishing statements “likely to undermine confidence in the conduct of public affairs”. But we went further. As Tim himself said in 1990 on the occasion of giving the Feature Address at the Installation of Executive Officers of the OWTU:

“This is the first time I have met Senator Allan Alexander since he freed me from prison... Comrade Alexander came to Antigua with the assistance of the OWTU and defended me in a constitutional motion in the High Court and was successful. The case went to the Appeal Court, the government appealing and the Appeal Court re-established the sentence. It finally ended up at the Privy Council. But it is worthy of note that the Privy Council in giving judgment in my favour, referred in its judgment to statements made by Allan Alexander as establishing the fundamental principles by which the Press ought to be regulated in these parts of the world. I certainly wish to thank him and to thank the OWTU for the tremendous assistance given in the struggle, not only for press freedom in Antigua, because three other governments had planned similar legislation and were it not for the OWTU and Allan Alexander these countries would have been similarly afflicted as Antigua was. A blow was struck for freedom.”²

This was Tim. He focused not primarily on his getting out of jail, but on the need to strike a blow for press freedom and not just in Antigua but throughout the Caribbean.

He was simply one of our best sons. But don’t take it on my say so. One of most celebrated Caribbean writers and progressive thinkers, George Lamming, in a talk given at UWI, Mona in 2003 at a Conference celebrating his work said this *“the second loss that I have experienced ... was the passing of Tim Hector who combined a magnificent and philosophical intelligence with the investigative skills of a journalist.”*³ And a long standing comrade and friend of Tim’s, Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, in one of the tributes at Tim’s funeral said *“Tim Hector was the best Prime Minister that Antigua never had”*. And this in the presence of his Caricom colleague Prime Minister, Lester Bird!

Why then was Tim Hector special and so important? Firstly, because he was an intellectual giant – a man who possessed “a magnificent and philosophical intelligence”. As all of us who knew him were well aware, Tim read voraciously. It was instilled in him from very early in life as he himself said *“In our house, money was always the scarcest commodity. Manufactured toys were few. For presents I got books... From early, a love*

of reading became a natural part of my life."⁴ The breadth of Tim's knowledge often had many of us in awe. This was most evident in his Lecture on "CLR James, Radical Politics and the Contemporary World" delivered at the James at 100 Conference. To address the issue of the contemporary world – and this activity was being held just days after 9/11 – Hector started us off in antiquity with references to the Roman and Greek civilizations and quotations by notable persons from those eras that were relevant to George W. Bush! It was quite amazing! Of course he examined the civilizations of Africa and Europe as well as the formation of the Caribbean. It was a tour de force and needs to be published.

Many of those who possess a great mind are however not good at expressing their views. Tim was not one of those. He had a tremendous clarity of thought. In his lectures and in panel presentations he took one through the steps of discovery so that at the end all one could say was – True! The sheer logic of his ideas and the facts and information mustered and presented cogently and compellingly were born not only out of his breadth of knowledge but the clarity of his thinking.

His knowledge, his clarity of thinking and his ability to communicate – orally and in writing – mark the outstanding intellectual that was Tim Hector. We all know that the general experience of the ordinary men and women in the Caribbean with our intellectuals is not a good one. For one thing our intellectuals do not think that ordinary people who do not possess tertiary – or even secondary – education can understand 'intellectual fare'. Of course this is nonsense but I will come back to why in a moment. And so our intellectuals also don't think it necessary to or just cannot write and speak in a style that the ordinary citizens can grasp. They use language that seeks to almost deliberately obfuscate the reality or deny their fellow citizens the knowledge that they have obtained. Throughout the region the stories are legion about this gap between the intellectual who uses "big words" and the working man and woman.

Tim was able to bridge that gap. When he wrote about literature he related it to the life experiences of working people in Antigua. When he gave a historical narrative he connected the dots with his audience's reality. In the talk that he gave at the OWTU as a panelist at the Forum "Africa, Europe and the Caribbean" in 1984, he took us through the historical experience from slavery to post independence. As he described one phase of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle this is what Tim said:

*"And you have to understand one of the great contributors of the anti-imperialist struggle. A fellow wrote a calypso in Trinidad and he said, look you see this American capital, it leads to the degradation of Jean and Dinah. While he brings his wealth and money it degrades Jean and Dinah and when the Yankees gone, degradation will continue. Even Sparrow says he will take over now and wants all the degradation to continue. And a lot of people didn't understand what Sparrow said. I don't think I understood it until I came back. When I was in Lever Brothers Camp, I understood it. So not because they go, you will necessarily make a leap. Putting them out is good but you could put them out but still continue with the same degradation that they used to go on with. You don't have to pay so much because you don't have so much."*⁵

Everyone in the audience could understand what the post colonial reality was from that single paragraph and Tim's use, not of a long so-called intellectual discourse but of reference to Sparrow's Jean and Dinah. This was because Tim was a radical and revolutionary political activist who understood what for him being an intellectual meant. It is a theme that Lamming returns to time and time again. With reference to Walter Rodney Lamming wrote:

*"Rodney wanted to participate in overthrowing the hegemonies of the Plantation and its Western institutions; to work towards the emergence of an alternative consciousness. He did not share the view of many of his colleagues that scholarship should seek to achieve a posture of neutrality. He believed that history was a way of ordering knowledge which could become an active part of the consciousness of an untutored mass of ordinary people. He did not only argue with those who had taken permanent refuge in the enclave of research and doctoral pursuit. He walked and talked with those African and Indian peasants and workers who had become the raison d'être of his intellectual activities. He had initiated in his personal and professional life a decisive break with the tradition he had been trained to serve."*⁶

As for Rodney so too for Hector. This ought not to surprise us since they both had a common mentor – CLR James. Hector was a member of the James study group in Canada that included Rosie Douglas, Robert Hill, Bukha Rennie and Franklyn Harvey; while Rodney was in the London study group along with such notables as Norman Girvan, Richard Small and Orlando Patterson. In Lamming's tribute to CLR delivered at James' funeral - *The Celebration of a Life* – he said about James *"To think was to engage in an act of pure and complete participation"*.

Tim, writing of Stokeley Carmichael (Tim said he always called him Stokeley and not Kwame Ture), said “*Praxis, the great modern philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, elevated into a philosophical concept. It means the unity of theory and practice. Of praxis, Stokeley was a living embodiment*”⁷. Tim then described how as a student Stokeley got deeply involved in the struggle against racism and for civil and human rights in the US as the manifestation of the practice of social change.

In similar vein, Tim returned after his University education to Antigua and immediately became involved in political activism, writing and organizing. I will not presume to talk of these activities to an audience that was intimately involved in one way or another; on one side or another in those activities. Suffice it to say that Hector, whatever his faults, was himself the embodiment of “praxis” here in Antigua and, as we shall come to see, throughout the Caribbean.

As I wrote in my tribute, Tim could have taken the easy road. He could have done post graduate studies for which his intellect more than qualified him to excel in. Thus equipped, he could have had a stellar academic career at any top rate university, lived a life of relative material comfort, raised his family and from time to time contribute to his native land. Or he could have returned to Antigua or somewhere else in the Caribbean and taught at secondary or even tertiary level, not earning as much as if he had become a university professor in North America or Europe, but still doing decently enough, together with having the respect – and some privilege – that such persons enjoy in our small societies.

Instead, Hector engaged in the practice of what he believed in – the struggle for the transformation of Caribbean society. And to this end, he fanned the flame! The newspaper was the obvious means for so doing. In this he was in the tradition of Lenin and James. Both these revolutionaries were firm believers in a newspaper as an organizer of political action and of the related task of raising consciousness. James of course had famously edited *The Nation*, the newspaper of the Peoples National Movement, led by Dr. Eric Williams, but he had written for many other papers and journals including *The Beacon* in Trinidad in the early 1930’s, and for a number of radical and revolutionary organizations in England and the US. Of all of James’ students, when it came to the praxis of communicating ideas to build a movement through a newspaper, Tim was far and away the most outstanding.

Significantly, Tim understood what a progressive newspaper had to be – it had to reflect, inform, analyse and thus educate its readers in every sphere of their existence. The Outlet did precisely that. It was not the ideological mouthpiece of the ACLM in the way that left parties produced their “organs”, yet it was a good reflection of the ideology of the ACLM which was to identify with and improve the lives of ordinary Antiguan and Barbudians. But, very importantly, Tim also knew that these ordinary men and women could understand ideas that our traditional intellectuals thought them incapable of comprehending. Indeed, Tim, knew that the ordinary people themselves not only comprehended but themselves had and expressed complex ideas as a result of their own experience – the theory and practice that is based on their daily activity of production.

Lamming wrote *“the word intellectual may be applied to all forms of labour which could not possibly be done without some exercise of the mind. In this sense, the fisherman and the farmer may be regarded as cultural and intellectual workers in their own right. Social practice has provided them with a considerable body of knowledge and a capacity to make discriminating judgments in their daily work. If we do not regard them as cultural and intellectual workers, it is largely, I think, because of the social stratification which is created by the division of labour, and the legacy of an education system which was designed to reinforce such a division in our modes of perceiving social reality”*⁸.

Hector, himself wrote of the stimulation and education which he received from two ordinary people. In his words - *“Ivan ‘Jones’ Edwards and George ‘Nugget’ Joseph who ‘fathered Hell’s Gate and the steelband. Their discussions on steelbands, music, Islam, and such other topics were simply remarkable. .. without a (world) view a man’s education has not begun. He can acquire mountains of information and words, even expertise, but he will always lack the means of understanding events around him and beyond. Our education system is totally deficient in consciously providing a worldview or leading people out to acquire one. From school to university the problem is the same. ... The crisis in education has everything to do with the fact that we have maintained and bolstered an outmoded colonial system of education which is a ball and chain on our feet, and a fetter to any kind of meaningful development, even to capitalist development.”*⁹ The Outlet set out to and did provide an alternative education for its readers and to give people a world view.

CLR James had once said that “what is philosophy today becomes reality tomorrow”. Ideas stimulate action. Tim understood this. As he had written about the seminal Black Writers Conference in Montreal which he was involved in organizing and of other similar activities, there is often resulting political action that is transformative. Certainly the 5th Pan African Conference held in Manchester, England in 1945 and organized directly by George Padmore with support from afar by CLR, was one such event. It was attended by notables such as Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta as well as West Indian labour leaders, the then President General of the OWTU included. That PAC set out the agenda for the decolonization struggle in much the same way as the early Conferences of West Indian labour leaders had done in the 20’s and 30’s. The Montreal Conference of Black Writers was a similar activity. That is why I said earlier that this activity is of such great importance and why the organizers should be commended. It is why Tim never said no to an invitation to speak and participate in conferences, seminars, education sessions organized by the OWTU and other progressive organizations here and elsewhere in the world.

But this was, especially in the case of the OWTU, also due to Tim’s belief that only the working people can bring about the fundamental transformation that is required. In this he was an adherent to the position articulated by James that “every cook can govern”. His addresses at the OWTU always centred on the role of the workers’ movement and of working people in the process of transformation.

In writing of Stokeley and of the struggle against racism and for “Black Power” - which Stokeley had defined as “*control of the institutions and of the communities where we live, and ...a stop to the exploitation of the non-white people around the world*” - Tim said “*to achieve that end, the social forces in the civil rights movement had to change, with students allied to working people. ...after all (this) can only be the work of people disciplined by capitalist production, and the co-operative association it breeds on the work-floor and in society*”.¹⁰

For Tim it was always about the transformative power of working people, especially in the context of the history of the Caribbean. As he stated so eloquently “*Let us be clear about this. So the struggles of the working people create that, bring that to the Caribbean. The British say that it looks like this thing going to explode, and the money that we making out of Caribbean could end. So let us satisfy them and so on and give them the vote. It is the struggles of the people that won these concessions, the right to*

*combine in Unions, the right to vote, the right to universal education, the right to publish newspapers etc. I hear people calling them bourgeois rights. They are wrong. The rights were won, secured and gained by the struggles and sacrifices of the working people*¹¹.

In this regard he would have agreed completely with Arthur Lewis who in 1939 wrote *"The labour movement is on the march. It has already behind it a history of achievement in a short space of time. It will make of the West Indies of the future a country where the common man may lead a cultured life in freedom and prosperity"*.¹² Tim reported that Walter and he, on Walter's insistence should produce a critique of Lewis. But Tim, grudgingly perhaps recognized some of Lewis' insights when the latter raised the question as to how could such distinguished nationalists as Manley (Norman), Adams (Grantley) and Williams allow the Federation to fail. Lamming suggests that the reason lay in the fact that *"they were casualties of an inherited tutelage which was colonial in essence and thereby placed an overwhelming constraint on the concept of liberation"*¹³.

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68
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To be more direct, the only way the Federation would have succeeded is if the movement for federation was led, as it was at the start, by the labour movement. It was in Tim's words *"The leaders and some of the members of the new Trade Unions met and they said we want a Federation. So you hear who started it, not the middle class intellectuals and professionals. They will take it over eventually, when it becomes popular. They will take charge then...the nationalist Parties that came to power after getting adult suffrage, after obtaining a fully elected legislature, after getting so many ministers, jettisoned the programme of the nationalist mass movement. Again the old economic relations of foreign power and workers' subordination remained. The nationalist movement has left the unholy mess which we have inherited as their legacy to this day"*¹⁴.

James was even more brutal in his assessment of the West Indian middle classes. Writing in *Party Politics* he said *"Our Middle Classes, unprepared, mis-educated people suddenly faced with the enormous messes that the imperialists are leaving behind...When, after 1937-38, the democratic movement started, it was a labour movement. Gradually, however, the British Government felt compelled to make the Civil Service West Indian, i.e. middle class...By degrees the middle class took over the political parties. The Colonial Office, carefully, what it called, educated them to govern... Let us stick to the class, the class from which most of our politicians come from, and from which they get most of their views on life and society... Otherwise we are left with the demoralizing result: 'That is the way West Indians are'*

and closely allied to this: 'The man or men who have brought us to this mess are bad men. Let us search for some good men'. As long as you remain at that level, you understand nothing and your apparently 'good' men turn rapidly into men who are no good...All this politicians' excitement about independence is not to be trusted. In recent years the middle classes have not been concerned about independence. They were quite satisfied with the lives they lived. If you watch the social connections of the politicians and the life they live you will see why their politics is what it is...I do not know any social class which lives so completely without ideas of any kind. They live entirely on the material plane... Read their speeches about the society in which they live. They have nothing to say. Not one of them. The cause is not in any individual and not in any inherent national weakness...The cause is in their half and half position between the economic masters of the country and the black masses...This middle class with political power minus any economic power are still politically paralysed before their former masters... The only way of changing the structure of the economy and setting it on to new paths is by mobilising the mass against all who stand in the way"⁵.

Having this understanding of our predicament, Tim was very clear about why we needed fundamental transformation, not change for change sake. Again, he makes the case far more cogently than I can.

"The whole idea of Parliamentary Democracy is based on a Party representing the wealth-owning class, the Tories, the Republicans, the Christian Democrats in Germany or Italy. And, on the other hand, a Party representing Labour such as the Labour Party of Britain, or the Social Democrats in Europe, or the Democrats in the USA. The compromises between these two parties, constituted politics...

In straight terms, the objective premises for bourgeois Parliamentary Democracy were non-existent in the English speaking Caribbean. In that there was no wealth-owning class in control of the economy to be represented by a party. There could only be a party of Labour. So in Barbados we had two labour parties, each dividing the working people in the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party; and in Antigua and Barbuda there is the Bird Labour Party and the Walter-Spencer Labour Party, each based on rival sections of the labour movement; in Jamaica there is the Manley Labour Party and the Bustamante Labour Party where the rivalry between both sections of the working people involved so much violence, that the violence has become independent of both parties and an end in itself. Jamaica is proof negative of where such policies inevitably ends, to which end, all parties in the region, similarly based are tending ineluctably.

In Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana, where the races constitute the working people, the Parties have based themselves each on one oppressed race. Racialism is the order of the day. That is to say, the cultivation of mutual suspicion and even animosity between the two oppressed and labouring races, the better to rule, manipulate and oppress them both. There no significant wealth-owning class made up of Africans and Indians has emerged. Therefore the self-interest of creating wealth does not serve as a glue to unite the races. The politics of racialism, exploiting the suspicion of one race against the other, predominates. Foreign capital rules, accumulates and exports capital. Or an elite mis-manages nationalised industries bringing them to rack and ruin.

In either case, be it the case of two labour parties based on rivalry between the working people, or two parties based on races set in rivalry, foreign capital and the external accumulation of wealth takes place, and therefore there is no capital accumulation for national development. In the result, we have landed in a post independence morass, as quick sand. Being convulsed in a political crime wave of corruption at the top, and a social crime wave at the bottom, it is all over the Caribbean, from the Bahamas in the North, to Guyana in the South.

Indeed, what passes for politics in the Caribbean is not development but the distribution of state patronage. Those who are in, get. Those who are out, get not. This has led to wasteful public projects and public enterprises and statutory bodies as instruments of state patronage. In the end, the State becomes bankrupt. It then has to endure IMF or "home-grown" structural adjustment. The Independence hopes, aspirations and dreams, were thus structurally adjusted into their opposite. That is cynicism, don't-give-a damnism and downright nightmare. Mysticism, fundamentalism and lottery-ism seizes hold of a population who see No Exit. That in plain terms is our current condition everywhere in the English-speaking Caribbean".¹⁶

It was this understanding of the reality of the Caribbean that drove Tim's thinking of and activism around the need for transformation. That is why he "Fanned the Flames". He was not fanning the flames for his own self aggrandisement, for people to say that Tim Hector was a bright man who knew everything and wrote it in his columns. No, he was "fanning the Flames" for the transformation of our Caribbean!

This notion of "our Caribbean" takes me to a key aspect of Tim's thinking. He never thought that transformation could truly happen in a single

island or territory, he was always a Pan-Caribbeanist, hence the name of his political movement – the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement; hence his passion about not just cricket, but the future of West Indies cricket. His politics always saw him involved with other Caribbean radicals in some joint endeavour or another. And he was firm in his belief that the transformation of the Caribbean could only take place if it was driven and led by the working people of the region. Just as slavery was ended by the emancipation movement from below, so too One Caribbean had to come from below. To understand why, let us once again hear him speak.

“What I want to suggest is that there can come into existence a different kind of and approach to Caribbean unity. Not one of these island economies are any longer viable in a world of continental economies. They become an anachronism and an absurdity. The first notion of dominion status in the Caribbean was raised politically in Trinidad by Uriah Butler, not for Trinidad but for the Caribbean. By then not even CLR James had yet written the case for West Indian self-government, at least he hadn’t conceived it as complete independence. The OWTU can claim paternity of the idea of Caribbean unity and it is my view that the OWTU ought to produce its child. I believe it is the responsibility of the workers of OWTU to charge its officers to go through the region uniting the progressive political and trade union forces, bringing together as much as possible women, farmers, youth to unite the Caribbean from the bottom up and not the top down... We cannot create a united Caribbean without a popular democracy in each Caribbean territory. We are well placed to create a new kind of state in a united Caribbean organized and directed by the working people of the Caribbean and OWTU can initiate it.”¹⁷

That statement was made in 1990. Tim was as consistent as he was clear in his ideas. Thus, in an earlier analysis in 1984 this is what he said:

“In the coming Caribbean Revolution which will create a Caribbean nation out of the 27 island or coastal nations of the Caribbean, that tendency cannot win. The Caribbean island or Coastal nation states cannot find any other way out of the present crisis until each island or coastal nation overcomes foreign domination of the economy and in the process of that overcoming creates a regional Caribbean Nation, meeting the needs of Caribbean industry and agriculture. Only such a Caribbean nation can with-stand and overcome the buffetings of imperialism. Only such a Caribbean Nation can realise the hopes and release the creative spirit and genius of the Caribbean people”¹⁸.

Tim however, was not an idealist. He knew that we needed to do the work. You see all of us at that time were in opposition. We met at Bobby Clarke's home as well as at various international conferences to discuss what was required. Tim was clear – we had to investigate and research and develop policies that addressed the key problems facing Caribbean countries: how to transform agriculture, how to mobilise domestic financial resources and how to invest these resources to increase the productive base of the economy. Various persons were to develop an approach to this work. It was central, but key leaders did not necessarily persevere – Rosie later won office as did Ralph but the work wasn't done. So in office, faced with the collapse of bananas their countries' economies went into a tailspin and they had to resort to running around the world looking for financial assistance. One can only guess at what difference it would have made if we had completed our One Caribbean project.

How, you may ask, was Tim so consistent and persistent in his vision of One Caribbean? Why was he so convinced about the central role of the working people in the process of transformation? Why did he spend his life in educating and raising consciousness, of agitating and organizing? It was because he was philosophically a Marxist in the tradition of CLR James – his mentor, Walter Rodney his friend and comrade, and if I may be so bold to add, that great African revolutionary theorist and leader Amilcar Cabral. For Tim, it was not and could never be Marxism as dogma but Marxism as a methodology of thought, analysis and guide to action. Tim Hector, for almost four decades until he drew his last breath, "Fanned the Flames for the transformation of the Caribbean".

Notes

1. David Abdulah in David vs Goliath, Sunday Newsday of 17th, November 2002 (Daily News Publishers, Trinidad and Tobago)
2. Tim Hector Edited version of Address to the OWTU Installation of Executive Officers, Vanguard Newspaper, 12th September, 1990 (Vanguard Publishing Company, Trinidad and Tobago)
3. George Lamming The Sovereignty of the Imagination (Arawak Publications, Kingston Jamaica, 2004)
4. Tim Hector The Crisis in Education (The CLR Journal Volume 9, Number 1 Winter 2000/1, The CLR James Society 2001)
5. Tim Hector Panel Presentation at Forum on Africa, Europe, Caribbean 11th, September 1984 (Africa, Europe, Caribbean, OWTU, Trinidad and Tobago, 1984)
6. George Lamming Western Education and the Caribbean Intellectual (Coming Coming Home Conversations II, House of Nehesi Publishers, St. Martin, Caribbean, 1995)
7. Tim Hector Salute and Farewell to a Friend, Brother and Comrade (CLR James Journal, op cit)
8. George Lamming Western Education and the Caribbean Intellectual ibid
9. Tim Hector The Crisis in Education ibid
10. Tim Hector Salute and Farewell to a Friend, Brother and Comrade ibid
11. Tim Hector Africa, Europe, Caribbean ibid
12. Arthur Lewis Labour in the West Indies The Birth of a Workers Movement (New Beacon Books, London, 1977)
13. George Lamming The Sovereignty of the Imagination ibid
14. Tim Hector Africa, Europe, Caribbean ibid
15. CLR James Party Politics in the West Indies
16. Tim Hector Walter Rodney, Friend, Scholar and Caribbean Figure Extraordinary in CLR James Journal, op cit
17. Tim Hector Address to OWTU Installation of Executive Officers ibid
18. Tim Hector Africa, Europe, Caribbean ibid

TIM HECTOR AND THE ALTERNATIVE OF COOPERATIVE ECONOMICS

Lowell Jarvis

With the global economic crisis of 2008/2009, Caribbean economies have been floundering in the sea of economic despair. The economic pundits have called for much belt tightening, even in the face of rising unemployment. Caribbean leaders have resorted to sugar coating the bitter taste of IMF imposed remedies. They are at their wits end but refuse to learn the lessons of history. They need only to root themselves in Caribbean political thought and thinking to find solutions out of the present quagmire.

Since the year 2009, the Antigua & Barbuda economy has increasingly come under scrutiny. Following an increase in the collection of revenues and the prediction of growth and prosperity in the 2009 Budget, the Antigua & Barbuda public was confounded by the news that there was very little money available to fund government programmes and guarantee the payment of salaries.

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74
... Blame was apportioned to the global economic crisis, the collapse of the Stanford business empire and the BAICO/CLICO fiasco. A reported US\$50 million emergency loan from Venezuela provided immediate relief to the government coffers. The fashioning of a National Economic and Social Transformation Plan with the acronym NEST – suggestive of the creation a caring environment, paved the way for the direct intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through a Standby Agreement of US\$230 million.

The public was told that the IMF was not the same economic “bad boy” of old, that it had transformed itself and was an important partner in fiscal reform and the transformation/modernization of the tax collection system. With the overpowering presence and influence of the IMF, very little attention has been paid to the overall structure of the Antigua & Barbuda economy. It is traditional as can be with a little tinkering here and there to augment efficiency in the collection of more revenue.

What is quite obvious in this period of belt tightening is that the mass of people are suffering economic hardship and feel a sense of alienation from national goals and aspirations. Social programmes are touted as being important in cushioning the impact of the economic situation. The working people are being told that they are being empowered yet they are aware of the growing affluence of the political elite.

The question to be posed is, how can the working people be truly empowered in these difficult economic times? What new structures can be created to truly empower the working people of Antigua & Barbuda? How can the economy be re-organised to allow the working people to be active participants in a national economy?

CLR James, in his published work *Facing Reality*, examined the relationship between the State and the working class. He wrote:

The whole world today lives in the shadow of the state power... an ever present self-perpetuating body over and above society. (State power) ...transforms the human personality into a mass of economic needs to be satisfied by decimal points of economic progress. It robs everyone of initiative and clogs the free development of society. (It) destroys all pretence of government of the people, by the people. All that remains is government for the people.¹

James was aware that in the advanced economies of the world as well as in under-developed countries, the problem was the same. The creative energies of the working people were being corked down. In the case of the peoples of the West Indies, the situation may have been more acute. The yoke of colonialism was an additional burden.

CLR James had great faith in the working class and the great masses of the people. He argued that the West Indian people were ready to govern their own affairs. As such, "... a people like ours should be free to make its own failures and successes, free to gain that political wisdom and political experience which come only from the practice of political affairs."² There was, however, a difficulty facing the peoples of the West Indies in their quest for freedom and independence. As CLR noted, "The real difficulty of the West Indies is the poverty of the masses."³

Another problem had to be overcome. There was no sense of belonging among the people. Colonialism and, dare we say neo-colonialism, had produced a people who were alienated from control of the means of production. There was no "... feeling of responsibility for the country, a feeling that what is done by any section of the population concerns them ..." ⁴ The solution was more than obvious. "You have to create it, and the only way that I know is by creating a landed peasantry,"⁵ James argued. Then he posed the question, "Will it be co-operative in certain parts?"⁶

Additionally, a middle class had to be created and that class would "... have the responsibility of maintaining the level of (the) agricultural peasantry and of developing industry along the lines (of) science..."⁷ Therefore, the middle class would have "...scientific responsibility for the development of the economy."⁸ James was firmly of the belief that "Unequivocally, technical progress can take place in the underdeveloped countries only through the release of the creative energies and self-organisation of the people."⁹

Confident that with independence there would be a new ethos, CLR James posited that "When a new nation comes into the world it brings something new, and I think there are two things that we have brought: first, a very critical and creative attitude to intellectual and historical developments, to sport, and writing; and secondly, a tremendous passion for a sense of national development, national recognition ..."¹⁰

Leonard Tim Hector has been considered the embodiment of Jamesian praxis.¹¹ While studying at McGill University in Canada, he was a member of a James study group that included Rosie Douglas, Bobby Hill and Franklyn Harvey. Following his return to Antigua, he plunged himself into political activity and was involved with the nascent Antigua Workers Union as well as the Progressive Labour Movement. He was a co-founder of the Afro-Caribbean Movement (ACM).

Under his leadership, the ACM was transformed from a Pan-Africanist, Black Power organization into a Jamesian political party, the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM). It is to this organization and its development that Tim Hector dedicated most of his adult life. The ACLM produced a number of "... classic political documents ..." ¹² such as *Liberation – From the Old Wreckage to the New Society*; *Independence Yes! The Old Mess No!; All Power to the People of Barbuda*; *The Peoples Bill of Rights*; *ACLM Statement Of Principles and Objectives*; *Towards A New Antigua – its 1980 Manifesto* and *We Shall Overcome – its 1989 Manifesto*.

Standing tall among its publications is the 1983 document *Statement of Principles and Objectives*. As is stated in its Foreword, "Our **Statement of Principles and Objectives** is the result of 15 years of consistent political practice ... Without boasting, it is a tribute to the ACLM that its members have remained undaunted and undeterred in the struggle for a new society at the cost of great personal sacrifice."¹³

Tribute is also paid to “...the leadership provided by ACLM Chairman Cde. Tim Hector who, for the past 15 years, has been the main ideological and organizational force in the party. To the people’s call he has always answered positively, to the attacks from the Establishment he has stood firm, proving that conviction like the pen is mightier than the sword. Such is the leadership of the future.”¹⁴ Tim inspired us, as members of ACLM, to have a view of the world and to develop the tools of analysis so necessary in understanding events and the movement of peoples throughout the world.

As a Jamesian, Tim had great faith in the working class and the transformational role it could play in society. Yet he was conscious of the weaknesses that may be displayed by the working people. Tim, along with ACLM, set about to propagate, breathe life into and advance the need to create a New Society. In 1973, the ACLM in its first major publication *Liberation from the Old Wreckage to the New Society*, examined the political economy of Antigua & Barbuda which was still a colony though it had control of its internal affairs.

The Old Plantation Economy had collapsed. Sugar was dead and Tourism was being seen as a viable option by the powers that be. The ACLM, through this document, established the need for a New Society and pointed the way to the re-organisation of the economy. The modern co-operative would be an important component of the New Society.

The problem was the same throughout the Caribbean. In a Fan The Flame article Tim argued that “If you look closely at Jamaica, where the elite is too small to control the economy, and the mass of people are not a class for-itself or in-itself, you will find both the extreme expressions of individuality, creative expression and at the same time unspeakable criminality, all issuing from free agents answering their individual inner voices. Modern co-operative labour in industry was not ...the case in the Caribbean archipelago, where the plantation economy had collapsed and no autonomous new form had replaced it.”¹⁵

Given the visible signs that the two major political parties were in favour of independence the ACLM, in its 1980 Manifesto, strengthened its call for the establishment of a National Economy. The three major pillars of that National Economy would be the Public Sector, the Private Sector and the Co-operative Sector. Tim and the ACLM were cognizant that control of the economy was in foreign hands.

The working people did not have the necessary capital available to successfully wrest control of the economy from foreign hands. The Co-operative Sector would allow the working people to pool resources and, with time, to accumulate the necessary capital formation for further investment in the National Economy. With a National Economy organized as ACLM had proposed would come new relations in production. The possibilities would be immense as it would allow for the meaningful involvement of the working people, for the first time in "large scale agriculture, large scale and co-operative commerce, large scale production to meet our needs, our tourists' needs and that of our neighbours."¹⁶

Tim, as leader, walked the walk. In 1975, the ACLM established the East Antigua Commune, an agricultural co-operative that involved unemployed urban youth. In 1980 the ACLM established the West Antigua Co-operative Farm, a modern agricultural and industrial co-operative. The members of ACLM were directly involved in the co-operative's operation.

Ever conscious that modern production could not depend solely on energy generated by fossil fuel, The West Antigua Farm may have been the first entity in Antigua to use alternative energy to power its operations. Wind power was generated and used for production purposes. In addition to crop production involving modern agricultural techniques, the production of fiberglass water tanks also took place on that farm. Constant sabotage in various forms would lead to the demise of that co-operative effort. To date, there is no evidence that State may not have encouraged the various forms of sabotage employed against the West Antigua Farm.

Simultaneously the ACLM established, in 1982, its Co-operative Superette. Here the ACLM Sisters, led by the indomitable Arah Hector, controlled that co-operative effort. Also opened in that period under co-operative effort, was a pizzeria while a bakery was managed, once more as a co-operative venture.

The ACLM launched, in 1979, the Antigua Caribbean Training Institute (ACTI). It was in direct response to the need to equip working people with the necessary tools to establish and control their own co-operative efforts. The ACLM was cognizant that UNESCO, in an assessment of education in Antigua said the following: "The education and training system of the country has to be redirected and guided to ensure that it produces graduates with the appropriate education and training. At present, education and development are mutually opposed to each other."

ACTI offered courses in Agriculture, Management, Appliance Repair, Alternative Technology, Food Processing, Mathematics and the Building Trades. UNESCO, in assessing ACTI in an early 1980s report on education in Antigua & Barbuda, had this to say: "The Antigua Caribbean Training Institute is doing commendable work in organising both non-formal and continuing education courses. The variety of subjects provided make it possible to accommodate the training needs of different clientele groups. They are not limited to academic pursuits alone but deal with vocational and skill aspects directly related to income generating activities."

The powers-that-be were not amused. ACLM became the target of continued harassment by the State. Police searches and raids became commonplace, a new printing press was dropped at the port and members suffered arrests. Efforts were made to shut down *The Outlet*, official organ of the ACLM. Those who supported and encouraged the establishment of co-operatives in the late 1950s and early 1960s were not prepared, with independence, to foster the development of new co-operatives.

That mistakes were made is a fact, but sabotage was the tool employed by those who felt challenged by the real possibilities of the co-operative efforts. ACLM was proving that the co-operative sector could be and was important in truly empowering the working people while allowing the participants to be engaged in new relations of production.

Undoubtedly, the co-operative sector in a national economy would create new levels of social relations. The pooling of scarce economic resources in co-operative ventures would be an important stepping stone for workers in their quest to accumulate capital. The workers themselves would be directly involved in the operation of the enterprises created to serve their needs. Social ownership of the means of production would become a reality. As Tim wrote: "Socialism is the independent creative spirit of the mass of the population, given the room and the opportunity to create new institutions at work, for the re-organisation of production in the interest of the majority of the toilers and so creating popular democratic organs of self-management in society and therefore a new culture."¹⁷

This would be the birth of the New Man in the New Society.

There are examples of unemployed, uneducated young men and women who, through their participation in the co-operative efforts of ACLM, became gainfully employed and have become success stories in their own

right. One such person is Ricardo Mapp who became a member of the ACLM and, with the new level of social and economic relations achieved, became a transformed person. Ricardo Mapp also operated the Outlet printing press up until the day that he migrated. Today, Ricardo Mapp lives in the United States and runs his own business there.

An examination of at least one example of a region in the world where the co-operative sector has had a positive effect on a regional economy is necessary. In the Basque town of Arasate in northern Spain is the Mondragon Cooperative Corporation. Considered the world's largest co-operative, Mondragon began in 1958 with the production of petrol based heaters and cookers. The formation of its financial arm, Caja Laboral Popular, was important in providing loans to its members and other small businesses. In the 1970s a Research and Development (R&D) unit was started and today, 9.1% of its resources are dedicated to Research and Development. The University of Mondragon was opened in the 1990s and 1,889 researchers are employed in 14 research centres.

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80
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In 2011, Mondragon had 83,569 employees in 250 companies with 82% of its members comprising its work force. Its members had a share capital of €1.82 billion and their salaries are 33% higher than those in non co-operative companies. Unemployment in the Basque region is at 15% while nationally in Spain it is at 25% and climbing. Involved in the production of Capital Goods, Consumer Goods, Industrial Components, Construction and Enterprises Services, Mondragon Co-operative Corporation is the largest business corporation in the Basque Country and the 7th largest corporation in Spain. It has plants in 18 countries.

It may be argued that small pockets of co-operatives do exist in the Caribbean. Our countries had an opportunity at independence to steer a new course and, in the process, create a new level of social relations. They all have, to this very day remained where they were at independence. As CLR James noted, politicians in the Caribbean can talk around a topic without addressing its essentials.

In Antigua & Barbuda, co-operatives in the financial sector have enjoyed some success. The Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB), locally referred to as the Penny Bank, began as a co-operative bank in 1955 and was located on Newgate Street. It is now the largest of the local financial institutions although it no longer operates as a co-operative bank. One of the leading co-operative credit unions is the Community First Co-operative Credit Union, formerly known as The Teachers Co-operative Credit Union. It had its humble beginnings in 1959 and today owns its modern

multi-million dollar headquarters located on the Old Parham Road, The St. John's Co-operative Credit Union, located on All Saints Road, was launched in 1982.

Today, there are six co-operative credit unions operating in Antigua & Barbuda with some 25,892 member, shares and deposits totalling EC\$45,619,213.00 and total assets of EC\$54,393,506.00 Yet, they are being challenged by the external imposition of conditions, sanctioned by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, that restrict their growth and reduce the level of services being offered to their membership. The challenge today is to expand not only co-operatives in the financial sector but to create new co-operatives whereby members can be involved in the production of goods, be they industrial or agricultural and to provide services. If we maintain the present structure of the economy, high unemployment will continue to be our lot.

Tim Hector and ACLM will now have the final words: "Let us, the people of Antigua/Barbuda, create ...in our own image and likeness, a new society, based on a new political culture, where the principles of self-reliance, popular democracy and social justice determine our onward movement."¹⁸ 11th

January, 2013

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LEONARD TIM HECTOR: EGALITARIAN AND VISIONARY

George Goodwin Jr.

It seems like only yesterday but ten years have gone by since our brother and comrade passed. Little over a month ago Tim would have observed his seventieth birthday. This conference organized in his honour is a most fitting tribute, and special commendation should be given to Dr. Paget Henry of the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association as the driving force behind this event, along with the other sponsors, University of the West Indies Open Campus Antigua and Barbuda and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union (OWTU).

To be born in 1942 and to grow up in a small colonial territory in that period in the Caribbean meant a particular exposure to world impacting developments: the Second World War and what it meant for the islands and beyond; the rise of the Trade Union movement and the anti-colonial struggles throughout the Region from Guyana and Trinidad in the south to Jamaica in the north giving impetus to the Federation and the Independence Movement; The Cuban Revolution reverberated throughout the Americas and beyond, and had its impact.

In the cauldron of political activity and discussion at the national and domestic level, which Hector himself makes mention of in his *Fan the Flame*, he was coming face to face with the world of ideas and global politics - prerequisite so vital as he himself pointed out in developing a perspective. Growing up in such a dynamic and vibrant environment, Hector yearned for greater information and knowledge and with that read voraciously.

He would excel at school, later becoming one of the youngest and inspirational teachers at his Alma Mater, The Antigua Grammar School. Not long after, he would travel to Canada to study. And what an experience that would be living in an industrialized society in the throes of social and political upheavals taking place across North America. With the Vietnam War; the anti-war movement raged making university campuses and cities in general a hotbed of social and political activity. At the same time the Black Power and Civil Rights Movement marched on inexorably. In the Maritimes in Montreal, in Toronto major conferences with noted scholars and political figures such as CLR James, Walter Rodney, Alfie Roberts and Kwame Toure would take place. Tim would be at the centre of these activities organizing, studying and learning particularly at the feet of his mentor, CLR James.

Postgraduate studies would begin at the McGill University, but events at home in Antigua would beckon. And so Tim would make perhaps one of the most crucial decisions of his life. He decided to abandon his studies to return home, and as the great chronicler and Latin American liberator Jose Marti stated in one of his poems when he Marti expressed his desire to affiliate himself with the wretched of the earth, Tim also concluded:

With the needy of the earth

Do I want my lot to cast...

From that day in 1967 when Tim returned home to his death ten years ago in 2002, the struggle was his life. As teacher, as writer, as Cricket and sports administrator, as political activist, he fought relentlessly to bring about a New Order and consequently that New Person capable of a variety of interests and ready to respond to a variety of social functions. This he said is the object and subject of our present struggle.

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84
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An exceptional thinker and an intellect fertile in ideas. For Tim ideas were weapons to be used in the fight for a better world. Listen to him in his Fan The Flame article: The crisis in education (Jan 26th, 1978). "The world in which we live has fallen into the greatest inhumanity. The concentration of capital means that mankind now threatens mankind with destruction-total and complete. In education, that has meant reducing individuals to the inhumanity of narrow specialization." Sounds familiar? That was written thirty five years ago. But he goes on further to say in that very serious article that one's education has not begun if one does not develop a world view and a way of apprehending the world. And what does he say is the gravamen of the problem. He writes this: "Colonialism has done its very worst in preventing our people from penetrating beneath the surface into the core of the world historical events, the causes of such events and their effects upon us", consequently he says our politics, "has been a series of shifts, one step forward and two steps backward. The more our professional leaders appear to oppose colonialism, the more they reaffirm it. This is our present dilemma and therefore the dilemma of education." Are we not too familiar with the idea here expressed?

A clear case in point is the issue of the Caribbean Court of Justice. Let's stay with the Privy Council. Let's keep the Queen as head of state. To become a Republic will mean Banana Republic. But, to address this crisis in Education which confronts us to this very day, Tim points out: "It is the purpose and therefore the content of education that needs to be changed

not just the teacher training and the school buildings and other facilities. Otherwise we will always remain dependent and backward even fly blown.” He could not be clearer or more forceful. A close friend of Tim and ACLM once publicly stated, that the ambivalence and sometimes hostility displayed towards Tim and ACLM had to do with the mirror he held up to the population, and truth be told we do not want to see our warts.

Tim however was not just about ideas. More than ever he knew the need to combine theory and practice. So ACLM would build institutions with a view towards transforming society. To name just two, The Antigua Caribbean Training Institute and The West Antigua Cooperative Farm were developed. Such institutions would help to demonstrate what was possible and to point the way to a new alternative.

With the obvious crisis of the education system designed as he forcefully points out to make us dependent and mere consumers, Tim and ACLM set about in every conceivable way to inform, educate and agitate for meaningful change. Throughout the length and breadth of Antigua and Barbuda by way of films, meetings, articles, cultural programmes, the history of the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles was told and the significance and relevance to us as a people. In a defining document, “The Caribbean Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” as Paul Buhle states in his book, Tim Hector: A Caribbean Radical’s Story, “Hector drove home the historical lessons, with a Jamesean look at slave uprising in Antigua and the region. If Jamaican blacks sought to overthrow all property relations in 1841, it was a quest to form a new society.” So it was in his writings about King Court demonstrating the level of organization and culture in attempting to overthrow a most oppressive system and to make themselves masters.

“We know that we are nourished by the past but we knew that the past also needs us and that unless we can create an original role for ourselves in the present we will destroy our connections with the past.” That’s Wilson Harris, a foremost Caribbean scholar, writer and thinker. Tim and ACLM made every effort to give real meaning to this profound statement – the need to build bridges at the same time creating an original role for ourselves in the present, whilst always recognizing the tremendous role of those who came before.

For decades Tim and ACLM worked assiduously at developing a body of ideas as a result of study, as a result of constant discussions of local, regional and international affairs, asking difficult questions about the organization of society, as a result of listening and engaging with the vital

social forces in society But the exercise was not about producing dogma instead it would help to provide the tools of analysis. Let us refer to the source again: a Fan The Flame entitled "Socialism": To be or not to be: what is Socialism? (April 12th 1985) This is what Tim says on the subject. "Socialism is not nationalization. Socialism is not a vanguard party in power. Socialism is the independent creative spirit of the mass of population, given the room and opportunity to create new institutions at work for the reorganization of production in the interest of the majority of the toilers and so creating popular democratic organs of self-management in society and therefore a new culture."

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86
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An examination of ACLM and its activities with Tim as leader over some three decades would show tremendous effort to build institutions in communities throughout Antigua of an economic culture, educational and political nature: It was an attempt to create outside of state power, the beginnings of a new order within the old. That we made mistakes is without doubt, but often times too these efforts to bring about genuine transformation in the society were met with sabotage at various levels. And to quote Brother Adlai Carrot in the preface to *The World and Us* by Tim, "As he (Tim) translated theory into practice and action he (along with all his colleagues in ACLM) felt the might of the all-powerful state. He was persecuted and prosecuted, and his life was threatened. But never once did he retreat from his noble and courageous mission."

This evening it is an honour for LTHMC/ACLM to be a part of this very important conversation. Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all and in particular fellow travelers who have come from near and far to participate and to allow for ideas to contend at this very crucial juncture of our history. I am confident that the proceedings will be productive, and at its end we will all be the better for it, and it would have invigorated us all to carry on the struggle for a more just and humane society.

As Paul Buhle said, "Leonard Tim Hector offers us a voice and a template. He also offers us a life in search of freedom at once political and artistic, egalitarian and multiracial. He is a surviving beacon for the cause that many millions died seeking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a cause repeatedly betrayed but never entirely lost."

The struggle continues...

POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS: TIM HECTOR ON ARTS AND CULTURE

Dorbrene E. O'Marde

I know time is short and there are many who have much to say but I beg a few minutes to offer thanks to the organizers of this conference for their invitation and their acceptance of my proposal that we include in our deliberations a look at Tim and his positions and interpretations of the 'Arts and Culture' and their roles in economic and social development generally, and in politics specifically.

We heard from the organizers last night and at risk, I would like to say a special thanks to Dr. Paget Henry whose fingerprints are all over this conference. I have been forced to read the available works of Tim Hector and I have noted, not for the first time, the immense respect Tim had for Paget and his scholarship. He had nothing but sheer praise for Paget's work – commencing with his doctoral thesis 'Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua' which he/Tim called the definitive History of Antigua and Barbuda ¹. So effusive was Tim's praise that he ended his comments by suggesting that no Antiguan and Barbudan can lay claim to be educated, that is, rooted, who has not read Dr Paget Henry's history of Antigua & Barbuda.

I have had cause on these ACLM/LTHMC platforms to address the issue of cultural policy and without reinventing the wheel – or without having particular updates on my thinking of a year ago - I still see culture 'as the more or less dominant spiritual expression of the ever-changing matrix of environmental political and economic forces on human life and its effects on the interrelationships between individuals and groups and classes within a given society (or region).

The interrelationships are in many ways usually defined in political and economic constructs - leaders/followers, teacher/student, rulers/ruled, employer/employee, upper/middle/lower class, parent/child etc. The dominant nature of the interrelationships defines the culture and gives rise to – encourages, enhances particular and peculiar behaviours and expressions. This culture may (or may not - then it is not dominant and remains part of the little tradition) spread to an entire society based on the dialectic with the series of other values existing in other spheres or sectors or the strength of other factors e.g. race/heritage, other institutions like the church/religion etc. The dominant culture in a society is therefore the equilibrium achieved between the expressions of major institutions and other sectors/factors.²

Tim did not seem to get into the fine distinctions that his mentor, CLR James offers us in his 1959 Essay 'The Artist in the Caribbean' where we find indications of the artist, the great artist, the master artist, the supreme artist...but sufficient it is for us here to extract from his writings the capabilities of the artist and the role he/she performs...hence the decision to call him or her an artist. CLR suggests that – and I quote – 'By a combination of learning (in his own particular sphere), observation, imagination and creative logic, he can construct the personalities and relations of the future, rooting them in the past and the present. By that economy of means which is great art, he adds to the sum of knowledge of the world and in doing this, as a general rule he adds new range and flexibility to the medium that he is using'³.

Importantly however CLR emphasizes 'a supreme artist exercises an influence on the national consciousness which is incalculable. He is created by it but he himself illuminates and amplifies it, bring the past up to date and charting the future'. Tim was comfortable with the latter expression.

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88
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The classic definition of politics is 'the art or science of influencing people's beliefs on a civic or individual level'. Many choose to extend definitions to the practical concept that politics is 'the way we choose government officials and make decisions about public policy' Or we may drop all pretence and like political scientist Harold Lasswell define politics as "who gets what, when, and how."⁴ However Tim understood 'politics' – and I quote him 'as 'the means by which we regulate our relations, (economic, religious, legal and social relations) one with another, in society.'⁵

Let us not forget our mission in this discussion – to identify Tim Hector's approach to and understanding of the relationship[s] between art and culture, and politics in our Caribbean society.

The history of the Caribbean,' says Tim Hector 'is the history of dispossession – as continuous and enduring, as it is stifling'⁶. It is a history that began during the Middle Passage where some human traffickers paradoxically allowed dancing (really jumping up and down to the rhythms of metal shackles) as exercise to preserve the health of their 'cargo'. And while the man 'danced', the women sang – mournfully, tearfully – began communicating with others of different mother tongues. It is Tim's view that as early as this in our Caribbean history, music and dance had found their way into the 'in the arsenal of weapons to burst the Gordian knot of that paradox asunder'⁷.

‘Slaves,’ he claims ‘made an *un-liveable* life, *liveable* by reliance on their own traditions, values and practices, which they brought with them from Africa⁸. The collection of ‘traditions, values and practices’ is what we rudimentarily define as ‘culture’. This gave ‘culture’ in our Caribbean society a specific role, one that Tim refers to as ‘humanizing’. The effort to ‘humanize’ can only be described in political terminology. It is the struggle against those forces that deny our humanity, that retard the possibility of full growth and engaged potential, and those forces are politically controlled – the economy, the media/education/thought, the laws and the full apparatus of the State.

The arts therefore, in Tim’s and most cultural thinkers’ world, are products of culture and are most valued by their contributions to the humanizing process of culture. But this human – this humanized ‘slave’ is not a one dimensional being, so the humanizing process – culture – must offer contributions to his/her social, spiritual, economic and political well-being.

This thinking allows Tim – within the same understanding of arts and culture as ‘humanizing’ – to find the rebellious music of Miles Davis as important as that of Louis Armstrong who defined his music as ‘in the service of happiness’⁹. The entertainment value of Kitchener and Obstinat do not pale in any shadow to the socio-political work of Short Shirt and Sparrow. They have equal value in the ‘humanizing’ process. This thinking gives Tim much latitude in his choice of topics, of reviews – in

his use of literature and journalism to warn – to illustrate - to teach – ‘that the end to which all life must tend is the realisation and liberation of self through individual and collective, creative effort’.

We therefore get views of Tim’s thinking not only through his own assertions but also through the thinking of the artists to whom he choose to pay tribute, through the quotations he uses from others and through those he recognizes as standards of excellence...in his world, in his understanding of the synergy of arts, culture and politics. He was an internationalist, capable of emotional reaction to the European artists of early centuries as he was to the contemporary African – at home or in the Diaspora.

Tim had respect for all Caribbean artists, many of whom he did not share the same political view, but this was countered by the artist’s preparedness to at least challenge the ‘terror of silence’ as he called it. The evalu-

ation of their art – that evaluation that sometimes descends into art for art sake arguments – is a different act. For evaluation requires standards. And Tim had standards – expectations – by which he critiqued.

I talk theatre here. I remember the mixture of trepidation and excitement we felt in the Harambee Theatre when word spread backstage that ‘Tim out dey’. His judgment of our work – around ‘the key question as to whether it was worth doing’ pushed us to deepen relevance and unknowingly at the time, improving our own contributions to the ‘humanizing’ process.

But we also came to understand that Tim’s theatre standards included deep admiration for the European playwright Bertolt Brecht – who sought ‘to explore the theatre as a forum for political ideas and the creation of a critical aesthetics of dialectical materialism’... Brecht ‘wanted his audiences to adopt a critical perspective in order to recognise social injustice and exploitation and to be moved to go forth from the theatre and effect change in the world outside.’¹¹ He was clear that every new idea presented for human development should be ‘examined carefully and freely’ and ‘that art can present *clear and even make nobler such ideas*’.¹²

It is the same Brecht who is oft quoted as saying ‘*The worst illiterate is the political illiterate. He hears nothing. Sees nothing, takes no part in political life. He doesn’t seem to know that the cost of living, the price of beans, of*

flour, of rent, of medicines, all depend on political decisions. He even prides himself on his political ignorance, sticks out his chest and says he hates politics. He doesn’t know, the imbecile, that from his political non-participation comes the prostitute, the abandoned child, the robber and worst of all, corrupts officials, the lackeys of exploitative multinational corporations’.¹³

It was Tim however, years ago who pointed out to a group of us that the word ‘*idios*’ is the Greek word for those who were so self-centred and private that they took no part in public life – politics. He did not need to make the connection between the English word ‘idiot’ and the Greek ‘*idios*’.

His theatre world included Robert Bolt, [A Man For All Seasons] a playwright ‘known for dramatic works that placed their protagonists in tension with the prevailing society.’¹⁴ Wrote Bolt and Tim quoted: “*Suppose I were to draw a dagger from my sleeve and make it kill the prisoner with it, and suppose their lordships there, instead of crying out for me to stop or crying out for help to stop me, maintained their silence. That would beto-*

ken. I would betoken a willingness that I should do it, and under any law they would be guilty with me. So silence, can according to circumstances, speak terror."¹⁵

It is clear that Tim sees the arts as a critical vehicle to the challenge of silence. He recounts¹⁶ a conversation with a cocky white American whom he shamed into recognizing that the James Cameron movie 'Titanic' was an indictment of American civilization: 'as heartless, cruel hedonistic worshippers of wealth in itself and for itself, and driven by unprincipled selfishness.' He recounts that even after feebly agreeing with him, the American wondered out loud 'But do you really think Titanic was a comment on American civilization?' Tim's response is but a brief scalpel. 'All works of art are', he said. 'All works of art are comments on our civilization'. And that comment must include, always – the political.

Tim's theatre also included the folk and poetics of Nobel Prize literature hero Derek Walcott and the bravery of Peter Minshall 'who challenged the stereotypes of sequins, lamé and feathers...and in its place brought a new social and therefore political consciousness to the festival - carnival.'¹⁷

The breadth of Tim's understanding of literature is remarkable. He is also clear on its role in the humanizing process. His admiration for Edouard Glissant, born in the Saint Marie commune of Martinique in 1928, one of his favourite writers and thinkers - gives insight into Tim's understanding and therefore the standards by which he evaluates literature. Glissant asked "Can literature make one forget grief and injustice? Or, rather, is literature inextricably tied to grief and injustice so as to be able to point them out or fight against them?" Tim's answer is equally clear. 'I am inclined to think,' he says 'that all serious imaginary writing is tied inextricably to love, grief and injustice.'¹⁸ I suggest to you – even if Tim did not do so overtly - that injustice is political.

And so Tim finds common ground with Lamming (I think) that West Indian literature, in the novel or as poetry is of artistic necessity preoccupied with '*What new fevers arise to reverse the crawl?/ Our islands make towards their spiritual extinction?*'¹⁹ The reversal of the crawl towards spiritual extinction, the preoccupation of art - to my mind is political, politics.

He quotes extensively from Martin Carter who wrote: *'For a people like us, marooned in misery, and with naked roots, everything must be raw material awaiting transformation. The drunk man, dazed in a gutter, the criminal damned in a cell, the priest happy in his celibacy, the merchant hypnotized with profit, the politician blind with power, the mother paralyzed with her child's end, the lover ecstatic with freedom; we must accept all of these as those who constitute the stuff of an experience, the natural order, the given universe, out of which we must create what we want.'*²⁰ Tim suggests that this is 'the raw material on which our artists must build their word images to re-arrange reality until it becomes more real.'²¹

Tim unearths the depth of political motivation in the sculpture of Edna Manley, in the painting of white Cuban artist Carlos Enriquez and of the great Spaniard Picasso. He - with the help of Eusi Kwayana finds similar motivation in the Psalms of David - those 'of rare beauty, fuelled by political liberation'²². He ends his analysis in one of his finest essays 'The Art of Carnival and the Carnival of Art' of July 28, 2000 by asserting 'I do not think, that I overstate the case when I say that all great art is singularly political'.

Tim finds strong support for his espousal of a single purpose for both 'the aesthetic' and 'the political' in the remarkable essay - *'The Emancipation - Jouway Tradition and the Almost Loss of Pan'* where - Earl Lovelace explained 'just as steelband was showing us the inventiveness, dedication and genius by which we were to be liberated, the badjohns who created it were displaying the violence we needed to confront if we were to lay claim to that liberation..... To claim the aesthetic you had to claim the political'²³. Tim knew this and so felt that the aesthetic, the platform of the artists for the production of cultural products must address the political or he could lay no claim to it.

I am here reminded of the simple way of putting what I just said in English...'how the hell does anything advance without being part of a political agenda', one anonymous blogger asks.

Like Brother David Abdullah - who in his question and answer period last night admitted a possible serious omission in any analysis of Tim's value if discussions on sports - cricket in particular - were not included, I found that I had not paid particular attention to that important aspect of Tim's writing and thinking in the first draft of this paper - especially in the context of the interpretation of culture that occurs elsewhere in his work - and would like to correct that.

Tim sees sport as 'a fundamental human activity - a means by which people express themselves, and therefore, their essential humanity.'²⁴ He sees cricket therefore as a means West Indian people used 'to humanize ourselves' as he also sees music and dance...as an integral part of the process that liberates from the physical and social shackles in which West Indian society was born and bound. Tim is sure that '*cricket in the West Indies is more than a game, more than popular art. West Indian cricket is part of the process by which West Indians overcame or sought to overcome racism and the consequent sense of racial inferiority and racial self-contempt in which the majority of us were born. It is part and parcel of the nationalist movement, West Indian cricket is part of the process of nation liberation in the Caribbean.*'²⁵

So you can understand David's point, anything that threatened West Indian Cricket (with a capital C) as he knew it, as he helped shape it from deep within its history, threatened national liberation - be it a ban on cricketers with apartheid South African connections on an English team in Guyana or the boycott of Packer in Trinidad. No such affront could be supported by Tim - much less tolerated.

It is one of the challenges in interpreting Tim - in that in so many instances he is his own evaluator...of the management of West Indies cricket, of the media, of the PLM, of ACLM, of UPP - of ALP. This evaluation of Tim by Tim is the subject however for another panel - one that looks at Tim as 'a maverick organizational man' - that nearly oxymoronic thought...who understood the Leninist requirement for organization but whose thinking could not be bound by organization, certainly not unthinking organization. He lasted extremely long in the UPP - I thought.

But back to cricket...and I think there you see evidence of Tim's understanding of the similarity of the core values and roles of art and politics - theoretical politics that is. Tim's writing on cricket occurs during a period of commercialization of sport; a period wherein which 'sport as an elite practice reserved for amateurs became sport as a spectacle produced by professionals for consumption by the masses.'²⁶ No one is attacking cricket here...the writer says 'sport'. But it is this transition in sport - gone horribly wrong for the Caribbean - that gives us twenty-twenty cricket, that horrible abomination, that severe aberration of a total sport. For when sport or art for that matter - and some do interpret sport as 'performance art' - when it fails to contribute to the humanizing process, its relevance is devalued.

I do not think Tim would have loved this explosion of twenty-twenty cricket. That is my sane analytical mind at work but something still lurks in the background – that for all I know Tim might have found reason to like the game – one, because it came out of cricket - his cricket and two, any resistance to it was resistance to the child of his cricket, notwithstanding its whoring with dehumanizing capital and sponsorship money. Cricket fans however should not feel lonely – we are not the only ones suffering - out there in the land of commercial non-humanizing sports is wrestling and beach volleyball and beach soccer and lingerie football and the X-games... among others!

Back to the issue of arts, culture and politics. Tim, in his analysis of Antigua calypso suggests that ‘As everyone here knows there is a concerted effort to drive the political out of the calypso art, either by force, namely, censorship, or by less crude coercion, rewarding the sugary in competition by placing them as high as possible’. It should therefore not surprise us that Tim in summary - wrote the following:

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94
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I want now to move to the politics of art, since there is a determined effort to make us believe that politics diminishes art, when art, in fact, is politics by other means. Politics is the means by which we regulate our relations, (economic, religious, legal and social relations) one with another, in society. It is the way we see the world and our place in it. Art is the effort to interpret the world and to make people see how their place in it is being either endangered or enhanced. All art either seeks to accommodate us to the world as it is, or to move us to change the world as it is, for the better. Therefore then, is all art, politics by other means. Those then who seek to take politics out of art are, in truth, taking art out of art.²⁷

And if that were not strong and emphatic enough... Tim later in the same article paraphrases and repeats – **“Those who wish to hound the political out of art, be it calypso, poetry, psalms, sculpture, dance or painting, really wish to murder art, and therefore the creative capacities of the people, in which we have our very being.”**²⁸

‘Nuff said!

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TIM STILL FANS THE FLAME IN AFRICA

Edith Tomlinson-Oladele

Paget Henry's invitation to speak at this conference took me completely by surprise. The reason he gave for asking me was even more shocking!!! He somehow sees me as Antigua's Pan African Christian thinker at this time in the mode of Bishop George McGuire of Marcus Garvey's UNIA and Rev. George Weston, a Pan African Antiguan elder whom I admired very much as a young woman. I was tickled pink because the two things I value in life most are being a Christian, a disciple of Jesus Christ, and being a Pan Africanist and a serious thinker in matters related to Africa. At the same time I know that this is an awesome responsibility which has been placed on my shoulders but the yoke is light.

However, I jumped at the idea of coming home to Antigua from Cameroon to share my thoughts. As life would have it, seats were all booked up and any other way was proving way over budget. So, instead of being there in person, I have asked Paget to ask a friend who knows me well and who understands my thinking to read this reflection on Tim for me.

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96
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Actually, I am very disappointed to be missing this occasion because my expectation of listening to the intellectual discourses on the programme which are to be delivered by such a group of eminent Afro-Caribbean men would have provided me with some extra stimulation and grist to continue the work with which I have been entrusted here in Africa. Hopefully DVDs will provide the alternative to being there in person.

And so, onto the topic at hand: my personal reflections on Tim Hector and how he has influenced my life.

I find this topic intriguing. You see, I don't remember ever speaking more than four words to Tim Hector at any one time "Hello Tim, how are you?" and he would ask me the same. As my friend would say "Pweng!!!!!"

But ever since Tim came into prominence I became one of his quiet admirers. I liked the quiet, calm presentation of his person. I liked his discipline which showed up in his thinking, writing and his speech. I liked to hear him turn a phrase so prettily and swiftly to paint the picture he had in mind and wanted the other to see. I liked Tim's courage to speak his mind and truth to power even when it meant persecution for him, mockery, misrepresentation and even hatred. He stuck it out for what he believed: freedom and dignity for African peoples from the consequences

of slavery, colonization and continued exploitation wherever it was being meted out to Africans anywhere we were in the world.

Tim was a Pan Africanist of the first order. I read avidly his *Outlet* every week to learn of Marcus Garvey, CLR James, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, ANC, Nelson Mandela, Frelimo, Samora Machel and all these great Pan Africanists, and also of African liberation movements. It was from his writings and pronouncements that I had my first real tastes of African history, politics, economics and culture.

I remember him writing that ‘religion is the opiate of the people’. At that time he was quoting from some other, I think Marx’s, ideology; he meant black people at that time. I’ve since come to understand differently but then it gave me food for thought.

It was through reading the *Outlet* in the 60s that I began to order books on African history from the UK, which I devoured. I obtained my first copy of “The Philosophies of Marcus Garvey” after reading about him in the *Outlet*. In those days there were no online sources etc. The *Outlet* was our source of African information.....and we got good doses of it from reading that priceless little paper. As one writer has said “One drop of ink will make a man think!” and Tim’s aim was to make his readers think, understand and act from the knowledge and insight they received. As Rev. Weston said repeatedly “Africa for the Africans, those at home and those abroad.” These words sank deep into my mind. Tim’s objectives gained root in me.

I never really gave any thought about how Tim may have influenced me until my first visit to Cameroon in 2004. That is when my eyes were opened. That was where and when I realized what the term “divide and rule” meant. I’d read about it in the *Outlet*. First of all to get to Africa I had to go by a European aircraft to Europe 8 hours; then to fly to Africa was another 6 hours. 14 hours flying not counting the time spent otherwise on the journey not to mention the cost which is prohibitive! And to think of it from Senegal to Barbados is 4 hours; from Lagos to Antigua is clocked at five and a half hours. But where is the airline to take us back across the way we were brought to these shores?

Now think of this, Cameroonians are being refused visas to travel through many European countries, even if their goal is to come across here!!! The policy has worked too well and become too entrenched. The effects of this policy are before my very eyes. There we are, the great people of the

Caribbean region – CARICOM – standing in all our glory, proud and strong! Here on the other hand are our African brethren, who have little or no idea that we exist let alone where to find us on the map!!!! I was stunned. High government officials never heard of us; school principals never heard of us. People who travelled to Europe, chiefs and business people never heard of Antigua and Barbuda nor the Caribbean. I knew that I had to do something about it, but what?

I came back home prayed and sought ways from the Lord about how to change things. One of the pastors we'd met had a project to rebuild the first church built at Bimbia by emancipated Africans from Jamaica, led by Rev. Joseph Merrick. They needed carpenters. I asked if we could assist. That way we began by doing what Marcus Garvey said that we should do "Return to Africa with our skills and resources to rebuild Africa." We also wanted to take the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ to anyone who wanted to hear it, and deliver people from the superstition, ignorance and feelings of inferiority which held them bound.

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98
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It was a very strong force within me because I saw the terrible effects of slavery and colonialism first hand and was hearing the broken-heartedness of people on both sides of the Atlantic! I was seeing and hearing the poverty brought about from lack of knowledge and exposure; the inability to travel, buy papers, magazines and books. Something we take for granted in these islands. Much of this was because wages had been cut by 70% in 1994 on IMF recommendations. Before that their standard of living was one of the highest in West Africa.

Cameroonians were stunned too because they never knew where their people had been taken to once they were kidnapped, stolen or sold!!! They had no idea of the history of themselves except what the system wanted them to know. Seeing us was for them like a miracle.....plus they saw that there was a freedom about us and they desired to have it too.

The 2004 Cameroon Connection was an epiphanic event for me in many ways. First, being part of a group of African slave descendants who had been invited back to Cameroon specifically to be asked forgiveness for having sold our ancestors was very touching. Being welcomed back home to Africa as a long lost relative was an experience which will remain with me forever. That was a defining moment. I felt that at last I belonged. Cameroonians are very humble people. Their humility and prayers touched my heart as well as the others of the group as they thanked God for sending us

back. I also knew that my own ancestors, who wanted to return and were never able to, had returned in spirit, at last back at home and appeased.

Secondly, at the visit to one family in Limbola, whose grandfathers had been engaged as traders of slaves, I looked around me and saw a cry in the eyes of the men and women whom we met and heard a tone of regret for their family's historical actions, which tore so many away from their homes and families. I heard the Lord speak directly my spirit; "Return and work among these people!"

That August, I left Cameroon with a question in my mind. If I was so deeply touched by these experiences what were others feeling in Antigua and the rest of the Caribbean? I asked questions of many people and discovered the same cry for Africa in the hearts of African descendants on Antigua, in writings, poetry, in drama and in speech. It had been in the *Outlet*; the anger, the frustration, the resistance, the revolutionary expressions. It was in *Emancipation Still Comin'* by Rev. Kortright Davis. It was in my poem which just burst out of me one day taking me completely by surprise "Africa, Cry of my Heart, I Love You".... Say you love me too!

So on both sides there were broken hearts and a desire for reconciliation and reconnection.

Tim's influence fanned the flames of African thought with fresh understanding in my mind and in my heart. I was seeing and perceiving things which he'd written about in the *Outlet*. Oh, this is what Tim meant in his urgency, his boldness, his deliberate and his focused pronouncements. I really understood now from first-hand experience.

However, there came a parting of the minds. In 1979 I received Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord. He changed my whole outlook on life and situations. By now I was looking at the African situation from a biblical perspective; my world-view had changed, a transformation had taken place in my thinking. I was beginning to understand that man's desire for justice and fairness was a God-given desire in the hearts of all men, including Africans who were suffering the effects of the evil which had been perpetuated against them for centuries. And God wanted deliverance for Africans too – but his way. The intellectuals articulated the thinking of people but had no solutions. Only God's spirit could make the needed changes.

It was now December 2004 and I was on fire. I couldn't wait to return to Cameroon. People ask me often "Why Cameroon?" my simple answer is "That is where the Lord sent me." And I will say here that God put that desire for Africa in me from childhood in preparation for my work there. It is a work of Love – the Love of God extended to all through the liberating mission in which I am engaged.

The first thing the Lord gave me was the name of the mission through which I was to carry out the mandate he had given me; Antigua Cameroon Love Mission (ACLM). Like the other ACLM, Tim's African Caribbean Liberation Movement!! Secondly, God gave me a scripture theme from Isaiah 61:4: "And they shall rebuild the ancient ruins, repairing cities long ago destroyed; reviving them though they have lain there many generations."

The motto of the mission is: "Reconciling, Reconnecting, Rebuilding, Reviving". Truly, as Isaiah 61 begins "The Spirit of the Lord God was upon me." He was upon me in a big way, I had a serious assignment. I was heavily anointed to announce the Good News to the suffering and afflicted. He was sending me to comfort the broken-hearted; to announce liberty to the captives and to open the eyes of the blind." It was Liberation time in Africa and it was just the beginning!

I set to work. First I found out about the need for carpenters to help in rebuilding the first church on Cameroon soil built by emancipated slaves, Rev. Joseph Merrick and many others from Jamaica. I called four men whom I'd trained in Evangelism and asked if they would go – without hesitation they said yes. So off we went in March 2005 for three months.

When we returned home I set about organizing a cultural tour of Cameroon, which took place in July that same year. I invited Sir Keithlyn Smith, author of *To Shoot Hard Labour*, to come with me to speak about what his grandfather, Papa Sammy, told him about slavery and emancipation and his observations as one who was close to that awful period in our history. He said yes. Sir Keithlyn had the run of Limbe, speaking on the radio, and sharing his views with many interested persons. His book stirred the Vice chancellor of the University of Buea to request it for their African Studies programme. I am not sure that anything was done, but I know that the flame was being fanned and the interest was contagious.

Auntie Esther Henry of traditional cooking fame was also on the tour and together we cooked up red herring, saltfish, fungie, 'cassie', cook-up-rice

with pigtail and saltbeef, pepperpot and dumplings for our hosts. The food was donated by merchants in Antigua. The food was a big hit and it was a wonderful time. The Government Delegate at the Limbe City Council, Mr. Samuel Lifanda, after a meal of cassie' and saltfish and fungie said to me "I have to come to Antigua to see who you people are. You mean that you people who we sold away want to come back to Africa to help us?"

An exhibition entitled "From Cane Fields to Independence. 1834 to 2004" showed what slavery was like for the Africans on Antigua and opened the eyes of many viewers. The result of that particular mission was that Limbe city and St. John's Antigua are sister cities today.

Chief Samuel Ekum brought five other Bimbias from the surrounding villages to meet with us and we celebrated August 1, 2005 Emancipation Day 2005 together. We had a formal ceremony where they welcomed us and I read for them the Emancipation Proclamation of 1834 which they appreciated. Mr. Lifanda said that our emancipation was also Africa's.

Cameroon Connection 2004 had opened the doors for Cameroonians to learn about their own slavery history; discussions were held on television and very soon people were searching for the ruins of the slave port. For the first time many Cameroonians learned about their own slavery history and what had transpired on African soil for over 400 years right there from the Slave Port at Bimbia, just 14 miles away from Limbe. Recently I learned that so far 137 slave ships have been traced from this port and the area has been declared a UNESCO Heritage Site.

Unfortunately Antiguanians have been slow to realize the benefits of this relationship, but eventually as more people visit and enjoy the hospitality, learn the culture, make new friends, reconnections will take place on a personal basis and real reconciliation will take place. Cameroonians are taking full advantage of the mission and are learning to liberate themselves through our various interactions.

In March of 2006 I made a definite move to do what the Lord told me to do and moved over to Cameroon for two years. In June that year I received an invitation to a meeting with His Majesty Tanefo, JeanMarie of Bamenjinda. We'd never met but he heard that there was a descendant of slaves and he wanted to meet me. The meeting was held with him alone at his palace. As soon as we sat down, he asked me to relate to him what happened to the Africans who were slaves on Antigua. I told him what I

knew. He told me that he's always wanted to meet a descendant of slaves and that his grandfathers had been engaged with the Germans in selling their own people and he was interested in reconciling and forming relationships between us.

Two weeks after, I received another invitation to meet with about 24 chiefs from various Bamileke villages. Chief Tanefo asked me to relate our story to them which I did. There were tears and welcoming words for three of us representing Africans of the Caribbean. Another sister, Joselita Tito and her niece from Guadeloupe also related their story. Joselita was a descendant of a female slave who slit her own throat when she was about to be executed for calling other slaves to resist the slave masters.

Then about another two weeks after this, Chief Tanefo invited another 72 persons. All the chiefs of 108 villages (all did not attend), government officials, musicians, artists, journalists TV, Radio, newspapers and other interested persons. That afternoon the organization for reconciliation and development in West Province and Cameroon, Memoire d'Afrique was formed. I was asked to serve as the Secretary General.

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102 The words of Marcus Mosiah Garvey formed the basis for the organiza-
... tion and as I wrote the official documents I became acutely aware of how Tim's influence and Marcus Garvey's philosophies had penetrated my thinking. The following came to mind:

"When we see ourselves as one people simply divided by circumstance, we will begin to come together for purposes of reconciliation leading to international strategies and actions towards our aims and objectives of rebuilding, restoring and reviving the continent of Africa and the nations from which we were forcibly removed, sold and enslaved." Marcus Mosiah Garvey

Earlier in 2006, at the Limbe Fire Conference, for the first time I heard a Pan African West Indian pastor, on African soil, call on the African Christians to link up with the West Indians so that we could tell them how to retain their resources and not allow them and their lands to be stolen away as ours have been. I was ecstatic. He was Rev. Dr. George Phillips from Trinidad and pastor of the St. Thomas Assemblies of God in St. Thomas, USVI.

Again the Lord spoke to me. "Set up a conference between Pan African Church Leaders of Africa and the Diaspora." I shared this with several church leaders and waited for the right time to come.

One year after that, at the next Fire conference, Rev. Dr. Nevers Mumba, who eventually became Zambian Ambassador to Canada and who is presently seeking to become President of Zambia, spoke from his heart. He said “that Africa is tired of eating the crumbs from under the table, we want to eat from the top of the table like everyone else.” He spoke of house slaves and field slaves and called for some hungry, underprivileged field slaves to join him in pressing for the dignity of Africa and deliverance from the oppressive and cruel debts which were strangling Africa’s development and inclusion in international relations.

At that same conference Bishop Bernard Nwaka called for the church to understand and seek deliverance from the chokehold of the IMF and other aid and debt servicing organizations which were causing Africa’s impoverishment. At that conference several other leaders voiced their concerns for Africa’s liberation and true independence.

A second time I heard the Lord say to me “Set up a conference of Pan African Church Leaders of Africa and the Diaspora.” Again, I discussed the conference with several church leaders whose council I valued and they all have said “Yes, move with it.” The conference is planned to take place in 2014. Intellectuals of Africa and the diaspora will also be invited to participate.

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103
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In early December I addressed the National Convention of Bethel Churches in Cameroon. I used the occasions to introduce them to Pan African thinking and God’s perspective on our experiences of slavery, colonization and exploitation and liberation. I asked two simple questions “How many nations make up the African Union?” of about 100 persons in attendance only one person put up his hand. Yet, these are Christians praying for Africa every day. I asked again “How many persons here listen to the daily, local or international news.” The same one person responded. *Later this young man came to me and said that he felt called to be a Christian politician and make a difference in his nation.* After that meeting I invited those who wanted to learn more about African and the Diaspora affairs to give their emails and I would send them information from time to time. Over 40 persons responded. Today the list is almost one hundred persons. Some have Antiguan email friends today.

The flame is growing and glowing in Africa!

I met pastors from Sierra Leone, Congo and Liberia and Cameroon, much travelled men, educated, sincere but lacking in knowledge of Af-

rica and African matters. It is like we're on two different planets. But I must interject here to say that even Caribbean church leaders are just as ignorant of history and of African affairs.

Every African Church leader on the continent and of the Diaspora should know about Sir. Dr. Hilary Beckles work on Reparations; of the work of the African Union NEPAD and the Millennium Goals; of the African Union Diaspora Committee and its recent declaration; of WADU (World African Diaspora Union); of the UNESCO *General History of Africa* Volumes. Everyone should know the map of Africa before 1884 and the Berlin conference which carved up Africa. These are matters which every African should be aware of and this awareness must begin with the church.

How then can the church speak to the needs of Africa without this knowledge? Pastors, priests, ministers lead large congregations of thousands weekly. Multiply this by the churches all over Africa and the Diaspora including North America, Central and South America and the Caribbean, United Kingdom and Europe. We're speaking of millions and millions of Africans who are in ignorance of their history and daily national occurrences which determine their lives and lively-hoods. Politics, trade, education, health, malaria, agriculture, genetically modified seeds and so on. It is this knowledge coupled with the knowledge of God that they will need in order to know how to rise above the dejectedness, feelings of hopelessness humiliation, inferiority, and neglect. The plight of Africa's young men risking their lives to go to Europe who doesn't want them, unemployment, family inadequacies and racial prejudice are social conditions which still obtain today in many, many communities and nations. Church bulletins and newsletter, sermons and Bible studies could all be used to disseminate the needed information.

The intellectuals have done commendable work, but it is not enough. Their constituency is limited mostly to other academicians and it seldom reaches to ordinary people. The Christian faith in Africa and the Diaspora has the largest constituency of all as well as the Spirit of God and the Word of God to teach, inspire and motivate people into action, into a change of thinking, but they must be educated about how God moves in their history and be mobilized to share it with others. They must know too that God has heard their cry and is moving to answer their prayers and that justice and fairness are his watchwords.

In Psalm 78 and Deuteronomy 6, God spoke to the Israelites as they came out of slavery and instructed them that they should continually recount their history so that their children would know the good things God had done for them in delivering them from slavery and bringing them into the promised land. The knowledge of our history is important and must be passed on to the younger generations with deliberate urgency. Papa Sammy dictated *To Shoot Hard Labour* for the same reason – that the young should not fall into slavery again. Tim's *Outlet* is needed in Antigua and it is needed in Africa.

This newspaper fanned the little sparks of my interest into a flame; Pan African thinking which had been budding since childhood began to take form. Marcus Garvey's philosophies stirred an intense longing which gave energy to that flame and brought about a lifelong passion for descendants to return to Africa to be part of its development in trade, education and for repatriation. The same desire also resides in many young Antiguan, Diasporans and Africans today. The flame must be fanned again.

The calling and mission of Antigua Cameroon Love Mission in Africa is to fan the flames of liberation and dignity and self-realization to a blazing fire which will engulf the church and the people of Africa. Can it happen? Yes, it can because it's God's plan. That is why Jesus came to set men free! He is the first and greatest Liberator.

Two days ago I bought a copy of *African Business* for January 2013. The headline is "How Can Africa Rule in the 21st. Century" and in large letters AFRICA'S TIME...Strangely enough the index listed the article as "How WILL Africa Rule in the 21st. Century" If anyone will take the time to read Isaiah chapters 60 and 61, they will read that thousands of years ago it was prophesied that the Spirit of the Lord would come to announce to those who have mourned that the time of God's favour to them has come.....and the day of wrath to their enemies. The Liberation Theology of the African-Americans is based on the belief that prophecies therein are also meant for Africa and Africans who were also bound in slavery's vice grip. In Latin American countries and in South Africa, Liberation theology also prompted the church to resist and win over the oppressive systems under which they lived.

AFRICA IS POOR

In 2004, The Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair, announced loud and clear at a G8 meeting "Africa is poor!" It was emblazoned across

all the papers and magazines as we passed through Gatwick Airport. What a psychological ploy to keep African people suppressed. Africa, the wealthiest continent in the world! The trouble was that they did/do not know it and those who do, don't know what to do about it!!!

I met young Cameroonians who were complaining that they were poor! I remember telling one young man to look at the ground and see what he saw. He looked at me oddly. I told him "Each leaf you see is money for you." I know he thought I was crazy then but the same young man who thus complained to me six years ago is now engaged in the trade of selling precious stones from the soil in his village. He is not poor anymore! He's found his wealth in the soil of Africa and it is there for every African. Imagine, in Revelations the gems from which the New Jerusalem is built are all found in African soil. Can Africa be poor? However, the Chinese are here digging in the same soil to take out Africa's wealth and resources.....and the Cameroonians don't know what to say about it. They need an *Outlet*.

Africans must not be ignorant anymore about our status in God's plan for his world. Ignorance is a sin and what one doesn't know can keep him in poverty and make him a laughing stock while others get rich from his ignorance. "I will not have you ignorant brethren" was Paul's word to the church. It has to be ours today also.

That is what CPACLIAD is intended to do, help the church to know and to disseminate this information, knowledge and gained wisdom to the nations. God hates ignorance, injustice, robbery and wrong and has promised that for all our suffering and humiliation he would give prosperity and everlasting joy, but if we're ignorant we won't know what is there for us to look forward to and receive.

The prophecies of Isaiah say that Africa would 'see her sons and daughters return bringing the wealth of nations with them. It's happening here. African Americans who have done the DNA test with African Ancestry have traced their origins to Cameroon. This December 90 came to meet with their African families. 20 of them from last year's visit also received titles to lands given by a businessman who was touched by their return to find their families here.

God has promised in Isaiah. 61:22: "The smallest family shall multiply into a clan; the tiny group shall be a mighty nation. I, the Lord will bring it to pass when it is time." Is it impossible? No, for nothing is impossible

with God and everything is in his plan, we cannot force it nor can we change it when it is time.

Yet, here we are today, the African Diaspora, the Sixth Region of Africa, made up of descendants of those who were enslaved on this side, over 170 million from the 12 to 50 million who left Africa's shores, and including those Africans who came out for other reasons. The tiny family has become a mighty nation and shall mightier be as the United States of Africa. Observe the results of the recent Olympics in Britain in 2012; who were the shining stars? Were they not Africans and the descendants of African slaves – from the West Indies and the USA? The scriptures say that Africa/Ethiopia will lift her hands in praise to God – did you see each one of the Africans lift their hands and eyes to praise God and give him thanks for their victories?

God has promised that he would faithfully reward his people for all their suffering and make an everlasting covenant with them in Isaiah 61:9 “Their descendants shall be known and honoured among the nations; all shall realize they are the people God has blessed.” On December 26th 2006 I asked the Lord “How will we know that the time has come for Africa to rise?” His answer was profound and strong: “Just as Hezekiah looked for a sign for deliverance from his enemy, so my people have wondered when their full delivery would come. See the sign: it will be the coming together of the Church and the Academy, representing my heart and my mind. When the two coordinate, then my people will be able to walk in the fullness I have intended for them. I do all things in my time and in my way; there is no forcing of my hand. You can only ask me and wait. I do all things in my time and I make all things beautiful in my time and in the way I have planned. Every situation there is, I have planned. In every situation, I am in control. In every situation there is, I am at work”.

Therefore, when we see God's heart, the church, and his mind, the intellectuals and academics come together, share their knowledge and work in one accord we will see the genuine rebirth that Africa seeks begin to take place.

Across this continent Christians pray without ceasing for God's hand to move and for divine guidance and deliverance in their nations. God promises to hear the prayers of his people and to answer in his time. The time has come for him to make all things beautiful. Lift up your eyes and see! Your redemption draws nigh Africa!

For too long the church has neglected the intellectuals as ungodly and worldly and for too long the intellectuals have neglected God and the church saying that it is so 'heavenly minded that it's no earthly good'. Perhaps there is mite of truth to both opinions – but it is time and God is calling both to be humble before him and each other. Put the old opinions down to ignorance on both sides and let us do all we can to set relations right. Africa's future depends on obedience to that.

The *Outlet* fanned the flame in Antigua and so many of us came out of the ignorance of our history and other matters which were adversely affecting us. Today, if indeed Tim's memory and the *Outlet* meant anything, we have a God-given responsibility to bring others out also. Africa and the Diaspora await us.

Let the Spirit of the Lord be upon you to do the work. Fan the Flame!!!
Hail Tim! You did well and your labour was not in vain....Aluta Continua. The flame burns brightly in Africa and we will see Africa's Time, in God's time, come to pass. Amen.

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THE SOCIALIST LEGACY OF TIM HECTOR

Paget Henry

Since the turn of the 20th century, Caribbean people have been thinking of the economic transformation of their colonial societies through two primary lenses: those of capitalism and socialism. The former was seen as a modernization of the plantation capitalism of the colonial era. The latter was viewed as an alternative to these two forms of capitalism. Antigua and Barbuda has been an integral part of this tradition of seeing itself, and the larger region, as being located between these two alternative poles of capitalism and socialism. However, since the closing decade of the 20th century, the socialist alternative in the region and abroad has been in a state of steep decline and collapse. Since the close of the first decade of the 21st century, the capitalist alternative, after gathering new strength through strategies of neo-liberal globalization, is still in the process of recovering from a major financial meltdown that has come to be known as the Great Recession of 2008. It is the convergence between these two formerly alternative systems that followed their periods of crisis, which defines the current conjuncture that we are muddling through. The focus of this paper is impact of this ambiguous conjuncture on the Antiguan and Barbuda Left, and in particular the socialist legacy that it inherited from Tim Hector.

When I think of the socialist legacy of the Caribbean, I think of the revolutionary socialism George Padmore, Hubert Harrison, CLR James, Cyril Briggs, Claudia Jones, W.A. Domingo and others. This part of the legacy was forged in Caribbean diasporic communities in the early decades of the twentieth century. I also think of the Fabian or democratic socialism of Norman Manley, Eric Williams, V.C. Bird, McChesney George, Novelle Richards, and others, which these individuals attempted to implement in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Tim Hector's place in this legacy of Caribbean socialism was his central role in reviving the revolutionary socialism of CLR James in the 1960s, which came to be known as the Caribbean New Left. Thus in the political history of Antigua and Barbuda, two types of socialism have taken root: first, a black democratic socialism that was introduced by V.C. Bird and others in the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (Henry, 2009); and second, a Jamesian socialist tradition that was introduced by Tim Hector and the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM).

Like many other territories in the region, the birth of this Jamesian or Caribbean New Left tradition of socialism in Antigua and Barbuda was triggered by the imploding of the earlier Fabian tradition, under the weight of its internal contradictions and limitations. These performative difficulties resulted in a series of gradual moves towards forms of foreign-dominated state capitalism as solutions to the crisis tendencies of Caribbean Fabian socialism. In addition to not clearly articulating the nature of these crisis tendencies, these particular state capitalist solutions, Antigua and Barbuda included, reinforced white economic control without solving problems of high unemployment, poverty, and racial inequality that were leftovers from the colonial period.

Consequently, the intellectual and political challenge to the Caribbean New Left was a new formulation of the socialist project and a political practice by which it could be implemented. Hector made this clear in his review of my book, *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua*: “it is for this reason that ACLM exists, called up by history to remove a century old blockage” (1985:7). Both the objective and subjective conditions for such a reformulation were present. The strength of the dissatisfaction with the receding colonial order was still very palpable in the hearts and minds of many in Antigua and Barbuda – and across the Caribbean. Also very palpable was the growing feeling that the desired national development was moving further away rather than closer under the leadership of the post-independence regimes. In other words, there was a widening gap between popular projections of self into the future and where national development was going with the state capitalist turn.

In response to these objective and subjective conditions, individuals on the Left in Antigua and Barbuda began producing “black power” or “black nationalist” critiques of V.C. Bird’s tourism-centered state capitalist response to the crises of his earlier black democratic socialism. Individuals such as Barry Stevens, Mali Olatunji, Lestroy Merchant began criticizing what they perceived to be its unsatisfactory cultural ethos, its racial attitudes and anti-worker biases and practices. Many from this group joined together and organized themselves into a co-operative – The Outlet Cooperative Venture. Their primary goal was to produce the journal, *Outlet*, and to further articulate their views of an alternative to Bird’s state capitalism. In the co-operative spirit, articles were written more often by a collective “We”, than they were individually authored. But in the leadership were clearly Barry Stevens, Lestroy Merchant Everett Christian and Fitzroy Christian.

What was most striking about the group's alternative vision were its roots in the long co-operative tradition of Antigua and Barbuda, and the wider Caribbean. This was a co-operative tradition with roots in West Africa, which was revived during the post-slavery period. It is also important to note here that this was also the economic tradition that V.C. Bird drew on in his initial black democratic socialist alternative to colonial capitalism. In explaining their return to the co-operative tradition, the *Outlet* group wrote: "a co-operative is owned by those who use it. Its purpose is to provide SAVINGS not profits. It differs from commercial enterprise in that the aim is not to get the highest possible remuneration for capital but to SERVE THE INTEREST OF ITS MEMBERS" (1969:1).

Out of this body of co-operative ideas, the *Outlet* group argued for developing a strong co-operative sector for the Antiguan and Barbudan economy: "time and again, the need for co-operation and the institution of co-operative business in Black Communities to establish a balance to the private business as far as the people are concerned has been stressed... We have suggested before and we suggest again that we all look to co-operatives for we believe therein lies our salvation, our freedom from the exploitation of the masses" (1969:1). In contrast to firms in the capitalist sector, the *Outlet* group saw the co-operative as "an institution with human aims and spiritual goals" (1969:2). However, they did not see this co-operative sector as replacing the capitalist sector. Rather, they saw it as "a counterforce to monopolistic practices" coming from both the state and private sectors. In short, their alternative view of the economy was a three sector one, which as we will see was quite similar to Bird's original black democratic socialism. The *Outlet* Co-operative then did a critique of the tourist industry in Antigua and Barbuda, and went on to list a number of enterprises that had been co-operatively organized. These included banks, credit unions, agricultural marketing, grocery stores, housing and health services.

Tim Hector and the *Outlet* Co-operative

From the above, it should be clear that before Hector's 1967 return to Antigua and Barbuda from studying in Canada, the foundations of a black co-operative critique of Bird's state capitalism were being laid. It was coming from deep within the political imaginations of members of the middle and lower strata of Antiguan and Barbudan society. In spite of being only partially formulated, its similarity in broad outline with Bird's original black democratic socialism point to some of the well-established categories and ideals of the popular political imagination. After joining the *Outlet* Co-operative, Hector quickly ascended to the position

of leader. His major contribution as leader was to give this emerging black co-operative alternative a more rigorous and comprehensive socialist reformulation. This he did by recasting it within the categorical framework of the Jamesian tradition of socialism (Henry, 1992:239-50).

For James, socialism was first and foremost the popular institution-alizing of the creative visions and projected alternatives of the future produced by the masses of the people. The creative responses of workers to their laboring condition, their oppositional projections of self in response to their de-humanization are the foundations of his socialism. Its primary aim is to find the answers and alternatives to the problems of this class that are embedded in these creative visions and self-projections. For James, the latter were the textual foundations of socialism. For Hector, socialism was "the institutionalization of people's power, over production and politics" (1978:3). It was in this Jamesian spirit that Hector read these initial articulations that were coming out of the Outlet Co-operative, and thus saw them as indicators and barometers of the political sentiments in large segments of the population. The Jamesian recasting provided by Hector changed significantly the political economy of the black co-operative alternative.

In filling out its political dimensions, Hector reframed them in terms of more direct forms of democracy that would give the people much greater control over elected representatives and much more active involvement in the day to day affairs of the state. The people would be organized in assemblies or popular councils. These councils would have the power to recall representatives, and to intervene effectively in cases of mis-representation by elected officials. In other words, Hector proposed a system of government in which real power was located in popular councils as the alternative to the parliamentary system of representative government in which elected officials often abused the power and trust given to them by the masses.

The economic dimensions of the black co-operative alternative were refashioned along similar lines. The earlier three-sector model remained the core of Hector's economy. This was going to be a national economy, but not one in which huge government bureaucracies controlled everything. Rather, it was going to be a national economy in which there would be "the direct voice of the people in the organization and development of every major enterprise that is the property of the nation" (1978:3). At the center of this popular involvement in the economy must be the working class, as dominant agent and major entrepreneur.

In the state sector there would be a planning committee, “made up of technicians, workers and farmers” (1978:3). However, this was definitely not going to be a centrally planned economy. The goal of this planning was to launch and coordinate the transition from the neo-colonial/tourist economy to the new national economy, and how this state sector would relate concretely to the private and co-operative sectors. However, in both the co-operative and state sectors, assemblies or popular council models of governance would be introduced. For example, “ACLM will organize large co-operatives on government agricultural land, with state farms in each zone to give support and technical guidance to each co-operative” (1978:3). To further support these co-operatives, an Agricultural and Savings Bank would also be established, as well as a co-operatively run marketing company.

In the area of industrial development, the ACLM’s plan was “to establish industries, manufacturing industries, which have a direct linkage with primary production in Antigua, e.g. textiles, food processing, pottery, etc. These agro-industries would be located in rural areas, to reverse the steady drift towards the capital and thus avoid the insoluble problems created by that drift. In the commercial sector, the planning committee would encourage the formation of worker controlled co-operative import-export enterprises with some state owned ones to support and guide them as in the case of the agricultural co-operatives (1978:3). Through these linkages between agriculture, manufacturing and commerce, the ACLM hoped to eliminate unemployment even if it required the imposing of an unemployment levy. To further support workers and farmers in these productive and political ventures, Hector called for significant expansions in the educational and training opportunities available to the members of these classes. Drawing on the work of Caribbean economist, Sir Arthur Lewis, he called for an appropriate set of agricultural and technical institutes to the support the productive activities of the masses in Antigua and Barbuda (1977:6).

Thus workers and farmers, through their assemblies, would be in charge of significant areas of production, making key decisions, regarding output, wages, benefits, unemployment, the distribution of the surplus and its investment. Indeed these were the councils or assemblies that would in most cases also have the power to recall poorly performing political representatives from state offices. Thus Hector’s critique of Libya’s experiment with direct democracy was that its assemblies were “not based on production, but on residence” (1982:9). For Hector, socialism was the unity of working people organized in associations of co-operative producers, which clearly established the control of workers over both politics and economics.

From the Jamesian standpoint, a key question arises here: how accurate was this socialist formulation as an interpretation of the creative responses and oppositional self-projections of the workers and farmers of Antigua and Barbuda? It certainly was an insightful and plausible reading of these popular political sentiments, and a brilliant formulation of them into a plan of social transformation. But given the fallibility of all interpretative readings, it is by the effectiveness of its practice and the response of workers to it that we must judge this reading. Looked at in the light of its practice, this initial model went through a number of changes, which suggest that it might have been a little too big for the hands and feet of Antiguan and Barbudan workers; that is, when they tried it on there was not a close enough fit for immediate use. The workers of Antigua and Barbuda were certainly engaged and tempted by this program of the ACLM, but never made it their own. Also important here is the fact that, being more the scholar, Hector did not have the charisma and closeness to the masses that Maurice Bishop or Michael Manley had.

Over the years, the key changes and adjustments that Hector and the ACLM made to their socialist program were in regard to how immediately and how completely would the workers of Antigua and Barbuda be able to take direct democratic control of the state and substantial areas of the economy. From the more immediate position of the late 1960s and 1970s, Hector and the ACLM shifted to a less immediate one. This latter position called for the building of the national economy and the politics of the postcolonial state on the notions of mass party democracy developed by James in his book, *Party Politics in the West Indies*. This less immediate reformulation introduced a preparatory period during which party life was to be built around cultivating practices of direct democracy in both politics and economics (1983:1-3). The transition to the earlier vision of direct democratic control in politics and economics would have to wait a while, at least until the next major upsurge by the working class. Hence the turn after 1980 to the electoral route to power and away from the idea of coming to power on the wave of an insurrectionary upsurge by workers and farmers.

Unlike the case of Maurice Bishop in Grenada or Michael Manley in Jamaica, the Caribbean New Left never came to power in Antigua and Barbuda, even though they tried. In other words, the ACLM never acquired the quantum of power needed to attempt a socialist transition. Unable to break the grip of the two major parties on state power, Hector and the ACLM were forced to further rethink their positions in the face of declining popularity and influence. This rethinking led

to a major split in the party as some including Hector decided to form a coalition with the opposition United Progressive Party, headed by Baldwin Spencer, while others remained opposed. Needless to say, the split further weakened the Left. This political decline marked the beginning of the turning of ideological tables such that soon it would be this New Left Socialism and not state capitalism that would be asked to justify itself. However, in order to fully grasp this crisis of Antiguan and Barbudan socialism, we must take a quick look at the collapse of Jamaican and Grenadian socialism, African socialism, and state socialism in China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to see how they match up against the experience of socialist decline in Antigua and Barbuda.

The Collapse of Caribbean, African, Chinese and Russian Socialism

In addition to Bird's firm grip on the reigns of state power in Antigua and Barbuda, events in the surrounding socialist world began moving the balance power in adverse directions for Hector and the ACLM. First, there was the 1980 electoral defeat of Michael Manley's democratic socialist regime in Jamaica. Among the many and complex reasons for this defeat was the economic difficulties of the regime and Manley's decision to turn to the IMF. The Jamaican defeat was followed in 1983 by the tragic implosion and collapse of the socialist revolution in Grenada. In this case, it was the internal political clashes and how they were handled that led to this destructive outcome. This violent end to a very promising socialist experiment devastated the image and credibility of the Left in the hearts and minds of the Caribbean masses. It was an implosion that has left deep scars, many of which have not yet healed. Also contributing to the changing image and political position of Hector and the ACLM was the defeat in 1990 of the popular Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua, which had received a lot of attention in the wider Caribbean.

Also making their own contributions to the weakening position of the ACLM were the economic difficulties that had begun to overwhelm some well-known socialist experiments in Africa. The most important of these were the Ujamaa socialism of Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, and the socialist experiments of the revolutionary party, Frelimo in Mozambique. Tanzania in particular attracted a lot of Leftists from both North America and the Caribbean, including Walter Rodney and Clive Thomas. In the cases of both Mozambique and Tanzania, the regimes were overwhelmed by economic difficulties such as shortages, which forced them, like Jamaica, to turn to the IMF and to undergo a capitalist restructuring.

In short, the evidence from other developing countries where socialist regimes had come to power pointed to serious internal and external difficulties standing in the way of realizing these alternatives to capitalism.

As if these difficulties of Caribbean and African socialism were not enough, the late 1980s brought the dramatic collapse of Soviet and Eastern European state socialism. These were indeed momentous events with far-reaching implications for the credibility of the Left in Antigua and Barbuda, as well as the wider Caribbean. These tremors within the socialist bloc began even earlier with 1972 start of détente between President Nixon and Chairman Mao, which paved the way for the market reforms of Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping. Were there any similarities in the collapse of Caribbean and African socialism and the ones in China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe? Indeed such was the impact of these dramatic events that many quite rightly began to ask: "what is left of the Left?" This, in short, was the larger context that resulted in Caribbean New Left socialism finding itself on the defensive and having to justify its claims to power and popular support.

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116
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Hector's answer to the above question was simple and direct. He was highly critical of responses like Francis Fukuyama's end of history and victory of liberalism thesis, Margaret Thatcher's "there is no alternative" (TINA) thesis or Samuel Huntington's view that the collapse of state socialism would be followed by a "clash of civilizations", mainly with Islam. Hector based his rejection of these views on the persisting problems of labor's exploitation and alienation by capital in the post-cold war period. These objectively and subjectively impoverishing experiences would continue to generate resistance and thus the projecting of alternatives by workers, which would provide precious substance for new socialist alternatives. In short, all of the major problems of capitalism – exploitation, poverty, periodic crises, etc. – would continue after the fall of socialism in Jamaica, Grenada, Tanzania, Mozambique, China, Russia and Eastern Europe.

Although Hector was certain of another major crisis of Western capitalism, he did not live to experience the Great Recession of 2008. This certainty regarding another major crisis of Western capitalism came from many sources. One in particular was the 1985 book by the Indian economist Ravi Batra, *The Great Depression of 1990*. Batra based his predictions on rising levels of inequality in the West, and on the growth of high-risk investors, such as Allen Stanford, major banks and insurance companies such as Lehman Brothers and AIG. Although he was off by a

decade or so, Batra's book made a strong impression on Hector. It helped to confirm his belief that the period following the dramatic global collapse of socialism would be a return to more "savage" forms of capitalism with higher levels of exploitation, greater inequality and more dramatic periods of crisis.

The dramatic unfolding in 2008 of such a finance-driven crisis, which took Western capitalism to the brink of collapse, was a game-changing event. To avoid complete collapse, Western leaders had to make dramatic turns towards thicker forms of state capitalism, which have left their economies in the hands of their central banks with their policies of low interest rates, quantitative easing and stress tests. These banks, along with other government agencies, have been the chief organizers of the trillion dollar rescue missions that have pulled Western economies back from the brink. Figuring out when central banks will end these life-support measures has been one of the biggest concerns in the lives of major Western banks and corporations. It is important that this crisis of Western capitalism should not be seen in isolation, but rather as one of a series of financial crises around the world that followed the globalization of financial markets. These crises include the 1980s Latin American debt crisis, 1990s financial meltdown in Jamaica, and Asian financial crisis of the 1990s.

The form of state capitalism to which Western neoliberal economies turned was clearly quite different from that to which Bird turned following the crisis of his black democratic socialism. But what they shared in common was an un-prescribed mixing of principles of economic organization. As the collapse of socialist regimes in the 1980s pointed to their major crisis tendencies, the Great Recession of 2008 pointed equally clearly to the return of old crisis tendencies in Western economies now that many of the Keynesian supports had been removed during the post-cold war period. The exploding of these crisis tendencies and the state-directed manner in which they were contained and dysfunctional markets repaired, soon made clear some of what was still left in the Left.

However, in spite of such potent reminders, the Left cannot extend its correctness on the crisis tendencies of capitalism to the correctness of its socialist alternative. The experiences of the 1980s have made it quite clear that the time has come for the Left to fully acknowledge and work on the crisis tendencies of its socialist alternative. These must now be boldly and transparently addressed if the Left is to be once again a credible political force. In other words, as capitalism has had to explain its turn to the

state when its markets go into disarray, socialism has now to explain its even more dramatic turns to markets when its central planning by the state has been overwhelmed by shortages, slow growth, and other economic problems. This dramatic turn to markets has occurred in China, Russia, Eastern Europe, Vietnam and most recently Cuba. In the cases of these socialist economies, the resulting forms of state capitalism have been quite different from the state-directed measures that have rescued Western capitalism but have been closer to the form that rescued Bird's black democratic socialism,

The Crisis of Antigua and Barbudan Socialism

If there is anything that the above experiences of socialist regimes and movements make clear, it is the fact that implementing socialism is a very difficult and complex undertaking. Yet many on the Left have been reluctant to fully acknowledge these difficulties, or the crisis tendencies to which socialist orders are prone. In many cases, failures are attributed to the intentions, absent capabilities, or betrayals of leaders, while ignoring the many technical and structural difficulties faced by young socialist orders. Marx, Engels, and Lenin did not solve all of the problems associated with the building of socialist orders. Indeed, it would have been impossible for them to have foreseen the major ones with which we are now confronted. Hence the very pressing need for us to face these problems honestly and to address them with all of our intellectual and political resources. Thus from the point of view of this paper, any account of the global crises of socialism must begin with factors that overwhelmed the two socialist movements here in Antigua and Barbuda: V.C. Bird's attempts in the 1940s and Tim Hector's in the 1960s.

Drawing on Bird's experiences three factors strike us immediately. First, it should be clear that leaders of socialist movements and young socialist states must accumulate and sustain a sufficient quantum of power, popular and institutional, in order to undertake the transition in spite of resistance and push back from established centers of capitalist power. Without such a strong political position, the experiment will most likely be prematurely stopped by the powers of the old order.

Second, given the additional experiences of Tanzania, Jamaica, China, and the Soviet Union, it should be clear that the specific crisis tendencies of centrally planned and co-operatively organized economies can lead to the collapse of these socialist experiments. In particular, the problem of shortages, poor coordination between different sectors of the economy, and maintaining the growth rates necessary to meet the increasing

demands of members or consumers. At this particular juncture in the history of socialism, these problems need to be anticipated and met with probable solutions. In short, the economics of socialism has to be established on new foundations if we are to move forward on the waves of future upsurges.

Third and finally, particularly in the light of the experiences of Grenada, the ACLM, and the Soviet Union, it should also be clear that the politics of socialism has to be established on new foundations and practices. To start, Grenada made clear the crises of political accumulation and competition that can develop around ideological differences and their potentially explosive nature. This set of differences is particularly important in periods of transition where rules for leadership and regime change are themselves undergoing change. From the experiences of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, it should be crystal clear that an authoritarian state cannot be the basis of the politics of socialism. From the experiences of the ACLM, we have learned to pause and look carefully at the real agency of which workers are capable before assuming that the masses in a given society are ready for an immediate transition to forms of direct democracy. This is an extended debate that I have been having with my friends and fellow James scholars, Matthew Quest and Ellorton Jeffers, a former Vice Chairman of the ACLM. In short, the political economy of socialism must take its cues and not stray too far from the collective self-projections of workers. These must be its contents and foundations. As workers are always projecting themselves into the future, there will always be content for us to build on and articulate. Thus the present challenge is to do that in the present moment with all of its contradictions and ambiguities.

In its earliest and most comprehensive phase, Bird's 1940s attempt at building a black democratic socialist Antigua and Barbuda was centered on the nationalizing of the sugar industry – including its lands – and reorganizing it on a co-operative basis. However, although his socialist movement had a strong popular base, it never acquired the additional elements of institutional power within the colonial context, which was needed for such a major change. As a result, the suggestions for nationalizing the sugar industry had to be dropped when this idea lost the support of democratic socialists in the colonial office in London. However, the significance of this political challenge was not fully grasped by the New Left in Antigua and Barbuda, as our focus was on Bird's character and intentions and much less on the challenges of implementing socialism.

Hector recognized the radical nature of Bird's early socialism, noting that, "V.C. Bird from 1943 to 1962 was a socialist in the grand manner" (2002:9). However, following such statements of recognition were oft-repeated statements on Bird's "betrayal" of his socialist legacy and of the workers (1987:6-7). This thesis of betrayal was present in some of Hector's last written essays from his sick bed in Cuba. In one of these he wrote: "Bird's betrayal, his climb down from public ownership of the commanding heights was not accomplished overnight" (2002:9). Hector then proceeded to argue that this betrayal was the result of Bird allowing himself to be seduced by the titles conferred on him by the British and the capital that the Americans were pouring into Antigua and Barbuda's tourist industry. In other words, Hector attempted to explain Bird's turn to state capitalism without reference to any of the difficulties that Bird and other socialist leaders had been experiencing with the implementing of socialism, and may have led them to turn to capitalism. Whether or not there was such a betrayal, we cannot let it obscure this crucial issue of whether or not Bird had secured the critical quantum of power needed for executing a transition of such magnitude.

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120
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Equally important were the lessons that the New Left in Antigua and Barbuda failed to learn from the economic difficulties Bird experienced with his co-operative and state-run enterprises. In addition to his plans to reorganize the sugar industry on a co-operative basis, Bird also attempted to build a state-run industrial sector as an integral part of his socialized Antiguan and Barbudan economy. This industrial sector was conceived as an extension of the agricultural/peasant sector. Arrowroot starch, cornmeal, and cottonseed oil factories were established, which were to be supplied by increased peasant output of arrowroot, corn and cottonseed. The idea here was to orient the economy more towards increasing peasant output, improving agriculture and the material well-being of peasants.

These state-run industrial undertakings failed for a number of reasons at the technical, managerial and productive levels. In the case of the cornmeal factory, the primary problem was the quality of the meal. With the cottonseed oil factory, the major difficulty was that of meeting projected volumes of output. In the case of the arrowroot starch factory, it was the unreliability of peasant supplies of arrowroot. This was a well-intentioned industrial program, designed to empower agricultural and industrial workers, and to further socialize the economy (Henry, 1985:108-21). Yet by the 1960s, this plan from the 1940s had just about collapsed as it morphed into a tourism-dominated form of state capitalism. Exactly how

this happened was not something that the New Left examined in detail as we attributed it to Bird's betrayal of his socialist heritage. Today, we need to go beyond this betrayal argument and look more carefully at some of the stubborn structural and performative difficulties.

The pressing need for this detailed study of the failures of Bird's experiments becomes obvious when we look retrospectively at the socialist program of the ACLM. They both spring from a common co-operative root that is deep within us as a people of West African descent. It is this common root that accounts for the striking similarities between these two socialist programs. To concretize the co-operative model of a socialist economy outlined above, the ACLM established its East Antigua Commune and the West Antigua Co-operative Farm. In an interview with Harold Lovell, a former Vice Chairman of the ACLM, Anthonyson King, the West Farm's manager, said: "Though we are aware that a new society will create a new man, the farm and the organization of work demonstrates the possible. Further, it is from experiences in this type of activity that people acquire the skills to run a country" (Lovell, 1982:13).

However, in spite of getting off to a good and widely publicized start, these cooperative experiments were overtaken by economic difficulties, which have not been clearly analyzed by its members. When interviewed, one gets widely differing accounts of the causes of their eventual collapse. From my perspective, there were definite production problems, which gave rise to issues of steady growth, and thus of the ability of the co-operatives to support its members as they acquired growing families.

Given this outcome, as well as the co-operatives encouraged by Bird, the need for a much better understanding of the economics of co-operative enterprises, their growth problems in particular, should be crystal clear. This new understanding should include careful studies of co-operatives in Antigua and Barbuda that have failed and those that have succeeded. Probably the best-known and most successful co-operative in our country is the Community First Co-operative Credit Union. This co-operative began in the 1950s as the Antigua and Barbuda Teachers Credit Union, and has expanded to include other professionals in order to secure continued growth. Any future mobilization of the Antiguan and Barbudan Left must include this firmer grounding in the economics of co-operatives, as well as state sector economics. These lessons do not apply to just the case of Antigua and Barbuda. On the contrary, they can help us to understand the global crisis of socialism and the key factors in getting out of it.

The Crisis of Socialism: A Global Perspective

As the crises of Antigua and Barbuda capitalism have consistently reflected those of global capitalism, it should be clear from the foregoing that the current collapse of the socialist movement in our country reflects the global condition of socialism. As already noted, the features of the global crisis of socialism are the dramatic turns that socialist regimes have had to make towards markets in order to revive their economies. It is important to note that this trend began in the third world countries such as Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Tanzania and Mozambique to be followed by China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

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122
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In the case of China, it is now clear that the 1978 market reforms of Deng Xiaoping were motivated by major economic problems that had been slowing China's growth. In particular, both he and Zhou Enlai became quite dissatisfied with the Soviet-style project of centrally planning the entire Chinese economy, and thus contributing to the historic "Sino-Soviet split". More specifically Deng was dissatisfied with the outcomes of state-managed programs of industrialization as well as the state-run collectivization of agriculture. Within a few years of introducing these policies, Mao and his comrades had a massive agricultural crisis on their hands in addition to major industrial shortages due to inter-industry imbalances. These crises set the stage for the break with the Soviet model, the deterioration of relations between the countries, and the putting out of diplomatic feelers to the U.S. at a time when President Nixon was very interested in "opening" China to Western business interests, and having it as an ally against the Soviet Union. These developments set the stage for the conflicts of the period known as "the Cultural Revolution" out of which Deng emerged as leader and started his market reforms. The intricate details of this complex coming together of geo-political and economic forces are still emerging, but they are extremely important for any understanding of the current collapsed state of socialism.

In the case of the Soviet Union, we can identify similar sets of growth inhibiting problems that contributed to the re-introduction markets. Even clearer than in the case of China, were problems associated with the mathematics of central planning, difficulties with state-run collectivized agriculture, major shortages in many industrial goods, the neglect of services, and mass consumer demand (Aganbegyan, 1988:1-5). By the 1970s, the failure to address these problems severely reduced the growth rate of the Soviet economy. It was the sharp worsening of these trends in the 1980s that led to Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of the reforms of uskorenje (acceleration), perestroika (restructuring), and glasnost (open-

ing). Perestroika in particular contained the major market and co-operative reforms that Gorbachev had in mind, while glasnost contained the political ones. These reforms, together with the earlier Chinese rejection of the Stalinist turn its revolution took, marked the end of the economics and politics of the classic Soviet model. What then would be the new politics and economics of the socialist alternative of workers in power? These reforms were not carried out, as Gorbachev was overthrown by Boris Yeltsin, whose project was the complete return of the Soviet Union to capitalism and the restoration of old Russia. Thus we had the dramatic fall of the Soviet Union.

Similar factors were also behind the collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe, the re-introduction of markets and their turning to the capitalist West, many joining the European Union and in the case of Poland, NATO. But for us in the Caribbean, the case that is particularly instructive are the market reforms of Raul Castro in Cuba, and the attempts of the Obama Administration to normalize relations with that Caribbean nation. The 2011 *Draft Economic and Social Policy Guidelines* of the Cuban Communist Party is a document that specifies the areas of the Cuban economy that will be re-privatized and function on market principles. Consequently, this is a set of reforms that can be usefully compared to those of Deng and Gorbachev, and also to the internal changes that the ACLM made to its original program. The information from such comparisons would be vital for grasping where socialist policies and programs are at the current moment. It is still much too early to say what will be the outcomes of the reforms in Cuba. The Chinese have become quite influential in Cuba, and the latter's reforms seem to be closer to the Chinese model than the Russian. However, my guess is that we will be seeing a form of market socialism with distinct Cuban characteristics.

These three cases of reform make clear the global features of the current crisis of socialism as well as the unique characteristics and problems of New Left socialism in Antigua and Barbuda. These global features point to the emergence of hybrid political economies that mix principles of partial planning, governed or restricted markets, and co-operatives. These mixed political economies will be with us for a while as we work our way through the after life of both the Great Recession and the fall of state socialism. Between the fall of Lehman Brothers, the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of Deng's China, we have the major reference points for the world in which we now live. It is a world of convergence and rapprochement, which has brought these formerly opposed types of societies into unexpected relations of cooperation and complementarity.

The most striking case of such convergence is that between the China and the U.S. The symbiotic relationship that has developed between these two economies has been both deep and far-reaching. China has become America's biggest creditor and source of cheap labor, while America has become the largest market for Chinese industrial goods. This symbiosis is now so deep that some scholars have referred to it as "Chimerica" (Karabel, 2009). In his 1947 book, *The Invading Socialist Society*, CLR James explored the implications of a period of crisis-driven convergence between Western capitalism and state socialism such as this one. This tendency for both market capitalism and state socialism to move towards each other in times of crisis was at the core of what James called state capitalism. He thought that such a state capitalist convergence was most likely to occur between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Such a convergence, whether with China or the Soviet Union, James thought would be a most unfortunate development as it would set back the struggle for a people's socialism at least forty years. In any credible account of the current weakened position of labor and the collapsed state of socialism, this Chimerican convergence along with Western policies of neoliberal globalization must occupy major places. The question that arises here for all inheritors of Hector's socialist legacy is: can this legacy survive this period of neo-liberal globalization and the state capitalist convergences between a crisis-ridden neoliberal capitalism and an equally crisis-ridden state socialism? Before we can answer this question we must take a brief look at neo-liberal globalization and Hector's response to it.

Hector, Globalization and Socialism

Departing from us in 2002, Hector's last writings caught only the onset of this period of unprecedented state capitalist convergence. These writings began with his responses to the fall of the Soviet Union, his rejection of "the end of history" and TINA theses, and ended with some detailed analyses of the phenomenon of neo-liberal globalization. This process of globalization began in the early 1980s as a response of Western capitalism to rising wages and the increasing power of organized labor at home, and also to intense industrial competition from Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. This increased competition saw these Asian countries capturing sizeable shares of U.S. markets without the U.S. being able to make compensatory inroads into other markets abroad. Neo-liberal globalization has been a Western effort to negotiate, through the WTO, the removal of all trade barriers in commodity and financial markets. These included systems of protected markets that had been left over from the

period of European empires, upon which Caribbean sugar and bananas still depended. The West, particularly the U.S., was confident that in this more open system they would gain or regain needed market shares.

Although the process of globalization remains incomplete, the area in which it has allowed the West to gain significant market shares overseas has been finance. This was the change that led to the financialization of the American and British economies in particular. This globalization of financial markets led to the creation and growth of stock markets around the world including the Eastern Caribbean Stock Market on which shares of Antigua and Barbuda companies are traded. This growth in stock markets increased dramatically the mobility of capital as it now crossed national borders entering and leaving stock markets at will. Further, both in the West and abroad, this globalization of financial markets fundamentally altered the nature of banking, such that banks would make much more money from betting on the changing values of currencies than lending for investment purposes. The result of all of these changes has been financial capitalism on a scale even Lenin could never have imagined. The best image of these globalized financial markets is still that of the character Arthur Jensen in the 1976 film, *Network*. He declared: “there are no nations! There are peoples! There are no Russians! There is no Third World! There is no West! There is only one holistic system of systems, one vast interwoven, interacting, multivariate, multi-national domain of dollars – petro-dollars, electro-dollars, reichmarks, rubles, pounds, and shekels. It is this international system of currency that determines the totality of life on this planet”. To this globalized system of currencies, Jensen could have added the Eastern Caribbean, Jamaican, Barbadian and Trinidadian dollars.

Other markets, such as those for agriculture, shoes or educational training, have not been as completely globalized as finance, but are more so now than they were in 1980. Thus, although globalization remains an incomplete project, it has provided the economic framework in which Western economies have been able to capture shares of overseas markets in banking, real estate development, tourist development, consumer and government debt. Together with the convergence with China, Lloyd Best, in typical fashion, likened this globalization policy response by the West to a googlie that Caribbean leaders and masses have not yet found a way to hit out of the park.

At the same time that Hector rejected the TINA and “end of history” theses, he also expressed serious concern about this googlie of globalization that the West was now bowling. Like Best, he knew that it would

clean bowl, with stumps down, most of the Caribbean governments that were at the wicket of state. This deep concern of Hector was very clearly expressed in at least three “Fan the Flame” columns, “What is Globalization? Why Socialism?” (2002) “Globalization and Us” (2001), and “From Chattel of Globalization to Globalized Chattel” (1999). In these three essays, Hector identified six crucial features of Western globalization. First, it did not begin in the 1980s. On this point, he noted: “we in the Caribbean are the first products of the first stage of globalization, which obviously did not begin yesterday. For, since the 15th century, we were brought here from Africa, through the suffering and death of the Middle Passage” (2001:8). The neo-liberal restructuring of the 1980s was thus the latest installation in the global project of the West. Hector suggested that this phase of “globalization is a phenomenon with which we must contend for at least, I suspect, the next two decades” (2001:8). In short, there was not going to be a quick fix available to us.

Second, Hector saw neoliberal globalization as the work of the 1000 top Western corporations, who, in his view, controlled the WTO, the OECD, many presidents and prime ministers. At the heart of this attempt to open up global markets, Hector saw an effort to further “the concentration of capital in the hands of fewer and fewer global corporations. At the same time, he saw this more intense concentration bringing with it “the degradation of the earth’s eco-system all over the globe, the growth of inequality, with the rich getting richer and the poor more impoverished, with the world itself more impoverished in terms of community values and commitments” (2001:9).

Third, Hector was convinced that the financialization of many economies produced by neo-liberal globalization would make the major economies of the world more unstable and prone to the erupting of periodic crises – recessions and depressions. We have already made reference to the influence of the Indian economist Ravi Batra on Hector regarding this point. Further, Hector saw the financialization of the Antiguan and Barbudan economy as bringing it well within the orbit of this new set of rolling financial crisis tendencies moving through the global economy. In 1990, he saw three threatening clouds on our financial horizon. The first was personal indebtedness: “in the boom years, personal loans in Antigua leap-frogged from \$EC 125.2 million in 1985 to \$215 million in 1989 without any significant increase in productive capacity” (1990:10). Second, was a devaluation of the Eastern Caribbean dollar that he thought would follow the neo-liberal ending of protected markets for sugar in St. Kitts and bananas in the Windward Islands: “this devaluation

will dramatically increase inflation without the corresponding capacity to increase wages. This devaluation will not make Antigua's exports more competitive. The fact is, we have no export sector worth the name" (1990:11). Third and finally was state indebtedness: "in 1988 Antigua was \$68.3 million in arrears on its debt payments... Antigua is caught in debt-trap. Its credit-worthiness is non-existent. Yet it needs to borrow. Yet it cannot pay. We are in a bind" (1990:14). The Great Recession of 2008 would not have taken him completely by surprise, and neither would have the financial meltdown it produced in Antigua and Barbuda – a meltdown that took us to the IMF.

Fourth, Hector saw globalization as leading to an unprecedented era of global finance capitalism, such as we described above. Thus he noted that in 1975, nearly 80% of foreign exchange transactions were connected to the real economy, while in 1998 that number fallen to 2.5% (1999:8). It was as a miniscule of miniscule part of this 2.5% of foreign exchange transactions that he located the financial transactions that support the Antiguan and Barbudan economy. In the period since the Great Recession, the big banks that markets had condemned for failure, along with Lehman Brothers, are now bigger than before the crisis and their rescuing by European and American governments and central banks. Thus a widening gap between the financial sector and "the real economy" continues to be a striking feature of both Western economies and our own.

Fifth, Hector saw globalization as greatly increasing the power of capital to exploit and extract surplus value from workers. With capital being able to cross national borders at will while labor cannot, an imbalance arose that has made the relocating of industries to escape the power of well-organized labor a dominant practice. This imbalance has not only dramatically weakened the power of unions, but has also placed national working classes in fierce competition with each other. The most striking example of this heightened competition has been between Chinese and American workers. For Hector, this increased exploitation was of special concern to the cause of socialism.

Sixth and finally, Hector saw globalization as further marginalizing and eroding the power position of the Caribbean region as a whole. This trend he thought would indeed continue until we found a way to hit this googlie out of the park.

What was to be Done

Given the above features of neo-liberal globalization, Hector realized that effective resistance by the Caribbean Left would require major changes in both theory and practice. The economic base of this expanded and reinforced resistance by the Caribbean Left would still be the three-sector model outline earlier. However, to protect and make it work, the Left in all of the islands would have to significantly increase their power base – both popular and institutional.

In regard to this political dimension of an appropriate response to the google of globalization Hector wrote: “from the Caribbean perspective, it necessitates a Regional State – all 28 states and all 36 million people – Cuba to Guyana” (1999:9). The insular and territorial states that we have so far developed have been made even less viable and more obsolete by globalization. The latter has thus increased the pressure on us for regional integration. In Hector’s view, this regional state must pursue three crucial goals. First, it must attempt to achieve a much greater degree of food security than presently exists. Second, it must standardize or harmonize the rules for imports and for the entry of foreign capital into our region. Third, this regional state must seek closer cooperation with Central American states.

Along with this unification of the power and scope of insular states must go a renewing and expanding of their democratic spirit and traditions. In other words, new and expanded spaces must be created, where regional management and labor can meet and talk on equal terms, new and expanded spaces where workers, political parties, and other civic associations can share information, exchange ideas, and coordinate plans and strategies.

In addition to these more direct democratic changes in the nature of the regional state and the sectors of the economy it controls, Hector also argued for expansions in the power and scope of the co-operative sector. These expansions were to counter-balance increases in the power of the central state and thus to keep alive the long-standing traditions of co-operative practices and also to further empower workers.

However, Hector was fully aware that these changes would not be enough to meet the challenge of globalization. To be effective, they would need the support of a new international mobilization of workers, women and youths around the world all networking and exchanging ideas over email and all the new media (1999:9). To this new international mobi-

lization, the Caribbean Left must be able to give articulate accounts of its struggles to build socialism on the basis of this three-sector model of political economy.

In this more regional projection of Caribbean socialism, Hector took the time to remind us that the primary normative concern of socialism is still the subordination of economic production and capital accumulation to human development. That, even as we respond to the economic challenges of globalization, we must remember that all the economic development we are pursuing must not be an end in itself, but like works art should rest gently on the shoulders of our psyche providing both material bases and outlets for its inherent creativity. This engagement with globalization was the last reformulation of Hector's changing socialist vision with which he left us.

Conclusion

I wrote this paper with the Antiguan and Barbudan Left in mind, or should I say what is left of our Left. The hope was to rally us so that we can take stock of our long heritage, and in particular the rich body of work that Hector has left us. I have tried my best to outline his ideas in all their complexity as well as the changes that they went through as things changed both at home and abroad. With this legacy that Hector has left us, the Left needs to keep before our society the choice of seeing itself and its economy from both a socialist and a capitalist perspective.

It is now more than ten years since Hector had to retire his very agile pen, and the last "Fan the Flame" column was written. As I have tried to indicate, much has happened in our world since 2002. Thus, the major challenge confronting the Antiguan and Barbudan Left is the careful evaluation of this legacy in the light of these continuing changes – particularly neo-liberal globalization, the global crisis of socialism, ecological degradation, and increasing social inequality – and what they mean for our future. Even though our socialist project is currently in a state of collapse, the problems that socialism had set out to address are not only still very much with us, but continue to grow more urgent with every passing decade.

The end of this essay is not the place to begin this careful evaluation of Hector's socialist legacy. That should be the topic of another paper all its own. However, in the course of writing this one, I have emphasized the urgent need for us to rethink the economics of our socialist project. Although Caribbean socialism still lives in the shadow of the collapse in

Grenada, our politics, as Hector's writings make so clear, has for the most part been deeply democratic. Ideally, the writing of such an evaluative paper or set of papers should follow some intense discussions by members of the Antiguan and Barbudan Left. We need to be clear on what we see as the major changes in the world and our nation since 2002, and what, if any, modifications they may require in Hector's views of socialism. Have we changed? Have the masses of Antiguan and Barbudans changed? What of our co-operative heritage? Is that still alive in us after the urbanization of our social life, and globalization of our economy? Will it emerge in the next popular upsurge as it did in the upsurge of the 1960s? These are some of the questions we need to ask as we reflect on Hector's legacy.

Humanity is still very much in the making, and hence in need of genuine ideals. We have not yet arrived at utopia or the end of history. Or as Hector was wont to say, we have not yet arrived at the rendezvous of victory. The current order of state capitalist convergence between market capitalism and state socialism is a transitional one. Hector looked with confidence toward a period beyond the current dominance of finance with its rolling set of global meltdowns, and its increasing separation from the productive bases of real economies. Thus he looked forward to a period in which commodity production would once again determine the flow of financial resources and transactions. The socio-historical forces that brought us our last popular upsurge have not gone into retirement. They are still very much alive and at work. We can feel them at work in the current wave of wild cat strikes in China (over 1400 in 2014), and in the Solidarity Economy Movements in Brazil and South Africa. We also saw these insurrectionary forces on display in the Occupy Wall Street Movement, and the popular uprising in Egypt that brought down the Mubarak regime. Therefore new futures beckon us. We must rise to meet them. But we can only do so on new wings made with feathers from legacies such as Tim Hector has left us.

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WISDOM IS PLENTIFUL AMONG ORDINARY PEOPLE TO GOVERN: A VIEW OF ANTIGUA'S TIM HECTOR AND GUYANA'S EUSI KWAYANA

Matthew Quest

Introduction

Antigua's Tim Hector and Guyana's Eusi Kwayana, as suggested by the inclusion of the article, "What is Socialism?" (1985) in this edition of the *Antigua & Barbuda Review of Books*, have a heritage that must be placed in conversation. At the Conference on Tim Hector's intellectual legacies I tried to place Kwayana and Hector as part of a recasting of the Caribbean New Left (1968-1983), that period from the Walter Rodney riots in Jamaica to the collapse of the Grenada Revolution. My emphasis was that Hector's political legacies were experiments in cultivating the Caribbean popular will. At his best he projected that everyday people had an instinct toward a direct democracy and workers self-management. But late in his life a more ambiguous commitment to a nationalist purpose for Caribbean people began to overtake this direct democracy, where instead of functioning as an enemy of the state he was an adviser to its statesmen and entered electoral coalitions subordinate to transparent capitalist politicians.¹ Because it is a looming danger and misunderstanding is in the collective memory, I underscored that historians cannot allow this later collaboration with electoral politics, to define the radical political legacies of Tim Hector's Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement.

Caribbean Socialism: An Imaginary for Workers Self-Management or Advice to Capitalist Statesmen?

For Hector's ACLM, especially from 1972-1976, and Kwayana's ASCRIA from 1971-1974, socialism was not simply a labor-theoretic economic discourse but was an *imaginary*, a means for cultivating alternative institutions and for designing a new society.² The content of socialism for both Hector and Kwayana was a struggle of social classes but never a narrow political economy. Instead socialism was a civilization-ethic where the masses discover their own unfolding capacities. Class struggles were not in conflict with cultural nationalism which resisted white supremacy and projected into Afro-Caribbean history, literature, and the arts a thread of popular self-government. For Hector's ACLM and Kwayana's ASCRIA, Black labor in the Caribbean was as modern as any other. If emancipation was not self-emancipation it was a fraud. This was crucial for approaching a post-independence politics from classical colonialism. To the extent there was a national-democratic movement being fostered, a hybrid of direct democracy and nationalist purpose, it was seeking not

to elevate the aspiring Caribbean middle classes but to *invade* the pursuit of nationalized property by the independent labor action of workers and farmers by popular committee.

Conflicting Tendencies in the Caribbean New Left

I also underscored that there were conflicting tendencies in the Caribbean New Left, as codified originally by Trinidad's Bukka Rennie of the New Beginning Movement. The direct democratic tendency has to be seen in contrast to three others. The Caribbean Stalinism of Cheddi Jagan, Trevor Munroe, and Bernard Coard; the New World Group of economists led by Lloyd Best and Norman Girvan; and Caribbean cultural nationalists who saw the empire of capital and its local management in narrowly "white" terms.³ Whether advocates of a one party state or welfare state (or oscillating between the two), despite populist moments, all three competing factions, in contrast to the direct democratic tendency, had a restricted sense of representative government (whether vanguardist or bureaucratic) and felt the Caribbean Left's role should be primarily advising, as a loyal opposition, to what were essentially capitalist politicians above society toward a sense of nationalist purpose in an underdeveloped society.

To be clear, Hector's and Kwayana's increasing advocacy of a more narrow vision, forward to a democratic republic and not a socialist revolution based on direct democracy, consolidated itself after the collapse of the Grenada Revolution. As "What is Socialism?" implies, this was partially a result of the crimes of statesmen who abused people in the name of socialism on a world scale, but also the declining popular self-organization among the multitudes. Hector believed the latter, as expressed in Kwayana's essay about the Guyana experience, resonated with his experience in Antigua. He wished to facilitate popular self-activity toward arriving on its own self-governing authority. Yet some of his own loyal supporters began to see the Antigua masses desiring patronage and jobs, even where they did not complete their work qualitatively, from the Bird regime. Aware of Bird's corruption and collaboration with Apartheid South Africa, this did not ultimately disturb them. The ordinary person did not always observe what happened in Caribbean parliaments enough to offer criticism of public policy much less for designing an alternative society or forming their own popular self-government.⁴ For a short time, Kwayana became a member of parliament in Guyana, elected as a member of the Working People's Alliance to represent the unrepresented majority during a period of transition out of constitutional dictatorship (1985-1990).

However, Hector and Kwayana, when properly understood for the true

highlights of their political careers, must be placed in the direct democratic tendency in the Caribbean New Left. This faction did not allow the peripheral nature of Caribbean economies to frame an underdeveloped humanity. Instead the masses were extremely creative and always had within themselves the capacity for self-emancipation and to arrive on their own authority. The direct democratic tendency advocated workplace councils and popular assemblies as a new form of government (mind you not a new form of protest). This faction tended to question the authority of state power, ordinary electoral party politics, trade union hierarchy, and professional classes above society more broadly. This tendency of the Caribbean New Left, inspired by C.L.R. James, was known for believing wisdom is plentiful among ordinary people to directly govern society. This was the popular will that the direct democratic tendency of the Caribbean New Left wished to cultivate. An incomplete instinct or latent understanding, an engaged popular self-government can only appear again with active vitality in a future social revolution. A proper understanding of Hector's and Kwayana's radical politics requires placing the statesmen whom they opposed, Antigua's V.C. Bird and Guyana's Forbes Burnham, outside frameworks which codify radical traditions. We must not confuse radical historiography with the shaping of conventional "whig" histories.⁵

Radical History Not Whig History

As I suggested at the Hector conference, C.L.R. James's *Party Politics in the West Indies* argues while there is a tradition of individual and national talent within colonial freedom movements, we cannot understand the Black or Caribbean radical traditions unless we understand the antagonisms within those histories.⁶ Current scholarly approaches to radical traditions create false discourses which minimize important historical and political quarrels through a concise citation discourse. CLR James is not simply part of a tradition with Kwame Nkrumah, Eric Williams, George Padmore, and Walter Rodney. He had crucial political debates with them which must be placed beyond hearsay and gossip through serious research. These hidden disputes, if need be through intellectual controversy, must be restored so as to better comprehend the nuanced relationship between labor's self-emancipation and the political economy of colonial freedom.⁷

Importantly, while we examine Hector's and Kwayana's direct democratic project, we should be transparent that in the 1970s the suggestion that sympathy should be had also for the national bourgeoisie's capitalist aspirations (however disguised in populism) was anathema. This is why I

cautioned at the Hector Legacies Conference against a framework of the Caribbean radical tradition which placed VC Bird and Tim Hector in the same Antigua heritage, despite their well known conflicts. Of course in the political history of the nation it is inescapable that they are both characters in one drama but they cannot easily be said to share a radical tradition. It was the young Tim Hector, who with international social movement experience in Canada and the United States, taught the Antigua masses how to throw back the tear gas canisters at the riot police of VC Bird (not simply white colonizers). Bird received this in disdain. Of course he wished to suppress Black popular uprisings.⁸ That both Bird and Hector later found a common enemy for a time in George Walter, the prime minister from 1971-1976 who defeated Bird initially with the young Hector's help only for Walter to ban the ACLM's *Outlet* newspaper, should not change this fact. Neither should we simply portray Hector and Bird as being radical labor leaders at different moments in Antigua history. If we have the audacity to ask what is socialism, we should also ask what is a labor leader?

The Political Failure of the Cultural Front

Both Hector and Kwayana have in common a deeper sense of direct democracy growing out of mistakenly first building a cultural front around Black capitalist politicians, who claimed to speak for Black labor or the colonized nation, only to see their increasingly firm grip on state power terrorize society. It has been a widespread global experience. Certainly, the elder Eusi Kwayana does not wish to be placed in the same long term heritage as Guyana's Forbes Burnham and his People's National Congress, though Kwayana was editor of that party's publication, *New Nation*, and a major leader of it for a time (1957-1961).⁹ From a certain vantage of national historiography, both Burnham and Kwayana can be placed as distinguished Afro-Guyanese cultural nationalists, embracing Cuffy, the embodiment of resistance to Guyanese plantation slavery. Yet, Kwayana's self-criticism for formerly building a cultural front around Burnham's party and regime, before the movement for people's power and no dictator in Guyana associated with Walter Rodney, should not be neglected as profound political thought.

Kwayana's creative activism rupturing with Burnham arguably was a neglected touchstone for the Caribbean New Left. At the end of this essay I wish to speak about what Kwayana accomplished as he engaged bauxite strikes and landless sugar workers in Guyana. At a certain historical moment for Kwayana, direct democracy and national liberation became one in the same at the expense of the national bourgeoisie. This is important

as a comparative contribution to the recent intellectual controversy in the book reviews of Paget Henry's *Shouldering Antigua & Barbuda*, a biography of VC Bird, which places him both within the Black radical tradition and an ally of Black labor in one historical moment. Some view Henry's interpretation as the ACLM's viewpoint on Bird, even as Henry acknowledges Bird attacked Black labor movements in Antigua late in his career. I will argue also that there are similarities between the charisma of Bird and Burnham, in their "ethical bad mindedness" and that this poses a certain warning to those who seek to cultivate the popular will of labor in the Caribbean toward popular self-management. The aspiring national bourgeoisie in a post-colonial society, or in movements for colonial freedom, must be rejected as spokespeople for Black labor. They always have obstructed the self-emancipation of the working class in formerly colonized and peripheral societies.

Joseph Edwards's Workers Self-Management: A Neglected Influence on Hector and Kwayana

At the time of the Hector Conference, I just finished writing an introduction to an updated edition of Kwayana's *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics*. Subsequently, I edited Joseph Edwards's *Workers Self-Management in the Caribbean*. This Jamaican refrigeration mechanic, born George Myers, was an advocate for meat packers and sugar workers. He was also a leader of wildcat strikes in the 1960s and 70s, and a critic of Norman and Michael Manley's claim to speak for the dignity of labor. At the conference I located Edwards among the unsung luminaries of the direct democratic Caribbean New Left. Edwards articulated in theory and his activism was consistent with the challenges found in the conflicts between the personalities of Antigua's Bird and Hector and Guyana's Burnham and Kwayana. Of course popular social movement history does not move through mere intellectual debates. But these disputes, as embodied by representative men seeking to cultivate the Caribbean popular will, were over the same issues Edwards wrote and spoke about as found in Jamaica, Trinidad, and elsewhere.

Wildcat strikes are rebellions against management *and* trade union leaders who won't endorse independent labor action. Edwards would have laughed at the idea that Michael Manley had a shared radical heritage with him in support of Black labor. Most scholars aware of Edwards conveniently forget his life and politics or relegate him to a footnote to maintain the Michael Manley myth whom Edwards called "Mikehell Menley." Manley can serve national identity formation. Edwards's internationalist politics, which essentially opposed nation-states

and ruling elites in principle, cannot be reconciled with a nationalist purpose for political economy, despite the matter that Edwards was an outstanding anti-colonial and internationalist thinker. This should not be as complicated a proposition as it first appears for those deeply aware of radical traditions.

Edwards, who was a pamphleteer and radical journalist, also made an LP recording under the name “Fundi” (Swahili for craftsman and teacher) which criticized the politics of Michael Manley, Trevor Munroe, and Cheddi Jagan. He also discussed the contradictions of the anti-capitalist movement in Jamaica and the Caribbean in light of Russia, Spain, France, and Cuba. The common thread was the tendency for communist parties in or out of state power to repress the actions of independent labor. Of course it is a commonplace understanding that most socialists and communists are defenders of labor. Both viewpoints cannot be equally affirmed. Caribbean socialists historically had to choose if contemporary scholars seek to minimize or avoid the issue. Edwards is another pillar of the direct democratic tendency of which I speak and was well known to both Hector and Kwayana. Edwards linked up the Rastafarian critique of One-Menism, or the idea of “doctor politics,” that electoral parties were inauthentic and remote from the masses, with the matter that the Caribbean working class did not even control its own labor organizations.

Caribbean radicals, argued Edwards, had to oppose trade union hierarchy, and what he termed *menegement* in pursuit of workers’ autonomy. This included workers and farmers banking their own union dues, deciding how to allocate them for collective welfare, and refusing them as a basis of a privileged life for remote trade union leaders. This meant economic planning could be meaningfully discussed only among toilers’ own self-created associations.¹⁰ Edwards’s vision resonated with activists among the Guyana working class and was also circulated in Antigua.

Do Workers and Bosses Have Something in Common?

Caribbean socialist criticism today, as personified by Paget Henry, has a non-existent public challenge to political bosses. Most wielding this framework seem to believe labor and management have something in common. Condemning individual politicians’ ethics abstractly, not state power, or the normative terms of professional and managerial regimes; in fact it speaks on behalf of *more* management of the economy but also subtly working people. The latter should concern us. The discussion of “Caribbean socialism” is getting lost in the search for a national identity, national reconstruction, and a sovereign economy. But perhaps for most

tendencies of the Caribbean New Left, despite the internationalism, animated by the Caribbean Diaspora and the Caribbean working people, it was always so.¹¹

Walter Rodney is perhaps emblematic of this *ambiguity* in history and political thought. Despite being a consistent facilitator of insurgency, Rodney in recent years has been re-branded as a pedestrian human rights activist, perhaps an anti-fascist, but not a revolutionary. Despite being associated with the slogan of self-emancipation and being a genuine leader of insurgent rebellions, Rodney really has political legacies closer to Caribbean Stalinism and the New World Group in how he viewed labor as a conceptual framework compared with CLR James. Further, the common citational discourse which creates a canon of representative men, “There was Walter Rodney, CLR, Fanon...” distorts a basic truth. All Pan African and socialist thinkers do *not* have the same approach to colonial freedom or labor’s autonomy. Placing Rodney and James in this fashion had not advanced movements for social justice.

Socialism is not simply equivalent to access to food , healthcare, housing and jobs for wage earners and consumers – even during a time of a great economic recession. The very call for jobs and justice” by progressives concedes that one needs the latter to correct the conditions we will accept in the former status. In its revolutionary manifestation, socialism is a self-organized revolt, against both conservatives and progressives, where ordinary people take up the tasks of economic planning, judicial affairs, foreign relations, all educational and cultural matters. The narrow identity of workers as only wage labor, sharing a false *reality* with capitalists and bosses who own and manage the means of production, coerce them, and appropriate the vast majority of the wealth labor produces, may be a main current in Caribbean and global socialism. But it should be discarded upon careful reconsideration. Socialism is not “plenty for all” plus participation in politics. Direct democracy is not participatory democracy. Who invites labor to participate in politics, in a non-insurgent manner, in a socialist society?

CLR James As Mentor and Inspiration

When we think about Caribbean socialism, especially the direct democratic tendency, we have to keep in mind that both Hector and Kwayana were mentored by CLR James.¹² They learned both aspects of direct democracy and the politics of national liberation struggles from his activism and writing and forged their own innovative paths. Among other achievements, James wrote *World Revolution*, the first anti-Stalin-

ist account of the Communist International. *World Revolution* was a revolutionary socialist narrative clearly against liberals and progressives from an evolving perspective of labor's self-emancipation. Later, James developed transparent views of direct democracy and workers self-management, found in *Every Cook Can Govern*, *Facing Reality*, and in *The Invading Socialist Society*.¹³ Yet James was skeptical of the prospects of direct democracy for the post-independence Caribbean, and those he mentored, like Kwayana and Hector, pushed these views further into the political arena of peripheral nations than James's imagined possible for the 1970s.¹⁴

Hector can be seen later in life, leaving behind the influence of James's *Facing Reality*, which revered the workers self-management of the Hungarian rebels of 1956 but divided the world between a politics for modern industrial and formerly colonized nations, and retreating into political formulations inspired by *Party Politics in the West Indies* – a discourse that spoke of “politics as an activity” but which attempted to advise a progressive ruling class.¹⁵ Ironically, Kwayana's most innovative politics in the Caribbean New Left period was an evolution out of such party politics and advising of purported progressive statesmen. He in the next chapter of his activism, saw all Caribbean politicians deemed progressive as basically flawed in the same manner. James came to this conclusion after the 1958-1961 period, this is when CLR first met Kwayana, when he was an adviser to Trinidad's Eric Williams. Kwayana moved toward a politics of popular committees of labor and the landless that confronted the contradictions of elite party politics and representative government.¹⁶ It was Kwayana's politics from 1971-1974, despite their political differences, which were the most inspirational for Hector and the Caribbean New Left in their most radical manifestations.¹⁷ But historians of the Caribbean New Left must develop further how a period of uncertainty and retreat from 1974-1976, with specific local and regional manifestations, began to undermine the advocacy of direct democracy.¹⁸

Now, when we consider how VC Bird, a Fabian “democratic socialist,” absurdly dismissed Tim Hector's direct democracy as “communism” of the totalitarian variety, even in the 1980s, then we must begin to consider ceasing talking about a holistic Antiguan or Caribbean socialist paradigm or Black radical tradition framework, and probe further about the content of socialism.

Hector argued socialism must mean something more than nationalized property and the desire to seize state power above society. He also explained socialism cannot be a process where “the lamb lays down with

the lion” for a cooperative ethic rooted among workers and farmers to flourish.¹⁹ These distinctions may be difficult to follow but they are crucial to understanding the different meanings of socialism.

We must inquire whether all versions of “socialism” (a) really oppose capitalism, (b) are hostile to national development of capitalism in their internationalism or opposition to imperialism, and (c) view the working people as having not simply a special – though often ill-defined -- but the only role as a social class in directing politics and government. On what terms can specialists, perhaps emerging from or functioning among different social classes, offer their assistance to labor’s self-government and not capitalist politicians? This is a more difficult question for partisans of direct democracy than it at first seems. For Hector, following CLR James, pursued cultivating the popular will in the tradition of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who as it happens, also historically was seen as having both an anarchist or direct democratic tendency, even as he inspired middle class Jacobin politicians during the French Revolution, and even feudal leaders of Poland and Italy, on strategies for nationalizing the masses through popular cultural activities.²⁰

Distinctions among socialists for Caribbean intellectual and social movement history and politics are paramount not as a result that the Soviet Union has now collapsed, that the Chinese Communist state has chosen capitalism, and the Cuban regime has been intermittently on its way for some time. Rather, “communism” and “socialism” became associated with dictatorship, not simply through Cold War propaganda, but because of these regimes’ real repression of their own working classes.

All of these regimes have in common that they attacked genuine revolutionaries, while their leaders claimed to be cultivating the popular will and wished it to bloom, only to shoot down the self-mobilized people. Though on occasion projecting platitudes and speeches that suggested “the dignity of labor” (Michael Manley) or promising to “make the small man a big man” (Forbes Burnham), these regimes denied that wisdom was plentiful among ordinary people to govern. How many movements for social justice today believe in the possibility of the direct self-government of working people? If not, what do they believe is the meaning of social and economic justice? It is an inquiry which can no longer be minimized in discourses on radical history and politics.

From Bird to Burnham: Ethical Bad Mindedness and Black Labor

Those aware of the conflicting tendencies in Caribbean socialism must be uneasy with the framework of "Black laborism" especially for how Paget Henry argues it is a developmental stage of VC Bird's personality as much as his politics growing out of his "ethical bad mindedness" – though it is a fascinating and penetrating concept akin to bad faith but something more. If Antiguan and Caribbean people love trafficking in stories of "the bad man," not simply that many saw Bird in this manner, then ethical bad mindedness has a protean nature not just as a characterization of a developmental stage in a statesman's personality but that of ordinary people.

Why might "a bad man" be admired? Could it be for how he or she flatters, persuades, compromises, wields common sense, and has the talent to lie convincingly when necessary? How does a popular audience come to accept such a personality as political leader? Do they accept that such a politician mirrors their own instinctive value system when not exposed to modern political theory and radical traditions? Perhaps the statesman as outlaw, hustler, and renegade is seen as a mirror of themselves.

Linden Lewis, in a study of the charisma of Guyana's Forbes Burnham, insists that we must account for how Burnham could be charming and cruel.²¹ Lewis is profoundly insightful when he argues a danger exist when we start analyzing the charisma of a politician. This threat is a subtle suspension of belief in the possibility that the popular will could really be developed toward a cooperative purpose. Thus discussions of how democratic statesmen can possibly be are limited by rules of engagement which insist the highest stage a politician can reach is as an administrator of a state capitalist political economy and be perceived as an authentic spokesman for labor. Capitalism and imperialism cannot permit any more than this.

Burnham, despite his personal materialism and ostentatiousness, was a master of popular idioms, and could walk freely in high crime urban areas distinguished by poverty. He was also able to convey to the Black middle classes, that his personal pursuit of wealth, however corrupt, would pave the way for greater opportunities for themselves under the patronage of his state apparatus. Burnham, to a much greater degree than Bird, was able to project a Pan African foreign policy that obscured his creeping authoritarian rule on the domestic front where he played up, by regalia, his relationship to the military and police, while placing the civil service workers in fear of reprisals for any public criticism.

Burnham, while much more formally educated than Bird and coming from the middle class not the lower classes, wielded a type of ethical bad mindedness, where his reputation as “a bad man” was both admirable and disturbing. Observing Burnham and Bird in representative government, remarking how “bad” they were, mirrored a bad faith that ordinary people had in themselves. Bad faith could not simply be a measure of these politician’s character. Bird, per Henry, began with an ethical bad mindedness and grew into a moderate but socialist “Black labor” ideology. But Bird was seen as a radical, not because he was masterful in strike action, but because he was seen as powerful and potentially dangerous in a racialized and colonial environment. What Bird represented physically, represented to a certain extent authentically Black labor’s narrow conception of empowerment. They rarely wished to design a new society themselves. Black labor accepted overall, excluding those toilers who bore the scars of repression and continued to fight, that their self-emancipation was a new, more authentic representation from above, that looked and behaved more like them.

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142
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CLR James speaks in some respects to ethical bad mindedness and how the masses conceive of it in a neglected fragment of *Beyond A Boundary*. James explains that in anti-colonial politics a strain of racial vindication ‘blurs with a measure of politician’s personal corruption that all can see. Nevertheless, the anti-racist masses do not adhere to corruption discourses because they believe that they are based on a white supremacist and false conception of reason and merit. Thus politicians can be embraced for deserving something more for themselves, and breaking the rules of official society to get it, because they must do so also to survive. James is far from endorsing immorality in public affairs. Rather, he is saying it is an aspect of mass anti-colonial politics those who wish to accompany it must accept as a consistent historical development. If James’s observation is accurate, then this suggests the up-hill battle Hector and Kwayana, and their direct democratic movements, against Bird and Burnham, respectively faced. While they tried to add an aesthetic dimension to their politics of a profound nature, speaking of ordinary people’s wisdom, most Black workers and unemployed (except in rare insurgent moments) actually adhered to a type of underdeveloped but authentic Black working class philosophy which combined admiration and fear. This was a fear of abuse but also an anxiety about their own capacities.

Does Democracy Mean Minority Rule?

C.L.R. James believed in order to have a democracy the majority has to organize itself to govern and defeat the minority that rules above society. The majority may have lost the habit of thinking about themselves in that way, but that is why socialists have the task of cultivating the popular will. Now, standard academic democratic theory in political science, defying conventional wisdom found in an ordinary dictionary, rejects the idea that democracy actually means majority rule.²² Democracy has actually two contradictory meanings: minority rule through periodic elections versus revolutionary popular liberation or direct self-government. The average social scientist condemns the latter as “anarchy” and believes a cooperative cultivation of the popular will is utopian and not to be taken seriously. This is the background to discussions of charisma among capitalist politicians.

History has asked us to choose between the lack of democratic content in capitalist and state socialist regimes and the matter that in a certain respects the one party state and the welfare state (even in retreat) represents a type of national sovereignty, even though the search for these was never an ideal or ambition of revolutionary socialism that centered labor’s self-emancipation. Yet it’s understandable that this relative national autonomy, as embodied in Cuba especially, could be admired by many Caribbean people. Still we must transcend the common premise: “Cuba may not be a socialist or democratic country but...”²³ What kind of discussion of socialism or democracy is sustained like this? Many socialists argue properly imperialism has attacked the autonomy of nations in the periphery, it’s aspirations toward “socialism,” but it also has underdeveloped its capitalist modernity. The perennial conceptual problem is anti-colonial nationalist discourses, separate from meaningful discussions of racism and autonomous culture, confuse a certain type of ethical capital accumulation with the building of socialism.

Communist regimes which were denounced during the Cold War by the empire of capital (not forgetting Russia and China’s own imperial tendencies) had two important characteristics. First, the aspiring preservation and defense of national development and sovereignty in hierarchical terms. Second, “people’s plans” which endeavored to secure the necessities of life, while regulating trade and the creation of a national capitalist class who must exploit ordinary people as their capital.

These people’s plans, to be sure, are advice to statesmen, and wish to ameliorate exploitation of labor while accepting their permanent role as wage earners. In short, this was a state capitalist vision. What is continu-

ally minimized in a citational discourse pre-occupied with political-economy, not popular self-management, as a lens for re-reading the Cold War and Third World national liberation epoch, is the smashing of independent labor revolt by Russia, China, Cuba, Ghana, Guyana, and Tanzania.

C.L.R. James's intellectual legacies are helpful in clarifying these historical problems only to an extent. Even his autonomous Marxism, could have a retreating valuation of direct democracy, and had serious blind spots, especially when he placed labor's self-emancipation in conflict with his Leninism. This is a neglected historical problem even among the direct democratic tendency of the Caribbean New Left.²⁴

One, Two, Three Many Values for State Capitalism

Paget Henry has properly argued in his conclusion to *Shouldering Antigua & Barbuda* that despite American nationalism which raises the banner of the free market as an ideal, the U.S. Government has never taken this principle too seriously. The imperial powers have always been state capitalist regimes. The free market for the United States functions as a tool of imperial nationalism. State capitalism had a double value for CLR James. When he did not insist it functioned as a world system which obstructed labor's self-emancipation in both imperial and peripheral nations, as he did in *State Capitalism & World Revolution* and *The Invading Socialist Society*, James did suggest at times that state capitalism could be progressive for breaking up the colonial or plantation economy. He particularly expressed this sentiment in his speeches on Caribbean Federation and to the Convention People's Party of Ghana. However, Henry has taken this awareness, and extended VC Bird's "progressive" legacy, and in light of the Great Recession of 2008 which has undermined the validity of imperial economies, has taken this opportunity, as with many progressives, to elevate state capitalism as the only rational approach to national development for *all* nations – thereby validating state capitalism as a pillar of post-independence nationalism for the formerly colonized. Still state capitalism cannot be the pillar of a Caribbean or any global socialism unless it accepts a certain type of capitalist statesman as a lesser evil.

Can VC Bird Have A Progressive Legacy?

Did VC Bird, from the perspective of Hector's ACLM before their foray into electoral politics, have a progressive legacy? In fact they were most often in conflict with Bird and faced state coercion. Yet Tim Hector, upon V.C. Bird's death found a way to remind the Antigua public of Bird's solidarity (visiting as a member of an official British delegation)

with Mau Mau political prisoners in Kenya, affirmed his fight to nationalize the electric company, a modernizer who solidified tourism and agrarian reform, he was a modest supporter of Caribbean federation. Notably Hector did not call Bird a socialist (of any kind) in this contribution to historiography. He acknowledged that Bird once had a heroic relationship to labor revolt in the 1940s but that independent labor action made him uneasy but he rose to the occasion to play what was a decidedly an ill-defined role in this telling. Antiguan rank and file workers pushed him from behind and from the perspective of even a mild cooperative movement Bird never fulfilled what he could have delivered.²⁵

Paget Henry builds on Hector's outline and transforms VC Bird into a qualified political genius – qualified not in the most original but qualified as in with hesitation if not objection -- an amazing political strategist of working class background within his limited education and lack of experience abroad.²⁶ He consolidates this perspective further by placing Bird within the Caribbean radical tradition not simply as the father of the nation – in some respects both Hector and Henry's approach is very peculiar. Will the ACLM enter the long view of history primarily as a favorable and nuanced interpreter of Bird's life and work? Would it seem strange if Eusi Kwayana and the Working People's Alliance chose, as a central project, to remind the nation of the historical legacies of Forbes Burnham or Cheddi Jagan?

Henry's *Shouldering Antigua and Barbuda* acknowledges the largely perennial conflict between Bird and the ACLM, and despite being criticized as assessing Bird from a perspective favorable to the ACLM's political legacies by Lionel Hurst, really accomplishes something else.²⁷ He presents Bird in the 1940s as harnessing the power of wildcat strikes of dockers and bringing them to a close, in successful bureaucratic negotiations, as a settlement pushing toward the long road to colonial freedom and nationalized property.²⁸ But these conflate unproductively two types of liberty: self-government from above, led by the national bourgeoisie, as embodied in a growing nationalized economy, and below society as personified by labor's self-organization.

Henry's *Shouldering*, as a study of Bird's life and work, seems torn between two implausible premises. First, that he must convince Bird's loyal supporter Hurst, that Bird was an advocate of "Black proletarian power" in the 1940s only to attack the Antigua labor movement in the 1970s. Henry is not absurd in dividing Bird's life into four periods from a rise and decline perspective. Yet, second, in response to Tennyson Joseph's

criticism, Henry tries to explain how he has harnessed CLR James's approach to state capitalism – with awareness of its necessary and perennial repression of popular democracy – in pursuit of an “objectivity” which is not convincing. This is so for Joseph because he portrays Bird, even partially, as a radical advocate of Black labor. Since I see the merit in Tennyson's challenge, especially when compounded by Henry's response to Hurst, and despite a very nuanced approach by Henry, I still am left with the impression that Tim Hector, CLR James, and VC Bird were all advocates of Black proletarian power if not all at the same moment in time. This is the type of impression that a Whig History, in contrast to a radical history, can leave a reader.²⁹ Henry accomplished this complicated portrait (which is appropriate for Bird was nuanced and disturbing) by applying how James not so much understood state capitalism, as how he observed labor's self-activity, its latent understanding, its elemental drive for creativity to the father of the nation. Henry's Bird may not have become what he could have been by the comparative standard of Caribbean statesmen or Caribbean labor action, but his humanity was left unresolved both because the defense of Black lower working class's humanity (from which the young Bird emerged) is still unresolved and society was not organized yet, just as the Trinidadian colonial conditions Matthew Bondman faced in *Beyond A Boundary*, for him to fulfill his obvious capacity for style, grace, and despite vulgar moments, still convince the masses of his worth.

Henry by such an interpretation of Bird contributes to the sociology of cultivating the popular will while suspending a commitment to laboring a direct democratic purpose in exchange for recognizing and recording a representative man of national purpose. Nevertheless his study has received some rich and diverse responses exactly because he shed so much light on the contours of Bird's, and the lower working class's, political personality.

Progressives: A Recently Discovered Political Phenomenon

At the Tim Hector legacies conference I was careful to underscore the meaning of “progressive:” it means you support the president or ruling elite of your nation-state. My particular emphasis was what progressive means in the United States, in light of President Obama, the declining advocacy of anti-imperialism, because it now conflicts with race vindication. Still, I was clear that this is a global phenomenon and might resonate with the peoples of Antigua and the Caribbean. CLR James's *World Revolution* (1937) argues that progressives were “a recently discovered political phenomenon,” a sign of socialist collaboration with capitalism

and imperialism. He means to suggest that it is a signifier associated with a decline in socialist ethics. But James over the long arc of his career, as we already have shown, could be inconsistent.

Henry in certain respects validly interprets the 1940s Bird through the lens of CLR James's approach to strike activity in a peripheral nation – this is in contrast to James' approach to America workers during the Age of the CIO in the same period. So while Henry's lens is consistent, it is confusing because it plays on a peculiar aspect of Jamesian methodology. A general strike or wildcat, James insisted for peripheral nations, must retreat or advance into another political form – some type of post-independence state power and state capitalist economy. This placed James in the role of adviser to bourgeois politicians, especially during the years when he was secretary for the ill-fated West Indian Federation (1958-1962), where if he did not place workers in the shadow of state power built a cultural front around those who did.³⁰ James' most original body of political thought, developed in his first American sojourn (1938-1953) was hostile to such an approach. In contrast to Henry, and consistent with James' earlier approach to what he saw as the modern workers of the U.S., Bukka Rennie, advocates for peripheral nations that labor's self-organization, when it takes the form of strike action, should be cultivated so it never stops. That is labor action is not, for revolutionary socialism, leverage for bureaucratic political negotiations but an opportunity for toilers to form their own government.³¹ This is what is missing in contemporary discussions of neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism, and this is the mysterious and somewhat confusing silence in Hector and Henry's reconstruction of Bird as part of a "Caribbean socialism."

Humanist Strategies of Capital Accumulation?

In light of what is repeatedly termed far and wide as "vicious" neo-liberal strategies of capital accumulation today, I ask my dear reader to inquire among socialist thinkers what will be the "humanistic" strategies of capital accumulation? Despite in theory rejecting wage labor/capital relations as an inhumane form of capital accumulation, in fact most forms of Marxism sustain them under the premise of increasing public and nationalized property, which it uses not to liberate the working class, but discipline and repress it.

The accumulation of capital does not grow out of nations whether imperial or colonized (despite diversionary discourses of progressive political economy) but out of the workers and farmers labor. Nations, like capitalists, may pretend to own fields, factories and mines, and what

emerges from them, through GNP, GDP, and bottom line talk. Yet this is bourgeois social science which measures the accumulation by capitalists within nation-state borders.

A real “people’s plan” would flow out of workplace councils and popular assemblies where toilers decide how much to produce and the social relations of production.³² This means that ordinary people, not specialists, must decide how to approach scarcity and rationing, debt, and how much of their surplus production to appropriate, and toward what ends. This is quite different than Grenada’s Bernard Coard reading a prepared austerity budget blessed by the World Bank to a popular assembly where people can only ask questions in the climate of detained political prisoners.³³

Without this direct democratic focus, “socialist” ideas lend themselves to a certain type of national capitalist development. State socialism, or progressive capitalist development, proposes that some surplus or savings must be allocated for welfare and broadly the maintenance of public infrastructure. While few contest this (and I believe the collective maintenance of commonly accessible necessities is crucial), even as neo-liberalism wishes for less and less public appropriations and pursues the drive for fictitious capital under unregulated finance, what is missing is that progressive capitalist development assumes an alliance with private property owners, particularly industrialists, who don’t work.

Cooperative Socialism and Labor Laws

As Paget Henry suggests in his discussion of the Antiguan cooperatives of the past, labor must organize itself communally with both subsistence and the future in mind. Still Henry does not locate workers self-management in both the private and public sector, because his respect for the development of Caribbean private capital continues to indulge their ambitions. In his view, Caribbean nation-states should support indigenous capitalist development. Yet I argue the state cannot assist *both* national capital and labor’s self-emancipation. Every communist, capitalist, or state capitalist regime, whether in imperial or formerly colonized sectors, has had labor laws which make it a criminal offense to lead a labor strike which seeks to federate and directly govern. Ellorton Jeffers, a leader of the ACLM in the 1970s and an advocate of labor’s self-emancipation, has shown that this a neglected aspect of the workers and farmers conflicts with the regimes of George Walter and VC Bird. Further, Caribbean trade unions, far more than most realize, have wished to evade the struggle for political democracy. Jeffers argues Caribbean nation-state’s intervention in the practices of labor organizations cannot be sustained and have them maintain their popular legitimacy. Where trade union

hierarchies function this way they reveal their organizations to be insignificant.³⁴ It is time that those who speak of “people’s planning” in the Caribbean, and who wish to advise both the working class and statesmen, make clear that they oppose such laws. Their difficulty, lack of transparency, or whatever they say in the future, will still underscore it has been a defining issue. But let us return to Caribbean political economy.

Arthur Lewis, who was not a member of the New World Group, but who adhered to more classical conceptions of economic growth critiqued by them, nevertheless framed a shared problem with Stalinist and New World Group’s political economy. He explained that “making a plan is an exercise of the imagination, while implementation is a struggle with reality.”³⁵ Lewis locates the imaginary institution of society in the state bureaucracy, and perhaps competing interests for the budget and resources within, and not ordinary people.

In contrast, direct democratic economic planning is a struggle against professional politicians and their economic planners’ (for the taking of action). *Reality* is something ordinary people must ultimately assess and convince themselves.³⁶ While professional economic planners dispute how much they can export, how much wages can be granted, how much industry can be cultivated, how much research and development can be initiated, their social psychology of industry is such that labor must be encouraged toward subordinate participation or the truth of their self-activity must be placed under central surveillance.

The truth is that Marxist-Leninism, from a nation-state perspective, can only produce an outlook toward labor remarkably similar to classical liberal economists.³⁷ The labor-theory of value can be permitted by progressive elites perhaps to buttress an aspect of anti-colonial nationalism but never a direct democracy. Hence anti-colonial economics laments how racism and imperialism have underdeveloped its indigenous capital accumulation illustrating an acceptance of accumulating capital as a ethical nationalist category. Is there a valid link between the labor theory of value and nationalist economic planning? Perhaps that is a matter for a more extended study. Anti-colonial economics, despite its anti-imperial pretensions, asks on what terms can the Third World produce its own Carnegies and Rockefellers beyond the comprador bourgeoisie? It’s a false start for, as we have already underscored, state capitalist collaboration has produced all wealth on a world scale, purportedly national, that escapes the labor theory of value. This is why we must reconsider radical

political theory from colonial freedom movements which don't quite discard, despite much vitriol about "betrayal," the national bourgeoisie as a social class.³⁸

When we consider Eusi Kwayana's *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics* (1972) (especially the revised 2012 edition with the appendix of a selection of rare ASCRIA documents), we see that in Guyana, like in Antigua in the early Afro-Caribbean Movement, what began as a Black Power oriented criticism of a Black led regime, had to shift toward recognizing that Black labor's autonomy had to become the meaning of colonial freedom. All of these questions of political economy and direct democracy and how they conflict under state capitalism or increasing nationalized property came alive in the history of Guyana in the 1970s. Whether in the 1940s, or the 1970s, or the present day, it is up to scholars of VC Bird and Tim Hector to revisit these issues for Antigua. There is enough documentation of events. But there must be a search for a proper interpretive framework, if labor continues to take independent action against their hierarchical leaders, discarding one after the other, only to return to police proposals and legal negotiations by others which compromise them and send them back to alienated workplaces and fields.

Importantly, for Kwayana, a labor-economic theoretic did not have to be in conflict with an African (or Indian) anti-colonial cultural nationalism. Rather, a deeper anti-capitalist, anti-state perspective had to be fused to the latter.³⁹ Kwayana recognized that previously it was a mistake to advise Forbes Burnham on the crafting of a cooperative republic for an independent Guyana. This was not because Kwayana first supported and then opposed cooperatives. Rather, the fusion of anti-colonial nationalism and socialism had created a government bureaucracy and party politics which cultivated the disposition of "it's our turn now" among the Black middle classes, to pursue coveted positions and advance their individual pursuit of property in the name of Black Power. This is not an issue especially developed in "What is Socialism?" as Hector recalls Kwayana's presentation.

Kwayana was clear how this social problem emerged. The burdens of racial insecurity flowing from slavery and colonialism necessitated the teaching that Africans could govern themselves. Yet "investment in Black people can reach the point of a fault."⁴⁰ Seeking to chronicle the historical and cultural context for these scars often flowed and overlapped into an assertion: the Caribbean middle classes and professional intellectuals were as vibrant and skilled as any other and could take over

from and negotiate with white racist colonial elites. Like Norman Manley and Eric Williams relationship to labor revolt, as an elite adviser, this is how Paget Henry's V.C. Bird enters anti-colonial history and the history of Antiguan and Caribbean labor. Perhaps, it is only through the eyes of Kwayana's criticism in *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics* that we can see Burnham, Bird, and other Caribbean statesmen properly. But how we see personal success and the purpose of labor revolt is crucial in such an assessment.

Anti-Colonial Nationalism's Outlook on Labor

Anti-colonial nationalism, while embracing Black slave labor as despised and degraded historically within the colonial plantation order, responded to how Black labor was racialized, not so much how that racialization denied Black labor's self-governing capacities in political theory and practice. Instead the crime appeared to be it degraded all colonized people equally. Yet this created unequal anti-colonial political strategies and outcomes. Hidden within this historical problem was a neglect to *imagine* new self-governing institutions and political philosophies. Instead most often there was a clash for recognition and representation under the governments and laws that existed. In pursuit of democracy and anti-racism this could be limited by the matter that a republic or nation-state, animated by capitalist economics or not, could never permit the Black working people to hold the reins of society. Toilers could only be the banner for a false revolution or social change that could be believed in. Hector believed in the 1940s "labor" in fact was made the false banner of middle class anti-colonialism in the Caribbean. This was so even if parts of the middle class rose from peasant or unemployed parents.⁴¹ It is difficult, even when relatively perceptive thinkers propagate the destruction of hierarchy for the working class, for these intellectuals not to be revered and transformed into a new elite, even as philosophers who see their brethren as their poorer. The crucial stance in response may be for the purported advanced thinker to refuse to appropriate the disposition and identity of a professional class and mentor with all the privileges which comes with those vocations. After establishing such an alternative personality among working and unemployed people they can accompany, facilitate and give direction (toward a direct democracy). From 1970-1974, despite having already established himself as a original popular leader from 1951-1953 and from 1961-1964 in different phases in Guyana's political history, Eusi Kwayana made his mark in a new fashion.

The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics

We must be alert to a Caribbean socialism which can conceive of a progressive capitalism and thus might discourage strike action. Eusi Kwayana, as recorded in *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics* began by taking responsibility for his role in counseling labor against strike activity “on a few occasions” since independence, from 1966-1970, as an adviser to the Burnham regime. He was insufficiently confident in Black labor to emancipate itself before 1971-1972.⁴² It is unprecedented among Marxists and revolutionary nationalists on a world scale to make such a public self-criticism. However, this mistake was far from uncommon and central to the downfall of the socialist project in many former colonized nations.

Kwayana then began to clarify nationally and internationally “the Negative Direction in Guyana” (1973) that Burnham’s purported Pan Africanism and cooperative socialism had fostered. This was difficult for Kwayana, for since 1964, he propagated in some way, that Burnham was building a cooperative republic (Kwayana gave him the name), that would ease economic burdens domestically and be a refuge for political prisoners (which for a time it was). Yet he saw the regime evolve toward a populism which “disguised class snobbery,” especially under the pretense it was leading a cultural and economic revolution. It actually abolished the most dynamic cooperatives. This led Kwayana, a long advocate of cooperatives, to temporarily cease his promotion of them. For the cooperative drive was now tied to the monster state’s identity.⁴³

Kwayana, along with other initially more alert members of ASCRIA (members of the group had multiple views on the labor revolt and there was much debate), began to support a wildcat strike led by a Committee of Ten which insisted they were leaderless. This group published *The Voice of the Workers* (which was the masthead of their leaflets). A selection of their organ and the false propaganda of Burnham’s PNC state was the contents of Kwayana’s last chapter of the original printing of *The Bauxite Strike*.

Popular uprisings in Linden (Wismar-Mckenzie) around the bauxite mines confronted the abuses of ALCAN (a Canadian division of ALCOA) from permitting sexual abuse of Guyanese nurses employed in a segregated company town, to betraying these industrial workers pension scheme (RILA). This happened in a process whereby Burnham’s PNC government was negotiating the nationalization of the bauxite industry. In the process of negotiations the government appropriated the matching funds the multi-national had previously contributed to their retirement and life insurance. The rebel workers who fought this

over a year had been subjected to jail, beatings, and teargas by the Guyanese state. The union bureaucracy of the Guyana Mineworkers Union (GAWU), having not sanctioned the strike, suspended 20 members who they claimed were the leaders of the strike. This allowed for the blacklisting of these employees for years. The government wished to divide the striking workers by creating tiers among them – that is refunding their pension investment, without contributing to it, if they had been on the job less than 12 years.

This was the process of how Guyana consolidated its state capitalism by negotiating with “labor” and settling through negotiations a wild cat strike. Was Antigua’s path to state capitalism much different in how it based its foundation on the breaking of a wildcat strikes among dockers in the 1940s and subsequently? Did Bird really make a more heroic intervention than Burnham? He did not have state power yet, but once he did, he smashed labor with equal vigor.

Kwayana learned that such bauxite workers were ready for socialism and could defend it. Labor was the force to resolve national crises; nations, even the formerly colonized, should not resolve economic crises at the expense of self-organized labor. In contrast, Kwayan viewed the “old politics” should be discarded, where charismatic personalities worked crowds or assemblies only to disband the political work after elections. Once in state power politicians replaced mass meetings with press releases. Kwayana viewed the bauxite strikes as a process where “we all learned to govern,” alluding to James’s principle of “every cook can govern.”

Kwayana recognized the popular committees and assemblies of the bauxite strikers as having at times narrow views and that democratic processes can have severe if unexamined limitations. However, Kwayana was organizing solidarity with these strikers, and had not yet entered the arena of facilitating a direct democratic process himself, among workers and farmers as self-governing producers. His next project was profoundly different where he assumed from the beginning workers and farmers could directly form their own government. He advocated that they form a type of dual power at the community level.

In 1973, Kwayana organized a rebellion of multi-racial landless sugar workers. It was the first multi-racial radical activity in more than a decade in Guyana. Burnham’s PNC government was in the process of negotiating the nationalization of old sugar lands, no longer farmed, but abandoned by the Bookers Corporation.

Kwayana propagated and successfully encouraged over 2000 people in African and Indian communities in the East Coast of Demerara, Guyana, to seize the land and start building homes and farming on them. He advised them to inform the government, which was advocating nationalization as part of a cultural revolution, that they wanted their deed but they would not pay for the land. If public or nationalized property is “the people’s land” it should not be something that government restricts or manages access. After the first week of squatting, the government gave the squatters a 48 hour ultimatum. Burnham’s police then started subjecting these communities to brutality and burned the homes and farming plots which were in the process of coming to fruition. Ultimately in February 1974, there was a fast and vigil, which brought this episode to a close on the authority of the landless former sugarworkers. The date was called “The Day of Redemption of Sugar Lands.”

The Seizure or Discovery of Sugar Lands

As I have already mentioned above, workplace councils and popular assemblies are not merely forms of protest activity. This is part of the process of how revolutionary socialists form their own government. For the imaginary of economic planning to support designing a new society, those aspiring specialists who wish to facilitate must advise labor not hierarchical or bureaucratic regimes. Eusi Kwayana’s effort at fomenting a rebellion of popular committees of the landless was accompanied by “guidelines.” These appeared to be informed by Julius Nyerere’s TANU guidelines (otherwise known as the Mwongozo) for socialist workers and farmers to fight “bureaucracy” but of course not Nyerere’s one party state in Tanzania. Nevertheless ASCRIA’s guidelines were different because they revealed how to proletarianize nationalized property at the expense of the Burnham’s increasingly authoritarian state. Though Kwayana insists it was not a formula meant to attack the Guyanese state, it appeared to be guidelines for class struggle which encouraged the direct seizure of the means of social and economic reproduction from state power, while carefully warning against obstacles that may lead to racial insecurity and middle class opportunism.

ASCRIA advised the landless sugar workers to first find out if the land soon to be nationalized was owned by the former sugar company. The land to be seized should not be privately owned. If it was private they were implored to leave it at once. If the state (the cooperative republic) seeks to lie or misrepresent itself as already having given the land to a cooperative, find the registered board of the specific co-op, sign up, and start building on the land. The squatters were warned to make sure that in the *Official Gazette* the deeds were not being passed over their head.

The movement was framed as not against the government or opposition but one which transcended political parties. Popular Committees were to be formed, and so long as individuals were not undermining the effort, they should be put on the committee regardless of race or party. This was to be a rejection of feudal-capitalism – sugar as landlord. The People’s committee was encouraged to recognize and record the accomplishments and challenges of seizing the land and facilitate discussion. Strict rules must be maintained as to who could have the land. Speculators, those already with a plot of land, could only have land when the landless had attained their’s.

The committee must also limit the number from each house or family.

Each committee was told to first survey the land, leaving proper space for roads, irrigation, and sewage. Then the lot sizes could be decided and they should be doled out equally. ASCRIA reminded there will be multi-racial communities dominated by Indians and those by Africans. Whoever was in the majority must defend and protect the minority in their communities. Where there is a land dispute by an African and Indian community, judicial reason cannot be measured until there is an equal division made of the land *within* each community.

There would be no inter-ethnic disputes fomented by community leaders who tolerate economic and other inequalities within their own community. A federated Free Land Council would coordinate the different communities seizing the land. The landless were encouraged to fence in the land and only to fill out government forms if they were clearly expressing they would pay no fees for purchase of the land. Burnham’s government initially responded to the squatters, before the police brutality, by recognizing their “need” for land. ASCRIA reminded what was all the fuss if the land was publicly owned in a cooperative republic?

The Guidelines told the landless they were making their own history not a new political party. That feudal capitalism could only be destroyed if they arrived on their own authority occupied the land and formed their own government over it. ASCRIA reminded if the government jails or persecutes them they would be heroes to their people. Their people needed heroes it was proclaimed but not charismatic elites above society.⁴⁴

In “Getting Back The People’s Land” published in the *Guyana Graphic* in February 1973, Kwayana reminded a socialist government, a revolutionary government, would not be concerned by workers and farmers self-organization undermining their image or about secrets (like the cozy relationship between Bookers and Burnham’s government) leaking out.

Opportunist leaders in both ethnic communities tried to divide the landless sugar worker movement but failed. This movement was using the imperialist's property (or the government's now nationalized property) to resolve the contradictions and tensions among the toilers. Kwayana underscored what type of socialist government sees this process as its enemy to be repressed?⁴⁵

In ASCRIA's "Sugar and Redemption" (1973), they reminded their readers economic revolution is not a cheap slogan or policy of a government above society. It means overturning, shaking up, changing the laws and government which affirms the rich's ambitions so that the poor people can be liberated. The Burnham government was not going to be allowed to "treat people like dogs" and claim an economic revolution. They would not be permitted to impose financial burdens on people in isolation and proclaim they were socialist. People are prepared to work but for the authoritarian state or foreign capitalist exploiters. What they had built was people's power and all the trials for land trespass were morally rejected.⁴⁶ Finally, in "the Declaration of Bachelor's Adventure" ASCRIA declined the collective punishment imposed on certain villages because they oppose the corruption of the so-called revolution. Fighting white supremacy and colonialism, ASCRIA no longer had a narrower race vindication on their mind. They had come to realize that Caribbean statesmen were not representative men of "black" achievement.

Looking back we should not have been surprised. You cannot put capitalist hustlers to build socialism. You cannot expect people who live by privilege to carry out a social revolution, or to uphold... equality. ... Are we to stand aside and shut up when we see people preaching equality and practicing accumulation? The country is run in the supposed interests of the privilege few. The few are now more than before. They are African and Indian, Chinese and European, but they are few. They are the political elite, the managerial class in all sectors...⁴⁷

This may have profound comparative meaning for a future Antigua and Caribbean which promotes its state capitalism and nationalized property as progressive. When I was preparing the 2012 new introduction to the updated edition of *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics* (with the new appendix of these rare ASCRIA documents) Eusi Kwayana was a bit unclear why I had taken contemporary interest in these long out of print small booklets, pamphlets, and flyers as someone who was born in the United States. However, soon with the emerging contradictions of President Obama's regime piling up, despite Obama

claiming to be the embodiment of “change we can believe in” and moving the world “forward,” Kwayana, who is now 90 years old, relayed to me that he now understood. Will future discussions of Caribbean socialism begin to center that wisdom is plentiful among ordinary people to govern? Time will tell.

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157

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(Endnotes)

- 1 Matthew Quest. "Legislating the Caribbean General Will: The Later Political Thought of Tim Hector, 1979-2002." *C.L.R. James Journal*. 13.1 (Spring 2007) 211.
- 2 Paget Henry. "C.L.R. James and the Antigua Left." In *C.L.R. James's Caribbean*. Paget Henry and Paul Buhle eds. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1992. 241-250; Eusi Kwayana. (1972) *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics*. Updated edition. Atlanta: OOOA, 2012. This included as an appendix a selection of rare ASCRIA (African Society for Cultural Relations with Independent Africa) documents from 1971-1974.
- 3 Bukka Rennie. "The Conflicting Tendencies in the Caribbean Revolution." *Pan African Journal*. 8.2 (Summer 1975) 153-176. For a concise summary of the New World Group, and the Caribbean Stalinism of Cheddi Jagan, Trevor Munroe, and Bernard Coard see Denis Benn. *The Caribbean: An Intellectual History*. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2004. Especially chapters five and six.
- 4 Matthew Quest, "Legislating the Caribbean General Will," 227-228.
- 5 "Whig" historical narratives is not used here as related specifically to historical political parties or philosophies in the US and UK with that name. Instead a whig history is a triumphant legalistic or constitutional narrative which while acknowledging historical conflicts believes the nation-state is evolving on a peculiarly admirable and rational path. In this way all past protest activity has contributed to the democratic character of the nation however imperial in fact. This might be objectively so save for exceptional insurgent moments in history. But we should not help bourgeois and imperial statesmen brag about it or write their central role into history when they have abused us.
- 6 C.L.R. James. *Party Politics in the West Indies*. San Juan, Trinidad: Vedic, 1962. 117-118.
- 7 Matthew Quest. "The 'Not So Bright' Protegees and the Comrades that Never Quarreled: C.L.R. James's Hidden Disputes on Labor's Self-Emancipation and the Political Economy of Colonial Freedom." 10 (October 2013)
Online: <http://insurgentnotes.com/2013/10/the-not-so-bright-proteges/>
- 8 Robert Coram. *Caribbean Time-Bomb*. New York: William & Morrow, 1993. 58.
- 9 Kwayana was expelled from the PNC in 1961 for advocating power sharing in racially divided Guyana. Kwayana would again become an informal adviser to Burnham from 1967-1971, without taking a minister's salary, wherever he thought he could advance cooperative economics or a Pan-African foreign policy. Kwayana's entering Burnham's PNC and this on again, off again relationship through the early 1970s must be assessed in light of a perception after the 1950s. Jagan, who claimed to be an international socialist, always saw himself as the leader and organizer of the Indo-Guyanese community. On these terms of internationalism Kwayana could then organize Black people. Kwayana also was disappointed in Jagan's rejection of Guyana joining the West Indian Federation out of Indo-Guyanese fear of racial domination. Jagan, according to Kwayana, never challenged ethnic chauvinism among the Indo-Guyanese, especially when campaigning in all Indian districts. Earlier, Kwayana, who changed his name from Sydney King in 1968, was part of the first People's Progressive Party government which Cheddi Jagan, which was overthrown by Anglo-American empire in 1953 leaving Kwayana and Jagan political

prisoners.

- 10 Matthew Quest. "Workers Self-Management in a Rasta Idiom: The Political Thought of Joseph Edwards." Introduction to Joseph Edwards. *Workers Self-Management in the Caribbean*. Atlanta: OOOA, 2014. 9-45.
- 11 Paget Henry and I over the past decade have had a spirited discussion over the legacies of Caribbean socialism, and the role of labor's self-emancipation in the radical tradition. I have been inspired by the direct democratic tradition. While, he is aware of this as part of Antigua's and the Caribbean's intellectual legacies, he has been more invigorated by Walter Rodney and the New World Group, and focused on economic planning by professionals as a radical tradition. It is not a false characterization of his position in recent years that he is an advocate for state affirmative action for Antigua and Caribbean capitalists (as distinct from foreign capitalists) and does not believe that most of the Caribbean workers and farmers have shown an interest in popular self-management, since the Grenada Revolution, beyond a long term interest in cooperatives. See Paget Henry. "C.L.R. James, Walter Rodney, and the Rebuilding of Caribbean Socialism." *CLR James Journal*. 19.1&2 (Fall 2013) 458-484.
- 12 For evidence of James's influence on Hector and Kwayana see for example the following. Tim Hector. "C.L.R. James and the 21st Century." *CLR James Journal*. 8.1 (2000/2001) 124-133; Eusi Kwayana. "But A Visionary, Returning Exile, and Guest Activist Ready to Join in the Work of Nation-Building: CLR James's Influence on Guyana and Caribbean Politics." *CLR James Journal*. 19.1&2 (Fall 2013) 119-227.
- 13 Matthew Quest. "Every Cook Can Govern: Direct Democracy, Workers Self-Management, and the Creative Foundations of CLR James's Political Thought." *CLR James Journal*. 19.1&2 (Fall 2013) 378-395.
- 14 See Walton Look Lai. "C.L.R. James and Trinidad Nationalism." In *C.L.R. James's Caribbean*. Paget Henry and Paul Buhle eds. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1992. 174-209.
- 15 C.L.R. James. (1937) *World Revolution*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1993; C.L.R. James. (1956) *Every Cook Can Govern*. Detroit: Bewick, 1992; C.L.R. James. (1958) With Grace Lee and Cornelius Castoriadis. *Facing Reality*. Detroit: Bewick, 1974; C.L.R. James. (1947) With Raya Dunayevskaya and Grace Lee. *The Invading Socialist Society*. Detroit: Bewick, 1972; C.L.R. James. *Party Politics in the West Indies*. San Juan: Vedic, 1962.
- 16 Eusi Kwayana. *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics*. Atlanta: OOOA, 2012. 28-30.
- 17 Both Tim Hector and Eusi Kwayana, share the peculiar disposition of friendly relations with those with whom they have mortally disagreed, found in small countries. Tim Hector often disagreed with Eusi Kwayana's appraisal of the racial insecurity in Guyana and the merits of Cheddi Jagan in particular. Hector viewed Jagan as "a modern martyr." Kwayana also believed Hector, in his philosophy of history for the region, like CLR James, could overstate his understanding of events as he appraised and illuminated them from a distance. Yet we must underscore while Hector enjoyed fomenting public intellectual controversy among people who he viewed generally as allies, and whom he admired on one level, Kwayana reserved this approach only for political opponents who he had finally ruptured relations and who were an authoritarian danger to the public. Kwayana also resists supporting the codification of something called "his political philosophy" by scholars, as he sees himself intervening in discrete historical moments as events dictate.

Nevertheless, both Hector and Kwayana, have contributed to the radical traditions from which we can learn with the future on our minds.

See for example: Tim Hector. "Cheddi Jagan: Modern Martyr." *CLR James Journal*. 8.1 (Winter 2000/2001) 51-58; Eusi Kwayana. "Afterword: Tim Hector, Humanist, Political Values, and National Reconstruction." In Paul Buhle. *Tim Hector: A Caribbean Radical's Story*. Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi, 2006. 217-225.

- 18 These include controversies around the movement for the Sixth Pan African Congress in Tanzania, the overthrow of Allende's Chile, and an increasing anti-fascist front and critical support for Michael Manley's Jamaica during a period of perceived destabilization. This led to an increasing stance of "dialogue" among the different tendencies of the Caribbean Left as represented by the magazine *Caribbean Dialogue*, edited by Franklyn Harvey of the New Beginning Movement chapter in Canada, obscuring unresolved differences and debates before the Grenada Revolution of 1979. Another unexamined contradiction of the direct democratic tendency of the Caribbean New Left is it tended to substantially rely on the New World Group economic analysis while discarding its politics.
- 19 Tim Hector. "Bird Calls Direct Democracy Communist." *Outlet*. July 23, 1982. 8-9; Tim Hector. "Either Socialism or Barbarism." *Outlet*. March 8, 1985. 6-7.
- 20 Matthew Quest, "Legislating the Caribbean General Will," 217-218.
- 21 Linden Lewis. "Linden Forbes Burnham (1923-1985): Unraveling the Paradox of Post-colonial Charismatic Leadership in Guyana." In *Caribbean Charisma*. Anton Allahar ed. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2001, 92-120.
- 22 See Robert Dahl. *Democracy and its Critics*. New Haven: Yale, 1989.
- 23 Samuel Farber. *Cuba Since the Revolution of 1959*. Chicago: Haymarket, 2011. See in particular the conclusion entitled "Cuba Might Not Be A Socialist Democracy But..." The book is an outstanding work which highlights autonomous labor, anti-racist, women, and queer movements suppressed by the Cuban state as distinct from pro-imperialist movements.
- 24 See Matthew Quest. "Silences of the Suppression of Workers Self-Emancipation: Historical Problems with CLR James's Interpretation of V.I. Lenin." *Insurgent Notes*. 10 (October 2012). Online: <http://insurgentnotes.com/2012/10/silences-on-the-suppression-of-workers-self-emancipation-historical-problems-with-clr-james-interpretation-of-v-i-lenin/>; Matthew Quest. "C.L.R. James's Conflicted Intellectual Legacies on Mao Tse Tung's China." 11 (March 2013). Online: <http://insurgentnotes.com/2013/03/c-l-r-james-conflicted-intellectual-legacies-on-mao-tse-tungs-china/>
- 25 Tim Hector. (1999) "Hail Bwana, Farewell Papa!" *CLR James Journal*. 8.1 (Winter 2000/2001) 23-32.
- 26 "Paget Henry & Anthony Bogues in Conversation: *Shouldering Antigua & Barbuda*." *The Antigua & Barbuda Review of Books*. 4.1 (Summer 2011) 77-93.
- 27 Lionel Hurst. "The Life of V.C. Bird." *Antigua & Barbuda Review of Books*. 3.1 (Summer 2010) 98-103.
- 28 Paget Henry. *Shouldering Antigua and Barbuda: The Life of V.C. Bird*. London: Hansib, 2010. 111-116. Bird, according to Henry, must be seen as a modernizer who harnessed the power of wildcat strikes in the 1940s, with the aid of the colonial state, who was transitioning away from supporting the planter class uncritically.

- 29 Tennyson S.D. Joseph. "Paget Henry's *Shouldering Antigua & Barbuda*." *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books*. 4.1 (Summer 2011)123-128; See also "V.C. Bird: Politics and Philosophy: Reply to Critics." 135-157.
- 30 C.L.R. James. *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*. Westport, CT: Lawrence & Hill, 1977. 31-33.
- 31 Bukka Rennie. *Don't Stop the Strike*. Tunapuna, Trinidad: New Beginning Movement, 1976.
- 32 The only Caribbean political economist whom I am aware, of the Caribbean New Left generation, who has ever suggested that popular self-governing assemblies might be a crucial part of a critique of state capitalism (not defense of it) is Guyana's Clive Thomas.
- 33 Hugh O'Shaughnessy. *Grenada*. New York: Dodd Mead & Co, 1984. 86-87, 97.
- 34 Ellorton Jeffers. "The Working Class Restrained 1967-1976." *CLR James Journal*. 13.1 (Spring 2007) 233-238.
- 35 Denis Benn. *The Caribbean: An Intellectual History*. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2004. 115.
- 36 See Michael Albert. *Parecon: Life After Capitalism*. New York: Verson, 2003. While I don't agree with all of Albert's formulations for a participatory economics he understands economic planners sustain elite privileges of capitalists and statesmen and that a direct democratic economic planning encourages not choices between budgets and plans made by others but where workers, cooperative, and consumers councils make their own plans and judge them.
- 37 I wish to thank Loren Goldner for reminding me that "Marxist-Leninism" has always been a state sponsored discourse which bureaucratically dispenses it as a brand of conservative nationalism not insurgency. Some members of the direct democratic tendency of the Caribbean New Left, such as Bukka Rennie, use this term but have desired to attempt to tear its authentic interpretation from the Moscow and Maoist oriented.
- 38 See Matthew Quest. "Frantz Fanon's Critique of the National Bourgeoisie Revisited." *CLR James Journal*. 11.1 (2005) 113-126.
- 39 Eusi Kwayana disagreed with Bukka Rennie's New Beginning Movement's assessment of Trinidad's NJAC (National Joint Action Committee) as narrowly cultural nationalist. For Kwayana in 1970 they were just as anti-imperialist as any other radical grouping, and the "conflicting tendencies" analysis judged them too harshly. NJAC did organize people's parliaments – popular assemblies which NBM later advocated more thoroughly and programatically. The differences between NJAC and NBM were both of a political and interpersonal nature that has thus far not been revealed in historical accounts. Certainly NBM had a profound cultural outlook on both the Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians, while NJAC, the leading formation of Trinidad's 1970 Black Power revolt, spoke culturally only for Afro-Trinidadians and fostered alliances with Indo-Trinidadians.
- 40 Eusi Kwayana. *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics*. Atlanta: OOOA, 2012. 30, 34.
- 41 Hector generally agrees with Bolland that despite advocating Caribbean federation, the Caribbean labor movements of the 1940s were co-opted into middle class nationalist politics. See O. Nigel Bolland. *The Politics of Labour in the British Caribbean*. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2001.
- 42 Eusi Kwayana. *The Bauxite Strike and the Old Politics*. Atlanta: OOOA, 2012. 56. See

specifically footnote one in Chapter 3.

- 43 ASCRIA. "On the Negative Direction in Guyana." Appendix to *The Bauxite Strike*, 146-155.
- 44 ASCRIA. "Guidelines: To Those Who 'Discover' or Seize Sugarlands," Appendix to *The Bauxite Strike*, 167-168.
- 45 Eusi Kwayana, "Getting Back the People's Land," Appendix to *The Bauxite Strike*, 169-175.
- 46 ASCRIA. "Sugar and Redemption," In Appendix to *The Bauxite Strike*, 175-179.
- 47 ASCRIA, "Declaration of Bachelor's Adventure." In Appendix to *The Bauxite Strike*, 179-183.

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SPECIAL FEATURE ESSAY

RE-INTRODUCING HENRY REDHEAD YORKE: 18TH CENTURY BARBUDAN JOURNEYMAN

Edgar O. Lake

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[Editor's Note]:

This paper was excerpted from Lake's larger 2014 copyrighted manuscript: Henry Redhead Yorke, Eighteenth Century Barbudan Journeyman: from English Whig to Radical, to loyalist Tory; from pro-slavery advocate to pro-abolitionist.

Henry Redhead was born on Barbuda in 1772, the son of an enslaved African mother – Sarah Bullock. He was, then, the younger of two (illegitimate) sons she bore for a prominent plantation-owner, Samuel Redhead.¹

Samuel Redhead was Rt. Hon. Sir William Codrington's ninth legal counselor for his estates: ("manager of Betty's Hope and attorney for Antigua 1751-79; attorney for Barbuda from the end of the lease in 1761 to 1779")². Redhead is listed among Families (aggregated between 1707-1775), as 9th among the 18 most prominent land-owning families in Antigua.³ Barrister Redhead purchased 'Fryes' estate in 1763, for 29,000 English Pounds. He and his wife, Anne, (daughter of George Crump), had two children: Nathaniel and George. Nathaniel would marry Eliza and have eight children. George becomes a barrister like his father, negotiating many debts and securing a small pension from the sale of property, for his father, Samuel, and himself. Anne Redhead died and was buried on January 16, 1742.⁴

However, "by 1775, when the sugar economy of Antigua and the social system it had spawned was already on its course of decline,"⁵ Redhead's fortunes would have changed; and plunging profits – along with age and health concerns - were crucial factors why he returned to England – accompanied by Sarah Bullock.⁶

According to Amanda Goodrich's account, Samuel Redhead had five 'legitimate children'.⁷ But, in at least one letter written to William Codrington, the progeny of his 'wife' [an aspersion cast against Sarah's common-law status] seemed to be already under public scrutiny.⁸

Who is the woman being referred to as Samuel Redhead's 'wife' in At-hill's 1779 letter? Sarah Bullock (his common-law 'wife') was not popular even among Barbudans. During the last ten years of Samuel Redhead's

life, "...Sarah in fact seems to have more or less ruled Barbuda and to have made life difficult for those who opposed her... 'it was impossible [that] anybody could stay there [for] any length of time whilst Sally had anything to do with it as she was to all intents and purposes 'Governante.'"⁹ In the final days of 1779, Sarah accompanied Samuel Redhead on his return to England and lived with the aging Samuel Redhead in Marshfield, England.¹⁰

By the 18th century, most enslaved Africans worked on the Caribbean sugar estates, the density of which was among the highest in the world. Nevertheless, two very sobering factors qualified the lives of enslaved women in 18th century Barbudan social life – though these factors were also common to many other Caribbean forced labor societies.

Women were the majority of those working the gangs; and, they outlived their male counterparts.¹¹

Barbuda was, in many ways, the exception to the 'forced labor' sugar plantation model;¹² Henry's mother, Sarah, was most decidedly, not consigned to the 'slave gangs'. In fact, she forcefully exemplified a successful navigation for her offspring – and, this in the face of growing uncertainty from many external social forces. Merely one year after Sarah left Barbuda with Samuel Redhead, - with her children in tow – the juggernaut of all maternal fears materialized.¹³

The unique circumstances of Barbudan slave society which shaped Sarah Bullock's life – and the nascent social traditions nourishing her fortitude¹⁴ – would reveal irrefutable traces of emerging complexity in the development of young Henry Redhead Yorke's worldview. Even her name – Sarah – seemed to have haunted her young son, Henry Redhead, in his early political career.¹⁵

But, by 1769, with economic decline, Samuel Redhead had written to Sir Wm. Codrington, again: That letter "suggests freedom for superannuated slaves would save tax."¹⁶

Indeed, Sarah Bullock's life is an inestimable bulwark of African survival and capacity: an enslaved woman selected by a widowed plantation-owner for his companion, privately negotiated for purchase from his employer's estate, forced to chose co-habitation with her children's father, providing domestic and filial duties with Samuel Redhead until his death on March 15, 1785. Yet, she triumphed, eventually witnessing the valuation of her children in Samuel Redhead's will.¹⁷

A prism through which to see their union, or least, the social contract of the Redhead household still offers a pair of clues into colonial racial policy; notwithstanding the distinct laws of the colony of Antigua – and by extension, Samuel Redhead’s amorphous heritage – a complex identity emerged from a legacy of Henry’s life on Wm. Codrington’s plantation on Barbuda.¹⁸

Two letters exist where Samuel Redhead negotiates the purchase of Sarah Bullock, and ‘the mustee child of mine’.¹⁹ It was not only of Henry’s older brother, Joseph Redhead, to whom these letters referred; there was also an immutable contract evidenced with Sarah. By then, despite his overt privilege Samuel Redhead was a wealthy but ailing planter, barely functioning as an agent for Sir William Codrington, (2nd Baronet of Dodington); administering his estates on Barbuda from 1761 - 1779.

Later, according to Goodrich, “In his will, Samuel Redhead described Joseph and Henry as ‘my natural or reputed sons by Sarah Bullock...who resides with me.’”²⁰

... Those weighty words (“reputed sons”), I propose, both grounded
 166 Henry Redhead (Yorke)’s origin into the actuarial history of the Barbu-
 ... dan plantation; and, it shadowed his personage throughout his life. In
 the waning stages of his political life, even at his trial, it was precisely this
 – his ‘reputed’ personhood – that would be ‘entered’ into the testimony:
 questioning his origin, classification, residence, and affiliations.²¹

In 1774, - when Henry is two years old, his father Samuel was in England. Lowe writes of it bluntly: “Redhead was now an enfeebled old man having been succeeded in his post by his son, George.”²² Samuel’s last letter to Sir Wm. Codrington was written in England, on September 14, 1774.

According to Goodrich, young Henry Redhead’s own account is that he arrived in England in 1778, at the age of six.²³ Published records have not corroborated that he accompanied his parents to England. He may, indeed, have arrived earlier.

The intersection of forces in Henry Redhead’s Barbudan background would prove tumultuous. There were the misfortunes of the Codrington estates, tempered by conscription of Afro-Barbudans into the British military. The feared insurgency of their insertion into war in the North American colonies – made evident by the rebellions on Antigua (1736), and on Barbuda (1745) – encapsulated a nettlesome legacy for a West Indian planter’s illegitimate son. (Recent scholarship shows the inclination,

indeed the decision to go to war with Britain by the American leaders, was driven by the fear of Caribbean ‘slave insurrections’ spreading to North America).²⁴

The year following Redhead’s arrival in England would prove quite unsettling to the Redhead family, and material fortunes.

Prolonged drought struck in 1779 (and again in 1789), ruining Antigua and Barbuda plantations. Besides, George Redhead, Samuel’s son, seemed concerned in 1779 that Britain had declared war on Spain. In his June 10th letter to Wm. Codrington he complained nervously of “drought, little sugar; with Men of War...gone to North America with all troops but three regiments...”²⁵

When he arrived in England, ostensibly in 1778, at the age of six, Henry Redhead attended school in Cambridge.²⁶ The young Redhead would quickly learn the complex classification of being a ‘West Indian’, - a planter’s son; not a ‘Negro’. As he achieved academic success, he would exploit the identity of being a ‘Briton’. These two classifications would be rotating currencies, enduring identifiers for many later generations of black ‘West Indians’ of African descent.

Redhead’s life had entered a new but shifting vista – a break from an insular life on Barbuda. A year after he left those bucolic climes, major fissures began to be revealed.

First, aside from George’s June 10th Letter to Sir Wm. Codrington, now an ominous June 12 1779 Letter to Sir Wm. Codrington by James Athill had declared Samuel Redhead’s health as critical. Then, a September 27, 1779 letter reported the death of the Codrington Family attorney, Dr. Athill.

There was worse to come.

An explosive letter soon arrived in Dodington, England. It was dated September 30, 1779, sent by Godfrey Davy. It’s contents had been carefully written in Antigua, and sent to Sir Wm. Codrington. It asserted the plea of another woman: the result of a liaison with Samuel Redhead.

Another set of illegitimate children, besides Sarah Bullock’s two sons, existed. Godfrey Davy’s exhortative letter, - as summarized by Lowe – “Writes for the freedom of his mulatto half-sister, one of Sir William’s slaves, who has borne many children for Mr. Redhead and now wishes to retire.”²⁷

No doubt, it would foreshadow one of the most well-documented plantation record; and itemized lawsuits in the Samuel Redhead family legacy: the Samuel Redhead's "counterclaim against William his employer, Sir William Codrington." By Goodrich's account, Samuel Redhead had "retired to England and died in London in 1785;²⁸ and Lowe does record Langford Lovell's 1780 Letter of Samuel Redhead's counter-claim, five years before his death.²⁹ At the time of Lovell's 1780 Letter, young Henry was eight years old.

Through William Codrington's detailed submitted account of his absentee ownership of the Barbuda plantation, - and of Samuel Redhead's accounts, among others, for the entire island's operation - it offers us one of the most complete accounts of Sarah Bullock, an enslaved African-Caribbean woman - being paid specific wages as compensation for her administrative skills.

As a caveat, a 1780s Barbudan survey shows a particular inventory of the pastoral world which young Henry Redhead left behind,³⁰ - an island with an enviable equestrian feature of wild horses - which was undoubtedly forbidden under Sarah's watchful eye; but that would leave unrequited sentiments only to surface later in Henry Redhead's official portraiture, however obliquely.

When Samuel Redhead died in London in 1785, he left the bulk of his estate to his eldest son, George. His father left young Henry Redhead 500 Pounds (Sterling) and property in St. John's, Antigua.³¹

Four years after his father's death, when Henry Redhead had graduated from Cambridge University obtaining the LLB, in 1789, it was a grim year of record drought in Barbuda.

As late as 1790, - the year that Henry Redhead Yorke was admitted to the Inner Temple Bar in London - new schemes signaled change for Barbuda.

Bethell Codrington (Sir William Codrington's nephew who had visited the West Indian estates), lowered the boom. He wrote his barristers, "recommending 'clearing the ground and making enclosures,' for increasing numbers of domestic oxen, cows, horses, mules, jackasses, and sheep, 'as it is my opinion that all these Islands should (and would gladly) be supplied from Barbuda with all these articles.'"³² Langford Lovell's Barbuda correspondence to Wm. Codrington further provides a curious lens. His January 24, 1790 report "severe coughs & Peripneumony's [sic]."³³ Another March 8, 1790 Letter to Wm. Codrington, speaks to a feared regional

[slave] 'uprising' in Martinique.³⁴ With predictable foreboding, an August 8 1790 Lovell Letter to Wm. Codrington reports from Antigua a palpable fear of the Planters' financial demise – The Slave Bill.³⁵ Yet another October 13, 1790 Lovell Letter to William Codrington shows the September 9th 1790 sale of "undesirable slaves."³⁶ A stark November 2nd 1790 Letter, records: "Sir Thomas Shirley, Governor, definitely states that though he wished to renew Sir William's Barbuda grant 'he did not find himself 'inclineable' to renew, lest it should give offence to Government."³⁷

By April 4, 1792, Sir William Codrington was already dead.

Langford Lovell's 1792 letter ruefully expects "the Abolishers of Slaves" to bring down the price of 'West Indian goods'. Codrington's barristers, Lovell, Gray and Walrond have been given permission to 'manumit sundry Mulatto and Negro slaves' on Barbuda³⁸

For Henry Redhead, personal winds of change had already come. By 1792, Yorke would join the West Indian Planters' political club, and was soon negotiating political difficulties among his radical English associates - in France. But, a yet unconfirmed element would also force the 22 year-old Henry Redhead to change his very identity.³⁹ What might this name-changing action have portended, - particularly when he had to forcibly return, however unexpectedly, to England?

Now, seven years after his father Samuel's death, Redhead's education in English Enlightenment, his mastery of polished manners, meticulous dress, and financial self-sufficiency afforded him a pass as a *Gentleman* from 'above' – ostensibly, an 'insider' of English society. Understandably, he espoused viewpoints that mirrored that privileged class.

Yet, one must not underestimate the early literary environment among the elite planter-class in Antigua. It must have, however peripheral, awarded a deep social confidence in young Henry Redhead. He had been raised without interruption in his barrister-father's household, with all the actuarial and literary trappings of the Colonial Gentry. Samuel, a respectable landowner and legislator, was prominent among the Planter class in Antigua⁴⁰. Ledgers, diaries, study-rooms, - spaces of leisure - prevailed; social privilege, and deference, as well as access to his father's private libraries would have served the young Henry. These had been prevalent pursuits in that elite class which existed in Samuel Redhead's Antiguan circles [(and typical of his political and legal station in the Antigua Colonial legislature)] of the 1700s.⁴¹

In that watershed year, 1792, Redhead seemed to pledge his allegiance to the Whigs, becoming a member of the Whig Club. He reportedly came under the influence of Edmund Burke, reportedly even staying overnight in Burke's residence. In the same year when he joined the Whigs, Redhead also engaged with the English radical movement, joining the Derby Society for Political Information. In that tumultuous year, "he was sent by the Derby Society as a delegate to the French National Convention in Paris."⁴²

Also, in that very year while living in Paris, he met and joined British supporters of the French Revolution. They called themselves the British Club.⁴³

It was a new social space, and psychologically, by passing as a 'Briton' Redhead was outwardly embraced by the emerging Whigs; yet this threshold would partially 'exile' Redhead (soon-to-be Yorke) from his natal tropical homeland.

While Goodrich points out that Henry Redhead, never mentioned his origins in his writings, she does mention a significant account of his early admittance to being from Barbuda.⁴⁴

As a young barrister with an inheritance, young Redhead easily rose to the *Gentleman* Class, in sharp contrast to other African and black West Indian voices, including William Davidson; or, abolitionist figures such as Olaudah Equiano, and Ottobah Cugoano. Yet, other significant London-based black literary figures such as Briton Hammon, James Albert (Ukawsaw Gronniosaw), Ignantius Sancho, John Henry Naimbanna, and Philip Quaque (Kweku), also foreshadowed him.

However, Davidson's Jamaican background seemed most similar to Yorke, having been "the acknowledged son of the Attorney General of Jamaica and a black woman."⁴⁵ But much like Robert Wedderburn, another 'mulatto' son of wealthy Scotts in Jamaica, Davidson too achieved notoriety in London's radical movement, early in the nineteenth century.

Where Davidson's early formation differed from Yorke, was that before arriving in Britain, he had already "received a local education." And, having been sent to Aberdeen to study Mathematics, he was apprenticed to a Liverpool lawyer, then went to sea – perhaps by press gang. After learning cabinet-making in Lichfield, he set up shop in Birmingham. Soon after, his remarkable talents of confidence and oratory emerged within a respectable branch of the radical ranks. He published his own trial ac-

count; but, a lengthy official record also exists of his trial for sedition, charged as one of the leaders of the Cato Street Conspiracy - to blow up the Cabinet members in 1820.

Indeed, there had been an earlier specific social space championed through the West Indian childhood 'prodigy tradition'; in this case the [Jamaican figure] of Francis Williams.⁴⁶ He similarly navigated the 'intelligent free black' traversing Europe, -- later seized by Henry Redhead.

Williams, too, had gone to Cambridge University, taking classes in mathematics.

Further, their legacies were more deeply and inextricably intertwined. In 1834, Jamaica and Antigua would become the first two 'West India' island colonies simultaneously granting to the enslaved Africans their 'emancipation' - without an Apprenticeship period. Enslaved Africans on Barbuda, too, would, by extension, be granted 'emancipation' in 1834.

In contrast to Redhead, however, Williams was *sent* to England for his education by the Duke of Montagu, - an experiment "whether, by proper cultivation, and a regular course of tuition at school and university, a Negro might not be found as capable of literature as a white person."⁴⁷ However, Francis Williams, returned to Spanish Town, Jamaica, and opened a school where he taught mathematics, Latin, Reading, and Writing. He was recognized as a scholar and an author of Latin verse; achievements which earned him a portrait (circa 1735-1740), with painted "tools" of a mathematician and a scholar. These tropes included a padded white long wig,⁴⁸ "writing implements, a compass, globes, and books—Newton's pen of Philosophy was set on the table, with volumes by Newton, and others in the bookcase stacked behind him."⁴⁹ He would not be the last to exploit these tropes, ceremonial trappings of social achievement. Yet, in some fashion, Yorke's portrait emerges plaintively, even now.

But, in 1793, the political betrayal of members of the 'British Club' extremists, intent on backing the French overthrow of England, accused Redhead of being a British 'spy'. They reported him to the French authorities, forcing Henry Redhead to hastily leave France, and escape through Holland.

It is believed to be, here, when in order to accomplish his route of escape that Redhead had to change his name to 'Yorke' -- to stay ahead of a warrant issued for his arrest.⁵⁰

Still, his earlier political organizational skills within the radical (or Jacobin) Movement should not be overlooked. By contrast to other national chapters, then-Redhead's leadership skills in a thriving Sheffield town were outstanding.⁵¹

Now Yorke, in 1793, a year after he had begun engaging with the English radical movement, his all-out embrace of French Revolutionary principles – the Rights of Man – had completely transformed him. Supporters of the French Revolution were a different breed from the Derby Society for Political Information, which had sent Yorke (then-Redhead) to Paris. The Derby Society had, surreptitiously, sent him on a collision course: to the French National Convention, in Paris.⁵²

Yorke's star had been part of a larger constellation of radical advocacy, to wit, proclamations written in the New World; many admonishing for human rights of indigenous peoples. Born in the late 18th century, he was born of a time of hemispheric relevance. According to Lewis Hanke: "It was the French rationalists of the eighteenth century who unearthed this pamphlet (Las Casas's *Brevisima relación*) and disseminated it, in order to present Spanish cruelty – side by side with Persian despotism – as the perfect opposite of the project of the Enlightenment."⁵³ Hanke lends us a further marker, - to understand Yorke, arriving there (as Redhead) in 1778: ("From France, the Black Legend soon moved to England and from there to the British possessions In North America.")⁵⁴

Now, with the kernel of the revolution looming in Saint Domingue with Toussaint Louverture's August 29, 1793 Proclamation, the potency of the Jacobin movement in France clearly 'shadowed' Hayti; while, simultaneously, linking Yorke's heritage to English concern "in the British slavery-based colonies in the Caribbean".⁵⁵

There, in France, Yorke encountered political and literary luminaries from the 'French West Indies' – ties from his Barbudan heritage, and natal West Indian region -- that would better inform Yorke's circles, and Atlantic convictions.

Jean-Baptiste (Mars) Belley, as he called himself, -- born at Gorée Island and transported to Saint-Domingue as an enslaved person, -- would walk into the convention alongside Louis-Pierre Dufay, a white; both representing the new Republic. Imagine, Yorke, inspired by the fiery announcement that would introduce the two delegates to the hall of the National Convention.⁵⁶

One can imagine how Yorke would further draw inspiration from a remarkable 1797 portrait. One account, in describing this riveting Caribbean figure, “shows Belley nonchalantly leaning his slim athletic body against a plinth bearing the bust of Raynal who had died the previous year. The tricolor panache in the hat he holds and the sash around his waist mark his official status as well as affording a pretext for the display of pictorial virtuosity.”⁵⁷ While Belley’s signature along with the six deputies from Saint-Domingue graded the vote of the *Constitution of the Year III*, August 22, 1795, Belley’s name was added to the Council of Five Hundred, although he lost his seat in May, 1797. Other black deputies – Thomany and Mentor – took Belley’s place; but all of their signatures, and more significantly engravings, were summarily obscured by Toussaint Louverture’s imperious engraving, as commander-in-chief of St. Domingue.

Indeed, nothing of the circumstances of how Belley’s portrait was exhibited - [*Portrait de Nègre*, (1797); then *Portrait du C. Belley, ex-représentant des Colonies*, (1798), the ‘C’ in his name standing for ‘citoyen’.] - is actually known, according to Hugh Honour. He invites us to consider “whether it was commissioned by Belley himself, or conceived by Girodet’s as a semi-allegorical image of blacks freed from slavery as a result of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.”⁵⁸ In 1802, Toussaint’s image was represented in an engraving in the fourth and last volume of François Bonnerville’s *Portraits des personages célèbres de la Révolution*. Toussaint’s image appears toward the end, preceded by Grégoire and followed by E.V. Mentor, Lefebvre, and Dumas.”⁵⁹

These intrigues would have been hardly insignificant to Yorke’s sitting for his own portrait by William Hay.⁶⁰ Curiously, a black-and-white mezzotint of Yorke is appropriated by Goodrich to substantiate her British racialized image of him.⁶¹ Some time after the Hay’s sitting, James Ward, a printmaker, copied Hay’s image in 1796.⁶² Ironically, in style and ideology, it was James’s brother, William Ward, who was a noted engraver.

Just as Girodet’s interest in painting non-European subjects was well recorded,⁶³ - the nascent affinity between Yorke and Ward would later reveal some surreptitious clues.⁶⁴

The 600 horses looming in the 1780 Barbuda report, and later mentioned in a 1790 Christopher Bethell-Codrington Letter, respectively – alluded to its enchanting population of ‘wild horses’ which had to be ‘broken-in’ then shipped to neighboring islands. That equestrian image would repeatedly surface as an ongoing presence in Yorke’s life. Horses would become

a trope shadowing the zenith of his oratorical career. And, horses would invade his metaphorical rhetoric during his conversion as a Reformer.⁶⁵

Concurrently, the iconography of horses would become notoriously apparent after 1810, in James Ward's oeuvre of landscapes. Yorke, whose wife was a painter, would have been keenly aware of this existential development before his death in 1813.

Besides, after he had begun painting in 1790, Ward would presciently partake of an erstwhile patrimony in the mid 1790s; fortunate to gain "access to the Orleans collection that had come to England from revolutionary France to be sold."⁶⁶ By the completion date of his engraving of Yorke in 1796,⁶⁷ Ward not only knew of Yorke, but was also "sympathetic to the anti-slavery movement and counted among his associates some of its leaders."⁶⁸ The young English portraitist's personal life, and ambivalence to institutional acceptance would mirror many aspects of Yorke's professional life; Ward had struggled to emerge from the shadow of being merely a successful – though a highly respected commercial engraver – to a well-regarded painter. His Yorke engraving articulated Ward's own trajectory, even while it emblazoned much of Yorke's spirit – being completed two years after his imprisonment.

Yet, Ward's image of Yorke kept one outstanding feature that also mirrored Francis William's Jamaica homecoming portrait: the trope of an elusive English aristocratic (or Cambridge jurist's) accoutrement: the long white powdered wig. York's portrait bore the white wig–albeit, a shorter one.

Despite contemporary nuanced hints to the contrary, Ward's mezzotint is the result of the printmaker's technique of image transference – not a confirmation of the original portraitist's attempt at Yorke's 'skin-tone'. Indeed, the mezzotint, a much-admired technology throughout the 19th century, expanding literary and Fine Art symbolisms within Continental circles, lent undiscovered affinities within Ward's engraving of Yorke; while deepening other symbolic 'tints' in his political Writings.

All these emerging symbolist features seemed strewn among other eclectic *universalists*, such as Pushkin.⁶⁹ Beyond this, in the notorious two-volume settler manifesto, *Antigua and the Antiguans*,⁷⁰ inaccurate claim s to Juan de Pareja's black image by Velasquez, as of West Indian heritage, and nefariously compiled therein, – would appear some 31 years after Yorke's death.

While living in Paris, Yorke became acquainted with other figures deeply involved in the French side of the Jacobins Movement. Yorke knew of Jacques-Pierre Brissot de Warville, leader of the Girondins, an elite group, who were “inspired by American and English abolitionist societies though very different in ambition, in tone, and membership.”⁷¹

But, even here in rarefied French circles, his colonial heritage had preceded him - in an unbearable insult worth mention.

The *Société des Amis des Noirs*, “at the instigation of one the Amis, the Sévres porcelain factory began to produce copies of the Wedgwood medallion with the inscription *Ne suis-je pas un homme? un frère?* (“Am I not a man? a brother?”), the ministry took fright.”⁷² The accusation of the *comte d’Angiviller’s* secretary, had manufactured a smear on the English colonies. The cultural historian, Honour, hardly absolves them: “There had not in fact been any unusually serious slave uprising in recent years in the British West Indies, and one can only wonder whether d’Angiviller was not mainly concerned with the situation at home during the troubled months which preceded the meeting of the Estates-General in May, 1789. Later that year, he was to attempt to exclude from the *Salon* all paintings which might be given a controversial political interpretation.”⁷³

...
175
...

But, again, these slights stung Yorke amidst other glories gleaned from the latent orbit of comrades at the French National Convention. Yorke, no doubt, watched the political fortunes of Alexandre Dumas even as he approached the sunset of his own years. Dumas was from Saint-Domingue, a man from the *des colonies*.

The winter of 1794, saw Dumas as Commander of the Armée des Alps, perform a “brilliant tactical manoeuvre ...finally dislodging Sardinian-Piedmontese troops from the Mona Cenis pass,”⁷⁴ – thus opening the road to Italy. It also portended Yorke’s path destined for downfall.

Yorke’s changing political fortunes that very year was beclouded by official investigations, trial, and imprisonment. Yet, keeping abreast of Dumas’s fortunes, Yorke kept his ears to the proverbial prison floor.

Dumas had had difficulty “dealing with *The Committee of Public Safety* in Paris with its constant interferences, threats, and suspicions. In July 1794, he was ordered to Paris by Robespierre to answer charges of *incivisme* but was saved when the Great Incorruptible was himself accused and guillotined just days later.”⁷⁵

By 1798, while Yorke would recant his radical convictions after four years of imprisonment, marrying the daughter of his warden. In a parallel path, Napoleon “appointed him [Dumas] Governor of Treviso and included him in his expeditionary force to Egypt which left Toulon in the summer of 1798. But their relationship did not survive their mutual antagonism.”⁷⁶

Recently, William Doyle reminds us of Yorke’s similar embitterment with the French revolution; through but one verdict of the exquisite ironies linked to the Jacobins movement:

“French republicans, living under one form of monarchy or another for all but four years between 1804 and 1870, did not care to remember that the Revolution itself had been monarchical for its first three decades. They were embarrassed to recognize, too, that the first republic’s founding years had been scarred by Terror. What they treasured was the memory of equality and fraternity, the promise of social welfare in the Constitution of 1793, and the populist rhetoric of the Jacobins.”⁷⁷

In brief, Henry Redhead Yorke had returned to England in 1793, with a fierce sense of mission, releasing three radical pamphlets. Goodrich charts Yorke’s speaking engagements associated with “radical popular societies around the country.” Goodrich also quotes Joseph Gales that after arriving in Manchester in 1793, “with the apparatus of a kind of apostolic Mission.”

By 1794, Yorke had begun to give frequent public speeches.⁷⁸ He gave at least one to an audience counted in the thousands. In April of 1794, Yorke was arrested at Castle Hill, Sheffield, (mirroring that recurring Barbudan landmark!), giving a speech to 12,000 eager sympathizers.⁷⁹ What Goodrich assesses, might be the most poignant irony inscribed of an earlier legacy of resistance occupancy on Castle Hill, on Barbuda;⁸⁰

Here, too, Yorke attained the zenith of his career as an orator: “The report of his trial suggests that he arrived at the Castle Hill meeting after the audience was assembled, ‘and when it was known he was there, there was a great noise from the people calling for Mr. Yorke in the chair and the crowd made an opening for him and he was pressed forward.’”⁸¹ Goodrich continues describing the exquisite moment of irony, and yet glory – and vulnerability – of Yorke’s political and now Pegasus-like career:

“After his speech, supporters allegedly took the horses from his carriage and dragged it bearing Yorke through the streets of Sheffield.”⁸²

Thus, Yorke’s performance suggests a celebrity status of leader-hero that was awarded to such political figures in popular culture at the time.⁸³ Certainly, Yorke’s performance at Castle Hill in 1794 was his crowning moment as a radical.” However, British informers who saw him as a Trojan horse, would quickly provide charges of treason against him; justifying his imprisonment, until the date of his trial.”⁸⁴

In his apotheosis, Yorke would now personify Barbuda, his ancestral homeland, and birthright of equipage;⁸⁵ both, had been reborn in the crucible of that very symbolic unhinged presence, - yet, part of Barbuda’s equestrian tithe: “one sufficient horse.”⁸⁶

Acknowledgments

My Thanks to Amanda Goodrich for her paper,

Radical “Citizens of the World,” 1790-95: The Early Career of Henry Redhead Yorke, Journal of British Studies, 53:03, 2014 (pps. 611-635). It was in her paper that I learned of Redhead changing his name, adding ‘Yorke’ in 1792.

Also, my Thanks to Margaret T. Tweedy, for her thesis, “*A History of Barbuda Under the Codringtons, 1738-1833*,” M. Litt., Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Birmingham, 1981.

Without Tweedy’s document, I could not have substantially supplement Robson Lowe’s book, *The Codrington Correspondence, 1743-1851*, (London, 1951).

Lastly, to Robert Glen, professor of history, University of New Haven, Conn., without whom I would not have learned of Goodrich’s 2014 paper on Henry Redhead Yorke. It was Glen who encouraged me to explore writing about Henry Redhead Yorke’s childhood Barbuda.

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(ENDNOTES)

1 Richard B. Sheridan, "The Rise of a Colonial Gentry: A Case Study of Antigua, 1730-1775," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, V. 13: 3, 1961, p. 356.

Also: Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838*, Indiana University Press: Bloomington, Indianapolis, 1990. Bush writes: "In contrast [to the French and Spanish laws related to miscegenation... to prevent the growth of a large mulatto population], with respect to the protection of slave women from sexual abuse, the limitation of miscegenation and the acknowledgment of the right of the slave family (which were all closely interrelated), earlier British slave law is patchy and inadequate. For example, Antigua was the only British colony to legislate against miscegenation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries..." p. 28.

N.B. Lake offers a caveat on what may have accounted for Samuel Redhead's complex behavior: one, gilded in his efforts to legally purchase Sara Bullock from Sir Wm. Codrington; but one that should not to be mistaken for a gesture to atone for his errant behavior - breeding Sarah Bullock with impunity. Redhead (a member of the Antigua Assembly) did so, knowing the miscegenation laws of Antigua. His behavior in Barbuda fell under special law, since Barbuda was an island ceded to Sir Wm. Codrington, for whom he worked.

See further : Stephen Sedley's article, ("I have no books to consult"), *London Review of Books*, January 22, 2015: "Although in later years Mansfield, and others, sought to limit the decision to prevent the export of slaves from England, its logic was far wider. The proposition that ownership of another human being was not a form of property known to English law - it had already been help to be outwith [sic] Scotts law - dovetailed with Mansfield's judgment in *Campbell v. Hall*...distinguishing between ceded colonies [Barbuda], which were subject to direct rule and therefore open to a common-law ban on slavery, -- and settled colonies [Antigua], whose legislatures were autonomous unless the imperial parliament overrode them." p. 22.

2 Margaret T. Tweedy. *A History of Barbuda Under the Codringtons 1738-1833*, University of Birmingham, UK (1981) Also: Sheridan, pps. 345-6,

3 Richard B. Sheridan. *The Rise of a Colonial Gentry*. Sheridan cites Samuel Redhead owning 740 acres with 264 slaves (sic). He is a member of the Antigua Assembly , p. 356

4 Vere Langford Oliver. *History of Antigua*. Vol. 3, p. 40

5 Margaret T. Tweedy. *A History of Barbuda Under the Codringtons 1738-1833*, University of Birmingham, UK (1981). p. 353

6 Richard B. Sheridan. As it relates to planters' fortunes, Sheridan points out: "By 1775 the sugar economy of Antigua and the social system it had spawned was already on its course of decline. After 1763, the Ceded Islands attracted a growing number of young planters who carried off seasoned slaves to carve new plantations out of wild woods. A disaster that struck more swiftly was the American War of Independence which brought real privation to this foreign-fed colony. Working more slowly but no less menacingly, were the eroding effects of absentee landlordism." pps. 353-54
Also: Michael Wood. *In Search of England: Journeys into the English Past*, University of California Press, 2001. Here, Wood writes of Sarah travelling with Samuel Redhead: "Even the Codrington attorney Samuel Redhead, who was responsible for their Antiguan estate between 1751 and 1779, and for Barbuda from 1761 to 1779, had a black

common-law wife, Sarah (Sally) Bullock. Samuel [Redhead] describes their sons, Joseph and Henry Redhead, as 'my natural sons by Sarah Bullock' and he made provisions for them in his will. According to Oliver's *History of Antigua* (1899), Sarah returned with Samuel to England and was living with him in Marshfield in the early seventeenth century." pps. 301-2

7 Amanda Goodrich, *Radical "Citizen of the World," 1790-95: The Early Career of Henry Redhead Yorke*, *Journal of British Studies*, v. 53: 03, (pps. 611-35), 2014. p. 615

8 Lowe, Robson, *The Codrington Correspondence 1743-1851*, Robson Lowe Ltd., London, 1951. In her summation: a letter (2-6-1779) sent to Sir William Codrington, written by James Athill (later Chief Justice of Antigua and second son of Dr. James Athill - who was himself married to Samuel Redhead's sister - and, died in 1779), Lowe encapsulates Athill's letter, [JA59] reads thus: "A long and interesting letter. Described decline of Mr. Redhead's faculties, brought on by old age and a domineering wife who 'has had art enough to make him believe he is the father of a tribe which is undoubtedly the offspring of others.'" p. 25. N.B.: Oliver, however, records that Anne (Redhead) is buried in 1742. [Oliver, *History of Antigua*. 1899, vol. 3, p. 40]. Athill's letter was, therefore, clearly referring to Sarah ('Sally') Bullock, - who would have four children, altogether, for Samuel Redhead.

9 Tweedy. *A History of Barbuda Under the Codringtons 1738-1833*, (1981). p. 41

10 Michael Wood, *In Search of England: Journeys into the English Past*, University of California Press, 1999, Wood writes: "According to [Vere Langford] Oliver's *History of Antigua* (1899). Sarah returned with Samuel to England and was living with him in Marshfield in the early Seventeenth century." p. 301.

Lake. *Personal correspondence with Gregory Frohnsdorf, December 1, 2014*: "Samuel Redhead's will indicate that Jane Comyns is the daughter of Sarah Bullock....Samuel Redhead's will indicates that Sarah Ann Redhead (under 21 years at the time of the will) is 'another daughter of Sarah Bullock.'"

11 Palmié, Stephan, & Scarano, Francisco A., *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its Peoples*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, London, 2011 p. 252

12 Ibid. Both Palmié & Scarano point out: "Although sugar was the archetypal slave crop, many Caribbean slaves worked at other activities. A few marginal colonies grew no sugar at all. In British Honduras and Belize, most slaves were woodcutters. In the Cayman Islands, Anguilla and Barbuda, a majority of the slaves lives on small, diversified agricultural holdings....The internal economy of slaves varied greatly. On marginal islands such as Barbuda and Great Exuma in the Bahamas, which did not grow sugar, slaves were virtual peasants, farming extensive provision grounds, owning livestock, and spending a good deal of time hunting and fishing...Slaves' economic opportunities were least extensive on small islands such as Antigua or Barbados, where they were permitted, at best, small garden plots." pps. 252-3.

13 Tweedy. One of the most revealing and, ironically, lasting contributive incidents to the slave-breeding myths, did occur in Barbuda. Tweedy writes: "The transfer of children in 1780-81 from Barbuda to Antigua looks at first like corroborative evidence of stud farming, especially as it was treated as a sale in the [Sir Wm. Codrington] accounts. Actually, though, this seems to have been a sudden decision as the parents had to be 'induced' to part with their children and the children themselves bribed in some measure." p. 233. Earlier, Tweedy had noted: "In 1780 Richard Clarke—one of the Codrington attorneys in Antigua—arranged for the transfer of 18 young slaves (aged

8 to 15) from Barbuda to Betty's Hope [GRO, D1610 C10 Clarke to W.C., 15 Oct. 1780]. Subsequently, another twelve were sent to Betty's Hope [GRO, D1610 C10 Clarke to W.C., 29 June 1781] and a further eleven to the Cotton New Work [GRO, D1610 A52, 1 Oct. – 31 Dec. 1781]. The Barbudan accounts were credited with One Thousand Pounds (Sterling) for the 30 sent to Betty's Hope and Sixty Pounds (Sterling) sent to the Cotton New Work [GRO, D1610 A52, 1 Oct. – 31 Dec. 1781]. Clarke said he had induced the parents to part with their children entirely by persuasion 'and fair promises, such as a little gratuity to themselves and clothing their children as soon as they come over here, with a promise of indulging them of spending the three holidays of Xmas with their parents [GRO, D1610 C10 Clarke to W.C., 15 Oct. 1780]. The accounts show that Thirty-three Pounds was distributed to the parents of children sent to Betty's Hope; a slave woman, Cranky, was given Two Pounds, Nine Shillings, Six Pence, for her children brought to Betty's Hope [GRO, D1610 A5 1781 C Betty's Hope] (where she herself seems to have been working); and Nineteen Pounds, 16 Shillings was distributed among the parents of the 11 children sent to the Cotton New Work [GRO, D1610 A5 1781 C Cotton New Work]. Although Clarke implied that the parents had been persuaded to part with their children willingly, it is difficult to believe they really had any choice in the matter. Barbudan slaves when asked later if they would be prepared to work on the Antiguan estates refused resolutely to do so and only went there under compulsion [For example, GRO, D1610 C24 James to C.B.C., 26 Apr. 1810]. John James, years later, seems to have been referring to this incident when he mentioned that Barbudan slaves had pined after being sent to Antigua. [GRO, D1610 C24 James to C.B.C., 26 Apr. 1810]. There is no record of any earlier transaction of this sort so that Barbudan slaves must have been totally unprepared for such an event. It must have reminded the slaves forcibly that though they might have sometimes felt free on Barbuda they were still actually slaves with no final control over the fate of their children. A shock of this sort may well have been the cause of the decline in their birthrate in the following decade. It also meant of course that the island was deprived of children and adolescents, the eldest of whom might have become parents themselves from about 1783—a point touched on by Reynolds in that year [GRO, D1610 C24 James to C.B.C., 26 Apr. 1810].

14 Lowenthal & Clarke. "It was further represented by them that they were deprived of the use of Carts, to carry Materials, and also of lime necessary for the repairing and building of their houses. Mr. Winter alleged that many of them desired to have more houses than was requisite and that others had refused to build stone houses, or repair and occupy those which were already built, [instead of] their ordinary wattled houses." p. 516. See further: James Scotland, Jr. and John Athill. Report [on Barbuda] to Evan Murray MacGregor, May 2, 1834 Enclosure no. 5 in MacGregor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, May 2, 834, Pro C.O. 7/39 Mo. 100

15 Goodrich. The author quotes Montgomery as saying: "This eloquent, restless, and attractive individual. . . . was personally unknown to Mr. [Joseph] Gales before the winter of 1793, when he presented himself one evening in Sheffield as a patriot; he was about twenty-two years of age, a handsome figure, and so insinuating were his manners, that he contrived not only to domicile himself for a time in the family at Hartshead, but ultimately to obtain the affection s of his host's daughter youngest sister, Sarah." Holland and Everett, *Life of Montgomery*, I: 165-66, 171. Goodrich: p. 629

16 Lowe. SR30 p. 21

17 Vere Langford Oliver. *The History of Antigua*. Oliver records under The Pedigree of

Redhead: "Samuel Redhead dies on Bennet Street, Blackfriars Road. His will was filed on June 21, 1784; and 'proved' on April 6, 1785. p. 40. Both Joseph and Henry are under 21 years of age.

N.B.: Frohnsdorf, wrote to me: "'Samuel Redhead's will indicates that Jane Comyns is 'daughter of Sarah Bullock... Samuel Redhead's will indicates that Samuel Comyns (under 16 at time of the will) is the son of Mrs. Jane Comyns and that he is Samuel Redhead's grandson. Further, Frohnsdorf writes: "Samuel's will indicates that Sarah Ann Redhead... is another daughter of Sarah Bullock" - when Samuel dies at 81 years.

N.B.: For S. Redhead's will, read Oliver's History of Antigua, vol. 3, p. 39

18 Francisco Bethencourt's new tome, *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century*, Princeton University Press, 2014, 464 pgs. Here, the reviewer, David Armitage writes: "He [Bethencourt] argues that when Jerusalem ceased to be the centre of their mental maps, Europeans could start to structure the world's populations within novel hierarchies of continents, peoples and civilizations. Depending on the balance of numbers, European colonial societies tolerated race-mixing, set barriers to miscegenation, or managed the problem. The legacies of these strategies prompted the question that initially ignited Bethencourt's study: 'How is it that that a person can be considered black in the United States, colored in the Caribbean or South Africa, and white in Brazil?'" *The Times Literary Supplement*, July 25, 2014. p. 5.

N.B.: Antigua was the one of the earliest English colonies in the 'West Indies' in have official laws banning interracial marriage. Thus Samuel's conjugal relationship with Sarah Bullock could not have happened there. See: Palmié, Stephan and Scarano, Francisco A., *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People*, The University of Chicago Press, 2011,

19 Lowe. *The Codrington Correspondence 1743-1851*, Robson Lowe Ltd: London (1951). An August 3, 1771 Samuel Redhead Letter to Sir Wm. Codrington, [SR36].:

"Redhead wants to purchase the freedom of a female slave in Barbuda who has borne him a son." p.22.

Also note, Goodrich writes of Redhead's request: "In 1771 Redhead was attempting to purchase the freedom of Sarah Bullock and her son by Redhead, from Sir William Codrington. Redhead wrote a letter of 30 July 1771 to Sir William Codrington, 'I wrote you the 10th of last month by Cap. Lusby [SR34] and by that opportunity I forwarded a Deed... for the conveyance of a mustee child of mine the son of a mulatto in Barbuda, named Sarah Bullock, which I hope you will be so kind as to execute. I have a further favor to request of you... of the same nature.... I have now sent... another Deed for the conveyance of the above mentioned Sarah Bullock the mother of the child the last Deed was sent for.'" p. 615.

N.B.: I could not find such a separate Redhead Letter of July 30, 1771, listed in Lowe's ledger. Two Samuel Redhead Letters do exist which may conceal this related matter, however. First, a June 10, 1771 Letter references [SR33], but that document, dated May 13, 1771, notes 'Encloses a letter dated 22.3.1771'.

20 Goodrich. p. 615. Also: Samuel Redhead's Letter to Wm. Codrington. Doc. SR36 in Lowe's *Codrington Correspondence*, p. 22. N.B.: Lake's personal correspondence with Frohnsdorf independently confirmed this fact.

21 Goodrich, p. 621. Also, as mentioned by Goodrich in *A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason*, Thomas Bayly Howell, & Thomas Jones Howell, eds.; 34 vols. (London, 1816-28), 25: cols, 1003-1154.

22 Lowe, Document: SR42. p. 22

23 Goodrich. p. 616.

Also: In Yorke's *France in Eighteen Hundred and Two*. (1906). Richard Davey in the Introduction, serves up a spirited and little-known account of Yorke's life and travels. He mentions that Redhead "was brought up in Little Eaton, near Derby. p. 1

24 Gerald Horne. *The Counter-Revolution of 1776*, New York University Press: New York, 2014. "In the prelude to 1776, more and more Africans were joining the British military, and anti-slavery sentiments were deepening throughout Britain. And in the Caribbean, rebellious Africans were chasing Europeans to the mainland. Unlike their counterparts in London, the European colonists overwhelmingly associated enslaved Africans with subversion and hostility to the status quo. For Europeans colonists the major threat to the security of North America was a foreign invasion combined with an insurrection of the enslaved. And as 1776 approached, London-imposed abolition throughout the colonies was a very real and threatening possibility – a possibility the founding fathers feared could bring the slave rebellions of Jamaica and Antigua to the thirteen colonies. To forego it, they went to war." Visit: www.nyupress.org

25 Lowe. SR43. p. 22

26 Goodrich, p. 616. She states that Henry arrives in London in 1778 shows. that "Henry Yorke's [examination] [was] taken before John Higgins Esq., one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the County of Bucks, June 1, 1793," Treasury Solicitor's Papers, The National Archives, T.S. 11/959/3505. But, a year later, James Athill's June 12, 1779 Letter describes Samuel Redhead's frail health ('decline of Mr. Redhead's faculties'), in Antigua. More recently, Michael Wood's account (*In Search of England: Journeys into the English Past*, U. of California Press, 2001) documents that Sarah Bullock left for London with Samuel Redhead. It would be difficult to imagine her leaving young Henry behind.

27 Ibid. Document: GD62. p. 25

28 Goodrich. p. 616.

29 Robson Lowe. *The Codrington Correspondence*, Robson Lowe Ltd., London 1951. See: Langford Lowell's Letter to Sir Wm. Codrington. [Document LL73], June 13, 1780. Lowell's Letter "concerns the counter claim of Samuel Redhead against Sir William." The letter was forwarded from London to Dodington, then forwarded to Tewkesbury, receiving the three-line town stamp WOTTON/UNDER/EDGE. [Lowe, p. 27]. Edgar O. Lake. A related April 1, 1782 document concerning Samuel Redhead Esq., itemizes expenses back-dated to November 1, 1780. In that document, "*Samuel Redhead Esq. In an Account of Articles which had been reciprocally disputed between him and Sir William Codrington taken from each parties Accounts of Objections submitted to Arbitrations, and now finally determined and formed into one Account by the Arbitrators*," Samuel Redhead's expenditures are determined by an Arbitrator, to include an item "by the sum paid by you to S. Bullock. . .£6.17. 3."

30 Lowenthal and Clarke. *Slave-Breeding in Barbuda: The Past of a Negro Myth*, "Annals of the New York Academy, The authors write: "Barbuda in the 1780s carried about 8,000 sheep, 2,000 goats, 600 horses, 300 deer, 100 cattle, 30 mules, and 7 jackasses. There were 300 acres in pasture, but only one-third that area in crops—80 acres in guinea corn, 10 each in cotton and yams. " p. 513

31 Goodrich. This scholar reports in her 2014 paper that Yorke's inheritance "was reduced by a codicil from One Thousand (English) Pounds. p. 616. See also: Vere Oliver

Langford, *History of Antigua*, 18995/99. v. 3, 39

32 Lowenthal and Clarke. p. 514 Also: CBC to Wm. Codrington, June 16, 1790, Cod. Corr. CC 109. (Lowenthal & Clarke, p. 532)

33 Langford Lowell. January 24, 1790 Letter to Wm. Codrington. Doc. LL79. Robson Lowe's *The Codrington Correspondence*. p. 27

34 Langford Lovell. March 8, 1799. Doc. LL80. Lowell reports that "Sir William's nephew had visited Dominica, etc. Inhabitants of Martinico (sic) fear of revolt among the 'free people of Colour, and a discontented Soldiery.'" See: Lowe p. 28

35 Langford Lovell. Letter to Wm. Codrington, August 8, 1790. Doc. LL85. "Hears that Parliament is about to dissolve. Later: congratulates Sir William on his re-election. The Slave Bill to be revived again by Wilberforce." See: Lowe, p. 28

36 Ibid. Langford Lovell. Doc. LL86. Lovell: "Commences with duplicate of a missing letter dated 20.9. 1790 dealing with the selling of undesirable slaves and buying mahogany in British Honduras with the proceeds.." See: Lowe p. 28

37 Lovell. Doc. LL87 See: Lowe p. 28

38 Lowe. Lovell's April 8, 1792 correspondence to the Codrington Family. Doc: LL91, p. 29

39 Juss Satvinder, "Slavery in English Law," [Letters}, London Review of Books, 5 September 2015, Satvinder, in charting the 18th century fluctuations around Lord Mansfield's 1772 landmark decision on James Somerset, cites Granville Sharp's legal writings challenging the 1729 Yorke and Talbot Opinion: "The real hero of the times is Granville Sharp, who challenged the Yorke and Talbot Opinion. One evening in 1729, in Lincoln's Inn, a deputation representing the powerful West India interest approached the law officers of the crown, attorney-general Philip Yorke and Charles Talbot, the solicitor-general in order to seek clarification of the matter. 'We are of the opinion,' they stated, 'that a slave, by coming from the West Indies to Great Britain, doth not become free, and that his Master's Property or Right in him is not thereby determined or varied: And that Baptism doth not bestow freedom on him'. pps. 4-5. Yorke may have fancied adopted this moniker, accenting his Whig ambitions.

40 Goodrich. p. 615. Goodrich also mentions Richard B. Sheridan's, "'The Rise of a Colonial Gentry: A Case Study of Antigua, 1730-1775,'" *Economic History Review*, New Series 13, no. 3 (1961)

41 Gregory Frohnsdorff, "Before the Public": Some Early Libraries of Antigua, *Libraries & Culture*, v. 38:1, p. 1-23, Winter 2003. Frohnsdorff discusses early libraries in Antigua, including Thomas Bray's libraries in the 1690s; efforts to meet literary needs in the 1700s, as well as library organizations up to the mid-1800s, etc.

42 Goodrich. p. 616.

43 Ibid. p. 617. Goodrich footnotes: "The Friends of the Rights of Man associated in Paris was informally known as the 'British Club.' Erdman. *Commerce Des Lumieres*, 226-27, Further: John G. Alger, *The British Colony in Paris, 1792-3*, *English Historical Review* 13, no. 52 (October 1898).

44 Ibid. In her ruminations of Yorke's identity, (both national and ethnic), Goodrich writes: "James Montgomery, a journeyman printer in Joseph Gales's newspaper office in Sheffield, remembered Yorke in his *Memoirs*: 'He called himself Yorke, but always said he was the son of a plantation agent, . . . of the name of Redhead at Barbuda. . . He was, if not a mulatto, a quadroon.'" p. 621. Also: *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of James Montgomery, including Selections from his Correspondence, remains in Prose*

and *Verse and Conversation on various Subjects*, ed. John Holland and James Everett, 7 vols. (London:, 1854), 1:16566, 171.

45 Paul Edwards & David Dabydeen, eds., *Black Writers in Britain 1760-1890*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, (printed by Robert Hartnoll Ltd., Bodmin) 1991. p. 127

46 Francis Williams (1702-1771), a Jamaican, sent to England for grammar school, after which he 'attended' Cambridge, before returning to Jamaica to open his own school. In both cases, attending Cambridge University further links these two figures beyond the Emancipation 'experiment'.

47 Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica; or, General Survey of the Ancient and Modern State of that Island with Reflection on the Situation, Settlement, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government*, Research Library of Colonial Americana (London), 1734; reprint ed., New York, 1972, vol. II, pp. 475-85. (This citation was referenced from Karen C. Chambers Dalton, "The Alphabet is an Abolitionist" (Literacy and African American in the Emancipation Era), *The Massachusetts Review*, vol. XXXII, No. 4, Winter, 1991-92. p. 546)

48 Anon. Portrait of Francis Williams, oil, ca. 1735. See, also Goodrich: Henry Redhead Yorke's portrait is, by contrast, documented by Goodrich: "a mezzotint of Yorke produced by James Ward dated 1796 displays him wearing a powdered wig and with features and a dark skin tone that suggests a contemporary representation of a Creole mixed race." p. 616. She footnotes #25: "A curator at the National Portrait Gallery has confirmed these conclusions as far as is possible in a black-and-white mezzotint." p. 616. [Also: Lake, Personal Communication: Gregory Frohnsdorf, Reference Librarian & Historian of South Carolina, who has written extensively about Antigua's colonial literary past, provided this link to Yorke's portrait at the National Gallery: <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw39292/Henry-Redhead-Yorke?LinkID=mp52687&role=sit&rNo=0>

49 Dalton, p. 546.

50 Richard Davey. *France in eighteen hundred and two, described in a series of contemporary letters*, ed., J.A.W. Sykes, W. Heinemann, London,, 1906

51 E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 1963. Thompson writes, in a chapter, titled, "Planting the Liberty Tree": 'Of all societies, in the years 1792-4, Sheffield was most painstaking and prompt in its correspondence.... Although, as we have seen, the members had a preference for histrionic talent on the platform – M.C. Brown and Henry Yorke – their own officers were all journeymen or craftsmen in the Sheffield industries.' To further understand the intellectual climate of Sheffield, Thompson gives this color: "Sheffield had one outstanding advantage; a capable publisher, Joseph Gales, with a weekly newspaper, the *Sheffield Register*, which supported the society. (A more influential intellectual journal, *The Patriot*, was also published in Sheffield for a time.) Founded in 1787, the journal achieved the high circulation (for that time) of 2,000 weekly in 1794." p. 151

52 Goodrich. p. 616

53 Ricardo D. Salvatore, *Imperial Revisionism: US Historians of Latin America and the Spanish Colonial Empire (ca. 1915-1945)*, *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 5(1), 2013. p. 23

54 Ibid. p. 23

55 Madison Smartt-Bell, *Toussaint Louverture: a Biography*, Pantheon Books: New

York, 2007. Smartt-Bell writes: "The idea that French Jacobin ideology could provoke revolt among African slaves was unthinkable awful—and yet it had happened just next door." p. 29. Further describing the porosity – or potency - of the

56 Jacobin presence in 1792 Hayti, one year earlier, Bell writes: "During the French Revolution's Second Commission, and with the colonial assemblies abolished by the law of April 4... The *petits blancs* who'd taken control of many of the bigger towns like Port-au-Prince had been quick to declare for the revolution and to join the Jacobin clubs—maneuvers which got them out from under the heel of the *grands blancs*." p. 49
 Hugh Honour, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 4:1, Harvard University Press, 1989. Honour describes the announcement: "'Since 1789 a great action has remained unresolved: the hereditary aristocracy and the sacerdotal aristocracy had been wiped out, but the aristocracy of the skin still held sway. The latter has now expired. Equality has been ratified. A black, a yellow, and a white will take their sets among you in the name of the free citizens of Saint-Domingue.' With these ringing words the speaker on 3 February 1794 announced the arrival in the hall of the National Convention of Louis-Pierre, a white; Jean-Baptiste Mills, a mulatto; and the black Jean-Baptiste Belley whose portrait was later to be painted by Anne Louis Girodet." p. 104

57 Honour. The author offers this sober caveat: "Belley's career after the day of his reception in the Convention is difficult to trace. In the reports of debates the official gazette, the *Moniteur*, uses only general terms to describe *hommes de couleur* or a *représentant des colonies* who cannot be individually identified." p. 106

58 Ibid. p. 107

59 Ibid. p. 107

60 Lake. Personal Correspondence with Paul Cox, Associate Curator, November 24, 2014. Cox wrote: "All we [National Portrait Gallery] really know of him [William Hay] is from his body of exhibited work. He exhibited eighteen works at the Royal Academy between 1776 and 1797. Most of these were portraits, but miniatures and coastal scenes were also exhibited. He sent his works mostly addresses in London, but also mentions Plymouth and Bath."

61 Goodrich. This scholar provided a noticeable minimum of information about Yorke's image, supporting her racialized characterization of him. She wrote: "A mezzotint of Yorke produced by James Ward dated 1796 displays him wearing a powdered wig and with features and a dark skin tone that suggest a contemporary representation of a Creole of mixed race." Her curious footnote, follows: "A curator at the National Portrait Gallery has confirmed these conclusions as far as is possible in a black-and-white mezzotint." p. 616. N.B.: Here, I challenge Goodrich's otherwise insightful scholarship: Why was the curator's written confirmation 'of these conclusions' not also quoted?

62 Lake. Personal Correspondence November 24, 2014. Paul Cox, Associate Curator, National Portrait Gallery (Reference Collection), provided this important point of distinction in the provenance of Yorke's portrait. National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE. Their website npg.org.uk gives the print's publishing date as: 21 July 1796.

63 Hugh Honour. *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, The Menil Foundation, Texas, 1989. Honour writes: "evidence of Girodet's interest in painting non-European subjects can be seen in his letter of 28 July 1797 to Talleyrand proposing 'to apply his meager talents to the painting of the presentation of the ambassador of La Porte to the Directory: cf. Paul-Auguste Leroy, Girodet-Trioson: Peintre d'histoire 1767-1824 (Orléans,

...
 185
 ...

1892), pp 44-45. [Honour, p. 322]

64 James Ward (1769-1859), a painter of animals and landscapes, began painting horses after 1810. He recently enjoyed a revival at The Tate Gallery. Until 1803, his major influence was his brother, William Ward, the engraver. Together, 'they produced the best that English art had to offer.' But, Honour [*The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 4:1 (1989)] chronicles, also Ward's post-1811 development: "Nygren ('The Art of James Ward'), pp. 32-34, suggests that Ward's study for the lost painting [*The Liboya Seizing his Prey*, 1803] 'may be an allegorical representation of the disastrous effects of the slave trade with avarice or materialism (the serpent) destroying Africa (the black man) and England (Adonis)' – Adonis being a favorite horse of George III. Nygren notes, there is no documentary support for this interpretation. Ward's title for the picture suggests that he conceived the scene was set in America. As Nygren (p. 30) points out, it may have been inspired by Oliver Goldsmith's account of a snake attacking an Indian in Surinam. Dr. Peter Whitehead kindly informs us that in South America *boa* was a common tern for a snake and *Giboya* (rather than *Liboya*) for an anaconda." p. 320

65 H.R. Yorke. Esq. *A Letter to the Reformers*. Printed by T. Lockett, Dorchester 1798. Yorke wrote about the vagueness of [French] laws: "What is true and just today, is false and wicked tomorrow; and the rage for law-making has increased with such rapidity, that we may safely apply to them, what one of their modern philosophists [sic] said of old France, that a man in his own country often changes laws in changing post horses." pps. 29-30.

66 Edward J. Nygren, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. N.B.: Lake's personal communication with Paul Cox, Associate Curator, National Portrait Gallery, London, UK. Nov. 24, 2014. These notes were provided by Cox.

67 Lake. Personal correspondence with Paul Cox, November 27, 2014. Cox wrote: "The only firm date we have for this [Hay's] portrait is the date of publication of Ward's print: 21 July, 1796. We can only say that Hay's portrait must have predated this."

68 Honour. p. 45

69 Walter Arndt, *Pushkin Threefold: Narrative: Lyric, Polemic, and Ribald Verse (The Originals with Linear and Metric)*, Translated by Walter Arndt, A. Dutton & Co., Inc.: New York, 1972. Alexander Pushkin's poem, *Dawe, EsQr* [1828], [partially offered here] in its original form: "Wherefore does your wondrous pencil/Draw my Moorish profile?", exhorting the portraitist, George Dawe, further, to "Draw the features of [Miss] Olenina/ In the glow of the heart's inspiration(s)". Despite Pushkin's obvious autobiographical features, Arndt provides this richly allusive footnote about the portraitist (to whom Pushkin lends his poetic votives): "George Dawe (1781-1819), English portrait painter and mezzotint engraver in the Manner of Sir Joshua Reynolds, went to Russia and was named First Painter to the Court of Russia by Alexander I, who had him paint about 400 portraits of army men who served in the Napoleonic Wars. Several of Dawe's paintings hang in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad."

But, in Pushkin's complimentary Linear translation of the same poem, titled *Remembrance* [1828], the poet writes of day's existential end: "When for the mortal the loud day falls silent/And on the mute squares of the city/Sinks down the half-transparent shade of night/And sleep, reward of daily toils,--/At that time for me in the silence drag/Hours of tormenting wakefulness:/" N.B.: The poem ends here, abruptly. Here Arndt, instructs us both in surreptitious – if unconscious pun – of Pushkin's deeper inscriptions of the 'mezzotint' of his very own autobiographical, if not poetical,

landscape. Of this poem, Arndt writes in his footnote: "A Continuation of this poem, to more than double its length in print, exists in a manuscript version that shows a few single-word gaps. These, and an unexplained reference to 'two dear shades, angels given me by fate in bygone days,' may explain Pushkin's decision not to include the rest of the poem in editions printed in his lifetime." p. 221

70 _____ (Lanaghan/Flannigan), *Antigua and the Antiguans*, Saunders & Otley, London, 1844. In Volume II, the compiler includes in Chapter 30, a section titled, "instances of superior faculties among the Negro race," and mistakenly places Juan de Pareja, in the West Indies. As assistant to 17th century Spanish painter Diego Velasquez, Pareja was characterized in *Antigua and the Antiguans*, thusly: "One of those clever negroes was a slave Juan de Pareja, who was sent from the West Indies as a present to Diego Velasquez, the celebrated Spanish painter, about the year 1600." p. 18

71 Honour. Here, Honor contrasts the Société des Amis des Noirs as far more reaching than that of English Society which looked no further than the abolition of the slave trade, but also less clearly defined: the gradual phasing out of slavery over a period of seventy years." p. 78

72 Ibid. Honour gives the account that the compte d'Angiviller's secretary in the Direction générale des bâtimts wrote to the director of the Sèvres factory on 8 April 1789: 'No doubt the motive is good, it is dictated by humanity. But medals of this kind, brought into the colonies and seen by Negroes, could stir up movement there. M. le comte directs me in fine to make clear to you that he absolutely forbids you to go ahead with this project, and, if the medal has been made, to deliver a single one of them. This is a formal demand made by the administration committee for the colonies, to which no refund is possible... You can judge of the danger that there would be if these medals arrived in our colonies upon news that the English parliament was concerning itself with the freedoms of Negroes; they revolted immediately in various plantations, and these rebellions never occur but that all the Whites are massacred." Further: Sévres, Manufacture nationale de Sévres, Archives, Carton H.4 (correspondence), liasse 3, letter of 8 April 1789. The plaster model for the relief is in Sévres, Manufacture nationale de Sévres, no inv. no; cf. p. *The Image of the Black in Western Art* v. 4, Part 1. pps. 79, 317

73 Ibid. p. 80. Belley, and other Haitian, Senegal deputies, were to be excluded.

74 David Coward. "Dumas grand-père," *Times Literary Supplement*, July 11, 2014

75 Ibid. p.7. Coward reviews Tom Reiss's recent book, *The Black Count (Glory, revolution, betrayal, and the real Count of Monte Cristo)*, Harvill Secker, 414 pp.

76 David Coward. p. 7. He expounds further on their antagonisms: "Napoleon was too personally ambitious and Dumas too committed to liberty, equality, and fraternity. Learning that Dumas was privately critical of his policy, Napoleon was furious at his 'sedition', by which he meant disloyalty not to the ideals of the Republic but to him personally. There was an angry confrontation. Dumas asked to be sent back to France. Napoleon agreed to his request." p. 7

77 William Doyle. "Words of the Street," *Times Literary Supplement*, No. 5811, August 15, 2014. Doyle's review of Christine Donougher's *The Wretched*, - the new Penguin Classics version of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.

78 Goodrich. The scholar Goodrich lends this quote: "York was also much feted by fellow radicals for his fiery and passionate speeches. Joseph Gales declared him 'one of the finest orators in the kingdom.'" p. 628

79 Goodrich. p. 626. Goodrich states: "The only available printed version of one of Yorke's speeches is an edited version of a speech given at Castle Hill, Sheffield. In this speech, of more than one hour, Yorke allegedly spent some time discussing the constitution and the need for parliamentary reform." p. 626. [This printed edited version is to be found in *Proceedings of the Public Meeting, held at Sheffield in the Open Air, on 7 April 1794*, TNA, T.S. 24/3/88, 7. At his trial Yorke denied having written this speech.]

80 Tweedy. p. 69. As noted earlier, in 1745, enslaved black Barbudans revolted, seizing the Castle and murdered the manager on Barbuda. N.B.: In addition, Goodrich notes: "A petition to be presented to the King, calling for 'total and unqualified emancipation of the Negro slaves,' was also read out by Yorke at the Castle Hill meeting. Here he declared 'Justice is eternal, unconfined by time, person, circumstances or place' and called for the abolition of 'Negro slavery in the West Indies, in the fullest manner and without any qualification.'" p. 627

81 Ibid. p. 629.

82 Ibid. p. 629. Howells *State Trials*, 25: cols. 591, 603-04, 1115. The uncoupling of Yoke's horses from his carriage is remarkably existential: a symbolic gesture that unhinges him from this equestrian Muse; a presence that has shadowed him throughout his life and career.

83 Ibid. p. 629. Goodrich provides a further source: Mee, *Romanticism, Enthusiasm and Regulation*, 122.

84 Ibid. p. 629

85 New considerations of a Barbudan aesthetic emerges as Yorke is sporting a new Object of the Atlantic – a concretizing of a subtle sovereignty – in the bold wearing of his 'Hessian boots and a stock of republican plainness...' as documented in *Memoirs of The Life and Writings of James Montgomery*, eds., Holland, John & Everett, James. Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans: London, 1856. 1:165-66, 171. [Goodrich, p. 629]. Lake's Note: It is important to remember that between 15,000-20,000 escaped enslaved Africans evacuated with the British at the end of the War of Independence, some to Nova Scotia, Sierra Leone, The West Indies; some even went to the German state of Hesse (Home of the notorious Hessians).

Also: Tweedy, states: "When Coleridge visited Barbuda in 1824, he described the huntsman in some detail: 'they wear a leathern cap, a belt round their shoulders with a long clasp knife stuck in it, and a rude kind of half-boots. They generally possess a horse each, a duck gun and dogs...' p. 183. I argue further, new and current literature of this concurrent time in Britain, supports this appellation of sovereignty amidst the ensuing embargoes. See further: Peter Stothard's review of Jenny Uglow's book, *In These Times: Living in Britain through Napoleon's wars, 1793-1815*. Faber 740 pp, 2014. He writes: "One of Uglow's strongest connecting threads is the same as Whiting's, the planning for self-defence itself, the 'fencibles' of the home-front, local militia in varieties of splendid uniforms, vying with each other for glory until such time as Napoleon might arrive. Britain might have lost its American colonies –and still be paying the bills for the loss – but it was at every level a great power still.. A Glasgow grocer might prove it with his squad of 'Sugaraloes', a glass-maker with his 'Anderson Sweeps', Uglow describes the intense competition for cockades and waistcoats and for the newly fashionable boots, worn suddenly in town and not just in the fields..." *Times Literary Supplement*, November 21, 2014, p. 10

86 Tweedy. She writes: "In 1684, having acquired (with George Turney and Clement

Tudway) the remainder of the original lease, for the whole island, they surrendered it to the Crown and applied for a new grant. This was given to Christopher and John for 50 years in 1684, the rent being 'one sufficient horse' to be delivered at Nevis at Christmas." p. 10. Further sources: GRO, D1610 T9 Grant of the Island of Barbuda 1684 [p. 21]. To complete the Pegasus irony of Yorke's political existential horizon, Tweedy quote Burns, who wrote of Barbuda in the year 1698: "Just before the death of Christopher Codrington III, a French force attacked Barbuda. They destroyed the castle and other buildings and carried off most of the inhabitants and their slaves." P. 14. N.B. See further: Sir Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, London 1954, revised edition 1965, p. 425.

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POETRY WITH
EDITH TOMLINSON-OLADELE
AND
ALVETTE (ELLORTON) JEFFERS

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190
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MURDER MURDER MURDER, WOI!

Edith Oladele – October 2014

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 Murder, murder, murder!!!
 Woi! A wha arwe a see ya!!
 Court, Tomboy and Hercules head a hang pan jail do!
 Dem tree bady bruk up, mash up pan de wheel.

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 De woman dem a roll pan de grung
 Dem pickney a tun ober inna dem mudder belly
 Dem farder gorn; dem farder gorn!
 Mudda, sissa, antie, pickney yung an ole
 A hole dem hed anna barl an roll inna dut!

Murder, murder murder!!!
 Fortune, Jack, Venture, Frank an Cudjoe,
 Green, Annimo, Quash, and Gift
 Bun up lacka cossie coal ashes
 Dem bady roas an twis up pan de grung
 Nabaddy know who dem be a lie dung dey!

Murder, murder, murder!
 Cuffe, Colley, Quash, Ned, Secundi and Jacko
 Mason, Fiddler and butcher, carpenter, mason and driver
 Gibbet up pan de pole dem
 ‘Tretch clean fram crass head- o- tung dey a Ottos parsa.

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 Tony, Charles, Ghloide an Scipio
 Oliver, John Guy, Jack, Tony an Geoffry
 Cuffy, Billy, Scipio, Jean, Collon an Bristol
 Kellsey, Quaco, Sampson, Oliver, Billy, Saby an Cudjoe1
 Natty, Quash cooma, Primus, Scipio, Only an Frank
 Bun up fram Navember to December 20
 Dem Tak wan brake fu Christmas!

Murder, murder, murder!!
 Dem tart agen, dis time a Harry de driber
 A wha he do dat he get bruk pan de weel pan January one!!
 Dem mussa min see he bad fu so!

Fram jauary to March
 What a way fu tart de new year!
 Jack, Joe, Penzance, Jacob and Quamina,
 Harry, Hanniball, Richmond, Tim and Quamino bun up;
 Caesar, 'a sort of an Obia man' fry up!
 Tim, Quamino, Richmond, Quamina, Mahles an Robin, wan ole man,
 sizzle up!
 Saltash, Chelsia, Tribling, Monday, Natty an Quamina, roas pan de stake!
 Twenty man in January wan –
 Man flesh a roas crass de tung;
 February an March Caesar, Minion, Cudjoe, Watty, Hector, Johnno an
 Green;
 Quaco, English Dick, Dick, Jack an Prince
 Vigo, de master drummer
 Mulatto, Ned Chester, Barroman, Secundi, Ptolamy Sampson and Sacky
 de driver and fiddler:
 Wen de 'whiteman' weary he 'tap!
 But, murder, de islan drap dudng, Bap!!

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 192
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Murder, murder, murder!!!
 A wah mek Tony an Harry one get bruk up pan de weel;
 Dem mussa min leder lakka Court, Tomboy an Hercules;
 Dem baddy min lef fu dry up inna de sun
 Fu friten ebery baddy!
 Plantaman a warn you "Na du um agen!"

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 A wha mek dem do all dem good man so?
 A wah dem do?
 Coachman, Driver, "Head field Negro"
 Carpenter, millwright, old fisherman, 'trong fisherman,
 Cooper, wan 'sort a ole Obiaman"
 Waitin-man, Tribling, who cudda rite so well,
 A wha dem min do?

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 De hoal ilan a bawl
 De 'whiteman' friten, friten
 Cor dem nearly ded!!!
 De African dem face lang and sad, dem yeye red
 Dem tarkin done
 Dem nar larf noway

Dem nar lef dem wattle an daub wen nite cum;
 De murder quench freedom tark
 Dem spirit mout shut up tite lakka dark nite!.

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 Bendal, Ottos, Byam an Hamilton
 Gamble, Freeman, Betty Hope an Tomlinson,
 Oliver, Wedderill, Matthew and Cochrane
 Warner, Vernon, Lyon an Parham
 Lavington, Pares, Painter an Yeaman
 Crass de lan,
 Allober!
 Eberybaddy get nak!
 Eberybaddy num!
 Eberybaddy tun dum, dum, dum!!

Murder, murder, murder!!!
 Who na get ketch a run a Sherckley
 Who get ketch a bun inna tung!
 Puppa, bredda, son, nevew an fren;
 Masonman, carpenter, no bildin a go orn
 Fiddler, drummer, na music dey, na dance!
 Waitin man, nabaddy dey fu wait pan nabaddy!
 Coachman gorn – nabaddy dey fu dribe nung buggy
 ‘Whiteman’ kyan move
 E wife an pickey kyan move!
 Dem a barl for help!
 Anteege lak dung!!

Murder, murder, murder!
 Dem kyan kill de baddy but kyan kill de soul!
 De pickney dem member
 Dem tark bout um inna de fambly
 Dem han dung de tory
 Dem granfarder na ded fu nutten
 De tory oral fram farder to son;
 De ‘whiteman’ rite um dung fu awe fu see
 Wha arwe na member awe see pan paper;
 A tru!
 Dem kill de 88 man widout prove nutten
 “Arwe granfarder min murder wid Court, de King a Anteege”

JUST ONE WORD!

Edith Oladele – Cameroon 2012

“One word, just one word
If only we knew one word like Kunta’s family
We could trace our own in Africa.”
For the first time my father was owning his connection with his ancestral
home.
There was an old uncle enslaved on Mercer’s Creek Estate in the east;
He walked to Hatton’s Estate in the west
Leaving late at night so as not to be detected
Trekking back way before sunrise,
Satisfied and ready to work again.
The two aged men had spoken their native tongue
The only two who remained from that long-ago ship;
They spoke of home
But never saw home again.
We never knew the language.
“Roots” raked up this desire for ‘Just one word!’”
It was a cry from my father’s lips
It came from a deep longing and hurt in his heart
Just to know.
“One word, just one word,
If only we knew one word!”

BACK HOME ON AFRICA LAND

Edith Oladele – Cameroon 2013

Oh God! I can't take it anymore!!
Is this how our family was broken up?
My grandmother's heart torn in pieces
As her children were sold away?
Her man dragged and beaten and bullied?
I threw down the book – "Roots"
Hot tears, racking sobs and cries racked me
My heart pounded.
The tears stopped and strength came.
In my heart I swore to two things
A white man would never touch me!
And I would return to Africa for all my ancestors
Who longed and wished for home
But were never able to return.
I would go for them.
I went!
They went with me!
We were welcomed!
We were home!
Atonement was made!
The reconciliation complete!
Back home in peace at last!
We were all at home on African land.

I MET THE MEN

Edith Oladele – Cameroon 2012

I met them, I met the men
Ordinary men like me and you
In whose bodies
In whose bodies run the blood of those
Of those who sold their own.
I am the future of one
Of one who was sold
Sold by their own to others
To others who brought us here to make us toil
Make us toil for free
Toil for free so they could be rich
So they could be rich and call us poor.
Call us poor.
No! Make us poor so they could be rich
Become rich by exploiting us;
Exploit us further and further and further, and then offer us aid,
No, force the aid on us to bind us to beg, we're forever begging.
We, who once were richer than they,
Richer than they!
We will again become rich
Because I met them
I met the men who sold their own.
Now, their own have returned
Have returned to toil for our own
Without the need to exploit anyone.

IF I SAY

Edith Oladele- October, 2014

If say that my country of birth has no hold on me

Would you believe??

If I say that there is not a patriotic bone in my body

Would you believe?

If I say that I see only pain and dysfunction in this place

Would you believe?

If I say that 'fair Antigua' isn't fair to me

Would you believe?

If I say that I see only coagulating blood

Salty crystallizing tears flaking off broken bodies

Wreaking of the Alabama cossie odour of frightened sweat

Would you believe?

If I say I feel it dripping from the underarms of weary foreparents

Drenching the cowitch patches among the biting sugarcane

Feeling it creeping on my own trembling skin

Would you believe?

If I say that I hear that in the tradewinds only the silent cries

The painful moans of broken hearts and spirits

In the hot, dry, bare and boring landscape

If I say "Antigua is not 'fair" in any way to me.

Would you believe?

WHO WILL ADMIT?

Edith Oladele – 2000

Who of my genre will admit to this stage
That at our age
Chords that lay broken and slack
Can vibrate once more with airs of girlish wistfulness
Tendrils of tenderness and
Frightening passion?

Which of us will dare to admit
That embers in the nether
Long entombed in the ashes of old age fables
And out to rest less oestrus
Behind matronly facades
Thought dead
And left to lie dormant
So long neglected

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198

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Unnoticed
Unused
Untouched by the life-giving breath of love
Can be stirred again?

Which of us my friend
At our age will admit to thoughts
Who will admit that having sweated it out so long ago
Again – “It” can happen?
Who will admit that
Flashes can turn into flame and
Light up life with encircled moments when
Orbs melting meet
Hands clasp in agreement
Breaths mingle with whispers
Bodies merge, fill and release
With each wave of heaven’s baton
Creating the oneness that soars in a Symphony of joy, peace and praise.
Which of us will truthfully admit
“I long to love again”

AT THE TOUCH OF A LOVER

Edith Oladele – November, 2000

Every fibre of my being came alive
Sparkling, phosphorescent,
Shimmering like the blue Caribbean sea in mid-morning.
Eyes sparkling
I laughed, breathless
Amazed at the unexpected rapture.
Colours leapt
Mind harp as a needle
Consciously allowing each look and touch to register
For later recall.
But now
Lazily
Unreserved savouring
Delightedly
Intensely alive
A fullness no words could express.
Why do the young feel that all that is left is a glimmer?
Why do they feel that they alone can shimmer
Like the blue Caribbean sea
At the touch of a lover?

THE TRANCE

AE Jeffers - 2009.

What do you do when the sky is empty of light
and drops of rain remain constant?
You wish for the sun.
But what does it matter if it shines?
Hardly anything,
because I'm locked behind
guarded windows,
lacking desire for motion and engagement.

Living is a burden, you murmur;
A sour mixture
of minor triumphs and huge failures.
Even the small triumphs,
magnify your failures.

...
200 What is then left to celebrate?
... Yes, there was a time when my young
mind rejected misgivings.
Everything around me
suggested new possibilities.
It was like how I remember, as a boy,
the sweet, budding lush, canes.
The cutting seasons created the
moments for their perennial rebirth.

Sugar is dead now.
Its ghost is everywhere and in everything,
unsettling every effort to reinvent a new King.

And,

I have come to see our July/August
rituals,
a spectacular farce.
Its erotic songs and belly dances
a mere trance
into which we are pulled
not knowing that this is our perpetual state.

Who among us want to know
if the wind blows,
from East to West, or West to East, or North to South?
If light comes after the darkness, or
the darkness remains permanent?

Yes, it was not my people who sat in
Darkness
and saw a great
Light.
Light was not our liberator.
We are the ones,
who covered our eyes
because we thought light blinds.

I WILL REMAIN

AE Jeffers - April 2015

For Patricia

I will remain,
long after your lingering fragrance
fades.

I will remain
after Spring
has made you its offerings of
Beauty, Music and Delight.

Yes, my love
I will remain;
long after the howling and growling
hurricane winds have bent and broken your fruit trees,
and the things that form your dreams
have disappeared under the raging floods.

I will remain,
long after the clowns and john bulls
have frightened teary, eyed children
into their mothers' powdered, bossoms;
Well after the echo of the steel drums
stretches out to sea and mixes with the
rhythms of the waves.

I will remain, even
if after a long life,
you possessed nothing except
your radiant smile,
which is like the intermittent lights
of so many fire flies darting around in the dark night.

FIELD OF LILIES

AE Jeffers - 2nd April, 2015.

For Patricia

Hold my hands gently.
Lead me through your field of lilies.
Curious as I am,
I am still a novice
one though able to appreciate
the vibrancy of the whites and the purples,
the yellows and blues, and the reds and pinks.

Stop, my love.
Let me linger a moment here,
that I may gently touch their alluring petals,
and have formed on my fingers
their rainbow of colors.
How vibrant in the morning light,
whose rays upon your face
show you to be the real essence of nature's beauty.

How delicate these lilies seem.
How vulnerable they appear.
Yet, they conceal a quiet resistance,
noticeable in how they merely bend and bow,
sway in graceful form up against the fierce winds
as if they were merely copying
your own bodily rotations.

Such a pleasure to be here with you, my dear.
Everything is here expressed in all essential detail.
Beauty, form and movement.
It is to you that I owe this awakening,
and if I may, can I forever dwell here, close to
you as the colors in the lilies?

HOW WOULD I KNOW

AE Jeffers - 2010.

How would I know
when love is making its exit?

Does it first prepare its self'
like a traveler,
packing a suitcase
with items which cannot be left behind?

Does it hurry out
like a tenant, frantically trying to escape a blazing fire?
Or meanders away from
a too familiar scene,
now too ordinary to inspire?

Will it take fright
and fly,
like a little colored bird
who hears approaching,
the trampling noise of an unfamiliar herd?
Or,
like the little, green, pet turtle
takes an unnoticed stroll,
through a tall, prickly brush
which acts as a co-conspirator in its escape?

Give me a sign, like the rainbow after a torrent.
Or a word,
after the silence is uttered.

For without the
Word,
or the
Sign,
I am better off,
Blind.

NUDE IN THE BASIN

AE Jeffers-- September, 1979.

The lily, white clouds were floating by
below the faint, blue, distant sky.
And in the yard alone and bare
A woman sitting in a basin.

The fence stood high
above her body's length.
So, to herself the woman said
No need I fear
I could wash in perfect peace
Thrilled by the touch of the summer breeze.

Because not all concealed
It was starkly revealed
a glowing, smooth, brown body
lathered from head to heel.
A splendid shape, poised and bare
came to the eye like a specimen
quite rare.
A woman emerging from a basin.

Her soapy hands now cupped
Her breast, vivacious and round.
And down upon her knees she went
with wash cloth to purify herself.
The soap suds streamed slowly down to the ground
Making her sun glistened body even more round.

And in the end
there it stood, an immaculate body
momentarily still.
And in his eyes he took her in
Like an artist bent on having a thrill
with a nude woman inside a basin.

COULD'NT MAKE LOVE TONIGHT

Alvette (Ellorton) Jeffers – April 21, 2nd

We couldn't make love tonight;
Neither last night,
Nor the night before.
Outside our wooden house,
Bullets flew and sounded
Like lighted fire crackers
On Independence Eve.

Pow pow, pow pow, pow.
Swish, swish, pew pew, swish
Pow pow, pow.

As sudden was the interruption,
So was the return to calm.
But what did not return was
My desire for romance.

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206

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My frightened heart sounded like beating drums
while cold sweat drenched my body.
My testicles became a small, wary seed;
And the penis shriveled up under the skin
Like the tiny head of my sleeping land turtle.

Oh! My lover.
She too, became listless.

BOOK REVIEWS

DORBRENE O'MARDE'S, *NOBODY GO RUN ME*

Joanne C. Hillhouse

Short Shirt is a master of the calypso art form. His titles – among them 15 local Calypso Monarch titles – testify to that. But you know what's the bigger testimony: throngs packed into the Antigua Recreation Grounds for a legend's show, belting out "Lament oh my soul!" (Lamentations) like they were in church and being touched by the spirit; total recall, word for word, notwithstanding that the song had contested and lost its bid for the crown 30 years, give or take, earlier. This happened some years ago and is testimony to not only Short Shirt's five decades long dominance of the art form, but the enduring power of his songs. During his 70th year and year-long 50th anniversary celebrations, 2012 to 2013, there were two notable productions: one a documentary film by Dr. James Knight, the other a biography by Dorbrene O'Marde: *King Short Shirt: Nobody Go Run Me*

Both were important cultural and artistic pieces but the focus of this article will be the O'Marde biography. While the documentary was much more specifically the story of the Making of the Monarch, it's something of a misnomer to call O'Marde's Short Shirt book, a biography. Though Short Shirt is the impetus for this work and its main character, the book really positions him at the centre of a tale mapping Antigua's social, cultural, political, creative, and economic transformation. Sounds heavy right? But, for me at least, it was a remarkably brisk read, as enjoyable as it was enlightening – its lyrical breakdown of Short Shirt's songs comparable to what Ghanaian-Jamaican-American poet Kwame Dawes does in his impressive book *Bob Marley: Lyrical Genius*. O'Marde positions the Monarch's songs in space and time, gives context tied to not just the lives of Short Shirt and his writers – notably Marcus Christopher who is less than a week departed as I write this, Stanley Humphreys, and especially Shelly Tobitt, one of Antigua's great wordsmiths – but the life, the heartbeat of the society from which they sprung. You get, through O'Marde's exploration of the music, a sense of a society transitioning to self-ownership and all the birthing and subsequent growing pains that come with that.

The book was reader-friendly, for me, not just because I happen to be an avid Short Shirt fan, and a fan of his writers, but because O'Marde is not only in his element but clearly chest-deep in a subject he's passionate about; calypso. That the former Calypso Talk publisher sees calypso as

something much, much more than frivolity and fun is never in doubt as you read this book; but that he's also having fun convincing his reader is also evident. And his skills as a writer and analyst are sharp, convincingly so. So that even when you find yourself arguing with him – as I do during his dismissal of one of my favourite Short Shirt battle songs, Uneasy Head (Kong), as ungracious sportsmanship or his takedown of Lamentations, which he's publicly stated is among his least favourite Short Shirt songs – you feel like you're in a heated but friendly calypso parley, and you're enjoying the cut and thrust of the debate.

O'Marde's first book after a well-established reputation as a playwright, the fictional book *Send Out Your Hand*, was weighted and slow by comparison – exposition heavy, the characters too often coming across as mouthpieces for the writer's intellectual concerns rather than fully drawn people.

In *Nobody*, O'Marde invests more successfully in the characterization and humanization of his subjects, making them (Short Shirt, Short Shirt's writers, and, in fact, calypso, more relatable, complex, and interesting) while at the same time tying them all, Short Shirt and calypso especially, in to the larger cultural and societal shift. For instance, writing on the roots of Carnival and its subsequent shifts: "The growing sense of working class entitlement could no longer dress up and perform to the upstairs penny-throwing sugar barons and the Syrian/Lebanese merchants as it did during the traditional Christmas parades. The stage and street performances – sponsored, policed, regulated – offered a more egalitarian space to build a national culture. The enduring image of the white woman jumping in a [steel] band is but metaphor for the classless and non-racial future dancing in the imagination of middle and working class Antiguan." (p. 34) The white woman referenced calls immediately to mind the "pretty little Yankee tourist...from Halifax" here for a taste of Antigua's Carnival in Short Shirt's Tourist Leggo; though here, of course, she is meant to represent something beyond herself.

The deftness with which O'Marde makes deeper connections is just one reason why *Nobody Go Run Me* is not only a good read but a book that matters.

For the social and cultural historian, it is a gift, covering if not the birth per se then certainly the popularization of Antiguan calypso – from the days when "seasoned Trinidadian calypsonians controlled the calypso entertainment sector" (p. 32), to the days when the Monarch took An-

tiguan calypso, specifically Tourist Leggo from the Ghetto Vibes album to the kaiso 'mecca' and but for some legal wrangling would surely have come back to Wadadli with the win – let's call those the halcyon days, to the plateauing and declining of what was once great: Short Shirt and Calypso and Carnival; and, yes, the tome suggests indirectly Antiguan and Barbudan society.

There will be errors; nothing is perfect. But students, who these days seem to think research starts and ends with Wikipedia, could learn from this book which draws from personal papers, periodicals -including Calypso Talk, academic papers, interviews, personal reflections, and when he thought they got it right, as with the definition of picong (p. 32), Wikipedia. As D. Gisele Isaac said in a review at the launch subsequently posted at <http://wadadlipen.wordpress.com> and in volume 27 of the *Caribbean Writer*, a journal produced by the University of the Virgin Islands, the book is "exhaustively researched" and with its extensive end notes, "so interesting and educational" in their own right, "you could easily say that this is two books in one." (quoted from <http://wadadlipen.wordpress.com/2013/09/12/d-gisele-isaac-reviews-nobody-go-run-me-by-dor-brene-omarde>)

This is important, too, because, in a society in which so much is undocumented, the facts of the matter are often dependent on who you speak to – see O'Marde's end notes re the facts surrounding the start of Carnival (P. 42) for a striking example of this 'it depends on who you ask' type of record-keeping. It's unfortunate that we live in a landscape where even with the papers of record you are forced to ask, who's record? Assuming there's a record at all – I remember years ago suggesting a virtual (i.e. online) Hall of Fame, if a physical one was not financially feasible, to lionize our cultural icons; as I think of the life of someone like Marcus Christopher, someone too important to the art form to have such an invisible footprint, online or otherwise, the absence of this feels huge. That's one of the reasons this book matters.

The book is important too for marking the societal shifts in modern Antigua and to some degree the wider Caribbean. For instance the birth of black power: "By Carnival 1969, Edris Thomas [Edris Silston of Edris Clothing Store] produced a mas' troupe 'Back to Africa'. The Point's troupe 'Africans from the West' emerged around this time and continued playing the same mas' for years. Calypso Franco was singing 'Negroes have the ability'. Short Shirt sang 'Hearty Transplant'.

“Across the region, the consciousness of calypso had already absorbed and addressed the Black struggles in North America, a racial consciousness it had previously espoused in the nineteen thirties through the work of Attilah, Houdini, and others in praise of Emperor Selassie and Ethiopia and in defiance and rebuke of Mussolini and Italy.” (P. 64)

O’Marde references Short Shirt’s foray into these weighty racial issues with 1970s era tracks like Christopher’s “Black Like Me” – “a stirring anthem of racial affirmation”; and “Afro-Antiguan” of which he said, “as powerful and relevant as ‘Black Like Me’ and ‘Antigua Will Redeem are, it is the acrostic ‘Afro Antiguan’ that deepened Short Shirt’s appeal to the revolutionary.” (p. 65). Interesting as well, re the latter song, is O’Marde’s observation that in it “the difference between ‘race’ and ‘nationality’, a concept that even very intelligent people in Antigua today find hard to grasp, is critically analysed. Antiguan nationals – in the main – are proclaimed to be of African race and heritage. The African Caribbean movement had found its spokesman, that artiste capable of translating its social theories and polemics to the language of popular culture; youth had found a message beyond the nascent Bird/Walter politics that would plague the country for generations.

“Antigua calypso had found its voice. It had proved its ability to fulfill its traditional African functions.” (P. 66)

In this moment, he seems to be suggesting, Short Shirt was Antigua, and possibly the Eastern Caribbean’s James Brown – “say it loud!”

The book tracks other themes in Short Shirt’s calypso; for instance, its exposure of the hypocrisy and rabid greed of imperialism in songs like the Anguilla Crisis.

At the same time, it exposes the artiste’s – and perhaps his writers’ – if not hypocrisy, then blindspots, when it comes to certain other issues; women’s issues for instance. The Shelly Tobitt-penned Lamentation, one of my favourite Short Shirt songs, has a line that makes me, a feminist, smile wryly every time I sing it; O’Marde speaks to that very line in his takedown of the classic track.

“It is dismissive in its lack of appreciation of the human development necessity of equal rights for women: *‘Female liberation/ ‘even’ women want their freedom/Riot and demonstration.*” (P. 84)

Though as relates to the blatant misogyny in this and some other Short Shirt tracks, O'Marde does attempt to give some context: for instance, he quotes these lyrics - "Me man - Darling, you woman/Honey, me master and you slave/And you ain't go tell me how and where and when/you want/for is me who supposed to take" but then reminds that "these were the dominant male attitudes of the Antigua, and dare say Caribbean society in the male-female relationship...Feminism as a political ideology was in its infancy, not yet finding root in even the progressive elements." (p. 61) The feminist in you might want to debate this point as this was the early 1970s and second wave feminism started rippling out as early as the 1960s, that plus, frankly, misogyny remains rampant in our modern Caribbean. But let's move on.

O'Marde brings an activist's eyes and heart to his discussion of the treatment of many of the themes in Short Shirt's calypsos. So that when he discusses social and political movements like the Grenada revolution, he doesn't, as another writer might, simply recount the facts of the overthrow, he writes "On 13th March 1979, the New Jewel Movement overthrew the supposed duly elected government of Eric Gairy" (p. 139) - the use of supposed here casting the legitimacy of the Gairy government into doubt and making clear that in the writer's view they were no such thing. His entire handling of this subject - tone to choice of references - make clear that this is not just history but history with perspective - emphasis on the perspective, albeit a well-informed one.

Musicians and students of music will appreciate that O'Marde doesn't just break down Short Shirt's lyrics but what it is that makes his music so compelling. For instance, while there's no love lost between him and Lamentations, O'Marde does show appreciation for "the power of the melody, the inviting call-and-response structure and Short Shirt's vocal wizardry." (P. 84)

He speaks as well to the lyrical and musical innovations Short Shirt - and especially the Short Shirt/Shelly Tobitt partnership brought to the genre. In discussing Starvation, for instance, O'Marde wrote, "the guitar work is steady and compelling. The rhythm is up-tempo. 'Starvation' represents the initiation of one of Short Shirt's and Antigua's contribution to the world of calypso - the social commentary sang at dance pace. There is no other body of work in calypso where social commentaries are so executed consistently." (P. 93 - 94). O'Marde, and this is not just a matter of opinion, has the cred in calypso to make such an assertion.

His voice on these issues – the crafting, the content – has the ring of authority; so that when he writes, for instance, “that is his amazing vocal power, his ability to reach any note – high or low – that he or Shelly, in their melodic creativity found; and to do it with stellar clarity; while dancing in costume in competition or in live performance” (p. 94), he’s not just fanboying.

The literary nerd in me appreciates his dissection, for instance, of how Tobitt transmuted the calypso lyrical structure. “Very few lyricists would write a line *this envious greedy conniving blood sucking attitude in calypso*. The simplicity of ‘Starvation’ is replaced here by long complex verse and chorus. Multiple rhyming patterns are engaged and a riveting but unusual melody is forced to the fore. Few calypsonians in the business could handle the lyrical and melodic complexity – at tempo.” (p. 95) He applies his own analysis, layers on another authoritative source by direct quoting a 1975 review in the Outlet – footnoted. And then he lets the record speak for itself: “Short Shirt sang ‘This Land’ and ‘Lucinda’ to win the 1974 crown and the Caribbean competition.” (p. 95)

On the subject of the songs, another thing to appreciate about this book is its extensive quoting of lyrics. It’s ridiculously difficult – especially in this internet age where you can google lyrics to any song plus just about any trivia you want, and some you don’t, on that song – to find information on Antigua and Barbuda’s songs, calypso or anything of that nature, really. Neither the artistes, the fans, nor our young people, notwithstanding all the tablet and laptop giveaways, have seen fit to create content that could see our culture adequately represented online, the way users in places like America and Europe do for every minutiae they find of interest; my own attempts to build an online data base of Antiguan and Barbudan writers, including songwriters, at <http://wadadlipen.wordpress.com> has been slow going on the songwriting end, despite the fact that I’ve reached out repeatedly to songwriters and producers for information. We’re just slow off the mark on this. Slow, slow, slow. As such, I doubly appreciate the lyric share – and crediting in *Nobody Go Run Me*. I would love to see some of this content shared online, and would do it myself if I had the time. As it is, I’ve been able to use the book as a go to resource when blogging on song and/or songwriter related matters.

Beyond the songs, *Nobody Go Run Me*, albeit it’s not a straight-up biography, does zero in on the man behind the myth. And though it mostly takes an academically sound approach in terms of sourcing, unlike some academic texts it gives equal weight to the anecdotal, mostly oral, evi-

dence in painting a complete picture – e.g. the incident in Barbados (P. 92 and 93). “Oral history in Antigua and Barbuda is laced with tales of his physical encounters with man and woman, accounts which the Christian Brother Emmanuel denies or doesn’t remember...” (P. 93) – it’s implied in the tone and in his decision to relay some of these tales that the author is giving these denials the side eye.

The tone sometimes edges up against snide – “The lows, like his failed attempts at competition during the last decade, he scrubs from his memory or dismisses as inconsequential aberration of judges. ‘True? I didn’t make finals that year? No!’” (P.218)

Still, Short Shirt is given a fair shake in this book. O’Marde is generous with respect to the artist’s talents and accomplishments but also clear on his blindspots, failures, and contradictions. The fading, retirement, conversion, and return of Short Shirt are all covered. Writing of his return from retirement, O’Marde observed, “this is the calypso protest tradition and stance that Maclean Emanuel re-joined in 2001 – one that he as Short Shirt, helped create, one that he led for three decades. But first he had to explain the apparent backslide that allowed his return to calypso and the ‘decadence of Carnival’. Brother Emanuel had to release Short Shirt.” (P. 200) Of course, fans of Brother Emanuel’s gospel could credibly argue that the message may have been re-directed but the calypsonian was never caged. But his comeback CD, “The Message” and particularly the title track and the Handwriting song constituted a welcome return to form for the beloved calypso icon. That would be the post-return peak – at least so far – the offerings since being uneven at best.

The book delves into the complexity of the musical marriage and divorce of Short Shirt and Tobitt – those who’ve always wondered will appreciate the gossip-but-not-just-gossip-ness of O’Marde’s excavation of this touchy issue. It’s clear that O’Marde had deep access to both the artiste and the writer, the notoriously reclusive Tobitt speaking to issues he hasn’t spoken of since the break-up. Even so, there is still no clear resolution: “Short Shirt affirms that Shelly Tobitt is the best writer he worked with and mourns the loss. ‘I love Shelly up to now...up to now I don’t know what I did to turn him against me. It couldn’t be about one song or money.’” (p. 146)

Other complicated Short Shirt relationships such as the one with “frivals” like King Obstinate are touched on. Sidebar: O’Marde’s treatment of Obsti songs like “Children Melee”, “Fatman Dance”, “Elephant Walk”,

“Coming Down to Talk to You”, songs he describes as “vacuous” (p. 162). In fact his categorizing of the calypso of the late 1970s/early 1980s, when I would have been introduced to calypso, the calypso of Short Shirt, La-tumba, Obsti, does take the shine off of some of my fondest childhood calypso memories – but never let it be said that he is not a critic with bite, and he is right to call out the ways politics (or the appropriation of calypso by political interests) had begun to blunt “the sharp edge and excitement of the calypso in Antigua”. (p. 183)

At some point in each biography/autobiography, you grab hold of an insight beyond the individual and their story, an insight to life. It’s not always reassuring. And this quote, O’Marde extracted from Short Shirt is a sobering reality check for any artiste trying to create and make life in this small place: “I am still a struggling man...after fifty year man... everything gets ploughed back into producing my albums...feeding my family.” (p. 218) The struggle is real – even for one considered by all to be the best among us; sobering indeed.

And speak of sobering, though we perhaps no longer live in an Antigua and Barbuda where “Hotel managers and owners and their trained snarling dogs were determined to keep the beaches free of Black people.” (p. 35) or are perhaps less obvious about it, as we consider the economic paradigm in which we do live, the deals ‘we’ negotiate that maintain the hierarchical status quo, and the erosion of rights we have come to take for granted – beach access for everyone, for instance – the book, deliberately or not may inspire reflection on how much has really (not) changed.

That in mind, because this is a thought provoking book, you might find yourself reflecting, after closing off the last chapter, on the players who have attempted to step into the void, but failed not because they didn’t have a good song or even a good run; but because none since has shown the epic depth, reach, span, and consistency of the man who inspired the book *Nobody Go Run Me*. Because of Short Shirt’s impact on all these points – for all those who would, as some have, question why Short Shirt and not this or that other one – a book on the Monarch is long overdue. And for all the reasons given in this article, Dorbrene O’Marde was just the man to do it justice.

*Writer’s Note: In between the time I drafted this and came back to edit it, Dorbrene O’Marde’s **Nobody Go Run Me** became the first ever Antiguan and Barbudan book (one of only nine overall and three non-fiction in 2015) to be long listed for the OCM Bocas prize previously won by Derek*

Walcott, Earl Lovelace, Monique Roffey and Robert Antoni making him already a winner whatever the final outcome.

REVIEWER'S BIO: Joanne C. Hilhouse is the author of *The Boy from Willow Bend*, *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight* – and its 2014 edition *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight: 10th Anniversary Edition and Other Writings*, *Oh Gad!*, *Fish Outta Water* – a children's picture book, and *Musical Youth* – a teen/young adult novel and finalist for the Burt Award. Her creative and journalistic writing has appeared in other books and periodicals, and she blogs online at <http://jhohadli.wordpress.com> and <http://wadadlipen.wordpress.com>

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THE 'MEANING OF HER SKIN': CARIB [BEAN] REVISION IN MARIE-ELENA'S JOHN *UNBURNABLE*.

Hazra C. Medica

I looked up at the sad leaning cocoanut palms, the fishing boats drawn up on the shingly beach, the uneven row of whitewashed huts, and asked the name of the village.

'Massacre.'

'And who was massacred here? Slaves?'

'Oh no.' She sounded shocked. 'Not slaves. Something must have happened a long time ago. Nobody remembers now.'

(Exchange between Rhys's 'Rochester' and Antoinette in Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea 85).

Carib [bean] Revision

Marie-Elena John's debut novel, *Unburnable*, is an intergenerational historical fiction whose setting alternates between post-World War II Dominica and modern-day Washington D.C., and Dominica. It is a timely elaboration of Antiguan and Caribbean literary traditions that scrutinise, recuperate, and re-situate mistreated Caribbean bodies and experiences. *Unburnable* underscores the crucial role Antiguan and, by extension, Caribbean literary producers play in suggesting and/or setting the critical agenda for the exploration of issues, experiences, and identities conventionally sidelined by Caribbean criticism and/ or fiction.

John provides us with intriguing re-presentations of a number of Dominican and Caribbean bodies and experiences¹. She offers glimpses of, for example, Lebanese migrant shopkeepers as 'oppressed people who had transplanted themselves among other oppressed people' and young Lebanese for whom 'Lebanon was forgotten history' (62-63). By way of another example, so-called 'brown' Dominican males and females are facetiously re-presented as hybrid bodies in post-World War II Dominica. Neither 'black'²—and so not bearing the 'indelible badge of inferiority: one's very own skin'—nor 'white'—in the days when slavery was long gone, when the white man's day was done', they were 'a new race of the privileged' (74).

However, the core of *Unburnable*'s intergenerational tale is dominated by a compelling belated interrogation of European and Caribbean mis-treatment of the figure of the Carib in particular, and indigenous experience in

general³. *Unburnable* (2006), like Jamaica Kincaid's *The Autobiography of My Mother* (1997), troubles the Antiguan present via an engagement with a figure—the Carib—long removed from the Antiguan imaginary.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the Creole protagonist, Antoinette, when quizzed by her English husband on the origin of a historic Dominican village's name, Massacre, replies: 'Something must have happened a long time ago. Nobody remembers now' (66). John's Carib, 'half-Carib', and Maroon characters—Simon, Iris and Lillian, and Matilda, like Kincaid's half-Carib, Xuela, fill the silence created by Antoinette. They remind everyone 'unwilling to make the effort of memory that would bring those past events into the present' of the mourning that should occur over the origin of the village's name—the 1674 massacre of scores of Caribs by the English (Hulme, *Remnants* 205).

John's novel may be read alongside Kincaid's as part of a discretely Antiguan (and distinctly Caribbean) literary tradition peculiarly engaged with recuperating memory and intervening into the epistemological and ontological 'bad-mindedness' hoisted unto Caribbean/ 'New World' bodies since the late fifteenth century⁴. It may also be conceived as part of a developing scholarly/critical tradition that, as in the case of historian Hilary Beckles, calls for a re-framing of indigenous resistance within contemporary Caribbean accounts of anti-colonial and anti-slavery struggle⁵. Or, as in the case of anthropologist Maximillian C. Forte, argues the necessity of re-writing the erroneous myth of extinction that has been 'assigned and attached to indigeneity not just in the Caribbean, but across the Americas' (3).

Whilst the figure of the Carib and references to Carib experience(s) tend, for the most part, to be precluded from imaginings of Antigua and the Antiguan, neither are alien to Antiguan literature and travel writings/historical documents about the island. Apart from Kincaid, and now John, in Joanne C. Hillhouse's *The Boy From Willow Bend*, for example, the abusive and troubled grandfather is a Dominican of partly Carib descent. Likewise, in Frieda Cassin's nineteenth-century *With Silent Tread*, one of the few non-Creoles/ 'Whites' given a speaking role is a loud and vengeful servant, Barsy, who is identified as 'Carib or at least of Carib extraction' (97).

In addition, the first volume of *Antigua and the Antiguans* features the legend of the 'half-Carib' protagonist, Zulmeria, who is deceived by a rebellious Carib who journeys to Antigua from his nearby 'mountain home

in Dominica' (Lanaghan 304). And, instructively, of the thirteen events of 1493-1705 highlighted by historian Desmond Nicholson as crucial moments in Antiguan history, ten involve Carib raids upon the island, mostly from Dominica (*The Story of the Arawaks*).

Marie-Elena John is an Antiguan writer of Dominican heritage. Her Dominican heritage, *Unburnable's* preoccupation with recuperating Carib memory and agency and its privileging of the Dominican landscape are evidence of the slippage marking the boundaries of the local/national and the regional as well as those of the past and present, which is typical in our region. This slippage reflects the interconnectivity of Caribbean histories, subjectivities, and temporalities that have long been a marker of the Anglophone Caribbean territories.

For John's part, the porosity of such boundaries extends beyond and facilitates more than the typical co-opting of Carib memory as occurs, for example in Antiguan calypsos that reference 'Wadadli' to augment the Afro-Antiguan sense of an organic connection to the land⁶. Or, as in other cases, the appropriation of Carib names for territories to serve as names for local beers—as in the Wadadli and Hairoun beers of Antigua and St. Vincent, respectively. The following section of this review essay will demonstrate that John's novel commits to a significant re-positioning of Carib[bean] bodies and experiences that intervene into colonial, neo-colonial, and post-colonial nationalist discourses to positively re-configure their location in imaginings of Antigua, the Caribbean and in turn the world.

The 'meaning of her skin'

But Iris was not crazy, not yet, not then. She simply did not have a frame of reference to understand the meaning of her skin in a society of people who defined themselves in an ascending rank according to the shades that led up to white (John, *Unburnable* 95).

In *Unburnable*, John, like Kincaid before her, engages with prevailing myths, in circulation since the fifteenth century, that bad-mindedly delimit the Caribs, to invoke Peter Roberts, as 'more "other" than the rest' and account for the mis-representations and mis-treatment of the group in historical narratives, literary works, and Caribbean societies (27). In John's text, as in her predecessor's, the half-Carib female body predominates as a metonym for Carib/indigenous experience and identity. The female protagonists' recuperation of their bodies de-mystifies, de-colonises and in turn [re]inscribes the Carib body and experience with agency.

The recovery projects undertaken by *Unburnable*'s protagonists [re]insert the Carib body into the Caribbean experience and national space(s). They also, crucially, delineate Carib experience and in turn, to adapt DeCaires Narain, the trauma and loss upon which the region is predicated as female (344). Sandra Pacquet observes that since the mid-twentieth-century Caribbean women's writing has been preoccupied with a quest for a female ancestor via an 'imaginary emplotment of the primal mother'. According to her, Caribbean women's narratives 'reinscribe the primal mother as a quasi-historical mythical female ancestor'. This female ancestor's 'presence is responsive to the twentieth-century Caribbean women's writer's quest for cultural legitimacy and agency' (12). John's restorative efforts and preoccupation with the Carib mother grounds *Unburnable* firmly within this tradition.

The novel intervenes into Caribbean historical and master/national narratives to deliver important assertions about the foundations of Caribbean society and culture, and the female citizen's/body's location in them. Contra twentieth-century and contemporary conventional apprehension of the region as an Afro-Caribbean masculine space and endeavour, John enacts a reading of the Caribbean that marks the region's engagement with anti-colonialism and the national question as a Carib-Afro-Caribbean feminist undertaking.

Intriguingly, the enabling acts of resistance undertaken by *Unburnable*'s protagonists provide for, to cite Giselle Anatol, 'a woman-centred, woman-positive' reinterpretation of the fearsome Caribbean supernatural female folklore figure—the 'soucouyant'⁷ (46). This conventionally demonised figure is re-produced and revised in the performances enacted by the bodies of John's protagonists as an enabling gynocentric version of, arguably, the most pervasive Carib figure originating from within European colonial discourse—the cannibal.

Both the half-Carib mother, Iris, and daughter, Lillian, lay claim to agency via ironic and subversive performances of the Carib femininity scripted by colonial discourse and prescribed by colonial and postcolonial Dominican societies. They operate from a paradoxical location; they arrogate agency from within postures of defeat and historical demonization. They also construct autonomous selves amidst the depersonizing wreckage and cumulative trauma of colonial history.

John's half-Carib women's hybrid bodies, like Frieda Cassin's Creole female bodies, destabilise the dominant 'racial'—'black'-'brown'-'white'—

and cultural—West Indian-European paradigms. At the core of the interrogation of the mis-treatment of the Carib body and experience is, to borrow from Stuart Hall, a claim for ‘access to the rights to representation’ by the Carib herself and a ‘contestation of the marginality, the stereotypical quality and the fetishized nature of images’ of Caribs (442). There is also a concomitant exploration of the manifestations of, to adopt a term from Kenneth Ramchand, the ‘terrified consciousness’ of the ‘brown’ and/or ‘black’ Dominican communities⁸. These two groups, despite being similarly affected by a history of European subjugation and colonial trauma, viewed the Carib’s quest for autonomy as at odds or competing with their engagement with the national question.

An underlying argument this essay advances is that John’s revisions of the Carib figure from tragic, defeated, and despised body to a body characterised by self-autonomy restore the indigenous group’s deserved position in Caribbean traditions and narratives of anticolonial resistance. The remainder of this piece examines *Unburnable*’s re-presentations of Iris’s subversive engagement with three significant Carib myths: the exotic Carib, the savage Carib, and the hyper-sexual Carib. It also analyses Iris’s daughter, Lillian’s, planned suicide as an enabling act that combats the cumulative trauma of Carib colonial history and entrenches the figure of the Carib within Dominican and Caribbean national narratives.

The physical and psychological portrait of Iris that appears at the book’s opening straightaway engages with three pervasive myths that produce her as the Other in Dominican society. Reproduced below is Iris’s portrait:

Lillian’s mother, Iris, was known throughout the island for a number of distinct characteristics: the women would say that chief among them were her uncommon beauty, the fact that her skin was reputed to actually glow in the dark, and the nasty cussing she directed at anyone who crossed her path when she was drunk beyond a certain point. . . . Men, though, would laugh at that and say it was the quality of the sex Iris offered that was the thing. (1)

The above portraiture foregrounds Iris’s hybrid body’s entanglement in, to borrow from Fanon, the ‘thousand details, anecdotes, stories’ out of which European discourse has constructed Carib identity as a ‘racial’ Other (84)—exotic, savage, and hyper-sexual.

The opening phrase 'Lillian's mother, Iris' is not insignificant. It anticipates 'Caribness' and its concomitant burdens as a female inheritance. This in turn signals the text's engagement with the central role Caribbean female bodies have played in the reproduction of the scripted composite gender, 'racial', and class identities that nurtured 'white' colonial patriarchy and nourish succeeding Afro-Caribbean patriarchies and androcentric national projects.

The perceived uncommon beauty of Iris may be read as John's engagement with the figure of the exotic Carib, which Hulme intimates flourished in many twentieth-century travel narratives. According to him, many of these writings revolved around a 'diverted or repressed sexual encounter between Western traveller and Island Carib girl' ('Elegy for a Dying Race' 120). By way of illustration, in Birge's *In Old Roseau*, the American writer's account of his attempt to advise a young Dominican Carib girl that he could not take her to the United States is filtered through comments on her 'magnificent hair', her 'dainty neck and shoulders', and 'those dark eyes' (qtd. in Hulme, 'Elegy' 120)⁹.

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222
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The example of Birge's gaze brings to mind Robert Young's useful observations concerning the narration of 'colonial desire' in English colonial novels and travel writings¹⁰. According to Young, many of these works 'betray themselves as driven by desire for the cultural other' and 'concerned with forms of cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire, frequently sexual for the other' (3). Hall too addresses this 'desire' for the Other in his discussion of 'black' experience' and 'racism's' conventionally binary system of representation. He argues that the 'play of identity and difference' that articulates racism is driven not only by the interpellation of 'blacks' as the 'inferior species' but also an 'inexpressible envy and desire' (445-446). In the case of *Unburnable*, John's engagement with desire for and envy of the Other, as delineated by Young and Hall, positions them as both European and Dominican.

The drunk Iris's performance of 'nasty cussing[s]' of random passers-by is an engagement with European colonial discourse's re-production and othering—as enunciated in royal edicts, treaties, plays, travel writings, and et cetera—of the Carib as a savage. European colonial discourse re-produced the Carib as occupying the highest rung of the hierarchy of Caribbean/ 'New World' savagery. According to Beckles, the distinction made between the Caribs and other indigenous Caribbean groups resulted from the former's 'irrepressible war of resistance, which intimidated all Europeans in the region'. The peoples identified as Caribs were

‘targeted first for an ideological campaign’ establishing them in the European mind not as “noble savages” . . . but as “vicious cannibals” worthy of extermination’ (‘Kalinago (Carib) Resistance’ 4).

The myth of the savage Carib itself, as propagated over the centuries, has two other myths subsumed within it—the cannibalistic Carib and the polygamist Carib. Gullick highlights the pervasiveness of the cannibal myth in his relation of historical disputes and strained relations between Afro-Vincentians and Carib-Vincentians. According to him, the former often take to denigrating the latter by referring to their purported past as cannibals (161). For its part, the myth of the polygamist Carib played a significant role in the interpellation of the Carib as hyper-sexual. Iris’s delineation by Dominican society as a sexual creature and one who offered a peculiarly intense sexual experience engages with the latter trope. The simplified account of the indigenous peoples long taught in Caribbean schools identified the Caribs as polygamists who warred with ‘Arawakan’ men whom they ate, and took the ‘Arawakan’ women as wives.

Kathryn Morris observes that the propagation of the polygamist and cannibal myths was intended to ‘suggest loose moral behaviour in the context of European colonial discourse’. She argues that colonial discourse connected cannibalism as the ‘ultimate image of consuming flesh’ with sexual promiscuity as ‘another delicacy of the flesh’. According to her, the two myths operated within European discourse to ‘connote excessive bodily appetite and animalistic physicality’, which evolved into metonyms for the Carib people and differentiated them from the ‘civilised’ and Christian Europeans (958).

It is indeed this tendency towards excess and savagery that is re-presented in *Unburnable*’s initial portrait of Iris. Importantly, with regards to her sexual excesses, Gregoire, Henderson, and Kanem note that in Dominica the negative stereotypes attached to the Carib people ‘take on a special meaning in application to Carib women’ who are perceived by non-Carib men as ‘sexually available’ (150). This reads as support for *Unburnable*’s tracing of a tradition of ‘desire’—colonial and postcolonial—as subsumed within the othering of the Carib woman.

Furthermore, Iris’s characterisation as an alcoholic is not insignificant as far as John’s engagement with tropes/myths of ‘Caribness’ is concerned. Since at least the seventeenth century, the Caribs have been delineated as being particularly susceptible to alcoholism—another signal of their supposed proclivity for excess. Nicholson’s chronology of Antiguan his-

tory from 1492-1705 records a 1681 raid of Barbuda in which eight European settlers were killed and the remaining twelve managed to escape while the Caribs were busy consuming rum. In 1787 St. Vincent, the 'black Caribs' stood accused of maiming/shooting their wives in 'scenes of drunkenness and debauchery'¹¹ (Davidson 12).

In the early twentieth century, Treves theorised that the West Indian Carib 'might have held his islands longer but for his taste of rum' (173). The stereotype of the Carib as an alcoholic and the other stereotypes elaborated thus far enunciate a network of interpellations that brings to mind Gates's assertion that the 'sense of difference' defined in the term 'race' describes as well as inscribes 'all sorts of supposedly natural attributes such as rhythm, athletic ability...and so forth' onto various 'races' (5).

John's engagement with these myths via Iris's seemingly compliant performance of the scripted Carib female body is marked by a deconstruction and simultaneous indictment of the depersonizing bad-mindedness levied against the Carib woman by the European colonising project and twentieth-century patriarchal Dominica. By the second page of the text, Iris's performance is historicised and her body's seeming re-production of the stereotypical Carib figure of excess is revised as a subversive and enabling performance.

Whilst John retains Iris's performance of excess as a mark of her 'Caribness', she isolates 'Caribness' from the supposed inherent nature to exhibit/perform the excess. Iris's performance is instead framed as an attempt to negotiate and alleviate the great sense of defeat and powerlessness occasioned by the bad-mindedness, that is, the cumulative colonial trauma, still affecting the Caribs—the 'small group of people left over from the time before the white people and the Black People' (3).

Unburnable's elaboration of Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib woman's body reveals a woman who leaves 'men of all classes, town men and country-men— . . . astounded by the passion of their encounters' (1). Moreover, her performance left the fainthearted among the Dominican men unwilling to brave a second encounter. However, as the omniscient narrator explains:

None understood that the intensity that left them shaken was actually the aggression of an otherwise powerless, disappointed, and very angry woman, who was, in fact, molesting them with her body as she threw them onto their

backs and attacked them brutally. But they were oblivious to this dynamic, and left with their chests out, proud of their potency, which they felt had aroused her to such an extreme response. (2)

For Iris then, her impotency, as a member of the dispossessed Carib 'race', is tempered by her performance of the same body used to re-produce her as Other to recuperate personal autonomy and agency.

Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib female body is a re-inscription of the myth of the cannibalistic Carib. The violence she exhibits in her sexual encounters, along with the effect it has on her sexual partners, represents a symbolic cannibalization of the bodies of the latter. This cannibalization may in fact be read as a two-fold re-write of the cannibal myth. First, Iris transports cannibalism away from the trope of the savage and re-frames it as an enabling enactment of self-possession; she re-asserts her agency via devouring of another's body. Second, European colonialists and Afro-Dominican patriarchal society, rather than the Caribs, are invented as cannibals. The performance that Iris renders is produced as a symptom of the powerlessness and disappointment occasioned by their differentiated cannibalization of Carib agency. In the latter case particularly, Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib is an act of counter-cannibalism. It is her way of avenging the historical and contemporary cannibalizations of the Carib via epistemological, ontological, and actual physical violence.

Furthermore, if one takes into account the OED's definition of 'cannibalise', that is, to 'use (a machine) as a source of spare parts for another similar machine', Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib cannibal body is rendered all the more significant (255). Her 'molestation' and overwhelming of her clients, that is, the sapping of their [physical] energies to repair her diminished agency is a performance that is akin to that of the soucouyant. In *Unburnable*, the soucouyant, famed for her blood-sucking and skin-shedding tendencies, is in fact represented as the 'worst of the lot' of female supernatural creatures in Dominican mythology (292). Her location on the highest rung of the Dominican hierarchy of female demons is analogous to the Carib body's longstanding location in the hierarchy of Caribbean otherness.

The connection between Iris's performance of the Carib cannibal and the feared soucouyant is an important one to make. The soucouyant is in fact the form into which her daughter, Lillian, opts to transform

following her decision to commit suicide as a means of liberating herself and simultaneously corroborating Dominicans' conviction of her otherness. Anatol, in her excellent deconstruction of the folkloric figure observes that the soucouyant has been used in Caribbean patriarchal societies 'to demonize female "drive"—whether this be independence and ambition, sexual enthusiasm, or same-sex desire'. She argues for a feminist interpretation of the figure as a model of female agency (52). Iris's and Lillian's performances represent such an interpretation. As will be discussed more closely nearer the end of this essay, the recuperation of the soucouyant as an enabling version of the cannibal by mother and daughter limns a feminist tradition of Carib and Caribbean resistance of Dominican/Caribbean patriarchy.

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226
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Iris's male clients' failure to recognise her persistent symbolic battle with the bad-mindedness informing twentieth-century Carib experience signals the vast disconnect between the Carib woman and patriarchal Dominican society. Revealingly, these men supply Iris with alcohol as well as money after each visit. This facilitates both the physical degeneration of Iris and the perpetuation of the drunkard/alcoholic Carib stereotype. This may be apprehended as a symbol of the general unwillingness of Dominican society to attempt to bring to halt the continuing bad-mindedness that locates the Carib on the periphery of Dominican society¹²—the source material for hearsay and sly creole songs such as the ones documenting Iris's mother's hanging or the brutal sexual assault she (Iris) endured at the hands of her lover's mother-in-law.

Importantly, even the 'country people', as opposed to 'the high-class town people', who are presented as being aware of 'the options left for a woman'—a Carib woman—'who had suffered Iris's fate', are presented as unwilling/unable to negate Iris's positioning outside of the margins of Dominican society (2). Beyond their acknowledgement of her as the daughter of the powerful Obeahwoman Matilda, the village women, in particular, are portrayed as complicit in the re-production of Iris solely as a hyper-sexual creature. They appear to accept Iris as a performance of excess—the abject body—that cancels out other excesses in their midst. By way of example, Iris's sexual encounters with male villagers are facetiously re-produced as a valuable service provided to the female villagers. She relieves them of the sexual demands of their men that can prove excessive when they are in child-rearing mode and least concerned with the 'effort of sex' (2).

Iris's location on the margins of Dominican society, as well as her eventual fate, is in keeping with the characterization of the soucouyant as an inhabitant of marginal spaces. Written and oral versions of the soucouyant myth often place her alone in a house at the end of a village. This, Anatol argues, 'parallels her position on the cusp of society' (50). As a supernatural performer of non-compliant femininity, the soucouyant is located both outside the margins of society and in an Other-worldly space, forever under threat of a tragic end/fate due to her otherness.

Iris's marginal position in Dominican society along with her tragic end is also employed by John to render a facetious statement/suggestion about 'racial' and social relations in the Dominica re-presented in the text as well as the ultimate place/function of the Carib/Carib experience in Dominican and Caribbean society. By the fourth paragraph of the novel, Iris's degeneration is complete; the reader learns that she dies at the age of forty in 1971, while being held at a prison in the capital for disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace. The novel then works backwards to unravel an intergenerational Carib narrative spanning three generations. In this unravelling, Iris's 'black' mother's neglect of the young Iris is facetiously cast as the cause of the sum of bad-mindedness attendant to her half-Carib daughter's life.

John engages with three myths of 'Carib/ [bean]ness' and 'blackness' - the exotic Carib, the absent/invisible Caribbean father, and the emotionally unattached or disabled 'black' mother - to facetiously corroborate Iris's predestination for a tragic end from her location outside of the margins of Dominican society¹³. The latter two myths are referenced in Matilda's and Iris's Carib father, Simon's, neglect of a young Iris; the young girl is left to be raised by Matilda's Maroon community. The former is referenced in the biased socialization the young Iris received from the women in Matilda's community who were fascinated with the young half-Carib girl's 'unusual beauty' (4).

The omniscient narrator's tongue-in-cheek elaboration of Matilda's complicity in Iris's eventual tragic end spotlights her failure to ensure that Iris was a recipient of the 'sensible socialization' that the other children received. On one hand, the socialization the other children in the village received 'did not promote mobility, but . . . gave them a clear understanding of who they were and where they belonged' (4). Its importance lay in educating them that the outside world, that is, the world outside the sequestered Maroon village, held nothing for them but a 'limited lower space within which they could exercise their ambitions' (4). On the other

hand, Iris's socialization is revealed to have left her unprotected from the 'disappointment of destroyed dreams' and unaware of the bad-mindedness the island has levied against people of her 'race(s)' for centuries.

It is important to note that Matilda's ancestry is cast as equally culpable as Simon's in Dominicans' scripting of Iris's identity and location as Other. Throughout *Unburnable*, Matilda is cast in opposition—as the 'black' Other—to Afro-Dominicans; she is a powerful Obeah woman and a Maroon of 'unadulterated African descent'. Matilda and Simon, as members of two alienated groups that adhere to distinct mores and, particularly in the case of the Maroons, a separate legal system, represent a threat to the Dominican 'blacks', and particularly the 'browns' engagement with national self-determination now that 'the white man's day was done'¹⁴ (74). This is made clear when Matilda has another woman, with less 'black' 'African' features, take Iris to the capital in an attempt to get her enrolled in school; it was felt that Matilda's haughty walk, a sign of her physical 'otherness' would have signalled to the Dominicans that she was not of them, that 'she did not come from slaves'¹⁵ (56).

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228 ...
Unburnable is replete with evidence that Iris is 'battered down' by the stereotypes and other supposed 'racial defects' that produced her Maroon mother and Carib father as the Other (Fanon, *Black Skins* 84-85). Dominican society's re-production of Iris as an heiress to an isolated, empty, and powerless existence, with a predefined function to fulfil as a member of the lowest stratum is a central refrain of John's text.

For example, when the Council persuades Matilda to send Iris to school in the island's capital, the narrator facetiously laments,

Had Iris been properly grounded by those tasked with her upbringing, she might have had a chance to fit properly into the slot for which she was made. But they failed her. They filled her head with a sense of her own importance. (55)

Colonial Dominica is re-presented as a patriarchal society characterised by a rigid social hierarchy that is underwritten by 'race', class, and gender biases. This is summed up in the timbre of a younger Iris's relationship with John Baptiste, a member of Dominica's rising 'brown' elite. Iris is abandoned by John for marriage to a woman from a family equal in status to his. Importantly, John Baptiste's sense of the male and class privileges afforded to him is summed up in his reasoning that his marriage only meant that he would not sleep with Iris as regularly as he did before.

The suggestion *Unburnable* makes is that though Iris was doomed in mainstream Dominican society from the outset, her fate was hastened, and perhaps made worse, by her attempts to perform a femininity and personhood out of line with that scripted for her 'race(s)' and class. Her mistaken belief that a marriage to John was a possibility is framed as her lack of understanding of the 'meaning of her skin' and the 'meaning of her poverty' in Dominican society (95). Iris's unsuitability as a wife for John may be understood as a symbol of the incompatibility of the Carib body with the new national project. Like Frieda Cassin's Creole protagonist, Morea, Iris's 'othered' body is not one that can reproduce the ideal or required citizenship¹⁶. In Iris's and John's Dominica, it is the monied 'hybrid'/'brown' body—neither 'white' nor 'black' nor Carib—that is cast as the ideal citizen.

Furthermore, embedded within John's suggestion of the inescapability of Iris's fate is also a revision of the emotionally disabled 'black' mother myth that indicts Dominican society for expecting Matilda and, by extension, proletarian Dominican mothers, to collude with it in cannibalizing the ambitions of their children and keeping them in line with a ready-made fate. Matilda's 'failure' suggests a repudiation of what has been noted as the historical association of 'black' womanhood with the reproduction of the enslaved status and/or the labouring class (Beckles, *Centering Woman* 62).

This essay moves to a close with an examination of Iris's daughter, Lillian's, planned suicide and what *Unburnable* suggests through it about Carib agency and the place of the Carib experience within readings of the Caribbean. Near the end of the novel and in modern-day Dominica, Lillian, whose story unfolds alongside that of her mother's and maternal grandmother's, is revealed to have settled upon a mode of suicide that will leave her body in such a state as to convince the deeply religious/superstitious Dominicans that she was a soucouyant. Her intent is to jump from the mountainous site of her grandmother, Matilda's, former Maroon village, tearing the skin from her body in the process. This decision to perform the skin-shedding body of the soucouyant fulfils at least three important enabling functions.

Firstly, through Lillian's stream of consciousness, the performance of the soucouyant's body is re-presented as a claiming of personal autonomy. Lillian draws upon her creolised Catholic faith to invent her death as an indulgence, an act of liberation that runs counter to the life of 'atonement, practicing self-sacrifice and self-denial' that she has thus far led in 'the

hope that she would one day pay for her inherited sins' (291). Within the text, she is understood by the entire island to be a cursed creature; her conception is reputed to be the work of Matilda from the grave¹⁷. The text also details her stepmother's several attempts and failures to un-write the peculiar bad-mindedness attendant to Lillian's location as Other. For example, when Icilma attempts to have the young Lillian confirmed in the Catholic Church, the communion wafer the priest offers to the young girl falls on the floor leaving everyone present convinced that Lillian's body was 'so polluted that the body of Christ himself would not dare enter into hers' (5).

Lillian's planned skin-shedding is therefore an enabling performance that is designed to facilitate the shedding of the meanings inscribed upon her skin/body and in turn the attempt to fix her, as an immobile body, within the enclosure of otherness. This brings to mind Anatol's reading of the soucouyant's skin as a metaphor for a cocoon—'the constrictive outer layers are shed and left behind, and a transformed being emerges endowed with the freedom of mobility' (52). Lillian's plan is also designed to render her body in seeming compliance with the othering that is represented as the heirloom of the Caribs and her matrilineal line in Dominican society. In the latter case, her claiming of her heritage as the Other represents her reframing of otherness as a stance of resistance rather than a posture of subjugation. It is analogous to the appropriation of the appellation 'Carib' by members of the indigenous group as a 'symbol of resistance to the intrusion of those colonial and neo-colonial regimes' (Whitehead 12).

Secondly, Lillian's intent to perform the soucouyant's body is meant to revise the sense of disconnect between the Carib past and present, and in turn the amnesia characterizing the Carib experience. For Lillian, her death presents a way to acquire the truth directly from her ancestors about their and her pasts. Given her creolised Catholic faith, 'for her to believe that in death she would be able to speak with her mother and grandmother . . . was logical' (290). Returning to Dominica, after twenty years in the United States, to uncover the truth about her 'murdering Obeahwoman' grandmother and 'prostitute' mother, she is portrayed as tormented by the limited knowledge she has of her maternal forbearers.

Overall, Lillian's quest to unlearn the body of the amnesiac represents an engagement with the myth of the vanquished Carib. This myth references the absence of the Carib in most of the Caribbean and the silence,

discontinuity, and trauma characterizing the Carib nation and memory. Moreover, her desire to revise the silence surrounding her forbearers' narratives is analogous to the quest for a female ancestor with which Pacquet observes Caribbean female writers to have been preoccupied since the 1950s (*Caribbean Autobiography* 12).

Thirdly, Lillian's plan to perform the body of the soucouyant represents an undertaking to place cumulative Carib female trauma and experience on the national agenda and within Caribbean narratives of loss and trauma. She envisions Dominicans immortalising her otherness in song much like they did for her mother and grandmother before her. This othering is foregrounded as a positive experience and an important aspect of her heritage:

In the public aftermath of her death, she would not disappoint the people of Dominica. Let them sing another song about another woman whose life had not fulfilled its promise. Let them sing on her- she wanted her own song, it was her birthright. A *chanté mas* to guarantee her place in history, alongside her grandmother and her mother. (291)

Overall, the suggestion is that her desire to join her female forbearers—Matilda the 'black' Maroon Obeahwoman and reputed La Diablesse—and Iris, the 'half-Carib' Mama Glo¹⁸—in the annals of Dominican oral history is an attempt to quilt together Carib and African female narratives in a tradition of resistance and subversive femininity.

A Brief Critique:

Marie-Elena John's debut novel *Unburnable* is a tremendous surprise, and a welcomed addition to Antiguan literature, Anglophone Caribbean women's writing, and Anglophone Caribbean writing in general. It is a surprise because its crafting belies the 'greenness' of its author. Its surprise is great because as a debut project, its tackling of massive/significant and underexplored themes and experiences in Antiguan/Caribbean literature is, for the most part, well-executed. Moreover, it is a welcomed addition because, among other reasons, it is a belated yet timely intervention into the conventional neglect and/or mistreatment of a number of Caribbean subjectivities and experiences by West Indian literature and literary criticism as well as West Indian and 'Western' historical narratives.

It is never a pleasant exercise to take such an accomplished piece of literature by a 'young' writer to task for what may be deemed as its problematic areas. Indeed, this is why I intend to be done with this business very quickly. Before advancing to the conclusion of this essay, I will address what may be perceived as two major weaknesses of the novel. First, John's problematic rendering of a central character. Second, John's occasionally ungainly handling of the genre of historical fiction.

A striking weak point of *Unburnable*'s intergenerational tale of Matilda, Iris, and Lillian is the characterisation of the latter. During an interview I conducted with her in 2012, Marie-Elena John acknowledged and appeared to be in some agreement with readers who found 'the Lillian portion' of the novel tedious and who much preferred her handling of Lillian's mother and grandmother, Iris, and Matilda. Indeed, compared to the latter two, the characterisation of Lillian does strike as rather one-dimensional; it is hard to sympathise with her, particularly when, by contrast, the character of Iris, for example, is so well drawn by the second page of the novel. Regrettably, John's rendering of Lillian—the troubled 'black Barbie'—in fact treads dangerously close to caricature, as happens in passages that, for example, appear to inadvertently fetishise Lillian's hybrid half-Carib body.

As for my second point of criticism: *Unburnable* is marked by John's occasionally unwieldy handling of the historical fiction genre. Throughout the book, it is made obvious that John has conducted extensive research on and is rather knowledgeable about Dominican, African, and Afro-American histories and sensibilities. Yet, the weaving of her research and overwhelming body of knowledge into the story is not always seamless. For example, sometimes, characters (such as Lillian's Afro-American male lover, Teddy, or the colonial administrator who witnessed the 'Flying Masquerade') are used to elaborate/explain historic events/current drama in a distracting and heavy-handed ventriloquised manner. However, for the many moments in the novel when history is blended well with fiction—such as the capturing of 'ole time' masquerade or the deserved prominence given to oral traditions/history and Caribbean orality¹⁹—*Unburnable* is sure to endear itself to Caribbean and postcolonial readers who understand well the significance of giving voice where silences previously reigned.

Conclusion

John's re-presentation of Carib female identity and Carib experience engage in meaningful re-positionings within current Caribbean narratives of anti-colonial resistance, loss and trauma. The ultimate suggestion of *Unburnable's* preoccupation with the Carib experience is that Caribbean and, by extension, postcolonial, recuperative efforts should necessarily be concerned with entering into a dialogue with the recuperated past. Rather than rescuing traduced pasts and experiences as relics, there should be a commitment to engaging with/reading continuities and/or discontinuities between Caribbean past and present. The suggestion of the novel is that this approach is more appropriate to our post-colonial condition(s), which are marked by a continuing entanglement in the colonial past, and reverberations of epistemological and ontological violence.

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(Endnotes)

1 NOTES:

. Also existing alongside these are re-presentations of contemporary Afro-American experiences/realities.

2 . In this article, I follow the example of Gates Jr. and other sociologists who have undertaken to query the term 'race' and its derivatives. The situating of 'race' in scare quotes draws attention to the term's genealogy as social construct, biological misnomer, and, to adapt Gates, Jr., troubles the 'sense of natural difference' encouraged by its conventional usage. I fully agree with Gates, Jr.'s assertion that 'race' 'is the ultimate trope of difference because it is so very arbitrary in its application'. As he aptly observes, the 'biological criteria used to determine "difference" in sex simply do not hold when applied to "race"—"white", "black", "yellow", and so on, are but 'arbitrary constructs, not reports of reality' (6).

3 . I have avoided re-designating the 'Caribs' as Kalinagos/Garifunas as has been the recent tendency. My decision is based on the enabling recuperation of the term undertaken by *Unburnable* and the group's own appropriation of the trope of the aggressive Carib as a 'symbol of resistance to the intrusion of those colonial and neo-colonial regimes' (Whitehead 12).

4 . Indeed, Antiguan literature's singular engagement with the [re]construction of autochthonous Antiguan and Caribbean identities signals the viability and exhorts the elaboration of an Antiguan literary tradition. From Frieda Cassin to Queen Ivena, Antiguan literary contributions are marked by an insistence upon enunciations of enabling accounts that [re]inscribe Antiguan/Caribbean bodies and experiences with agency.

5 . See Beckles's 'Kalinago (Carib) Resistance to European Colonisation of the Caribbean'.

6 . Derived from the Carib name for the island: 'Waladli'.

7 . The *soucouyant* is 'A legendary, evil, wrinkled old woman, who hides by day, but by night sheds her skin wh[ich] she carefully hides in a jar, then becomes a ball of fire roving in the air to seek out and light upon sleeping victims, especially babies, whose blood she sucks before returning to her skin, wh[ich] may have been peppered and salted by those hunting her down to get rid of her by this as their only means' (Allsopp 520).

8 . In Ramchand's original formulation, 'terrified consciousness' is framed as the 'natural stance of the White West Indian' that accounted for the presence of certain continuities in literary works by West Indian Creole writers (*The West Indian Novel* 224). According to Ramchand, 'terrified consciousness suggests the White minority's sensations of shock and disorientation as a massive and smouldering Black population is released into awareness of its power'(225). He identifies a number of traits peculiar to texts informed by this consciousness that include 'references to an outer socio-economic situation that is recognizable as the fall of the planter class' (224).

9 . So too Lanaghan's nineteenth-century account of the legend of the Antiguan 'half-Carib' girl, Zulmeria, encourages gazing at the girl's 'lofty and commanding figure', the 'clear olive tinge of her complexion', her 'large black eye', and 'long coal-black hair' (1:287).

10 . Young defines 'colonial desire' as a 'covert but insistent obsession with transgressive, inter-racial sex, hybridity and miscegenation' (xii).

11 . This term originated to describe the offspring of African slaves and the Caribs. Descendants now largely refer to themselves as 'Garifuna'. Honychurch notes that this term probably originated from an Ancient Arawakan term for the Carib - 'kaniriphuna' or 'kallipina' (*The Dominica Story*, 20)

12 . Indeed, this is also a symbol of the unresolved quarrel between both groups with regards to the existence and nature of the so-called 'Carib Reserve'. Carib Chief, Hilary Frederick, gave evidence to this long-standing quarrel during a presentation in Geneva at a NGO Conference on the Rights of Indigenous People in 1981. He protested the confinement of the Caribs, to an area which was smaller than was originally agreed upon, stating confidently that the Caribs had 'more claims than any other human beings' to Dominica (*The Carib and their Colonizers* 17).

13 . The latter of these three myths reference what Beckles observes was the historical projection of the 'black' woman as 'lacking a developed sense of emotional attachment

to progeny and spouse' (*Centering Woman* xx).

14 . Near the end of the text, it is revealed that Matilda was the Chief Justice and head of the Council of the Maroon village of *Noir*, which had remained undiscovered for two centuries hidden as it was atop one of the island's highest mountains. She was wrongly accused of murder and executed by the state.

15 . In another incident, a 'brown' character rebuffs a 'white' English colonial administrator for suggesting a link between Dominican and African masquerades—"We here in the West Indies, we are not Africans, you know". She also assures, 'It's a long time since we could tell you anything about Africa' (138).

16 . In Cassin's novel, the ultimate symbol of the Creole woman's otherness in relation to her English counterparts is her incompatibility with the English male. The Englishman and the Creole protagonist's failed engagement spotlights the latter's positioning outside of the English 'family' or nation; her othered body is not one that can reproduce English citizenship

17 . Lillian's father, Wilson Baptiste, is the son of Iris's former lover, John Baptiste. Lillian's conception is apprehended as the work of the 'devil-dealing' dead Obeah woman, Matilda, 'determined to give her daughter what was hers' (171).

18 . La Diabliesse, the 'she-devil', is a folkloric female figure that initially assumes the form of an attractive young woman to 'lure a man into a wooded or bushy place before revealing herself as an old crone with cloven hoofs, who will cause the man to go mad or die'. The Mama Glow is a 'legendary mermaid-figure—now young and lovely, now old and ugly, always bountiful but deadly' (Allsopp 195, 365).

19 . Indeed, a striking feature of *Unburnable* that deserves a review essay of its own is the novel's privileging of Caribbean oral traditions and orality. Carol Bailey's 'Destabilising Caribbean Critical Orthodoxies' (Caribbean Quarterly 59.1 (2013)) undertakes such a discussion. Bailey analyses John's infusing of her fiction with the 'idioms, linguistic structures, narrative techniques, vocabulary and other features of Caribbean orality'. She also acknowledges *Unburnable's* significant casting of 'stories and storytelling, as a central mode of representation and as its primary subject'.

FREEDOM IS A MULTIFACETED CONDITION: DENISE SMITH-LEWIS' *EMANCIPATION COME*

Denise Smith Lewis, *Emancipation Come: The Yearnings of a People to be FREE*. Curepe, Trinidad and Tobago: Blessed Digital Services, 2014. 154 pp. Pb.

Introduction

Denise Smith-Lewis' *Emancipation Come* is a poetical expression of "the yearnings of a people to be FREE." The poet plays on the word "freedom," which is being used literally, figuratively, and spiritually. While the poet experiments with the various types of freedom, the overweening focus is freedom from a guilt-ridden conscience and the ability to live freely in the knowledge of God's forgiveness. This theme recurs throughout the book as the poet attempts to point her readers to a higher power.

The alphabetical listing of the poems in the table of contents suggests a deliberate format with a hint of authorial control. It's not surprising, therefore, that specific themes emerge including a clear sense of self and self-worth, current trends, patriotism, praise to God and intercession, freedom and reparation, encouragement, forgiveness, unconditional love, friendship, family life, and inequality. The dominant theme of slavery and emancipation is expressed in all of the poems with a great emphasis on self-knowledge, which is a major step on the path to freedom. The inclusion of a glossary at the end of the book helps to clarify words used, thus enhancing readers' comprehension.

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237
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Freedom through Affirmation

Winner of three Independence National Literary Arts Competition for poetry and short story, Reverend Smith-Lewis has demonstrated a commitment to writing and the literary arts. It is not surprising, therefore, that the poet's first theme is acknowledgment of one's worth through the title "Affirmation." This poem, not unlike Whitman's "Song of Myself," establishes a positive tone while reinforcing the poem's primary theme of freedom. It is a boost to one's self-esteem, to the sense that one experiences freedom through self-knowledge rather than through an act or declaration of freedom. The poet claims that self-knowledge "is a joyous celebration! Of sweet realization that I am me" (1). This celebration of one's positive attributes is bound up in God's creative miracle of presenting each person a unique marvel. "I rejoice in the wonder God made me to be" (1) is the poet's expression of affirmation. The acknowledgment

of one's worth and one's attributes is tantamount to freedom as the poet claims: "I am me! And I am free" (2). Freedom, therefore, according to the poet, is more of an internal act rather than an external mandate.

This intrinsic act of freedom is expressed in "Black Man I See You," where the poet reminds us that "loving yourself" is essential to the process, which will enable success by "living in harmony with all and your gifts coming to the fore" (17). The poet's sense of freedom is epitomized in her metaphor expressed in the poem "I Am an Eagle." In this poem, the poet describes the individual's unlimited potential of rising to "a higher altitude" (66) to overcome all threats to one's peace. The eagle is free. The eagle surpasses and overcomes obstacles because of its self-knowledge and positive sense of self, which generate productivity because the eagle knows itself: "I am the chosen one / I am an eagle" (67).

On a lighter note, Smith-Lewis assures those who lack self-worth. She disabuses her readers of the concept of "self-definition and status" defined by "possession of stuff" (89). Conversely, she reiterates her message: "You are acceptable and beloved! So stop feeling small! / You are fearfully and wonderfully made! / So stand tall! / And finally, the struggle ends; you come to a place of closure, / You're beautiful the way you are" (90).

In her address to all—children, women, men—the poet emphasizes the Biblical concept of individuals being created in God's image, which makes us God's children, a belief that enhances self-knowledge ultimately generating freedom. Adjectives proliferate as the poet expresses one's self-worth: "I am royalty; a money back guarantee" (104). Freedom is achieved through self-knowledge and one's commitment to God. When people believe that they are "wonderful, original, magnificent, altruistic, novelty," that they are "special, significant, and full of royalty," they can "hold (their) head high and walk with dignity in the land" (142) because freedom is a gift of God bestowed on all.

Freedom as God's Gift

Indeed, Reverend Smith-Lewis' clarion call is clear: freedom is a God-given gift to those who believe it, accept it, and walk in their freedom. In a similar vein, the poet weaves the thread of freedom through all of her themes. In addressing current trends, she includes the economic downturn, crime, domestic abuse, parental neglect, prostitution, and gender issues. Her recurrent theme of dependence on God is expressed: "Friend, whatever you are faced with, do not give up hope! / The earth is

the Lord's and time is longer than rope/ In the midst of every problem/ Trust in God, He will help you solve them" (85). Very sensitively, the poet describes freedom from incest and sexual abuse. The child's cry "I would really like to be free" (69) transcends the physical chains and prison bars to explore the atmosphere of physical and emotional fear and imprisonment. "Please, will somebody help me? / Tell me what do I do to get free?" (69). The unexpressed answer requests that the victim "break free from another prison/ This time it is one of my own kind. / For anger and self-loathing consume me; / No self-esteem, no peace of mind" (70). Based on that resolve, the victim chooses "to walk free" (70).

Freedom through Forgiveness

Another aspect of freedom relates to one's ability to forgive. Psychologically, the victim possesses the power to release him/herself from the chains of hatred and resentment. She supports the fact that forgiveness is more for the wronged party than for the perpetrator of the wrong. Forgiveness liberates the victim to move on with life. In a dialogue between two voices—Revenge and Anger—the poet engages them in their clamor for revenge. "Then Revenge jumped up and stood tall to his feet. He said: now is my turn, you know revenge is sweet!/ Anger shouted out, is long time I have you in my heart/ I've been waiting to get my chance to tear you all apart" (49). But then the victim remembers "grace" by choosing "to forgive" (50). With that act, the weight is lifted and the person is set free. Forgiveness is a liberating force that works physically and psychologically. In another poem, the poet penned the words: "I let go of every negative emotion,/ And I employ forgiveness to be my balm" (123). The poet reinforces the theme of freedom through God's forgiveness which, combined with one's forgiveness of self, will allow an individual to "live, love, and walk free" (124). Freedom, therefore, is a multifaceted subject. It operates on various levels—physical, psychological, and spiritual.

Freedom through Praise

How can we attain freedom through praise and intercession to God? According to the poet, trust in God eliminates fear, which frees us from worry. The poet's insistence on implicit trust in God revives the concept of faith that removes fear. God is intricately involved in people's lives and grants requests as they are made because "He's large and in charge in the midst of the strife" (37). Instead of worrying, "Give thanks to the father and lift up your hand [because] God's got you" (37). Through life's difficulties and problems, we need to demonstrate faith and allow God to

hold our hands (62). Self-knowledge is essential to attain freedom just as knowledge of God. God is the embodiment of love, justice, pardon, peace, mercy, grace, joy, and strength. When we understand who God is, it is easy to trust Him and accept His munificence. The poet summarizes it thus: "God simply is" (58). He is the immutable one who never changes. He stabilizes our lives. When we, by faith, commit ourselves to Him, He bestows His gifts on us with the added benefit of freedom because "God is the Liberator who gives release" (58). Such freedom surpasses all acts of emancipation; it is a state of being, a condition that may be experienced even when physical chains restrict one's movements. The freedom that God gives is limitless. The poet, therefore, reinforces the Biblical passage: "When the Son shall set you free, then will you be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Conclusion

The Reverend Smith-Lewis' book of poetry addresses issues and topics that are relevant to all, which makes this book a must read for all. Couched in the concept of freedom, she addresses such topics as family life, forgiveness, freedom, and friendship, as well as sports and unconditional love. She assumes an authoritative stance as she affirms, admonishes, and advises, all in a positive tone. This book of poetry is didactic. It engages the readers in introspection, while exposing them to alternate meanings of freedom. The eclectic flavor enhances its appeal to a wide variety of readers. In a small volume, the poet embraces a number of topics that help to enhance the appeal of the book.

The title *Emancipation Come* denotes a sense of slavery, which may be conjectured as a condition more clearly defined through history, but the poet subtly connotes a current prevailing condition that is self-imposed. In that context, emancipation has arrived for those who have initiated the move through self-knowledge and a dependence on God. Freedom is an active process. It is a multifaceted condition that may be approached through various paths, but the result is the same: joy, peace, and stability.

Reverend Smith-Lewis' little book packs a monumental punch.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTIONS: VALERIE KNOWLES COMBIE'S,
*LOTS OF LAUGHTER***

Paget Henry

For anyone growing up in Antigua and Barbuda during the decades of the 1940s and 1950s, Valerie Knowles Combie's, *Lots of Laughter* will be a delightful and highly evocative journey down memory lane. Through its use of proverbs, hymns, poetry, smells, tastes and images of childhood, this volume of autobiographical reflections takes us back decades to an Antigua and Barbuda that is now just about gone. The striking quality of character of this earlier time that rises from its pages, and makes us nostalgic, is that of innocence. This quality of mind is there in the energy and trust of the children, the moral guidance of the adults, and the sense of community that defined the village of Cedar Grove. Together, these cultural orientations provide a portrait of a post-slavery village community living by its agency and creativity. Although materially poor, it was a community that was giving birth to young people who were happy, confident that they were loved, certain that they were being raised by the entire village – in short, youths that were subjectively rich. This is the unmistakable message that we come away with after reading, *Lots of Laughter*.

Given the nature of its message, it should come as no surprise that this book is as much about the autobiographical reflections of its author as it is about the norms, values, and cultural practices that constituted life in Cedar Grove. Combie's autobiographical reflections are indeed filled with the laughter and innocence of childhood in Cedar Grove. Her account of how she started school is just so evocative of life in the village. She writes: "my older siblings were running down the church hill to school, so they could get in line before the school bell rang, I followed them" (p.7). Further on, Combie continues: "they were soon absorbed in the crowd of other children converging on the school grounds from all directions. No one seemed to notice me ... I don't know how I escaped the headmaster's eyes or the teacher's supervision, but I know that on a day in 1953 I entered Cedar Grove School at the tender age of four, and I have been in school ever since" (p.8). Combie tells us that she cannot recall ever being registered.

The next chapter of the book, which is entitled, "Long Live the Apprenticeship System!" initially threw me for a loop. It did, as I immediately thought of the apprenticeship system that followed the period of African slavery in our history. My mind was on fire with questions: How old

is Valerie? Did we have the apprenticeship system here in Antigua and Barbuda? However, as I got into the chapter, I quickly encountered a very different reality. Combie was sharing with us the informal system through which children were assigned duties and chores within and outside of the home. Indeed she notes that “we were inducted into the labor force from birth. My initial memories are those of work and work-related activities” (p.6). In particular, “I can recall very clearly being Mr. Rousseau’s errand girl” (p.14). In addition to her errand girl responsibilities, Combie also describes for us some of her work-related responsibilities at home: “we were very happy, busy doing our chores, which included learning to do all the domestic things like keeping the house clean, doing the laundry, learning to cook and bake, keeping the yard clean, and even growing flowers at home” (p.11).

Equally delightful are Combie’s descriptions of roasting corn and making ashum, riding a bike into St. John’s on Sundays with milk for her cousin, Mave Frances, taking the common entrance exam, scoring the highest and winning a scholarship to the prestigious Antigua Girls High School. Her accounts of life at this school are in sharp contrast with those of Margaret Lockett’s in her book, *Antigua Then*. They are also quite different from those of Jamaica Kincaid. Also worthy of note here is Combie’s very different portrayal of the mother/daughter relationship from those that we find in works by Kincaid, such as *Annie John* and *The Autobiography of My Mother*.

Fascinating and evocative as the autobiographical reflections in this book are, it was the account of the village of Cedar Grove, its social solidarity and patterns of normative regulation that really engaged me. Here, the sociologist in me is really showing his face. Indeed because of its engaging accounts of village life, Combie’s book can be grouped with a growing number of works that have focused on village life in Antigua and Barbuda, and its very marked receding. These works would include: Joy Lawrence’s *Bethesda and Christian Hill*, Leon Matthias’ *Gracefield Moravian Church*, Emily Spencer Knight’s, *Growing up in All Saints Village, Antigua*, Hewlester Samuel’s, *The Birth of the Village of Liberta, Antigua*, and Al Warren’s, *My Native Cradle*. In the 2011 issue of our *Review*, Susan Lowes reviewed a group of these works.

Written at different times, this set of texts reveal both the similarities and the differences in their author’s experiences of village life in Antigua and Barbuda. The innocence of childhood that we encountered in Combie’s narrative is audibly echoed in Al Warren’s book: “I always felt

safe and comfortable in Johnson's Point, the little village in which I was born and grew up, on the southwestern shores of Antigua" (p.8). On the other hand, Leon Matthias' account of growing up in Cedar Grove reflects his experience of a significantly changed village. Like Combie, Matthias entered primary school in Cedar Grove, but ten years later in 1963. By this time, access to secondary education had improved significantly with scholarships to attend the more recently opened Princess Margaret School. Matthias received one of these scholarships and became a teacher after graduating. Later, with help of organizations such as his church, the 4H Club, and CADEC (Christian Action for Development in the Eastern Caribbean), Matthias eventually became a Moravian minister. In short, the differences that these ten years made were quite dramatic.

Turning more directly to Combie's account of social life in Cedar Grove, her emphasis is definitely on the norms, values, beliefs, punishments and bonds of solidarity that held the village together as an ordered community with a definite identity. This supply of cultural capital, which constituted the community's major investment, derived from a distinctly Afro-Christian worldview. The importance of the norms and values supplied by this worldview are particularly clear in the chapters entitled, "Of Manners and Behaviors" and "Religion Permeated our Lives". In *My Native Cradle*, Al Warren has a chapter that is entitled, "The Role of Good Manners and Respect". The above chapters of Combie's text make clear the Christian foundations of life in her village through the many ways in which prayers were integrated into the daily life routines of both young and old. In these prayers thanks were giving to the Creator, who was at the center of their Afro-Christian worldview. Other chapters tell us of the special routines observed on Sundays, and the importance of Good Friday, Easter, Harvest, and Christmas rituals. In other words, the year was also a Christian year. The autonomy of Cedar Grove derived for the ability of its leaders to creatively adapt and apply the basic principles and norms of their worldview to raising the young, creating a subjectively rich and thus very human community.

Inextricably intertwined with some of the above Christian themes were a number that were of African origin and derived largely from the West African discourse of Obeah. The influences of this worldview and its norms appear very clearly at two points in Combie's narrative. The first is her discussion of the burial of the dead; the second is her very funny but highly original treatment of the phenomenon of bed-wetting. What Combie's treatment of these two topics share is the invoking of the idea of the jumbie or the soul of a departed person, and all that is associated

with it in Antigua and Barbuda. I will not here get into the details of her arguments. These you must read for yourself. But they are vital for grasping the distinctly Afro-Christian nature of the normative foundations of social life in Cedar Grove and other Antiguan and Barbudan villages such as Johnson's Point or Bethesda.

The conclusions of Combie's autobiographical reflections leave no doubt that the village life her book describes is no more – gone. She writes: “the Cedar Grove of 2013 is only a memory of the Cedar Grove of my birth and youth. Not only have many of us left, but many of our parents have passed away and some of the practices that bound us to the village and to one another have ceased to possess their power” (p.105). What is it that has caused so many people to leave this village? Why have the normative practices that bound them together lost the power they earlier possessed?

It is at this point we come face to face with the realization that in spite of its charm, innocence and other subjective riches, the village of Cedar Grove was firmly held in a state of material poverty by its economic relations with richer surrounding communities such as Crosbies and Hodges Bay, and ultimately the larger sugar plantation economy of Antigua and Barbuda. Cedar Grove was a village that “understood the meaning of family, respect, responsibility and stability” (p.106), but as its sturdy youths grew into maturity they had to leave in order to find an adequate livelihood and a solid material foundation. This was not to be had from farming the available land. Thus in the chapter on migration, both out of and into Cedar Grove, Combie gives us the major clue to the passing of what she calls. “those glorious days” (p.105).

Reinforcing these transformative effects of migration are those of urbanization, which has increasingly leveled the once strong distinction between “town” and the villages of “the country”. The Cedar Grove of Leon Matthias was a much more urbanized community, more a suburb of St. John's rather than the village in the country that it was during Combie's childhood. Cedar Grove is not unique in the changes that it has gone through, changes which are so revealingly described in the books of Combie and Matthias. Most other villages in Antigua and Barbuda have suffered similar fates. Thus we need to ask: where is this decline in village life taking us? Is it to a modern urban Antigua and Barbuda in which all will be both subjectively and materially well off? Let us all try to make it so.

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REVIEWS BY TIM HECTOR

ELIZABETH HART THWAITES—OUR PRIME HISTORICAL WOMAN

Tim Hector

I promised, or rather inferred some time ago, that I would write on someone whom I once called the most important woman in the history of Antigua and Barbuda—Elizabeth Hart Thwaites.

A particular lady, has kept behind me to fulfill what she called my “promise” to write on this woman. I kept putting it off, claiming that to write such an article would require me to research the religious history of Antigua which, was always heavily overlaid with piety and cant, as the missionaries sought to conceal the realities of life under slavery, and substituted some heaven on earth in place of the miserable conditions under which our people lived. The Missionaries may or may not have been convinced that they were creating “Christians” out of “heathens” and Christian slaves rather than heathen slaves. Much that was written about Elizabeth Hart Thwaites is “sickled o’er in the pale cast” of over-zealous missionaries who used her to justify that Christianity and slavery should and could co-exist. They were oblivious to the fact that Mrs. Thwaites was a confirmed abolitionist and wrote an anti-slavery article, at age 22, in 1794.

Besides, both the Church and the State persecuted and actually prosecuted Elizabeth Hart Thwaites. However, the religious zealots, such as Rev. John Horsford, 1856, who wrote about Elizabeth Hart Thwaites usually gloss over her prosecution and persecution, because it challenges the view that her monumental and pioneering work in education in Antigua, and, indeed, the West Indies, was done with the blessing of the Church and the planter slave State.

I interrupt here to remind, that the Rev. John Horsford, referred to above, himself black, was the first black to write a book with chapters on Antigua, as early as 1856.

Perhaps though, it would be best to give the briefest outline of a contemporary slave woman in the U.S. who bears some resemblance to Elizabeth Hart Thwaites. The woman born in slavery in America was Sojourner Truth. Sojourner Truth, as a notable biographer wrote, was born twice. First in the late 1790’s in Ulster County, New York, and was named Isabella in her first birth. Then she re-christened herself on First June 1843 as Sojourner Truth. Following her second birth, Truth was a formidable preacher who became an abolitionist and feminist. She was

prosecuted and persecuted as a woman preacher, in much the same way as the traditional opponents of equality still virulently oppose women priests today.

Sojourner Truth began as a Millerite, a mass movement of Second Adventists, who confidently expected the world to end in 1843, as they said the scriptures ordained. As you would know, the world did not end in 1843. But Sojourner had distinguished herself as an advocate of Millerism and became its foremost proponent as a woman preacher, and a black woman at that! When the world did not end in 1843, she joined the Northampton Industrial Association, which was profoundly influenced by the great American abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, and the greatest American black abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

History though national in character has to be seen as a continuum, for the more we understand the particular, the better we understand the universal movement of history and vice versa. Sojourner Truth in the universal continuum of history is directly related to Elizabeth Hart Thwaites. They are part of a piece and piece of one main current. Sojourner Truth is known in history as having laid the foundations of black feminism with her famous statement “**And arn’t I a woman?**”. That statement by Sojourner goes like this in part:

That man over there says that woman needs to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches and to have the best place eberywhar. Nobody eber helps me into carriages, or ober mud-puddles, or gives me any best place [and raising herself to her full height, and her voice to a pitch like rolling thunder, she asked.] And arn’t I a woman? Look at me. Look at my arm [and she bared her right arm to the shoulder, showing its tremendous muscular power] I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns, and no man could head me—and arn’t I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen ‘em mos’ all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with a mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard—and arn’t I a woman?

This is perhaps the best point to introduce Elizabeth Hart Thwaites, in her own words.

Writing from Antigua, where she was born and bred, black, but not a slave herself, Elizabeth Hart Thwaites writes in her anti-slavery letter

which should be compulsory reading for every CXC student, Antiguan and non-Antiguan alike. She wrote on October 24, 1794, this among other things.

I know several who have been mothers of ten children, who never had the satisfaction to call **one** their own; and this not from the hand of death, or separation by mutual consent, **but sold**, given away, or otherwise disposed of, according to the will of man. Others have only one darling child, whom they wish to **see** [emphasis in the original] do well, taken from them and sent to some other island [even under slavery the Caribbean was a de facto Federation with slaves sold from one island to another] where they would sell for the best price, no more regard being paid to **the feeling** [emphasis in the original] of the parents than if they were cattle. I very lately saw an old lady take an only son of one of her Negroes, and with seeming pleasure declare, he would serve her to buy bread with by and by; and in a house not far from hers is a young woman who was bartered for a horse. In such cases who can tell what those feel that have not.

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Put off their generous feelings, and, to suit

Their tempers to their fate, assumed the brute.”

Brute there, of course, means rebel or revolutionary.

I must, of necessity, give you another substantial quotation from this remarkable anti-slavery letter, written by a young Antiguan black in 1794, at the age of 22. It is one of the profound insights, worthy of the Enlightenment of Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau. I often wonder to myself, if Elizabeth Hart, then a young unmarried woman, born in Antigua, was aware of the tremendous slave revolution in Haiti then on-going when she wrote this in 1794. She may or may not have been aware. But she wrote: “Christians who are **not** slaves, need only be subject to the will of Heaven and to those they love; while most of those who are in bondage must either **continually** submit their wills to that of some irreligious, unreasonable being, or undergo a sort of martyrdom.”

It is clear that for Elizabeth Hart, like Rousseau, that man “is born free, but is everywhere in chains.” She too felt, that they had nothing to lose but their chains. It should be noted too, that she characterised the slave

holding planters, not as having class, but as “irreligious” “unreasonable beings” despite their pretensions of religious worship and their pretense to be the embodiment of culture, which they were not. They were, too be sure, Philistines of the worst kind. They left a legacy of Philistinism.

Elizabeth Hart, a twenty two year old Antiguan black, in 1794, 200 years ago, wrote with a passion and an intellect which would hardly be equaled by her consumption oriented peers two hundred years later. This is what she had to say in 1794:

There are likewise others [slaves] who, being endowed with good natural understanding, aspire after refinement, useful knowledge, the sweets of social life etc., etc. Were there a possibility of changing the colour of their skin, and emancipating themselves, with culture they would become ornaments of society. They are not permitted to emerge; they are bound down by some unenlightened mercenary mortal, who perhaps has not a thought or wish above scraping money together.

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250 Her repudiation of the exploiting planters was absolute—mere mercenary mortals, whose only “thought or wish” does not rise “above scraping money together.” We today have only exchanged places with them, Elizabeth Hart would have noted with equal pain.
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I have tried so far to let Elizabeth Hart Thwaites live through her words 200 years later. Now I have to reconstruct her life, because she has been smothered over in history as though she did not live, even though, or because she is the finest heroine in the history of this nation. We have no future because we have not connected to the liberating forces in our past. Only connect.

Elizabeth Hart, as you already know, was born in 1772 in Antigua, the second daughter of Barry Conyers Hart. Her eldest sister, Ann, was married to Gilbert of Gilbert’s estate. A Moravian Bishop, Bishop Walterville arrived in Antigua on or about 1795 placed his hands on Elizabeth Hart’s head and “in a solemn manner, gave her blessing.” This, it is said, had a profound effect on her, leading to her conversion, being born again, if you will. Thereafter, she adopted “a plainness of dress”. She had been taught music, “had made considerable proficiency in it” but on her conversion though previously “captivated by the concord of sweet sounds” she gave up music and the charms of music. What a pity! Fundamen-

talism seems to go hand in hand with cultural regression. She, however, subsequently wrote some moving and pious hymns better than most that are sung today. Her hymns remain unsung. English hymns being preferred. Not even political independence revived her hymns, there being no search for an authentic identity. The ole time colonizing religion would do. Independence, after all, was colonialism writ larger. She did not compose hymns like "God shall bestow on Jacob's race / Peculiar grace and glory too." Such are still being sung lustily in an independent but unconscious Antigua.

In July 1805, Elizabeth Hart married Mr. Thwaites, a man who supported his wife, and, indeed, carried on his wife's work, which, alone, makes him notable. He had the grace to follow where his better led. On marriage in 1805 they moved from St. John's to English Harbour. There, and at that time, 1805, the Sabbath was unknown. Even the Afro-Saxon Rev. John Horsford, writing in his book *Voice From the West Indies, 1856* had to write "The state of this place, [Antigua] was deplorably wicked. The Sabbath as in heathen lands was unknown. The naval yard bell rang on Sundays for the people to labour as on other days of the week. The ships of war anchored here and the military barracks were in the immediate neighbourhood, and immorality of the worst description was perpetrated." In other words, white on black rape was commonplace.

Nevertheless, it was in this Sodom, that Mrs. Ann Gilbert and Mrs. Elizabeth Hart Thwaites opened "the first Sunday School, established **in the West Indies**, on a Sunday, in September, in the year 1809" says the church historian Rev. John Horsford. It congregated children "of all colours, statues and circumstances" even "from amongst the most wretched."

She supplied "the wretched" with clothes. Sought contributions from the rich. She was criticized for this, for the Sunday school she started later become "The Female Refuge Society" established here in 1816 "designed to gather the orphans from the contaminating example of the fallen and depraved." The Sunday Schools spread all over English Harbour and Falmouth and were formally known as the English Harbour Sunday-School Society.

It took money to do the job. The carping criticism about taking money from the rich continued. Ms. Thwaites responded "He who has, has wrenched it from the loins and arms of the poor, man and woman alike. The carpers are the allies of oppression but know it not. Abundance is based on poverty. It is right to take from those who have, so that those

who have not, might lift themselves, with help, into the light of humanity, and challenge the galling yoke.” Today others carp ceaselessly, about taking a contribution from the rich, so that those without electronic media, without patronage, without utilities and land to give, might compete with the powerful, even on these uneven terms. They carp now as they did in Elizabeth Hart’s time for theirs is not the business of liberation, but to have the poor always with us, and so that “poor might not inherit the earth, and the fruits thereof.” Elizabeth Hart was even stronger, they challenged her for taking substantial contributions because they “wanted no change.” The oppressed supported her to a woman. Those in between, as always, remained in their social state of in-betweenity.

On February 13, 1813, Elizabeth Hart requested all the Sunday School teachers and children to meet on Lyons Estate. No Minister was present and consequently no service was held. There were more than 500 children present. The Church historian records, that “About half-way on their journey from English Harbour and Falmouth to Lyon’s Estate there is a delightful spot, a gentle rising ground, covered with the smooth green grass, and here and there a forest of trees, open to the sweet and gentle breezes of the Bay”. Pastoral and idyllic. Elizabeth Hart Thwaites was encouraged by the slaves to seek this place “from the proprietor.” Permission was asked and granted. The contribution was again criticised.

However, “In a short time the woods in the vicinity resounded with woodsman axe, posts, rafters, wattle, were speedily cut, in the space of time allowed these poor slaves; and often late at nights they would be found busily employed, and early in the morning, before they went to work for their Masters, they toiled on to get the roofs fitted up. Their wives, in the interim, contributed their portion of labour, and provided sustenance for their husbands. So zealously was the work prosecuted that it was finished in six weeks from the time when commissioned.” A people, were participating, as always, with enthusiasm in their own liberation. Gone was the apathy which always comes with oppression. Productivity multiplied many times.

On May 29, 1813 this school was opened. It was the first school room built in the West Indies for the purpose of teaching slaves. It was 44 feet long by 16 wide with an adjoining shed 9 feet long by 16 wide. The school was called “Bethesda”. There is a tale attached to the choice of the name Bethesda which time and space does not allow.

In the end she built and organised schools at Hope Estate, and at Wiloughby Bay. The schools grew in scope and size. Elizabeth Hart Thwaites,

led slaves themselves, to build and establish their own schools, for their own instruction and their own upliftment. She pioneered and wrote a special chapter in the history of Liberation in this country. She has no equal. She lit from Antigua a torch throughout the entire Caribbean.

Early in her life, and on behalf of the slaves, herself black, Elizabeth Hart Thwaites had challenged the Christian precept laid down by St. Peter, that the lot of the slave as Christian was “enduring grief, suffering wrongfully being buffeted and taking it patiently.” She repudiated this and felt that slaves ought not to be at the receiving end of every “capricious little Master or Miss who thinks nothing of lifting a hand or heel against them.” She considered slavery as visiting “the utmost indignities” and “an endless list of complicated ills.” Education was not Liberation but a giant step in the process.

Born Antiguan, the Church itself, the Anglicans led by Dr. Coleridge, Bishop of the Diocese and the legislature would prosecute her in 1825. They used trumped up theological arguments, charging her with what we today call ecumenism. For she was as much Anglican as she was Moravian or Methodist. They knew that she wished to educate slaves out of slavery, and that for her, education was a weapon of liberation on earth, and too, salvation in Heaven. It was the liberation on earth that bothered the high and mighty. She had taken contributions from the rich, for the purpose of liberating the wretched of the earth. She was a beacon of liberation. Elizabeth Hart Thwaites is largely unknown here because we remain unconnected to our own history of liberation. She will be acclaimed and put in the national pantheon as well as King Court when we come into our own—but not before. In the meantime we wander in the wilderness, trapped in consumption, and diverted into the ways of those who have “no thought or wish above scraping money together.”

Elizabeth Hart Thwaites established the first schools, provided instruction, in school buildings, the first ever in the Caribbean, with the slaves providing their own labour free, for their own freedom. Planter legislature and church placed her, all alone, in an inquisition over two days. She was not shaken. She held her own, triumphant against her white persecutors and prosecutors. She is a giant in her own right and by her own deeds. She has been given a pre-eminent place by the Ancestors in the pantheon of Caribbean liberators, who have welcomed her, on equal terms.

IN SALUTE TO AMBROSE—BERT WILLIAMS

Tim Hector

I think it was April 19, 1955. I was then 12 plus. April 19, 1955 was the day after the greatest scientist Albert Einstein died. My grandfather, an ex-policeman, whom my brother-friend Conrad Luke insists was the greatest influence on me, sat me down and said that April 18 is a day that will long be remembered because the greatest mind of the 20th century died on that day. He had me read and learn by heart a quotation from Einstein. The quotation went like this quoting Einstein from memory:

To think with fear of the end of one's life is pretty general with human beings. It is one of the means nature uses to conserve the life of the species. Approached rationally that fear is one of the most unjustified of all fears, for there is no risk of accidents to one who is dead or not yet born. In short the fear is stupid but it cannot be helped.

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254 To this day I am still puzzled by the last sentence. For if the fear is
... stupid, then it ought to be seen as such and overcome. For Einstein to say that a patently stupid fear cannot be helped, was to me stupid and I dared to say so to my grandfather then! In consequence, the customary Oh Henry which I got on Saturdays was not forthcoming for weeks. My grandfather who was a man of words, was struck down with a stroke, his eyes dim, he depended on me to read for him—everyday, day in day out. He ruled by words and exercised sovereignty through the word. That day he did not want me to read for him. He told our close family friend “Teacher”, the late Ms. Mildred Richards, that I was “incorrigibly impertinent” to have questioned the wisdom of Einstein while I was yet “a snotty-nosed ragamuffin” not yet weighing “a bag of flour.” To the end of her life, Ms. Richards and I always had a great laugh whenever I got into some fix with the government of the day. She would say “You are still incorrigibly impertinent.” And we would both convulse with laughter.

My grandfather as you would guess had little by way of formal education but educated himself. When I began teaching at the Antigua Grammar School, still in my teens, he stuck in front of me a page with another quotation from Einstein which I had read to him before. That quotation from Einstein went like this:

The problem with which the intellectuals of this country are confronted is very serious. Reactionary politicians have

managed to instill suspicion of all intellectual efforts into the public, by dangling before their eyes a danger from without. Having succeeded so far, they are now proceeding to suppress the freedom of teaching and to deprive of their positions all those who do not prove submissive i.e. to starve them out.

What ought the minority of intellectuals to do against the evil?

Frankly I can only see the revolutionary way of non-co-operation.

... If enough people are ready to take this grave step they will be successful. If not, then the intellectuals of this country deserve nothing better than the slavery that is intended for them.

This was one of the finest passages issued in the horrible McCarthy era, which Cold War era bent the world and thought itself out of shape. I readily confess that I did not understand those words until some 13 years later, in 1973, when I was removed from teaching, and since then I have seen some of the better teachers, among them Mr. Lesroy Merchant, removed from teaching as the intellectuals of the country fail to take a stand and so proceed “to the slavery that is intended for them.” For fear of being called “communist”, like I was, they hid their light under a bushel. And now the Cold War is over hiding their light has become a permanent habit.

In 1960, my reaction to this quotation was far different. Sharpeville had happened. Blacks in South Africa were brutally and mercilessly shot down by whites. I studied everything I could find on the subject. Since 1954 besides, I had renamed myself Dedan Kimathi, the last Mau Mau leader to be captured in Kenya, in their titanic struggle to take back their lands as the material base of freedom, from the colonising whites. By 1960 I had grown impatient with my grandfather for always holding up white scholars as if they were the paragons of all virtue. Politely but sharply I told him so as he handed me the page with the Einstein quotation.

He shot back at me. What do you know about Black Consciousness? About Bert Williams from Swetes, a black Antiguan, who on June 23, 1903 gave a command performance of his own play *In Dahomy* at Buckingham Palace, if you please. All you know is Shakespeare and Keats, Tennyson and Kipling! What do you know about Bert Williams' famous song “Nobody” written by him, recorded by him, and actually in a film

by him one of the first black men to appear in films? Don't tell me about being black, boy. What do you know about the race riots in New York City on August 15, 1900, when white mobs beat every black man they could find, and the most popular black man in the world, Bert Williams from Swetes, had to run and hide, while his great show business partner George Walker had to take a beating. My grandfather as you can judge from this soliloquy was livid with rage at my charge that he was grossly deficient in black consciousness.

Many years later, long after my grandfather was dead, I learnt he had left Guadeloupe for New York and was there for those race riots as he followed Bert Williams around. At the time, to tell the truth, when my grandfather angrily upbraided me about Bert Williams, I thought Bert Williams was some singer my grandfather played guitar with in some shabbeen. It was quite a shock to me when two decades later, I learnt that every word he said was a fact. That Bert Williams did give a Royal Command performance at Buckingham Palace on the exact date he cited June 23, 1903.

But this is not the point of this article. The question is: how comes it that two of the greatest Antiguan and Barbudans of all time come from the tiny village of Swetes? Who are these two Antiguan? One is known, the other is unknown. Who is there who does not know Curtly Lynwall Elcon Ambrose, proud West Antiguan Test player, taker of 405 wickets in Test cricket? Had he been honoured by his country in the springtime of his achievement he might, with that incentive, have taken 500 wickets now. And if you don't, I honestly think so. But we are most slow to honour our own, because our consciousness has not been decolonised. And so in honour of Curtly Lynwall Elcon Ambrose, I devote the rest of this piece about his fellow great villager, Bert Williams, to him.

In Antigua today not a street, not an alley-way is named after Bert Williams. Not even a lane in Swetes! What a disgrace, our own great, not honoured, even dishonoured in total indifference, by our own. This great master of Vaudeville, of Broadway, and of the London stage too, for more than 20 years totally unknown in his very own land. Though he was named this year, in the *US 2000 Almanack* as one of the great personages of the United States, as America summed up its own achievements for the Millennium, nothing, just nothing, has ever been done in honour of Bert Williams in his native Antigua. Why? Antigua has only one national hero. He alone resides in National Heroes Park. King Court who first sought to make us "masters of the island" can find no place there. Nor can Bishop McGuire, therefore not the superlative Bert Williams,

perhaps the most creative man to come from these shores. Not perhaps, but definitely the most creative man to come from these shores. But my purpose here is not polemic. I honour and hail Curtly Ambrose by writing of Bert Williams.

Incidentally, two full-length books have been written on Bert Williams, a great Antiguan and Barbudan, who is unknown to every school child in Antigua and Barbuda. No wonder that our children do not aim at excellence they aim only “to pass”. All of their own excellent past has been deliberately buried so that they may live peaceably “in the slavery long intended for them”, in an economy redolent with white supremacy in the Year of Our Lord 2000! Let’s not go there, though. No, not now.

Bert Williams was born on November 12, 1875, in the village of Swetes, Antigua and Barbuda. He is registered in the book of births as Egbert Austin Williams born to Fred of Sea View Farm, and Mary Williams of Swetes. The Williams family moved from Antigua in 1885 when Bert was ten (10) to Riverside, California. Why they chose California, and how they got there is still a puzzle unanswered in any of the biographical works. For interested persons the two biographies of Bert Williams are entitled *Bert Williams; Son of Laughter*, Mabel Rowland Ed., copyright 1923, The English Crafters, New York City. The second is even more appropriately entitled as *Nobody: The Story of Bert Williams*, by Ann Charters, copyright 1970, The Macmillan Company, New York City.

It is my view that neither of these two works remotely do justice to Bert Williams, and he awaits, a serious student of cultural studies, with a deep literary understanding, as well as knowledge of the theatre and film, and moreso the historical situation of Antigua and Swetes in which his artistic foundation was laid. May I just add that Bert Williams musical recordings (some mastered on wax cylinders, the state of the art in his time) were acclaimed some of “the best hits” of the era.

How did the great Bert Williams get into acting, singing, the stage of Shakespearean plays and film. They say he always had a great sense of humour. And as his father fell ill, on completing high school, Bert Williams had to go to work, and give up his pursuit of civil engineering. But listen to this from one of the best critics of the time: “Bert had developed a particular interest in the mannerisms of certain type of peasants while in Antigua. He later shifted this attention to the humble, and the shiftless who could neither read nor write but who had a certain hard, and not altogether inaccurate **philosophy of life**. He would **study** this type patiently

and rejoice whenever he discovered a new twist of dialect or expression. From this Bert would go on to develop an act into what became his trademark character “Mr. Nobody” and the accompanying song he composed.”

I am told too, by my grandfather that up to 1899 when he left Antigua, Swetes was famous for its story-tellers some of whom traversed the island telling tall tales in a country with little by way of art. That Bert Williams was actor, singer, composer, and the first black Director on stage and in film in the United States, when racism was perhaps at its worst, tells of his tremendous abilities. But tells too of the great fertility of the sub-soil from which he sprang.

It is also well to remember, it was the peasant character observed in Swetes, which was the basis of his art and genius. In other words, Bert Williams found a similarity between the plantation near-do-wells of Antigua and the plantation near-do-wells, the sharecroppers, the down-and-outs of the USA. Whereas Shakespeare wrote for the men “in the pit” dislodged by the Enclosures in Elizabethan England, Bert made the men in the pit—the peasant, the unlettered, the shiftless, the humble and their realistic philosophy of life—the centre-piece of his characters. Maybe he was into “Method Acting” before it was given the name by Stanislavski. Permit a short aside.

If Bert Williams was called The Son of Laughter, Curtly Ambrose is The Son of Joy. Nothing I have seen on Broadway, or in sports, not even Maradonna’s joyful race to the stands to receive the applause of his fans matches the joy of Ambrose when he scalps a prized wicket. Ambrose so serious, ramrod straight, all energy and nerve, bound and wound tightly, releasing in an epiphany of joy is one of the great spectacles of our time. It is elation at success, for self as well as for team and Region. Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” was embodied in Ambrose. And embodied too, was the character of the humble, the down and out, elevated into high art, the geometry of line, trajectory, and bounce, which was the special business of Ambrose’s art. But more on that another time.

It is well to remember that Bert Williams starred in the famous Ziegfeld Follies, with the likes of W.C. Fields, Will Rogers and Eddie Cantor, some of the most famous stage names in the USA, and not only did he star in the Ziegfeld Follies, from 1909 till 1918, he became its highest paid actor. May I also remind that Bert Williams was the Director of the film *Natural Born Gambler*, in which he did his famous poker game pantomime. Many regard this film as bowing to the racist stereotyping of the black person. But it is well to remember that not much else was possible.

One must recall here that Bert Williams himself fought racism all the way. It was through him that the first black orchestra played in a first class theatre (Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre) when in 1914, James Reese Europe conducted a pit orchestra for Vernon and Irene Castle's dance routine. One must also remember that the same Bert Williams was the first black actor to join Actor's Equity on August 3, 1920. And, in the same year, 1920 on November 3, he was acclaimed "a giant of the stage" when he appeared in Eugene O'Neill's justly famous play *The Emperor Jones*. In 1921 after having himself financed his own revue, *The Broadway Breveties*, written and produced by the great George Lemaire, Lemaire appeared as Bert's straight man and Bert does the Yalla shoes scene. It played for 40 weeks.

I could go on and on about Bert Williams' five films, he and Eubie Blake appearing in *Shuffle Along* in 1921, or of *Sons of Ham*, which he wrote, or his appearances in guess what? Operettas. Bert Williams was truly a man for all creative seasons. Bert Williams has been criticised for his work in "blackface" which it is said projected the racist stereotype. That he worked in "blackface" with George Walker is true. But that was the style of the time, and tells of the enormous pressure brought on black performers to perform in the accepted stereotypes. Yet none dispute that Bert Williams brought to his "blackface" comic performances a rare sensitivity, that reminds of Shakespeare's clown in King Lear, poking fun, sometimes by double entendre, at the mighty.

But I come now to his death. In January 1922 rehearsals began for the *Pink Slips* written **for** Bert Williams by the renowned Walter De Leon and produced by Al Woods. Bert Williams starred and was the only black person in the cast. It opened in Chicago. In Chicago Bert Williams caught a cold which became pneumonia. The show must go on, he insisted and himself appeared though gravely ill. On Saturday January 25, 1922, Bert Williams collapsed in the middle of his second performance that day. On Saturday March 4, at 11:30 p.m. Bert Williams died in New York City. Even in death he was to accomplish. Besides huge public and private observances of his death. He was buried in a Masonic Burial Ground with white Masons. It was the first time a masonic burial ground in the United States was integrated.

I am not done yet. In 1953, 31 years after his death, Bert Williams ranked third in a *Variety* poll of the ten most important comedians in the history of American popular theatre. And yet he is unknown in Antigua, though a world famous artist, from Swetes Village, Antigua and Bar-

buda. Not only was he a great artist but a great person. For example, Bert Williams began his career on stage in 1892 in partnership with George Walker. They performed together as Williams and Walker for 17 years, that is, till 1909 when George Walker was forced to retire through illness. Bert Williams split his earnings with Walker for the rest of his living life, as usual. That generosity of heart is proof of a great spirit.

Bert Williams did not fear death. He, before Einstein, saw it as one of the most unjustified fears of all human fears. He was concerned with what he could do, to make life better, for the humble, the shiftless, the peasant, the sharecropper, for all blacks oppressed by racism, between his birth and his death. Einstein would have applauded.

In Antigua and Barbuda though, 78 years after his death, even after he was yet acclaimed in the prestigious *U.S. Almanack 2000*, only one hand claps for Bert Williams. It is tragic in the extreme.

I had hoped as a Millennium Project for Antigua, to have a Bert Williams room, with all available memorabilia, in Antigua's Millennium Park. I had hoped too, to found a school of the Performing Arts, named after him. He would have inspired countless generations to come. Was the hope drunk? Or is it dead? At any rate, were I to proceed on the mission, the mean and petty would say I am in collaboration with a corrupt regime. However, when we cease "to be the slaves we were always intended to be" Bert Williams will be acclaimed not just by his native country, but by a Region and a Race.

Outlet, September 15, 2000

NOVELLE RICHARDS - OUR LITERARY FOUNDATION

Tim Hector

Novelle Richards and I have had a strange relation. He and I have the same birth date. He was born in the same year as my mother. Two of my aunts worked at the *Workers Voice* while he was Editor there. I wrote my first piece for a newspaper at age 13 with his encouragement (it was the news in Brief). He presided over the panel which chose me for my first session of cricket commentary. Ernest Mason persuaded him that I was “a local John Arlott in the making”. In the only known compliment he ever paid me, he used to persuade me to go to Trinidad and commentate on a Test match.

Nevertheless our relations remained cool, often distant, sometimes frozen. But always, mutually respectful. I believe that he thought as protégé I was not willing to show sufficient deference to those, himself in particular, who cleared the way, defined editorial traditions, laid the basis of journalism and newspapers in Antigua and Barbuda. Maybe he was right. Maybe not.

Novelle Richards was no mere journalist though. He was a journalist, editor, essayist, novelist, poet, historian, songwriter, politician, and diplomat. Even as listing, this is an impressive range of interests, activities and output. In paying tribute to him after his sudden death a few days ago, I will not concentrate upon his political career. It is enough to note, that he was among the first who had the privilege, then very exclusive, of secondary education, to take the side of the working people. That is the essential point to be noted about Novelle Richards. It distinguishes him.

When the Colonialists were urging those who had the benefit of education to exercise social mobility and climb up into the class of privilege, power and pomposity, Novelle Richards opted to remain faithful to his rural origins in Liberta and to the cause of working people as he saw it.

I chose here deliberately, not to discuss his political work, but his literary work. It is, or it ought to be common knowledge, that he was a legislator here, that he won the Federal Elections, went to the Federal Parliament in Trinidad as a Parliamentarian for the glittering opening of the West Indies Federation on April 22, 1958, and was a Minister in Sir Grantley Adams Federal Cabinet, when the West Indian Federation collapsed on May 31, 1962. It should also be common knowledge that he was President of the Senate from 1967, that he was Antigua’s Consul General in Canada as well as Deputy Governor-General.

In discussing his literary work, I am affirming the unquestionable. Novelle H. Richards was the foremost literary figure Antigua has produced. Jamaica Kincaid has written two brilliant novels, to worldwide acclaim. Novelle Richards wrote only one novel, and a slender volume of poetry entitled *Tropic Gems*. The sobriquet, the foremost literary figure that Antigua has produced to date, is not based on either Novelle Richards' quantity or quality of production, it is based on his pioneering work, his literary influence, ranging from the unremembered but important L.A.S. to Reg Henry, through Milton Benjamin and many another, the present writer not excepted. As poet Novelle Richards filled a small volume. He seemed untouched by modernism. There is no trace of Derek Walcott or Braithwaite, no influence of Eliot or Auden, less of Soyinka or Amos Tutuola, and none of Pablo Neruda or even Langston Hughes.

There is a touch of Blake, without the subtleties and profundities of Blake, as say from Blake's "The Clod and the Pebble", we have Novelle Richards' "Every Pebble makes a Ripple". From which we get this:

*Every lover
Is a trickster
If his love's a fake
Every dreamer
Gets a glimmer
When he is awake.*

Blake had a philosophic point. Here Novelle Richards is at best being clever, employing the rhyming couplet as well as a more sophisticated rhyming pattern. He fancied himself, his handsome self, his suave and debonair self, as a bit of a Don Juan, not aggressively so, in the Byronic sense, but in a mutually captivating sense. He could match the charms of his charmer and himself charm the charmer. As in his poem "The Way of Love". He wrote:

*I sat fascinated
Looking
Into her sparkling eyes.*

As much as he is fascinated and his desire quickened so is she, and therefore he wrote:

*She felt the urge also
Nestling
Closer to me until*

Feeling

All her resistance sped

Falling

Swanlike on me, she sighed

Pleading,

Love me, have me, take me

Kissing

She turned off the light

If there is the archaic and anachronistic Chaucerian “swoon” or the commonplace feeling of an “urge” there is though a certain rhythm, evoked by the use of the present participle, which produces a kind of sweeping crescendo to round-off the concluding second movement. And there is no need for the third. After all, she turned off the light. Certainly it can be said the poem gives delight and hurts not.

To be sure, Novelle Richards was not anywhere near the top rungs of Caribbean poets, but he and he alone helped place Antigua in the literary movement which swept the Caribbean before and after the Second World War, and which is symbolised by *BIM* and the *Beacon*. Through Novelle Richards, Antigua belonged in the Caribbean literary family. We owe him no small debt.

...
263
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And now we come to Novelle’s novel. It is by no means novel. What is novel about Novelle’s novel - *The Twilight Hour* is that it has never been discussed **before** now in Antigua. Never. Novelle Richards wrote, without an audience at home which read, appreciated or rejected his work. It is, to put it mildly, a most distressing situation. It says a lot about us. It says that the so-called ‘intellects’ among us never really applied their minds to the product of our own minds. They were interested in qualifications, in certificates and degrees, **not to acquire and apply knowledge**, but to get and collect status, even privilege. It is a degrading condition which degrades a society. Novelle Richards tried desperately to rise above that degradation.

It can be said that he failed, for *The Twilight Hour* is not a good novel, not even a good first novel. But it is not the failure which matters, it is his **trial** that was all important. Nothing attempted, nothing gained. He attempted where others, as well endowed, failed to try. *The Twilight Hour* is a most peculiar novel. The main characters are all **upper class** personages. They could be black or white. There is no trace, no trace whatsoever, of West Indian speech rhythms in this novel. No feel of Antigua, which is called

Santa Maria in the novel. There is no sense of landscape. Nights are moonlit or moonless. No sense of place. This novel is set anywhere and nowhere.

The characters have elaborate dinners. Charles, the central character, gives a dinner with crystal glasses “which were laid in order for the guests and reflected an aristocratic air in character with the room”. All the characters except V.C. Bird, who appears in the novel under the name John Partridge, live in Great Houses; “with old style mahogany and china closets containing delft china and an assortment of Viennese glasses.” It is unreal. The dinner given by Charles (obviously Novelle himself) “consisted of several courses. Soup was first, then a course of lobster, followed by the main dish of roast duckling and lamb [he did not say with mint] with vegetables”.

This black elite, aristocratic elite, are, like the colonial whites, surrounded by servants. Charles, who represents Novelle himself had a maid named Mary “a buxom” maid who is described by Novelle as “a good driver” meaning slave-driver, who saw to it “that the yard boy and the other maids did their work properly”. It is an incredible story in an incredible setting about unbelievable people in an unbelievable un-West Indian environment.

And yet it says a great deal about us. All we wanted to do is to replace the white colonials who once dominated over all of us. Even Novelle, who boldly joined the struggle with the Labour movement, is overwhelmed by this idea of stepping in the colonial master’s shoes, with its great houses, its Viennese glasses, its delft china, its imported roast peking duckling with English potatoes, served by a buxom maid, who sees to it “that the yard boy and other maids do their work properly.” Propinquity and propriety was English colonialism. It captured Novelle Richards and his generation and still holds them in fee simple.

One interesting thing about Novelle’s novel, *The Twilight Hour*, is that the ordinary people though present in crowds of up to 10,000 or as servants speak not a single word in the entire novel. Another, this time positive feature, is a view of V.C. Bird who appears as John Partridge in the novel. It is an unflattering picture of his wife, but I am told that the Labour leaders of the past did experience this problem. It broke many a marriage.

In *The Twilight Hour* we get this intimate picture of V.C. Bird as John Partridge. “Partridge woke up late one Sunday morning. He was tired and looked more gaunt than ever. His wife stood by the bed, watching

him closely, 'Don't you realise you are killing yourself?' said his wife. Day and night you are out. You have no time for me nor the children. We hardly see you, and even on Sunday mornings when you should be resting, the house is filled with all kinds of people. Why can't they leave you alone for awhile?" The argument continues as John (V.C. Bird) Partridge is told by his wife: "Your children are getting big, you are not looking well and I need some money. School fees for the children have not yet been paid and the grocery bill is running up. I cannot tell the people I owe 'The Lord will provide!' They want their money". To escape the furor, Partridge escapes to the bathroom. One day he would have to shape up or ship out. It was an inevitable choice.

Throughout this novel we get this view of middle class Caribbean women: anti-nationalist, uncaring, status-seeking, money-oriented, always anxious to get to the big city. Honey-mooning in London. And in love with the United States, and its mythical image of consumption unlimited. Is it a fair picture of the class and social type?

In truth the central theme of this novel is love, marriage and divorce because of a woman who could **not** share even the limited goals of a limited anti-colonial nationalist movement led by the Trade Union headed by her husband. This middle class woman, like 19th century Thomas Arnold, thought that Trade Unions were "engines of mischief". Then and therefore they made domestic mischief, which became political mischief. It is a bit one-dimensional but not without perception.

The novel also sheds light, rather is concerned with, the break up of the West Indies Federation. We get little of Novelle's personal feelings. Only the events. It is not journalism, not what George Lukacs called "reportage" nor is it what the famed literary critic also termed "portrayal". Events unfurl and people are caught up in them, more or less unaffected by them. Both events are back-drop to each other. There is no interaction.

And yet whatever the weaknesses of this novel, and I have been unsparing, though generous, in pointing them out, it has a most significant ending. Says a character towards the end of Novelle's novel. "Things are really bad. **We are in a thorough mess.** We should have as our motto "To dwell together apart". If this Federation breaks up we will only disgrace ourselves in the eyes of the world and show we are very little different from the Congo". And that is exactly what happened. We disgraced ourselves. (I cannot ignore it, note again Novelle Richards association of disgrace with Africa—the Congo in this instance.)

The novel ends this way, after the Federation has collapsed, and with Novelle depicted as Charles speaking thus to his second wife after the first loving but unhappy marriage had shattered “Men and nations have passed through the darkness before my dear, and they have come into the light. For us, for the West Indies, this is the twilight hour. Sometime, someday the light is sure to come”. By what means will this light come?

History it would seem works by mysticism in Novelle’s view, not by organisation, agitation and education. And that was the dilemma of Novelle Richards’ life. He was a Federalist supreme, not a mere integrationist. He knew that the Caribbean would only experience the darkness of insularity once the Federation collapsed. Yet he could not bring himself to form a party and build a Caribbean Nation movement. Instead he kept his “loyalty” to Bird, and went along even though he disagreed. He despised their greed, their corruption, their lack of ideology and the unprincipled void of their politics. But like Hamlet, he could not take arms against the sea of troubles and so end them.

...
266
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He symbolised the best and worst of a European, centre-right Social Democrat cast in a West Indian island. High principled, but ineffective. Noble-minded, but ineffectual. Extolling loyalty, he became and remained loyal to what he himself knew was “reactionary” a favourite word of his. And yet Novelle Richards by his written work has attained immortality. A national anthem, though riddled with archaic thee’s, thys and thous, stands among his eternal assets. The first of the modern novels by an Antiguan stands to his credit. The history of the Labour movement in Antigua, in *Struggle and Conquest* stands also among the bows in his quiver. Not many, if any, can so claim, so much.

He was not as well qualified as my friend Dr. Pat Lewis, the new ruling party historian. But Novelle Richards had a social democratic perspective, however limited, out of which he thought and wrote. Pat Lewis can claim no such perspective, at any rate he himself has claimed none except some Moravian mission. Had Dr. Lewis read Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* he would not have been so fulsome and so foolhardy in pushing his calvinist Moravian mission.

To be sure, Novelle Richards towered above such. Novelle H. Richards was a supremely decent man, alive to the creative impulses of the world. He enjoyed the company of his friends at bridge or at a drink. He was the most rounded individual produced by the Labour movement of 1939–67. Novelle Richards loved the classics and it would be appropriate to end

with them. He would have urged that we “spoke of him as he was, nothing extenuate, and tis right to remind that he has done “this State some service” and we know it. Of him it can be said as Plutarch said of Themistocles, “he was by nature a lover of things honourable, and sought beauty and refinement wherever he could, nor did he spurn simple pleasure, the love of friend the cheer of friendship, the warmth of love”. He himself had underlined these very words in my, formerly Ashley Bryant’s, copy of *Plutarch’s Lives*. They underlined his own life, most aptly and most well.

Outlet, July 18, 1985

ARNOLD PRINCE—AN ARTISTIC HOMECOMING

Tim Hector

Last Thursday I had one of those rare opportunities for which I will remain eternally grateful. That afternoon I sat in conversation with Arnold Prince, the great sculptor (born in St. Kitts) who spent so much of his life here with his Antiguan parents. The Leeward Islands, Antigua, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Montserrat were then a Federation. Arnold's father, a policeman, worked in the Leeward Islands Police Force, and so his children were born in the Leewards.

Present in the conversation on Thursday was Arnold's mother, 92 years old later this year. Her mind as clear as crystal. Her eyes as clean and clear as youth. She recalled where Arnold went to school, the exact locations in St. Kitts and Nevis, who was his Art teacher in St. Kitts and Nevis.

...
268
... She recalled too, how the musicians in the Prince family came about. One day, shortly after her daughter Jeannette went to school, she came home, propped a book up on a table, and promptly sat in a chair and began playing on the table, as if playing a piano. Mrs. Prince, whom I call Mama, by long association with the family, said that there and then she decided that Jeannette wanted to learn music, and she would send her to music lessons. She asked the other younger ones if they wanted to go to music lessons, and those who said yes, along with Jeannette, were sent off to music lessons. Out of this came not only Jeannette, but Sydney Prince, one of the best steelband arrangers Antigua has produced, a man with a rare sensibility, with a special sense of clarity, tone, instrumentation, and modulation. Sydney was to influence the last of Mrs. Prince's eleven children, Roland, who became a famous Jazz guitarist, once rated by *Down Beat*, the bible of Jazz, as in the top two jazz guitarists in the world.

Her eldest son, the late Ralph Prince, became a writer, indeed a short-story writer of high quality. Her last daughter, Dr. Althea Prince, is also a published writer of note. Another son, John, wrote poetry. Arnold, you will recall, at age 12 or 13 decided he wanted to be a painter, and was sent off to art lessons. He became a world-class sculptor. Both parents decided, on a policeman's salary, to send their children to art lessons and music lessons! That is most extraordinary.

Incidentally, Arnold recounted how his father told him one day that he had heard that artists “usually starve”. Nevertheless, his father still found the Art teacher for him to become an artist, the prospect of starvation not a deterrent! Amazing. Or is it amazing grace?

Mrs. Prince, that is, Mama, spoke clean, spare, wonderful English throughout our conversation. I noted, with growing interest, that she used no clichés, but every word chosen to convey a clear meaning. She was born in 1902. About five years ago she wrote a book, an autobiography. If her first son and last daughter became writers I thought I could see the origins in Mama’s use of language, and a narrative style with its emphasis on chronology of events, which reflected the African Griot or traditional West Indian story-teller, or both.

But more importantly it struck me, that this was an outstanding family, the Princes, of astonishingly gifted persons; sculptors, writers, musicians, historians, surveyors and a psychologist. All in one family. All mothered and fathered by parents of very limited means. No one can dispute that the Princes, individually and collectively, shattered the theories of economic determinism, that the economic position one is born into determines, rigidly, what you can aspire to and what you can become.

There was something else. Mama was born 68 years after slavery. Mr. Prince, I think, was born towards the end of the last century. Slavery is a diabolical enemy of the family. Slave children could always be sold by the master, as the **master’s property**. To forge a family out of the anarchic social relations of slave and post-slavery society is no easy accomplishment. As a matter of fact, if you look at the artistic work of the Princes, it is rooted in a sense of **belonging**. A sense of belonging rooted in family, which extends logically to community, and belonging to a particular community. Althea Prince’s work is a variation on the wonderful tales which had a profound and formative influence on youth of her time and before. She retold them with a subtle sense of old and new values.

Roland Prince has a recording of his own jazz composition called “Iron Band”. Nothing I have ever heard captures so wonderfully the musical history of Antigua, all overlaid with a sense of African polyrhythms. I have argued with Roland Prince, that there are rhythms in his composition “Iron Band” which he himself could not have heard here as a boy or man. In the end he said to me, “If you get into the music” you become aware “of the past and the future of music.” That statement set me thinking for a long time. Roland, by the way, whatever his personal difficulties,

has an exceptional mind, that cuts incisively to the heart of things. And few musicians I know, are so deeply rooted in the standards, in both jazz and calypso. His brother Edmond played with Oscar Mason and the Vibratones and practised on the piano at home. Later, Roland himself would play piano in his brother Sydney's band, building on the tradition he had imbibed at home and learnt with the band. He would roll all that into one to become a world-class jazz guitarist.

I have been trying to suggest something here. I formed the view that Mama, or rather Mr. & Mrs. Prince, in forming the Prince family, by some means or other, the collective unconsciousness, if you will, went back to notions of the African family with its sense of inclusion of cousins and close friends. The Prince's first cousin, Selvyn Walter, is as much a member of the Prince family as he is of his own. And it is to me not accidental, that Selvyn Walter is an art and antique collector, and learned in both subjects.

Some of what was written above, you, dear reader, might consider speculative. But I will go beyond the realm of the speculative.

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270 ... Arnold says that when he left here and went to Art school in New York—all opportunities for the development of his artistic work by then being effectively blocked by those with the power to hinder—he went into painting, naturally, continuing as a painter where he left off in Antigua.

However, he found that his teachers wanted to impose the Western tradition and the modern Expressionism and Dadaism on him. His whole psyche and being resisted it. Whereupon he dropped painting and went into sculpture. And not just sculpture. But the African tradition of sculpture! He had not been exposed to any African sculpture—at all. Most startling.

It is true that on or about 1902, the avant-garde Western artists like Matisse and Picasso began to transform Western Art by their discovery of African sculpture. In Paris, Berlin and London a new generation became hugely excited by African carvings. Its startling formal simplification and hallucinatory power played a decisive part in Cubism, Expressionism and Vorticism. Picasso, Kirchner and Epstein began to collect these African Masks and free-standing figures convinced that their austere intensity would help generate a renewal in European Art. The classical tradition was pushed aside with this new African departure. Arnold, living in Antigua, would have been outside these artistic movements.

In spite of the incorporation of African styles and motifs in European art, it was only in 1989 that there was a major Paris exhibition in which modern Western artists were shown alongside their African counterparts. This landmark survey at the Centre Pompidou was highly controversial. For sure though, it challenged the automatic dominance of Euro-American artistic work. Therefore, in the 1950's when Arnold Prince broke with the Western tradition in painting and took up the African tradition in sculpting he had nothing to go by, except his own sensibility.

Arnold pulled me up short here. Arnold, as some of my older readers would recall, was the founder of the Arnold Prince dance troupe—which were called Clowns. “Clowns” is a word that Arnold does not use to describe his “Dancers”. Arnold says, and quite historically so, that since slavery, and at Christmas, the British planter authorities here, would allow the slaves to do their own dances to their own music. And he implied, it was this involvement in transplanted African dance and movement, which shaped his sensibility for African sculpture. Seemingly, out of so little, so much!

Now, I am going to make a little bit of a leap. Not quantum. But a leap, nevertheless. Arnold Prince has written a book entitled *Carving Wood and Stone*. I do not have the knowledge or the ability to review the book, which I read. It is written for the carver and sculptor. The experts say it is the only one of its kind and uniquely good. I learnt a great deal in reading it.

The introduction to Arnold Prince's book is written by University Professor, Nathaniel B. Atwater. Mr. Atwater, a professor of English, is also a carver in wood. As a grown man and teacher himself he took courses from Professor Arnold Prince at the Rhode Island School of Design, where Professor Arnold Prince taught for 22 years.

Professor Atwater wrote, among other things, “So I took his (Arnold Prince's) course and continue to take it—with gusto, may I add. Arnold has a charisma which is hard to pin down. Probably, it stems from his West Indian heritage, be it in sculpture, music, dance or speech. And, again, there is no **decadence. This man will never be taken in by the meretricious trends and contraptions of the present generation who make disposable art; nor will he ever teach such claptrap.**”

There is a profound insight here. Arnold Prince was not directly affected by the barbarism and decadence which came with two World Wars, and in which millions were slaughtered. Nor is the existential de-

spair which came particularly after the Second World War a part of his sensibility and which expressed itself in art as Dadaism. His is a sensibility of family, and family seeking expression and development in community. I will not say it is African. That is too large a claim which I am not at liberty to make. I can and will say it is West Indian. The West Indian in the middle 19th century trying to develop a family out of the anarchy of slavery and post-slavery society, and the family extended to the wider community. And, then, to a Federation of island communities. The Prince family in Antigua, is, in my view, one of the highest expressions of this historical striving in the Caribbean. It is this which undergrids their remarkable creativity.

Now I am going to make a quantum leap. A leap to a great atomic physicist—the man himself, the great Albert Einstein. In a very fine essay on socialism, he had this to say in May 1949: “It is only a slight exaggeration to say that mankind constitutes even now a **planetary community of production and consumption**.” It may have been “a slight exaggeration” in 1949. It is now living reality, if not understatement, in 1994.

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272
... This planetary community of production and consumption has led to a grave crisis. Einstein then goes on to say that he will “briefly indicate what to me constitutes the essence of the crisis of our time.” Then Einstein continues, succinct as ever, this way to describe the crisis of crises in our time:

It concerns the relationship of the individual to society. The individual has become more conscious than ever of his dependence upon society. **But** he does not experience this dependence as a **positive** asset, as an **organic** tie, as a protective force, but rather as a **threat** to his **natural rights**, or even to his **economic existence**. Moreover his position in society is such that the **egotistical** drives of his make-up are constantly being accentuated, while his **social drives**, which are by nature weaker, **progressively deteriorate**. All human beings, whatever their position in society, are suffering from this process of deterioration. Unknowingly prisoners of their own egotism, they feel insecure, lonely and deprived of the naive, simple and unsophisticated enjoyment of life [in community]. Man can find meaning in life, short and perilous as it is, only through devoting himself to society.

Einstein, needless to say, is as analytic and profound as in his theory of relativity. Only moreso.

Our existing planetary society, of production and consumption, accentuates the selfish drives. In consequence, we are without a sense of social drives **for** community. A sense of expressing and developing our talents, natural and acquired, **for** a community. Life in production alienates. As a result we become lonely, insecure, feeling deprived. Consumption sharpens the self-centred drives. And, locked into our individual egos, we strike out at others, in our insecurity, often destructively. So with individuals, so too with nations. Taken at the larger level, we can see how as insular communities, the insular 'ego' strikes out so that there is no harmony in the Caribbean, in matters small and large. The more we say integration, the more there is disintegration.

I am suggesting to you, that Arnold Prince as an artist, is different. And, it is that difference that accounts for what Professor Atwater called his "charisma which is hard to pin down." He sculpts or carves for a community. It is to him a natural, even native-born, sense of being as a Prince, as an individual, and as an artist.

Can you substantiate this some more? That you are entitled to ask dear reader. In the course of our conversation, and without speaking directly to what I am exploring here, Arnold in giving what it was like to grow up here, as an artist, said this. When he was a painter here people could not afford to buy his paintings. Dire poverty prevented. However, he and other painters from Antigua, like Garner Francis and Adams, would hold exhibitions at the Court House, and people would come by the "**bus loads**" from all parts of the island and they would gladly pay, to enter the exhibition. From these entrance fees the artist made something. At least, did not starve. Few things I have heard about the history of Antigua have astonished me as much. This means there was an organic link, an "organic tie", as Einstein expressed it, between the artist and his community in the 40s and 50s. It has got to be reconstructed and advanced.

Some more evidence? If you insist, I will provide. Arnold says that more than anything else, he would like "to bring home" his works of sculpture for display "at home". This to me represents and conclusively demonstrates the "organic tie" which is the essence of his being as person and as artist. It would be part of Antigua's homecoming to itself, as a community, if we could organise through some Artists Association this

bringing home of Arnold Prince's sculptures for a national exhibition, with people coming from all parts of the island by the bus loads to see this exhibition.

The artist, after all, and in essence, heightens our sense of living, deepens our sense of beauty, and our perception of life in all its manifold and subtle variations. The artist lifts us out of our own egotism, and can make us see the "positive asset" in our dependence on society for our individual development. Or the artist can show how dangerous and meaningless life becomes when the harmony between individual and society is shattered.

Antigua and Barbuda needs this homecoming of the individual to society and vice versa.

Outlet, June 17, 1994

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**THE ALARM HAS BEEN SOUNDED: GEORGE WESTON,
INDIRA GANDHI, REGINALD SAMUEL AND V.S. NAIPAUL**

Tim Hector

The death of Indira Gandhi on October 31 had a shattering effect on me. I tried for some time to put it behind me. To say nothing, to write nothing, to discuss nothing. For the first time in my life, I sought the peace and silence of the graveyard.

I had first heard of India in an old Nelson Reader, I think somewhere about age 5, as the 'Black hole of Calcutta'. The image of grim, black, hot, teeming poverty, revolting in its totality, remained with me ever since, as images are wont to graphically remain with children, becoming a kind of touchstone by which all other similar things are judged. I next heard of India, from George A. Weston, who spoke of Gandhi, of Nehru, of Bandung in 1954—that momentous gathering of all Asian and African colonial peoples to end colonialism. Weston spoke of the great Indian mass movement that culminated in India's independence, and which to him, meant the end of the British Empire.

This was in the fifties. I was then a schoolboy, cocky with the secondary schoolboy's pride, and I wondered what nonsense George A. Weston was talking about the end of the British Empire! How could that be when only days before I had heard and sung on British Empire Day, May 24, "of the land of hope and glory", of Great Britannia, ruler of the waves of the world, head of this wonderful empire, an empire, mark you, on which "the sun never sets". And of which, I was told, I ought to be glad I was a member. One day if I behaved myself, I would get the ultimate accolade: Member of the British Empire, which MBE, I could proudly put behind my name! So the Headmaster solemnly instructed in stentorian tones. I believed him implicitly and explicitly. Had not I done several Geography lessons colouring maps of the world denoting the vast British Empire, of which I was a 'subject'? (strange that one was taught that one was a 'subject' but never was there even a hint that this subject, was related to subjection, and that that subjection was related to being profitable for others). I anticipate myself.

All the while, I was not totally politically naive. For instance at age nine (9) in 1951, I supported Bird in the struggle against the Planters. I went to hear him speak reporting back his every word to my stroke-ridden grandpa. I looked on the Welsh Fusiliers who were sent here in 1951 with

arms, to restore British Colonial order, with scorn. Some neighbourhood friends and I, contrary to V.C. Bird's call for civil disobedience in the face of this invasion, threw stones (from a safe berth) at some passing Welsh Fusiliers. We felt guilty about this, because V.C. Bird had specifically said, not to provoke these soldiers and "to keep out of their way". But something, and it wasn't just boyhood mischief, had compelled us to fling a stone or two at these invading British soldiers. Looking back at it I just don't understand how we are still alive. However, the ring-leader solved that puzzle for us by concluding "They (the invading soldiers) know they wrong". In spite of all that, I was still an enthusiastic singer at Empire Day and would defend Britain against all else. But such contradictions cannot endure for long. They implode or explode from their own force.

Enter George A. Weston again. I am sent to a lecture at the Public Library. George A. Weston rises (to disapproving murmurs from the respectable folks present). He says in his intervention, (intended to be a question but a short speech to make his own point) "Until The Man stops brainwashing our children, so long will we remain loyal British Colonial subjects, black men in white minds". What was this! Weston had to be wrong. Education was learning, and we had to learn so that we wouldn't be treated as inferior any longer. That seemed straightforward to me. Weston had to be wrong! But he sounded so wise, spoke with such conviction, I remember to this day, this gentle man, his eyes flashing black and luminous against their white background, his lips rhythmically moving, his flowing well-kept beard and as children know, I knew, he was a man in earnest. I walked away perturbed. Again Weston had spoken of Bandung. I went to the Library asked the Librarian Garfield Burton (a man of the Enlightenment who encouraged reading) for a book about Bandung and he promptly got it for me. I read voraciously. Wonderful stuff, I thought, so different from the school textbooks! Maybe, Weston had a point.

And then later, something at once ordinary and extraordinary happened. Reg Samuel, that man of many parts, and no mere dilettante either, was my favourite teacher. He taught us to draw a man, a sort of portrait. I took my time and did a fine job, I thought. When my turn came, near the end of the class, I took it up to Mr. Samuel. He looked at it. His brow knitted. He looked at me. I was terrified. What the hell had I done wrong? He looked through the drawing book, and saw the landscapes I had coloured, on my own, before. I, in my terror, wondered if some rude expression must have been in the Drawing book, because there was now a look of horror on Mr. Sam's face.

The class in a muted sort of hub-hub before, became silent. Mr. Sam sensed my terror—and relieved me with a smile. He rose from his chair. Sat on the desk in a very kindly manner (Reg Samuel, no matter how he tries, cannot, simply cannot be unkind). And then he said. “The negro is the only man in the world, who when he is asked to draw a man draws a white man. Everytime! Colonialism has done that to us. From now on when you draw you must try and draw people like yourselves.” After that he always made one of our classmates model for art class.

What then was this thing colonialism? Weston had spoken, and in the book *Bandung*, I had read of Nehru of India who had overcome colonialism in India. I had to go read about this Jawarharlal Nehru and the other man George A. Weston had mentioned (with another unpronounceable name Kwame Nkrumah). Why couldn’t they have nice British pronounceable names like Leonard and Clarvis and Tim and Reg like we had? British ethnocentrism had gone deep.

Anyway I had to read about this colonialism and those who were overcoming it. There was nothing in the library about Kwame Nkrumah, but something about Nehru. I read and read. I liked the man. Colonialism, I learnt, was the domination of one people by another, and this domination took the form of a foreign people “owning and controlling the natural and human resources of colonised peoples, and exploiting the labour of the people for foreign profit, and native poverty”. I learnt it by heart, for learning then was mostly learning by heart. And I understood at once about the Black Hole of Calcutta, the awful poverty in India, and the awful poverty I saw all around me. For the first time I learnt that poverty was not the will of God as I had been taught to believe at school and Sunday school. But that poverty was the will of man backed by armed force. The world changed and I changed. Weston was right. They were brainwashing us. Had us drawing Them when I could not draw myself or my fellows! What a thing!

India then, first through Nehru and then through Indira Gandhi, took on a particular meaning for me. This was 1956. Years later, I came to regard Indira Gandhi with great respect. I name my first child after her. Even when I became a socialist, and Indira was not, I felt, even before going to India, that Indira Gandhi was doing what had to be done—overcoming, or at any rate tackling Indian poverty, by creating a national economy. I had long ago made up my mind, since 1966, after the fall of Nkrumah in Ghana, that we in the Caribbean, Africa, in Asia and Latin America could not go straight from colonialism to socialism. What we had to do was

develop a national economy. That is bring our resources under national control, including private control, (not just state control) as the first step to overcoming colonialism. Indira was doing that in India, more or less, but more rather than less.

All of a sudden, out of the blue Indira Gandhi was dead. Assassinated. Over the years They had got everybody. Malcom X, gunned down, They say, by some black Muslim fanatic. Martin Luther King, gunned down, They say, by some white mindless goon. Before that, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, gunned down, They say, by some Congolese colonial fanatic. Amilcar Cabral, They say, gunned down by some nameless Portuguese brainwashed fanatic. Walter Rodney, They say, blown up by some nameless army goon. Tongogora of Zimbabwe again They say, blown up by some nameless Zimbabwean traitor. Maurice Bishop, They say, murdered by some black “hard-liner”. They can always find fanatics and traitors, mindless goons, or so-called hard-liners to do their dirty business. And now Indira Gandhi, whom I thought was safe at least, since she had no ideology (more on that later) she too, They say, was gunned down by some Sikh fanatic. At any rate, I thought for comfort, Fidel Castro had escaped Them, time and time again, and they were all the more enraged because They couldn’t get him.

Yet Imperialism just seemed to be able to get, by murder, nearly all of those who had raised the standard against it, and we were in perpetual mourning, funeral after funeral. The struggle seemed funereal to me in that dark moment on October 31. But it was certainly better to die standing up than to live lying down a British subject who can’t even draw himself, or an American subject who spoke unlike himself with a comic yankee drawl serving up Punk Rock as culture, and cold war anti-Communism, claiming that gibberish as point of view, and teaching that Cold-war bunkum as Knowledge in school and Sunday school on radio and TV, and calling it Education, or worse, “objective information”.

And now I come to something else. But quite related. When Indira died I found I had a compulsive desire to read Naipaul’s *India—A Wounded Civilization* again. To me everybody was misunderstanding Naipaul. Everybody had just taken it for granted that Naipaul was pro-colonial, anti-nationalist, the literary scourge of the Third World. I, for one, did not quite agree all of the time. True, Naipaul writes about post-colonial countries and has told us nought for our comfort and nought for our desire. True he did not repeat nationalist shibboleths and wave an anti-imperialist flag ad nauseum.

But it was equally true, that in writing Naipaul has put his sensitivity against the postcolonial countries, using his observations, to observe the hollowness of nationalist rhetoric, the remaining vestiges of colonialism posing as authentic nationalism, in its inauthentic sellout to foreign powers. Naipaul reserved his scorn, of which he had a great supply, for those who were singularly uncreative in politics as well as in other spheres of life, but who harked back to some pre-industrial fundamentalism, religious or other, and claimed that they were on a nationalist mission of mercy, while they were in fact re-inforcing the Old Order, of disease, ignorance, poverty and backwardness.

Take for example Naipaul writing about Argentina. He writes "Peronism was never program.... The Argentina parallel is with Haiti after the slave rebellion of Toussaint: A barbarous colonial society similarly made, similarly parasitic on a removed civilization, and incapable of regenerating itself because slavery provided the only pattern of human behaviour, and to be a man meant only to be able to assuage that pain about the other, to be like the Master".

Naipaul is writing about white Argentina. Like black Haiti he considers white Argentina barbarous. You may not agree that neither Argentina nor Haiti are incapable of 'regenerating itself', but you cannot deny that both Haiti and Argentina had become parasitic, dependent on the U.S. of A., and this parasitism had reduced both Haiti and Argentina to barbarism; and to assuage the pain, in their parasitism, Argentines like Haitians, (the disease, note well, is not specifically black says Naipaul) had concluded that to be a man meant that one had "to be like the master". They too, metaphorically like me in my colonised youth when asked to draw a man, patiently and laboriously drew a man quite opposite in features to myself, and that parasitism had been labeled education! Naipaul is not like Reg Samuel, he does not spare the rod, instead Naipaul brings his considerable powers of lucidity and acidity to scorch this parasitism.

But let us continue to explore Naipaul for we are in fact exploring ourselves. This time Naipaul is in India. And he relates this to us:

"I will tell you about the poor people in Bombay" she insisted "They are beautiful. They are more beautiful than the people in this room". But now she was beginning to lie. She spoke with passion, but she didn't believe what she said. The poor of Bombay are not beautiful, even with their picturesque costumes in low-caste colours. In complexion features and

physique the poor are distinct from the well-to-do, they are like a race apart, a dwarf race, stunted and slow-witted and made ugly by generations of undernourishment; it will take generations to rehabilitate them. The idea that the poor are beautiful was, with this girl, a borrowed idea. She had converted it into a political attitude, which she was prepared to defend. But it had not sharpened her perception.

Not a few in or out of power, Left or Right, go about romanticising the poor masses, expecting Naipaul to do the same, when Naipaul knows that this idea is parasitic, a borrowed idea from colonialism and alms-giving Sunday School, and worse such an idea as political attitude “cannot sharpen perception.”

People forget too, that Naipaul’s sympathy is really with the mass of the population. Here is Naipaul again.

But the alarm has been sounded. The millions are on the move. Both in the cities and the villages there is an urgent new claim on the land, and any idea of India which does not take this claim into account is worthless. The poor are no longer the occasion for sentiment or holy alms-giving; land reform is no longer a matter for religious conscience. Just as Gandhi, toward the end of his life, was isolated from the political movement he had made real, so what until now has passed for politics and leadership in independent India has been left behind by the intolerable millions.

This is true of India as much as of Antigua and Barbuda, of Nigeria as of Jamaica, of Iran as of El Salvador. Naipaul has kept his perception sharp and he is on the side of the millions who refuse to be controlled, regimented into poverty as a kind of beautiful mission of mercy, by some lapsed Salvation Army captain or some Ayotollah harking back to Islamic fundamentalism.

And now back to an earlier promise about Indira Gandhi and her lack of ideology. But once again Naipaul. Here is Naipaul writing on the Father of India, Mahatma or Mohandas K. Gandhi. Naipaul writes. “Gandhi swept through India, but he has left it without an ideology. He awakened the holy land; his mahatmahood returned it to archaism”. Indira too had no ideology. And therefore her mixed economy was a mixed up India without a new perception. The phenomenon is all too common. V. C.

Bird on a far lower scale than Mahatma in India, awakened Antigua and Barbuda in 1951 (even little boys awoke and flung stones at the invading British soldiers) but his Papahood, without ideology, returned Antigua and Barbuda, to the archaism of colonialism, only writ larger.

Naipaul is not on the side of those Philistines who eschew ideology. Without an ideology of liberation, Naipaul knows that all political awakening will lead back to archaism, and the colonialism of economics, politics and spirit even more insidious than the one which first awakened us to draw men in our drawing books like ourselves.

Outlet, February 1, 1985

OUR MOST ASTONISHING FIGURE: J. OLIVER DAVIS

Tim Hector

One of the peculiarities of life in an underdeveloped country, or a developing country, is that the lives of significant people are very rarely examined. So much so that the biography as a literary genre is very rare. And where they exist they are very superficial. Caribbean biographers of note that come to mind are Rex Nettleford's very fine work on Norman Washington Manley. Rupert Lewis' excellent work on Garvey and Robert Hill's volumes on Garvey's work are a tremendous contribution to scholarship. It is interesting to note, that Hoyos wrote an admiring biography of Grantley Adams, while that on Eugenia Charles was propaganda by other means. Dr. Eric Williams' autobiography *Inward Hunger* was only notable for what it did not say.

It remains surprising to me, that there is no good biography of the great George Padmore. I am aware of a book on Padmore by Hooker. But, to be charitable, the writer was unequal to the subject, Padmore, who has been rightly hailed and regarded as the Father of African Emancipation. To write of Padmore would have necessitated access to files in the Kremlin, which would not have been readily available before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Padmore, after all, until 1944, headed the Third International's anti-colonial work from the powerful Comintern with its headquarters in the Kremlin. It must be remembered that the Soviet Union justified its brutal oppression of its working class, by its assistance in the liberation of the colonial peoples.

When I was at University, I had hoped to do what I considered to be the definitive biography on Padmore, but my well known hostility to the Soviet Union would not have gained me entry to Moscow to do the research. Even now, the work is undone and so the Caribbean and the world are without the method and essence of the life of George Padmore. Padmore influenced, perhaps more than most, the tremendous and unparalleled historical movement which saw the birth of some 100 new nations, in the 47 years between 1947 and now. He is quite unique.

I must quickly add that most of the biographies written today, teach us very little about important persons and their historical contribution. Most are tasteless, engaging in endless psycho-babble, about the subjects childhood making all their achievements hang on some psychological but sexual deviation. And so we have some very large tomes full of facts

and pécadillos, but which are in fact hatchet jobs. The work of the subject is ignored, be he artist, poet or politician and we get endless psycho-babble based on anecdotal evidence at best, but never the great work of the subject. All achievement is debased as coming from dark and dangerous regions of the unconscious.

I am aware too, that a great literary critic, Lytton Strachey, author of the *Eminent Victorians* denounced the huge almost endless streams of praise which Victorian biographers used to clothe their subjects in what Strachey himself described as pompous but “a slipshod style” and “tedious panegyrics.” In my view British imperialism required such pompous biographies.

By the way, Paul Buhle, the very fine American scholar, has written by far and away the best biography of a West Indian, in his remarkable biography of CLR James—*The Artist as Revolutionary*. There is more to be done on James, particularly now that James’ opposition to what passed as the permanent face of socialism—the miscarriage that was the Soviet Union—has proved valid. Besides, CLR’s re-definition of socialism, as the product of the self-activity and self-organisation of working people overcoming the enormous problems that capitalism has bequeath us, and which has brought us to the very brink of barbarism unlimited, is essential for critical study as a result of praxis, at this time. Indeed, it is the crucial engagement of this hour.

I have written all this, by way of introduction, to what in my view is the most astonishing figure produced in and around the working class movement in Antigua and Barbuda.

I do not speak of V.C. Bird. I speak of J. Oliver Farquhar Davis. The late Pookie Davis, is by a long shot the most astonishing man produced by the working class movement in Antigua. This is not not a biography of Pookie Davis. It is at best prolegomena, or if you wish, a prelude to one. Why do I say that J.O. Davis was far and away the most astonishing, the most amazing, and perhaps, the most remarkable person in the working people’s movement in Antigua?

The substantiating facts. J.O. Davis was the **only** person in the history of Antigua and Barbuda, who was a leader and founder of the Working Men’s Association which preceded the Antigua Trades & Labour Union; J.O. Davis became not only a member of the AT&LU from early, he was also the founder and first leader of its political committee, which became

the now ruling ALP. J.O. Davis was, at the same time, a member of the Garvey Movement, the UNIA and a subscriber, to the Garvey paper, *The Negro World*, which was banned by the legislature in Antigua. Any consciousness of the history of the race was taboo. It was indeed, a challenge to colonialism.

J.O. Davis, not only broke with Bird, when the AT&LU took its first steps to becoming the cult of personality of Bird, but he became a leader of the AWU-PLM and a Minister of the PLM government. He was also giving critical support to the ACLM, through several monetary contributions, and he was a founder member of the U.P.P., firmly committed to its notion of participatory politics, the direct opposite of the Maximum leader tradition in which the ALP is born, baptised and bred. And will die. No other figure spreads over so vast a range. And his scope and periscope continued to advance even though dying at the Grand old age of 86. His life spanned from the charitable political work of the Working Men's Association, through Garvey, up to participatory politics of our time. He not only espoused it but his work in Liberta, Falmouth and English Harbour, at the very end of his life, was based on making the people themselves participate and decide. All through life he eschewed the autocratic tradition which British colonialism bequeathed. That is the quintessence of J.O. Davis' life.

It is, or ought to be common knowledge that at the age of 21, J. Oliver Davis was appointed Headmaster of the Gracehill Government School in Liberta. Up to his final illness he was the UPP political coordinator in that area, and he was advancing the cause of the young. He remained throughout life capable of responding to new ideas and the new conceptions of the time. He was never an old fuddy-duddy, mouthing foolish tales about widdy-widdy which never occurred, and some heavily mythologised meeting and confrontation with the Planter-leader Moody Stuart under some old Tamarind tree in Bethesda. He was always capable of renewal.

McChesney George has written a pretty frank, even sparsely brutal account of the dispute between Pookie Davis and Bird which caused him to leave the AT&LU. Of course, McChesney leaves us in no doubt that he himself supported Bird, who wanted and insisted on an illiterate member of the AT&LU being declared a political candidate, while Pookie wanted an educated member of the working class. Bird wanted a yea-sayer. Pookie wanted a critical follower. The crisis of Antigua and Barbuda still hubs on that dispute. For, Bird constructed a party, without ideas or be-

liefs, but one which the members were committed to one notion, namely: My Party, Right or Wrong, the more wrong the better, once they fix me up. There is nothing worse than loyalty to what is wrong. It produced Nazism in Germany, apartheid in South Africa, and the current massacres in Rwanda. J.O. Davis took an early and unwavering stand against that idiocy. It is his undying contribution to this country.

The hagiography which passes for history in Antigua & Barbuda, has Pookie Davis as favouring the middle class. It is false from beginning to end. Everything contradicts it. Pookie Davis never ever joined Rowan Henry's ANP, the first of the opposition parties against Bird and Birdism, precisely because it was a typically middle-class party, committed to an accommodation and collaboration with the oppressing colonial planters and planter class. Despite Robert Hall being his great friend, friendship until death do us part, J. O. Davis never ever joined Hall's ABDM, because that too was partial to the oppressing planters, despite its populist appeal. In spite of this clear history, palpable to the naked eye, let alone the political observer, J.O. Davis was still pilloried as a supporter of the middle class. Evaluation of positions espoused by a figure, was and is not even now a part of Antigua and Barbuda's nascent political culture. By the way, Pookie Davis while at Codrington College in 1927-28 was deemed a "Bolshevik" by his tutors because, as they said, he always stood up not for himself, but for the "underdogs". It was a most perceptive observation; indeed, profound.

Necessity requires me to explore, why it is, Pookie Davis, up until the age of 86 remained relevant and a significant participant in the political history of Antigua and Barbuda. The crux of that matter, lies not in his origin, that is, his childhood, but in his political origins.

Three political figures are responsible for J.O. Davis. The first is Garvey who bequeathed to J.O. Pookie Davis a life-long pre-occupation with Africa and African emancipation. Pookie did not wear his Afro-jack for style and colour. It was part and parcel of his world view. I still regret he was not buried in one. But that is decidedly not my business.

The second person responsible for J. Oliver Davis' outlook was Captain Andrew Arthur Cipriani, a Trinidadian white, and probably the finest and best Federalist the Caribbean has produced. Cipriani was Founder and Leader of the Trinidad Working Men's Association, one of the most significant worker organisations in all Caribbean history. Pookie Davis, Harold Wilson and Reginald Stevens founded a Working Men's asso-

ciation in Antigua, modeled on Cipriani's, and was the first worker organisation in the history of Antigua. This, mark you, was at a time when "combinations" of workers were outlawed by colonial law. The Moyne Commission would break down this formidable barrier and obstacle in the workers' way.

But when the Antigua Working Men's association was superseded by the AT&LU, Pookie Davis was to do something quite remarkable, even historic. He took the proceeds from the assets of the defunct Antigua Working Men's Association and donated it **all** to the Fifth Pan African Congress. This was the momentous one held in Manchester, which marks the real beginning of African emancipation. The great Padmore hailed the Antigua contribution as "the most striking, the most historic contribution" as it came from ordinary working people, and he declared at the Fifth Pan African Congress, that half of the funds from this Antigua Working Men's Association would go directly to the ANC in South Africa, "along with other funds". The recipient of those funds from Antigua along with other contributions was one Nelson Mandela, the leader of the youth arm of the ANC and founder of Spear of the Nation, the body which organised and led armed struggle in South Africa. J.O. Davis had placed Antigua & Barbuda at the very centre of the modern struggle against racism.

I have to elaborate a bit on Cipriani and why Pookie remained so closely attached to his vision of Caribbean emancipation by itself, for itself. But the third person I think in J.O. Davis' political trinity, was Tubal Uriah Buzz Butler. J.O. Davis had a particular sparkle in his eye, when he told of Tubal Uriah Butler, himself a working-man and a leader of working men, was the first political figure in the region to call for "Complete Dominion Status." That is, full independence for the West Indies, since 1938. The distortion in the political consciousness of Antigua, which is deep, and which has led directly to its corrupt politics now, is that Antigua and Barbuda, spent 30 long years, from 1951 when it got adult suffrage to 1981, when it finally got independence, wandering and stumbling in a political no man's land for those 30 long years. We lost all sense of political direction, all sense of political purpose in those 30 years in the political wilderness. It is one of the terrible legacies of V.C. Bird, who meanly and mean-spiritedly opposed independence even when George Walter proposed it as late as 1975. V.C. Bird opposed independence again in 1977—when in power—when the British, through Nicholas Riddley, proposed it twice. Twice he refused. He is the only Father of Independence who opposed independence with tooth and nail, three

times! Only when V.C. Bird was flattered by the prospect of becoming First Prime Minister, in a Ron Sanders treatise delivered by Lester Bird, at Jabberwock, did he accept. Antigua and Barbuda is yet to recover from that political hiatus. J.O. Davis champed at the bit and chafed inwardly as he had to live through this charade.

I return to J.O. Davis. It is part of the mythology of Bird that history began in Antigua in 1939, and more particularly, in 1943, when Bird became President of the AT&LU. But Bird, contrary to the myth, is by no means Alpha and definitely not Omega.

In 1932, in Dominica, there was the first of the meetings organised to federate the West Indies. As is to be expected, members of Working Men's Associations were the movers, shakers and shapers of this momentous conference. The great Andrew Cipriani was there. So too was Joseph Oliver Farquhar Davis of Antigua. Cipriani gave a memorable speech, which I will quote at length from the historical record. Cipriani said in Dominica this in 1932:

It is the inalienable right of every man to live in and on his country. Working men in this country (Dominica) and in every part of the British West Indies, only exist, they do not live, and it is only a question of time when as a working unit he must go down and disappear, unless he pulls himself together and demands his rights and privileges. And if you are to demand them, and get them, there is no hope except in the formation of a Working Men's Association in this island of yours....

I want you to realise **the time has come to think** for yourselves, do not let us [the leaders] think for you all the time. Discuss in your sordid, miserable homes, which are a disgrace and a blight on our **civilisation**, and there try and see whether you cannot figure out this for yourselves, and realise that **in adult suffrage alone lies our salvation**.

Adult suffrage or franchise, the right to vote at 21, prove to be the salvation in South Africa, but not in Antigua and Barbuda or the English speaking Caribbean. Adult suffrage in the English speaking Caribbean only reinforced the insularity which has kept us divided as "half-made societies that seemed doomed to remain half-made," as Naipaul so aptly put it.

But I race ahead of history now, and do so with the benefit of hindsight the preserve of the historian. But Pookie Davis on behalf of the Antigua Working Men's Association at that 1932 Conference in Dominica, moved a resolution calling "for all organisations and progressive persons in the West Indies to work ceaselessly for adult suffrage, as "the necessary pre-condition for the unity of the West Indies," which "united Federation is the only certain means of our salvation". Long before 1939 and well before 1943, the clarion call for adult suffrage rang out in the region, with a precise and clear political agenda for a political federation of the West Indies. J.O. Davis on behalf of Antigua and its working people was pivotal, and profoundly so, in the Federal politics of the region.

I did not intend to write so long. But I must continue. Pookie Davis, his sister Hilda, and his wonderful and most fascinating wife Evelyn Graham Davis, are not easily surpassed in their contribution to education here. Even when Pookie opened his own business, thus removing himself from the all-powerful, spiteful and always long reach of the vindictive State under Bird, he still found time to teach **every day** for years at the Foundation Mixed School, more properly and commonly known as Miss Davis School.

But this school specialised in something. It made it possible, by sound and rigorous academic training, for several of the sons and daughters of the working people to obtain the few scholarships then available to secondary schools. In that respect, it had and has an unmatched record. Remember though, that every school day, and for years, Pookie would leave his business, to go to the school to teach Math, without charge. It was at once a labour of love. And too, a contribution to emancipation.

I repeat I did not intend to be so long. But a major life determines length, the intention of the writer notwithstanding. However, I must conclude, Pookie was a very fine father—an exceptional one. I will never forget my visits to his home, in the late fifties and sixties. He had an astonishing and unfailing ability to provoke discussion on a wide variety of subjects, and he expected and required his children and their friends to express themselves freely and fully on any topic raised. He did not expect agreement with them. However young one was, a point of view different to his would be encouraged by him. It was exceptional at a time of autocratic parenthood. J.O. Davis had a thorough-going democratic temper. I never saw him rely on his authority as father-figure to win an argument. He was only satisfied, Socratic as he was, when all possible questions had been raised on the subject at hand. Incidentally, J.O. Davis

taught himself accounting, and could hold his own with any CPA. No mean effort that. He had to build this fortress of independence against the relentless assaults of the Bird vindictive State.

This is not a panegyric. It is said that in political organisation Pookie could stand fools, but he would not abide foolishness. He was easily provoked by persistent nonsense. While clear on over-all political strategy he lacked the tactical sense, of getting to the goal. Puritans say he was too partial to the company of attractive women. Astute politicians claim that on leaving the AT&LU he did not seek to build an organisation around his non-doctrinaire, but definitely socialist views and an organisation committed to Caribbean and African emancipation. Pookie had some views that miscegenation, racial inter-marriage could solve the problem of racism. His great friend George Weston riddled the notion with scorn, even so Pookie stubbornly maintained them, before he abandoned them. He **was** credited with being 'smart' a West Indian term of opprobrium against the intellectual in politics. It inspires or conspires distrust without a basis in fact. Once alleged, the victim is doomed.

However, J. Oliver Farquhar Davis has an unrivalled history of participation in all Working People's organisations formed in this country. He is our most distinguished Federalist, followed by Sydney Christian senior who attended the 1948 Closer Union Conference, in Montego Bay, and who was a founder of the University College of the West Indies which later became U.W.I. However, unlike Sydney Christian, J.O. Pookie Davis began as a Federalist and died one. He lived his views. Of few that can be said, so definitively. Not only was he Federalist, committed to a West Indian federation growing out of the unity of the working people across the Caribbean Sea, he was a life-long Pan Africanist, in thought and deed. Nelson Mandela would have delighted in the contribution he engineered to the struggle against apartheid as early as 1945, and would have been delighted to meet him and know him in depth. Pookie had a wonderful sense of humour which would have pleased Mandela no end. J.O. Davis lived a life worth living, in an exemplary sense—for himself and people of African descent everywhere.

Outlet, May 27, 1994

NOTES ON A NATIVE SON AND ON NÉGRITUDE: GREGSON DAVIS

Tim Hector

This Black History Month 1998, if I were to pose this question: Name the Black Antiguan who has written four non-fiction books? I believe I would have stumped even the cognoscenti with that question. What does that say about us, as a people, as a nation? It says that we fail to recognise achievement, to give pride of place to those who deserve it. As such then, we remain common-place, pre-occupied with the trinkets and taskets of the white Western world. We are alienated from ourselves. Hence we do not recognise ourselves. Therefore do we berate, rather than rate. Denounce rather than announce our own to our own. 349 years of unrelenting colonialism from 1632, and 16 years of neo-colonialism, which passes as political independence, have left us still wondering in the wilderness of dispossession, without the rootedness of a home and a habitation.

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290
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To begin with, it must be a phenomenon on a world historical scale, that a people inhabiting 170 square miles of space, have produced a literary critic who has written four books of literary criticism. And a fiction writer, in Jamaica Kincaid, who has five works of modern fiction, fit to rank with the best of her time. The Antiguan of whom I speak, the writer of four non-fiction works is living, is 57 years old, is now Andrew Mellon Distinguished Professor of Humanities at Duke University, lecturing in both the Department of Classical Studies and the Department of Literature.

This man of whom I speak has never broken with his Antiguan roots. He returns here all the time. Yet he has never been on national TV. He has however been on TV in Rome and Venice. Every summer for the past five years he lectures in Rome and Venice on the history of Rome and Greece. Nor is he just occupied with Rome and Venice. He has written a paean to Antigua, appropriately entitled *Antigua Black*. He returns to his native Antigua all the time. His mother lives here. His sisters and brothers live here. Though younger than the current Prime Minister of Antigua, Lester Bird, he was his senior at school, the same school, the Antigua Grammar School. Easily the Antigua Grammar School's most distinguished student, at which he later taught, teaching this writer. Yet no picture of him is at the school, no classroom is named for him. He comes unto his own, and his own receives him not. A distinguished educator, but he has had no say, and allowed none, in the education of Antigua and Barbuda. Locked out. Disregarded. Disrespected. Ever and always we continue to *Dis*. Not accidentally then we are wallowing in this

swamp of corruption. And yet, the distinguished man of letters of whom I speak, has tried and tried to bring his knowledge to bear on Antigua and Antiguan, on Barbuda and Barbudans.

Few would remember that in the late 1950s and early sixties, there was a man who started a musical programme on ABS Radio, entitled "Your Concert Choice", subsequently taken up and carried on by the late Tim O'Reilly. Fewer yet would remember that the man of whom I write, had another radio programme in which, way back then, he pioneered discussion of Caribbean Literature, with readings and discussions on V.S. Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur* and George Lamming's *Pleasures of Exile*.

Why do we leave our own significant black personages in the wilderness of oblivion? It is because we are oblivious, not in control of anything, dispossessed so we claim and hold nothing dear? I do not speak of only intellectual matters. Curtly Ambrose reached wickets in Test cricket. In the over one hundred years of Test cricket only 8 men in all the cricketing world have attained that feat. No celebration of that momentous event was held here. Nothing, nein, nada. We acknowledge nothing worthwhile about ourselves, is the inescapable conclusion.

Contrast the celebrations in continental Australia, when Shane Warne attained his 300 wickets, two months ago. Radio and TV celebrated for days. National parties were held. All Victoria rose to him on a public holiday. Antigua, more in need of its achievers to inspire those who will come after, does absolutely nothing. Nada. Our nada who art in Nada. Hallowed be thy Nada. We are not led. We are mis-led. And so the macabre dance of self-contempt, of dispossession, continues. Once we claim and acclaim nothing, we will remain dispossessed, and the Other will possess what is rightfully ours. And so the macabre dance continues.

When I went to the Antigua Grammar School, the walls of the Main Hall or auditorium were lined with the pictures of white old boys of the school. So much so that it became an affront. For, since the early days when whites or off-whites predominated at the school, there were several black old boys who have distinguished themselves. None made the walls of the school. Though Clarvis Joseph, myself and others took down the pictures of the white old boys, but we did not have the power to replace them with Black alternatives. We did manage though, to place the late Sydney T. Christian in a prominent place.

And so there is no picture of Professor Gregson Davis, the man of letters of whom I write, at this school, to this day. A school, a nation, disregards its very own, to its own peril. Few will remember that Gregson Davis left here at 15 for the prestigious Harvard University on a scholarship in 1955. Fewer yet will remember that he was the youngest student ever to graduate from Harvard. *Time* magazine celebrated the event. And every year for his four years at Harvard, Gregson Davis won the gold medal and Bowdian Prize for Latin. He was only 19 when he was Harvard valedictorian in 1959. *Jet* and *Ebony* celebrated that event as though it were a landmark in African-American history. It was rare. It was significant. It was an historic milestone. At home the matter passed without pitch and moment as though it were commonplace. We do not distinguish the common from the exceptional. And so all is commonplace. A valorisation process has not begun here. We know the name and demerits of everyone, but the merits and value of anyone we refuse to recognise or we pigeon hole.

Professor Gregson Davis, was to go on to do his doctorate at Stanford, I think, and more importantly to write not one but two Latin classics, namely *The Rhetoric of Horatian Lyric Discourse* and *The Death of Procris: Amor and the Hunt in Ovid's Metamorphoses*. While these may seem esoteric and latinesque, any serious discussion of these would have considerable contemporary meaning. But space does not allow.

For Gregson Davis has written two works on Caribbean Literature on the best known poet of the French-speaking Caribbean, Aimé Césaire. The first entitled *Non-Vicious Circle, Twenty Poems of Aimé Césaire*. The second for the prestigious Cambridge Studies in African and Caribbean Literature, entitled simply *Aimé Césaire*. It is this which I propose to discuss here for Black History Month.

The first thing that struck me in Gregson Davis' new work on Aimé Césaire was this which Gregson Davis wrote:

Like many post-emancipation blacks in the archipelago during the early decades of the Twentieth Century, his parents, Fernand and Eléonore, were passionately devoted to instilling in their children a deep respect for education, and they made extraordinary sacrifices to ensure that all six of their children took advantage of the opportunities available on the island and in the metropolis. These sacrifices on the altar of education were by no means insignificant, considering the social strictures on members of an ex-slave population in a plantation economy.

I could not help but feel on reading this, that inasmuch as it is biographical, it is autobiographical as well.

I know of no other family which put so much store by their children's education as did the late J. Oliver "Pookie" Davis and Mother Davis. To rise in a plantation economy, beyond plantation servitude, was to take the few opportunities available through education. It is my view that the Davises are a profound example to this country of effort, of striving to overcome the inherent obstacles of race and class which fetter the citizens of a colonial, plantation society.

Listen to Gregson Davis write of Césaire's rise in neighbouring Martinique:

In view of a transmitted family ethos centred on educational achievement, Césaire's precocious success as a pupil appears almost overdetermined. Predictably he won a string of scholarships to secondary schools, the first enabling him to attend the Lycée Schoelcher in the capital, Fort de France. On the strength of his superlative performance on attaining the baccalaureate certificate he was awarded a coveted scholarship to continue the next phase of his schooling in Paris at the Lycée Louis le Grand (1931). An enthusiastic student, who by all accounts also possessed uncommon discipline, he excelled under the superb teaching faculty of the Lycée, and proceeded in due course to gain entrance to the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure in the Rue d'Ulm, where he was enrolled until his return to his native island on the eve of the Second World War.

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293
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There at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, the height of the French education system Césaire was to join "the cream of the Francophone world. Césaire's eight-year Paris sojourn, then brought him into daily contact, on an intellectually equal basis, with members of the privileged classes of the French intelligentsia, as well as those of humble origins from French colonies as far apart as West Africa and French Guyana.»

I deliberately recorded this from Gregson Davis' book, because there was no similar or corresponding intellectual movement and discourse in the Anglophone Caribbean. That would come later, when the Manleys, the Burnhams and Barrows would meet in London after the Second World War. There they would come into contact with the milk-and-water version

of socialism known as Fabian socialism, which in essence did **not** advocate or devise a method for the poor to inherit the earth, and to end the domination of man by man. Fabian socialism, is at best, ameliorative, treats the poor a little better, for the poor we have always with us. It assumes that human society will always and eternally be divided into rich and poor. The idea of transforming society was not central to Fabian socialism. Frantz Fanon then was to travel in a very different direction from say Dr. Eric Williams, despite his *Capitalism and Slavery*. The intellectual environment of the Anglophone Caribbean and that of the Francophone, was very, very different. The circle of intellectuals including John Maynard Keynes and Virginia Woolf were vastly different in outlook from the intellectual circle in France, including the likes of Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, including the great Cuban painter Wilfredo Lam, Albert Camus etc.

That C.L.R. James and George Padmore went in a different direction is definitely not due to England and the English intellectual tradition. Both James and Padmore attached themselves to wider intellectual currents which transcended the narrow confines of the English current. It is not accidental that when C.L.R. James translated Boris Souvarine's biography of **Stalin**, it was intended to put a number of English intellectuals right, who were playing with Stalinism.

Gregson Davis is most perceptive on this score as he notes "For Aimé Césaire the relationship he struck up with Leopold Senghor of Senegal was nothing short of a revelation as far as his **received image** of Africa and Africans was concerned, for in the colonial Martinique, **as in the rest of the Antilles**, the African continent and its cultures were either virtually ignored or else branded with the mark of "primitive". The colonising country arrogated to itself a "civilising mission" (*mission civilisatrice*), in which Africa was projected as the very paradigm of the non-civilised world."

I wonder, even now, how much has changed after 16 years of independence, in our conception and perception of Africa and Africans here. No school here instructs in the African past, and the literature that is taught is very much English, from Chaucer to Keats and probably little bit of Auden. Here and there one or two Caribbean poets and writers might infiltrate the mainly English curriculum. Even after independence, in education, the colonial and the colonising persists.

Gregson Davis was to note of Césaire and his fellow students of the Francophone Caribbean, "In the face of such egregious European ethnocentrism there emerged a solidarity among Francophone students of

diverse cultural backgrounds that became a point of departure for a **robust self-education** about the extent and nature of the African heritage.” No such development took place in The Anglophone Caribbean. At any rate, it would come much later, with those of Walter Rodney’s generation. Garvey’s movement however, had penetrated from the United States, more among the masses, than the intelligentsia in the 30’s.

But Gregson Davis adds an important rider. He carefully noted that “In regard to their cultural identity as “French”, Césaire and his fellow students inevitably experienced a tension between assimilationist and counter-assimilationist perspectives a tension each individual strove to resolve in his or her own psyche by various means. It is plausible to speculate that whereas Césaire the artist appears to have succeeded in surmounting the tension through the outlet of poetry, **Césaire the statesman has not been fully able to transcend a certain deep ambivalence towards France.**”

I can be a little less polite than the scholarly Gregson Davis and say, that in his artistic work Césaire overcame neo-colonialism, but in his politics he succumbed to it. Remaining insular within Martinique, Césaire had no other political course. He did not reach out to his neighbours in the English-speaking Caribbean then decolonising, and they did not reach out to him. It will remain one of the historical oddities of the modern Caribbean, that Dr. Eric Williams and Aimé Césaire did not forge or form any kind of political linkage. Each remained in their French and English cocoons.

On the contrary, the first country Dr. Fidel Castro visited after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution was Trinidad and Tobago, where he hoped to find solidarity in a kindred spirit in Dr. Eric Williams, then in power since 1956. But Williams a cold war product, if not a cold warrior himself, was so terrified of the English and the Americans that nothing resulted from their 1960 meeting. In fact, Williams was to miss the boat altogether when he wrote that the Cuban Revolution was “catching up with the nationalist movement” in the rest of the English-speaking Caribbean. It is not just arrogant, it rings loudly with the arrogance of ignorance. For whereas the Cuban Revolution transformed a Spanish-American colony, in ownership and control, the nationalist movement in the English-speaking Caribbean merely accommodated to the Old Order.

It will remain a major conundrum of Caribbean history to explain how people as advanced in ideas as Norman Manley, Aimé Césaire, Dr. Williams, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Errol Barrow, and Dr. Fidel Castro could

all have operated on the Caribbean political stage, all at the same time, and not forge the all too necessary Caribbean unity. It may well be that the Cold War held them in fee, and shackled them to the old colonial divisions of French, Spanish and English speaking Caribbean. After 500 years these divisions still persist.

In a manner of speaking, Césaire's "Negritude" was a fitting and most necessary response to Euro-American ethnocentrism in literature, but it did not carry over to the political economy of the Caribbean as a theory, or the beginning of a theory, by which one could transform Caribbean society, and free it from its Spanish, Dutch, French, English and American blocs.

But it could say with unrivalled force as Césaire's wonderful *Cahier d'un retour au mon pays natal* - Journal of a Homecoming said:

Oh pristine source of light
 those who invented neither gunpowder nor compass
 those who have never tamed steam or electricity
 those who have explored neither oceans nor sky
 but without whom the earth would not be earth
 excrescence of all the more benign as the earth
 more and more deserts the earth
 grain silo where germinates and ripens what
 is most
 earth upon the earth
 My *négritude* is not a stone, its deafness
 heaved against
 the clamour of the day
 my *négritude* is neither a tower nor a cathedral
 it delves into the red flesh of the soil
 it debues into the burning flash of the sky
 it penetrates the dark debasement of its righteous patience.

Gregson Davis in a remarkable and unique piece of commentary on this well known passage, comes up different to all other critics I have read, and in which I see his particular Antiguan schooling in grammar and syntax, as well as his deep classical knowledge.

Wrote Gregson Davis, "Syntax, as usual, provides a salient clue to the underlying ideas: negritude is positively defined not by predicate nouns (like its opposite number) but by verbs *plounge, troue, (delves, penetrates)*.

The shift to verbs strongly indicates that *négritude* is not to be regarded as a state, but an **activity** - an activity of self-exploration, of “delving” into the psycho-social unconscious.”

I am not so sure that I agree with “delving into the psycho-social unconscious,” but rather to find out why we remain dispossessed, and what is to be done to transform that condition. And on that basis to act. That is *negritude* in the current Caribbean context. But the crucial point is Gregson Davis’ unique determination, that *négritude* is not just a rejection of Euro-American ethnocentrism, but it is an activity. An activity in becoming other than one is, riven with “authentic deceptions” and self-contempt, after one’s debasement in history at the hands of the accumulating, alien Other. And as a consequence of that activity, activity in becoming, other than the colonial Other determined, as he “domesticated and christianised.”

*“The black cargo that was sitting down
is unexpectedly standing upright*

*upright and by no means pauperised, or
mad in its seaborne freedom and destitution
turning and turning in a perfect drift
but upright before the stars
upright and free
and the lustral vessel advances without
fear over the whelming flood.”*

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297
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This then is *negritude*, as Gregson Davis enlightened us. There is no doubt that Aimé Césaire *Cahier* is one of the remarkable literary works of the 20th century. There is no doubt either that Gregson Davis has done the most remarkable literacy analysis of this major work. That he is black and Antiguan is a matter of national pride for those who have eyes to see.

More importantly however, Gregson Davis’ work on Aimé Césaire is a major contribution to that time when the Caribbean’s “**lustral vessel advances without fear over the whelming flood.**”

That of course will take more than *négritude*, but *negritude* in one form or the other is indispensable to that content or consummation.

Gregson Davis is not just a remarkable Antiguan, he is a remarkable mind of our time.

Outlet, February 27, 1998

THE GENIUS OF AND FROM ANTIGUA: RALPH PRINCE AND JAMAICA KINCAID

Tim Hector

A great poet once wrote, “As high as I had mounted in my delight/In my dejection did I sink as low”. To me last weekend did it happen so.

The death of Ralph Prince punctuated, rather abruptly, an otherwise most pleasing week. It was not the death of Ralph Prince, a writer, a journalist, a sensitive, decent, gentle...man, that bothered. Death comes, inevitably, late or soon. That I have always known. It was the life, the life of Ralph Prince which disquieted: that Antigua and Barbuda could not and would not allow a sensitive, decent, thoughtful man to function in this place at this point in time. That bothered, upset, enervated and devastated me for a while. It is not that Ralph was alienated. By no means. He tried so hard to be well-adjusted. It is that an alienated society, one in which the price of everything is accounted, and everything of value reduced to nought, could find no place but a sinecure for Ralph. He had the courage to quit it. Antigua alienated a sensitive, decent, humorous, creative, gentle...man. He came unto his own and his own received him not.

Intensely interested in folk-lore and folk-history, none but a few cognoscenti wanted to hear. The folk cared not a jot about the folk. The writer here had no audience. Officialdom made mince-meat of everything. Reduce everyone and everything to a cypher. Under the banyan tree nothing grows—not even mediocrity. Ralph was not mediocre. He was a pioneer.

Ralph had been a journalist in Guyana. A writer of short stories many of which were collected in the volume, *Jewels of the Sun*. Like Novelle Richards, Prince’s work reflected the regionalism that inspired the Federation of 1958–62. Thus his stories are set in several of the territories—Trinidad, Guyana, and Antigua. The title story is a marvelous narration of a European’s first encounter with the humming birds of Trinidad, and who ends up calling them “jewels of the sun”. The last of this elegant collection, “Mazumba Goes Home”, is set in Antigua.

This story narrates the death of an ex-slave driver, Mazumba, whose slave name was Sambo. He was abandoned in his old age by the now freed slaves that he used to drive in his youth. As he is departing this life, he has a powerful vision of the highs and lows of his life, and experiences

himself as going home to Africa. Prince writes: “when Jube (his wife) returned at last with a calabash of food, she met him lying on the floor, with a set smile on his cold face. All her tears availed nothing, for Sambo, the old man was dead, and Mazumbathe prince had gone home.

With a good, not great, published book of short stories, *Outlet* took note and celebrated Prince’s unique accomplishment in a profile in progress. His book hardly sold here. Not hardly sold, did not sell. Greed is in, books are out. The writer had no audience. A people were rejecting their own creativity. Even where it was nonconflictual, even where it ruffled no feathers. The writer, like that other fast disappearing breed, the pan-man or the Panist, was needed only on official occasions, when some official, some honourable nobody was laying claim to a “culture” he did not have, and could not care less about.

And yet, in spite of, this miniscule country continues to produce gifted and exceptional men and women. The Prince Family in itself and of itself is a cultural institution. Among them painter, and sculptor, short-story writers, poet and social critic, a fine arranger, indeed the very best steel-band arranger this country has produced, and last, but for sure most, one of the world’s leading Jazz guitarists, a composer of high quality, whose scatting is not in my view, exceeded by Al Jarreau. Few of their countrymen and women want to know let alone hear. Yet they produce. Ralph created and produced. There is no more fitting epitaph.

But it was and is not my purpose here to write of Ralph Prince. I had intended, before his death to see him and let him know, that Antigua had produced a writer of genius. I had intended to lend him the novel *Annie John* written by an Antiguan about Antigua.

The judgment that this Antiguan writer, is a genius, is not my own. It is the judgment of a world-famous literary figure—Derek Walcott. For those who do not know, Derek Walcott as poet, playwright and critic does not bestow praise on the undeserving.

He wrote of this Antiguan writer, a woman if you please, this: “Genius has many surprises, and one of them is geography. While we settle in the tradition of expecting art to be made in certain places on the map—in those fixed points of culture that make us as assured of our position as the geometry of the stars—some cell in the least predictable place, is accreting things to itself.” In this least predictable place, the first Antiguan

novelist of quality is a genius. Acclaimed and acknowledged as such. Genius, does indeed have many surprises, not the least of which is smallness of size, or if you will, geography.

The writer of whom I speak goes by the name JAMAICA KINCAID. She is the daughter of the popular ANNIE DREW who respects and therefore is respected throughout Antigua. Out of the ordinary has come the extraordinary. Jamaica Kincaid has to date written two novels. *At the Bottom of the River* and *Annie John*. I propose here to discuss *Annie John*.

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300
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Annie John is a story of childhood. Childhood in Antigua, with its peculiarities and particularities. Annie John is a child's perception of death: "For a while during the year I was ten, I thought only people I did not know died." It is a child's immersion in myth and superstition. "I was afraid of the dead, as was everyone I knew. We were afraid of the dead because we never could tell when they might show up again. Sometimes they showed up in a dream, but that wasn't so bad, because they usually only brought a warning, and in any case you wake up from a dream. But sometimes they would show up standing under a tree just as you were passing by. Then they might follow you home, and even though they might not be able to come into your house they might wait for you and follow you wherever you went, in that case, they would never give up until you joined them". It is a story of childhood love: "But no sooner than we were back in our classroom than the girls were in each others laps, arms wrapped around neck". It is a story of "playing stones". Jamaica Kincaid does not even bother to explain what the game "stones" is all about (little would she suspect that in this Americanised periphery "stones" is now ancient history!!) She does not bother to explain because she is writing for Antiguanians who all know what "playing stones" is all about.

Annie John is also about, how our history has been distorted as taught to us, in or out of school: "Of course, sometimes, what with our teachers and our books, it was hard to tell on which side we belonged—with the masters or the slaves." The confusion of education was deliberate. Deliberate. Not to know which side we were on, Masters or Slaves, is a violation of the personality which plagues us yet, now more than ever.

Annie John is about how we were taught to be unpatriotic, colonial from head to toe: "We began our [Brownie] meetings with the whole troop standing in the yard of the Methodist Church, forming a circle

around the flagpole, our eyes following the Union Jack as it was raised up; then we swore allegiance to our country, by which was meant ENGLAND”.

Annie John above all is about estrangement. Estrangement from mother. Estrangement from Gwen. Estrangement from the Red Girl. Estrangement at fifteen. “In the year I turned fifteen, I felt more unhappy than I had ever imagined anyone could be. It wasn’t the unhappiness of wanting a new dress, or the unhappiness of wanting to go to cinema on a Sunday afternoon and not being allowed to do so.... My unhappiness was something deep inside me, and when I closed my eyes I could even see it. It sat somewhere—maybe in my belly, maybe in my heart.” *Annie John* is a story of estrangement. Estrangement from the Red Girl. Estrangement from breadfruit. Estrangement from father—deeply loved for his fascinating creativity as joiner, carpenter, builder—but estranged nevertheless.

Growing up in Antigua estranges one from the lovely Bamboo Grove in the Botanical gardens, from family, from friend, from Brownies, from boys; from where “the sun shone and the trade winds blew”; from “where at night we could sit on the sand and watch ships filled with people cruise by”, from “where the sun was bright and just above my head”. Growing up in Antigua makes you want to leave. Leave for anywhere. Anywhere, like Rimbaud, out of the world you had grown up in. Anywhere.

Growing up in Antigua under the Union Jack or the Star Spangled Banner left you thus: “My home on an island—I was leaving it forever.” Home, forever homeless: “What to make of everything? I felt a familiar hollow space inside. I felt I was being held down against my will. I felt I was burning up from head to toe”. Hollow. Burning up. Held down. From head to toe. Against our will. Those are the sentiments, not forced but natural. Natural in Antigua. The unnatural, natural.

This is not, repeat not, a novel of anomie and ennui. Of angst or Mailer-esque pranks and verbal pyrotechnics. This is a profound examination of the human condition, as child, in an island, colony, an independent colony, not as maudlin tale, but as wonderful lyricism. And not just lyricism, but magical realism not a la Garcia Marquez, but like Jamaica Kincaid capturing the magic of ordinary Antigua.

Here the ordinary is ordinary, then the ordinary is extraordinary, then the extraordinary is extraordinarily ordinary. Wordsworth was to make the ordinary extraordinary, and Coleridge the extraordinary, ordinary.

This they combined to do in the famous Lyrical Ballads with its justly famous preface. Jamaica Kincaid does both in *Annie John* not in verse, but in a lyrical prose which uniquely and superbly captures the rhythm the cadences, the magic, the nuances, the tones and shades of Antiguan English speech.

The symbolism and perception of the Red Girl, dirt begrimed, or of Gwen, the lovely friend reduced to the most conventional and meaningless conformism, as woman frozen in girlhood, subsumed by marriage or the prospect of it, so that she was “hardly able to complete a sentence without putting in a few giggles” is I believe a new use of the symbol—without obvious contrivance. The artifice seems natural.

I come now to the prestigious *New York Times Book Review* which in a front page lead, and a brilliant piece entitled “A Negro Way of Saying” suggests that Jamaica Kincaid like many another Black woman writer “have grounded their fictions in the work of Zora Neale Hurston”.

I beg to disagree, not in whole, but in vital part. Perhaps the narrative strategies employed by Zora Neale Hurston, a fantastic Black woman writer, who died in obscurity in 1960 I think (she is now being re-discovered as genius) are used and deployed by Jamaica Kincaid. But the lyricism of Jamaica Kincaid is Antiguan, not American. Maybe it is characteristic of Black speech, but in Jamaica Kincaid it is Antiguan, *sui generis*. For example, and at random, I choose a few of her wonderful lines: “I could hear the small waves lap-lapping around the ship” or again “The photographs, as they stood on the table, now began to blow themselves up until they touched the ceiling and then shrink back down, but to a size I could not easily see. They did this with a special regularity, keeping beat to a music I was not privy to. Up and down they went, up and down”.

To those of us who remember, here is our grandmother, or an Aunt, or yet an old family friend entertaining us at nightfall with a story in which, suddenly, the ordinary becomes the fantastic, and language, by way of new word, is created—the waves lap-lapping—with ingenious ingenuity to give heightened quality to a particular moment.

Yes I agree that like Zora Neale Hurston, Jamaica Kincaid creates on the page the Black person’s ability for graphic and unique metaphor or simile, as when Jamaica Kincaid writes (this is a random example for they abound here) “The rain continued to come, sometimes in a heavy drizzle, sometimes as if, all along, we had been living with a dam overhead and

someone had purposely made a gash in it". The rhythm here is Antiguan, is as Antiguan as the word "purposely" is used there, and the "gash" in the dam that sends the rain bleeding down is the unique use of metaphor in Black speech which Zora Neale Hurston first brought to American and to literature generally. But the remarkable Hurston did not have Jamaica Kincaid's quality of imagination. Contrivance is more apparent in Hurston than in Kincaid. And there is no pandering in Kincaid, no exotica to entertain those in search of the quaint. Kincaid is genius, laying bare, the pain and pleasure, the joy and the dread of growing up absurd in an island whose very history demands purpose. Yet life is rendered purposeless. Master and Slave is confused. Union Jack exchanged for Star Spangled Banner, despite multicoloured sun-drenched independence flag.

Annie John is compulsory reading for every Antiguan who has had to ask "what to make of everything?" and who wishes to replace the hollow space inside, with a purpose, a purpose that tells you which side you are on Master or Slave.

Annie John is simple, and simply great. It is a modern literary masterpiece. Ralph Prince did not in vain live. Indirectly on his shoulder, as on Lamming's, as on Earl Lovelace's, as on Sylvia Winter's as on Paule Marshall's, sits Jamaica Kincaid, a literary grandmaster, a Black, Antiguan woman writer, enriching world literature.

Outlet, May 24, 1985

JAMAICA KINCAID PROPHET OF THE FUTURE

Tim Hector

If the Lion and the Lamb are in conflict, so too are the Sword and the Pen. The Sword of Power, acting on behalf of the Lion of minority greed, always seeks to subordinate the Pen, of public Truth seeking to force it to use, in Jamaica Kincaid's wonderful phrase, "the awful testament of government ink."

In Antigua today that struggle between Sword and Pen is at its most intense, with *Outlet*, as David and Slingshot, ranged against Goliath with Police and Court in attendance. And the struggle is not allegorical, but in deadly earnest. At this very moment in momentous time.

The Pen, of course, invariably and irresistibly represents a new future. The sword, by definition, is a hangover from the dread medieval past, seeking always to perpetuate itself as omnipresent omnipotence over all things, all activities, all perceptions. The Sword, as all Powerful State, has to be wrestled to its final medieval gasps. Or else, there will be no 21st century. And even if there is, unless this all powerful State in the Caribbean is not smashed, the Caribbean will remain islets, torn by the vast expanse of Cold War faction, so that all in disunity and confusion ends, so differently from what the heart arranged.

My purpose here is not politics, but literature. For me literature is the key to the politics of the future. And however high, however thick, however dark are the clouds of pessimism which loom over Antigua, as it drifts to Nowhere with dreadful speed, I am certain, as certain as certain can be, that Antigua is on the threshold of a new future.

Why do I say this? No country as small as Antigua could produce a world class writer, and not just a world class writer, but a writer of genius saying something new, and expanding the form known as the novel, into entirely new realms, without the imminent possibility of a new future for Antigua and Barbuda. If not the world.

Let me first of all rely on a well-known American writer and literary critic, none other than Susan Sontag. Writing of Jamaica Kincaid's first novel *At the Bottom of the River*, Susan Sontag, among other things, wrote "Jamaica Kincaid is an unaffectedly sumptuous, irresistible writer—and among these splendid stories about personal and cosmic desire, at least

two of them “My Mother” and “At the Bottom of the River” seem to me more thrilling than ANY prose I’ve read in the last few years by a writer from this continent”.

I will not bother with Susan Sontag’s effort to claim Jamaica Kincaid as a writer of the North American continent. That may or may not be a genuine mistake. What is of importance is that she recognizes in Jamaica Kincaid, Antiguan born and bred, a new prose “far more thrilling” than any she is familiar with. That is no small compliment. What I want to emphasize is this: the new prose of Jamaica Kincaid is distinctly Caribbean and specifically Antiguan. The point once stated has to be made, and therefore, proved. Here is Jamaica Kincaid herself in her first novel *At the Bottom of the River*:

Wash the white clothes on Monday and put them on the stone heap; wash the colour clothes on Tuesday and put them on the clothesline to dry; don’t walk barehead in the hot sun; cook pumpkin fritters in very hot sweet oil; ... soak salt-fish overnight before you cook it; is it true you sing benna in Sunday School?; always eat you food in such a way that it would not turn someone else’s stomach; on Sunday’s try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming; don’t sing any benna in Sunday school; you mustn’t speak to wharf-rat boys, not even to give directions.

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305
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Permit me I have to go on at length quoting because this story entitled “Girl” is my favourite in the novel. Kincaid continues “this is how you sweep a yard; this is how you smile to someone you don’t like too much; this is how you smile to someone you don’t like at all; this is how you smile to someone you like completely; this is how you set a table for tea; this is how you set a table for dinner; this is how you set a table for dinner with an important guest; this is how you set a table for lunch; this is how to behave in the presence of men who don’t know you very well, and this way they won’t recognize immediately the slut I’ve warned you against becoming; be sure to wash everyday, even if it is with your own spit;”

I hope you have got the point by now. The story “Girl” the entire short story is one, yes, one long sentence, punctuated by Commas and semi-colons. But what a marvelous sentence. It is a random recipe, all the more wonderful because it is random, of how ex-slaves humanised themselves after the long night’s journey UP from slavery. And too, it is Jamaica

Kincaid's mother, Annie Drew, your mother and my mother seeking to humanise a society after enduring the horror of slavery and colonialism. Here is the self-emancipation, seeking as they did to arrive at some conception of what a "Lady" was and what a "Gentleman" was. What astonishes me even to this day, is how our parents so thoroughly committed themselves to that serious enterprise of "bringing us up"—up from slavery of body and mind—and how in their view there was just a very thin line, a one millimetre thin line, between Gentleman and Wharf-rat, and between Lady and Slut. I want to posit, but cannot prove, that this is essentially a Caribbean perception. The poor, trodden down with slavery, humanising themselves, without too much by way of past custom to fall back on, and too little by way of living example to guide, had to think in extremes—their situation, like ours, was extreme.

I am sure, like me, you want some more of Kincaid's "Girl"—the humanising of the Girl in the Caribbean—the recipe of that humanisation in things large and small. Writes Kincaid in "Girl" about the process of do's and don'ts "Dont pick people's flowers—you might catch something; don't throw stones at blackbirds, because it might not be a blackbird at all; this is how to make a bread-pudding; this is how to make a doukana; this is how you make pepper-pot; this is how to make a good medicine for a cold; this is how to make a good medicine to throw away child even before it become a child; this is how to catch a fish; this is how to throw back a fish you don't like, and that way something won't fall on you; this is how to bully a man; this is how a man bullies you; this is how to love a man, and if this don't work there are other ways, and if they don't work don't feel too bad about giving up;"

Unmistakably this is recognisable experience, beautifully and succinctly retold. Even more unmistakably, this is the language, to quote from a famous literary revolution, "commonly used by men" in the Caribbean. Unmistakably, here are people reflected back to themselves in the mirror of art; from doukana and pepper-pot to love and abortion; from the routine of life and living to the stress of love and loving.

I have read this story ten times so far, and someone walked up on me in my tenth reading and I was totally, I mean totally unaware of their presence. Art entrances.

I want now to come to another point. Brevity of course compels me to encapsulate. Epic poetry was the mode of literary expression employed by the aristocracy as they strutted and fretted their hour on the stage as

the world ruling class. The novel, became the medium of the bourgeoisie, with its emphasis on character, as they succeeded the aristocracy as world rulers. From Jane Austin to Dostoevsky down to Herman Melville that remained true. Character, solid character, or the flaw in an otherwise flawless character. Even flawlessly evil character. But always character. This was the essence of the novel.

The Caribbean writer using the novel as medium or mode, had no middle class to write about. Philistine as they were, they were no more significant (after colonialism had excluded them from ownership of everything except MBE or OBE) than at best, fifth carbon copies of their American or English peers. Among such, there was no “angst”, no romance, no struggle, just an innocuous effort, often uneventfully petty, to secure the fantasy of status, status based on neither Industry, Banking nor Agriculture. Just nebulous status. They are not the stuff of which literature is made, except perhaps, as Naipaul’s *Mimic Men*.

The Caribbean writer, of necessity, had to make the worker and farmer, or the outcasts, the protagonist of his or her work. From CLR James’s *Minty Alley* down to the recently published novel by the St Kitts writer, *The Final Passage* by Caryl Phillips, that remains true, not by choice but of necessity. Character, therefore, is not central to the Caribbean novel. But events and processes are. The movement or self movement of a people is the centrepiece of *Minty Alley* or *In the Castle of My Skin*, arguably Lamming’s finest, and one of the finest novels in all literature.

Beginning with Wilson Harris’ *Palace of the Peacock* the Caribbean novel changed, in that perception, the perception of a people in unusual space and in unusual time become the centrepiece, as a people tried to establish authenticity.

With Jamaica Kincaid this novel of perception reaches a new high-point. Character all but disappears, at any rate, disappears in the traditional sense, and the reader is entranced by a series of perceptions until she or he is persuaded, almost imperceptibly, to come to a new way of seeing the old reality in which he or she was mired. The world is remade, and the reader sees the world anew.

A short example will have to suffice from Kincaid’s remarkable story “Mother”. The example has to be short of necessity. “The fishermen are coming in from sea; their catch is bountiful, my mother has seen to that. As the waves plop, plop against each other, the fishermen are happy that

the sea is calm.... I am sitting in my mother's enormous lap. Sometimes I am sitting on a mat she has made from her hair. The lime trees are weighed down with limes—I have already perfumed myself with their blossoms. A hummingbird has nested on my stomach a sign of my fertility. My mother and I live in a bower made from flowers whose petals are imperishable. There is the silvery blue of the sea crisscrossed with darts of light, there is the warm rain falling in the dumps of castor bush, there is the small lamb bounding across the pasture, there is the soft ground welcoming the soles of my pink feet. It is in this way my mother and I have lived a long time now”.

Now here is a picture of an idyl, of Caribbean humankind at one with nature. A long battle has been won. The problem of scarcity is over. Fish is plentiful. Limes are plentiful. And plentiful too, is the lime blossom as delightful cosmetic. We are, so to speak, self-sufficient, at long last dependent on ourselves. The housing problem is over as they live in a bower—imperishable in a hurricane zone. One is reminded of St. John in “Revelations”. But the last line is instructive, even though “they had lived” this idyl for a long time now, there was a time after now, when they had to face themselves as people. And it is their BECOMING, after the struggle to extract a living out of a sometimes hostile environment, that is important. It is their relations one WITH another and TO another that is important after the economic struggle of and for equality has been won, that is all important. The perception here is not novel, but its presentation is. The great writer presents the struggles of man in life for life, for a new life, since time uncountable, in a new way. Kincaid most certainly does so in *At the Bottom of the River*. And does so uniquely.

Somehow on reading Kincaid, my mind could not get off painting. Did Kincaid belong to the Impressionist school of painting or the Expressionist school? She spans both. But I settled for more Impressionist than Expressionist because, wrote a modern critic: Impressionism “In its discovery of a constantly changing phenomenal outdoor world of which the shapes depended on the momentary position of casual or mobile spectator, there was an implicit criticism of symbolic social and domestic formalities, or at least a norm opposed to these.” This is how Kincaid struck me, at least.

Few can read Kincaid without feeling that the sentences reveal wonderful strokes of the brush, and an almost Picasso-esque sense of line, and Wilfredo Lam's sense of composition, but somehow Manet is the overpowering figure. Kincaid paints wonderful word pictures.

I come now for the purposes of this review to my last and final point. In the depiction and revelation of life, as writers and stylists, a new school of women writers are making a striking new departure. Such writers include Maya Angelou, Margaret Walker, Jayne Cortez, Audre Lorde, Ntozake Shange, Toni Morrison, and perhaps the finest of the American school, Alice Walker. Kincaid belongs to this school in a pre-eminent way.

Through these writers, Black women have brought into literature a special knowledge of their lives and experiences that is as DIFFERENT from the descriptions and portrayals of women by men, as *At the Bottom of the River* is from *Pride and Prejudice*. Where women were depicted by male writers as queens and princesses, as Juliets or Delilah's as earth mothers or idealized big Mommas of superhuman wisdom, we get the world as perceived through the eyes women, of recognizable human beings, and consequently, we get a new distillation of the meaning of life—and perhaps a new dispensation. Jamaica Kincaid with *At the Bottom of the River* and *Annie John* has made a unique contribution to this revolution in literature.

That is my last word, for now, on Jamaica Kincaid. But the last word in this piece properly belongs to Derek Walcott of St Lucia, Trinidad and the Caribbean, certainly one of the finest poets in English or any language in the world today.

He wrote of Antigua's Kincaid thus: "My astonishment since I first read Jamaica Kincaid's stories in *At the Bottom of the River* has not gone with the morning dew. I have read her in damp winters and in the hard sun at home. So it's not dew, it's not wistful, girlish rites of passage; it's mica embedded in rock, and it dulls and changes and flashes as clouds of the subtlest feelings pass over the page". Dealing with the subtlest feelings, that is precisely Kincaid's forte.

Continues Derek Walcott about Kincaid's *At the Bottom of the River* "This book will hum on your shelf. It is too choked with love to incite envy, too humble for admiration, and still too startling to escape astonishment".

Like Kincaid, Antigua and Barbuda, will startle as a Caribbean city-state in a united Caribbean, but only when we discover our historic mission.

Outlet, June 7, 1985

A SMALL PLACE—A LARGE VISION

Tim Hector

This is not a review of **Jamaica Kincaid's** remarkable book *A Small Place*. It is a response to it, and to some of the things written about it in the United States, and to some of the things said by Antiguan at home and abroad about it. First of all, Jamaica Kincaid is not only the foremost literary figure Antigua has produced, she is not only among the Caribbean literary firmament, she belongs in a very special group of modern writers among which are Alice Walker (*The Colour Purple*), Toni Morrison (*Beloved*) and Maya Angelou (*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*). With that said it ought to be understood that we are dealing with a special type of writer, special in perception and therefore in style lean, spare, poignant and penetrating. They like Jamaica Kincaid go beyond that existential despair or verbal pyrotechnics which has engulfed European and American writing, and thank creation for an optimism of spirit, which notes and at proper times celebrates the truly human—its pain and joy.

... Take for instance Jamaica Kincaid's view of Antigua towards the end-
310 ing of *A Small Place*:
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No real village in any real countryside would be named Table Hill Gordon, and no real village with such a name would be so beautiful in its pauperedness, its simpleness, its one room houses painted in unreal shades of pink and yellow and green, a dog asleep in the shade, some flies asleep in the corner of the dog's mouth. Or the market on a Saturday morning where the colours of the fruits and vegetables and the colours of clothes people are wearing and the colour of the day itself and the colour of the nearby sea, and the colour of the sky, which is just overhead and seems so close you might reach up and touch it, and the way the people there speak English (they break it up) and the way they might be angry with each other and the sound they make when they laugh, all of this is so beautiful, all of this is not real like any other real thing that there is. It is as if, then, the beauty—the beauty of the sea, the land, the air, the trees, the market, the people, the sounds they make—were a prison, and as if everything and everybody inside it were locked in and everything and everybody that is not inside it were locked out”.

I have read nothing better in literature since I read the opening lines of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and parts of Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*.

First of all there is a peculiar, a unique cadence of movement and colour here that goes beyond the lyricism of the best prose poetry. I searched desperately for its source. Until I heard my eleven-year-old son and his friend in animated conversation, and then I knew, for sure, that Jamaica Kincaid had captured Antiguan speech rhythm in her own special distillation. Or is it constellation?

Kincaid's subtle and beguiling, not so much simplicity, but a deliberate simpleness, allows for a power of thought that the careless might miss the point because of the lyricism, and yet the lyricism conveys the point, without the harassment of logical positivists searching by textual murder for the meaning of "meaning".

Let me allow Kincaid to substantiate the point as she continued.

And what might it do to ordinary people to live in this way every day? They have nothing to compare this incredible constant with, **no big historical moment to compare the way they are now to the way they used to be**. No Industrial Revolution, no revolution of any kind, no Age of Anything, no world wars, no decades of turbulence balanced by decades of calm. Nothing, then, natural or unnatural to leave a mark on their character.

Just this "incredible constant"! What a remarkable phrase this "incredible constant". It is telling in its simple power. And there are nuggets like this scattered throughout this gold mine of a small book about a small place—Antigua.

But I want to stay a while. Kincaid is on to something. Something that is absolutely essential about us. And, it is simply profound. Never forget it. We have had no Stone Age. No Iron Age. No Mercantile Age. No bourgeois era, no nothing of any kind (as my 11-year-old son would graphically put it). "No Age of Anything" as Kincaid put it—except, perhaps, slave and non-slave. We have intervened in no sustained way (the odd angry riot here and there) in our own history. Nothing demarcates one period of time from another. Time passes. And what might it do to ordinary people to live in this way every day? asks Kincaid, and I add, for philosophical clarity, without a single authentic moment, as Heidegger would have said. Everydayness overwhelms. This incredible constant! It forces our best minds to migrate, and the mass to escape in religion, in colour Cable TV 24 hours a day, every day if you please, in consumerism, and to acquiesce in somnambulant indifference. Indifference, nowadays,

even to cricket and to West Indian triumph—Viv Richards and Curtley Ambrose notwithstanding.

I wrote all the above in answer to those somnambulents who accuse Kincaid of “badmouthing” Antigua or the American critics who speak of “the depressing nature of her subject”. Truth is never depressing—it liberates, or is the pre-condition to setting the subject of that truth free. And that is Kincaid’s intention, which she accomplishes with uncommon success. The Costa Rican-American critic, Erroll McDonald, who characterised Kincaid’s book “as a polemic of unrelenting virulence” used these words because they are in his vocabulary. If he were to see a pearl, he would describe it as a white circular precipitate petrified. They say so much because they want to know so little.

Perhaps one ought to be more generous. Perhaps the American critics do not know and cannot contemplate what it is to live in an island, a small place, in which the citizens are trapped in the cleft stick of owner and owned. That is, ex-slaves imitating the life-style of the departed master, and the new master. Because, and this ‘because’ is crucial, no native tradition has been built, and no native institution embody those traditions; the maintenance and overthrowing of which gives meaning to time in space. Kincaid however understands that, and lovingly but without sentimentality lays that condition bare, as the great artist must.

It is not that Kincaid wants, as Errol McDonald arrogantly conjectures, making conjecture fact, the tourist to get “involved in the omnipresent imbroglis and vicissitudes of native life”. Such involvement, or invasion as it should properly be called, Kincaid would be the first to denounce.

Kincaid’s profound analysis of the tourist-native syndrome is uniquely interesting. The complex of emotions on both sides. The One and the Other grappling with banality and boredom, the One finding pleasure in the Other’s banality and boredom, while the Other laughs at the One, is too subtle to be circumscribed as an anti-tourist polemic. Suffice it for brevity’s sake to say that she is looking into the soul of that phenomenon, not just the appearance. She is, I remind, not writing some patriotic gore as an Ode to Antigua, she leaves that to lesser mortals, or is it scoundrels?

Kincaid knows that she may not be widely read in Antigua, and may well be read more by the tourist, because Mr. and Mrs. Tourist has a library worthy of the name while her own people do not. The one they had still bears the sign since 1974 “Repairs are pending”! Meanwhile

a massive tourist shopping centre, called Heritage Quay, designed and built by Italians with Italian labour stands next door to the dilapidated library building. The contradiction is grotesque. It is proof positive that the rulers in this Small Place want an “almost illiterate youth” to smilingly wait upon tourists. That’s all. Such goals makes this small place, smaller.

Do I have reservations about this book. Yes. But only one. While Kincaid wonderfully unites her voice with that of the people, (at times you can hardly distinguish between the writer and the peoples voice) I wanted here and there the people to stand individually, in their own being, in this or that incident, in their own dialogue, illuminating, without being didactic, this or that point. In both *At the Bottom of the River* and *Annie John* Kincaid showed this talent. It is, to me, absent in *A Small Place*.

Anything else. Two persons have written from America asking me to comment on Kincaid’s very brief but telling “encapsulation of Tim Hector’s dilemma” as one of the persons put it. The most I can say now, is that that would take a lot more contemplation by me, and another, (my fourth) reading of this classic study of Antigua, so brilliantly and captivatingly written.

In what category does *A Small Place* belong? Is it essay, or is it travelogue, or both? In my view neither would do, though both are adequate. In my personal pantheon, *A Small Place*, takes its place as the prose equivalent of Aimé Césaire’s super poem *Cahier d’un retour au mon pays natal*. Kincaid’s statement of a return to her native country, addressed primarily to Antiguan, has universal significance precisely because of its lyrical particularity and the breadth of its vision. She has proven, beyond doubt, that smallness of size is quite compatible with depth and breadth of vision.

Outlet, August 26, 1988

A REMARKABLE WRITER AND CHILDHOOD

Tim Hector

Last week, in any other small country, would have been a week of note, of celebration even. But not Antigua in 1990. Last week an Antiguan was being celebrated internationally. Not only was an Antiguan being noted, but an Antiguan **woman** was the subject of critical acclaim, by the people who matter in her profession. The world noted her achievement. The Antigua from which she came paid no heed. Radio said nothing. TV less. Both are run in and by the lowest possible common denominator of taste. Or is it non-taste? The intellectual community here, took no note of this event. To the best of my knowledge only Lukie and I took note. We celebrated the event in style, speaking for hours about it. It was all we could do. What then was this event? That, you are entitled to ask dear reader.

314 ...
Jamaica Kincaid was publishing her fourth book, and her third novel, entitled *Lucy*. She was the subject of a full feature in the Sunday *New York Times Magazine*. A leading American critic had written the piece on Kincaid. And it was exceptionally good. Jamaica Kincaid was receiving the attention of some of the best literary critics in the world. I was thrilled. Maybe when Andy Roberts captured one hundred wickets, I felt the same. Or when Vivi Richards put himself in the world record books with the fastest Test century before his own people, I felt a similar thrill. Then too, there were no celebrations in Antigua. Strange, this small place! Naipaul had said it. Though achievement was rare in these parts, “we reserve our admiration”, wrote Naipaul “for scholarship winners gone mad.” But, a lament, is not my intention. Nor do I intend to jeremiad.

This is what was said of Kincaid by way of introduction by Leslie Garis in the very fine article in the *New York Times Magazine*. “In 1966 at the age of 17, with no money, no connections and no practical training, **Elaine Potter Richardson** left the West Indian island of Antigua, bound for New York and a job as an au pair. She did not return until she was 36. By then she was Jamaica Kincaid, a respected author of fiction and a staff writer for *The New Yorker* magazine whose prose is studied in universities and widely anthologized.”

Continuing Leslie Garis writes: “In 1983 *At the Bottom of the River* her first novel, made her an instant literary celebrity.” Wonderful. Later Leslie Garis wrote: *Annie John*, her second novel was “one of the three finalists for the 1985 international Ritz Paris Hemingway Award”. That

is no small achievement. Above anything else, Jamaica Kincaid (a.k.a. Elaine Potter Richardson) had placed Antigua in the universal literary firmament. From **a small place** she had placed us in the largest literary circles. That is genuine accomplishment. Jamaica Kincaid had ennobled a people from a small place, enslaved, colonised, and burdened with corruption in our childhood of independence. In other words, Jamaica Kincaid had said by her work, by her achievement that we were far bigger than our geographical size might suggest, better than our empty colonial past might suggest, and far better than our corrupt present might suggest.

However, let me say something here which I think literary critics of world class have missed about Jamaica Kincaid. Jamaica Kincaid is one of very few writers who have altered forever the idyllic conception of childhood which writers before have cast childhood in. Her two novels *At the Bottom of the River* and *Annie John*, set in tiny Antigua, constitute a critique not of Antigua, but of an entire world civilization and how it treats and perceives children. The limitations we impose on them, and the emotional horrors every society inflicts on childhood. Incidentally, if you were to look at pre-colonial African societies, in East or West Africa, you would find that the entire society was organized **to raise children**, and so raise society to a higher level.

Modern civilization with its emphasis on possession and acquisition, and “success” as possessions, has ruined society for children. They are atomised in the jungle of life. This is a large thesis and it cannot be developed here fully or even partially. But I am yet to meet the person of my age who did not feel that in all essential areas (though we were much poorer) our childhood, was far richer in quality and content, than those of our own children. That speaks volumes about the current human condition, but I do not have here the space of volumes.

Suffice it to say, that an Antiguan, a daughter not of privilege, but of deprivation, Jamaica Kincaid, has through two works of fiction required the whole of civilization to review its conception of the child in childhood, not within the limitations of what Americans call “parenting”, but in real terms, the child in the labyrinth of a fast food, 20 second byte age, in a regimented society, which makes little or no provision for the full and free development of a child, however privileged.

It would take exhaustive reference to Jamaica Kincaid’s two novels to develop this thesis. Let me for the sake of conciseness say that I do not think that the focus on childhood we get in Kincaid’s two novels is

matched by James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or the more modern classic Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* or William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. That is a large claim; but at another time, perhaps in another forum I will substantiate it. For now it is enough to outline it.

And to note, that where most novels focus on childhood it is usually the **boy**. Jamaica Kincaid gives the world, an insight into the enormous and disorienting pressures put on a **girl**. So much on this for now. But please note, an Antiguan **Jamaica Kincaid**, has placed Antigua, and life as lived here, in the very foreground of world literature! A small place was made central to civilization.

My intention here is something else. Leslie Garis wrote of Jamaica Kincaid this: "Perhaps the single most consistent and striking quality in her work is what the critic Susan Sontag refers to as its "emotional truthfulness". Her work said Sontag, one of the leading literary critics in the world today, (Sontag ranks in my view with Edmund Wilson and Isaiah Berlin) "is poignant but it's poignant because it's so truthful and it's so complicated. She does not treat things in a sentimental or facile way." And said Susan Sontag: "Jamaica Kincaid is one of the **few** writers writing in English now that I would **always** want to read." That is extraordinary acclaim by any standard, and Sontag is the highest standard.

Antiguans I think were affrighted by Kincaid's *A Small Place*. They expected tourist brochure. They expected their island glamourised and gilded and glitzed. Jamaica Kincaid presented Antigua in *A Small Place* not in a facile way and without sentimentality. A nation and a people who finds and produces a writer who can speak to them without sentimentality or in some glibly facile way, is extremely privileged. It is a rarity. Therefore, *A Small Place* is the proof that Antigua and indeed the Caribbean will not long remain inconsequential, and marginal, but have something important to contribute at the rendezvous of human triumph. That is, the triumphs of humankind over racism, class oppression and its twin, consumerism. Antigua and the Caribbean, will have important lessons for the world at large.

But I want to give you something of Jamaica Kincaid's remarkable insight, her poignant truthfulness. She was asked by Leslie Garis this: "You have written that when you left Antigua you had only seen part of your island. That seems incredible. What prevented you from exploring?" This was Kincaid's astonishingly poignant and emotionally truthful reply: "Absolutely nothing!" she cries out "**Just culture**. People are **not**

interested in each other, they're not interested in what the other person is doing. There is no part of Antigua I went to when I was a child just for the sheer joy of it, just for the sheer anything of it. You only do that if it has a personal interest for you. You can't believe the self absorption of a place like that [Antigua]. It's so distorted." A culture that does not generate curiosity about itself does not deserve the name.

I am going to give you Kincaid in full before I interpolate again. A few moments later and continuing in the same vein Kincaid said that in Antigua "You grow up in a street and it is a tiny street. That street might not be as big as this yard out there, but it becomes your world, and it's the only thing you know, and you know it unbelievably well, with its thickness, this heaviness and you have no interest in anything else. It would not occur to you that there might be something else". She leans forward intently "When I left home I never wanted to know another Antiguan. Of course, I thought about Antigua all the time. I did not know any West Indians, I just wanted to" She hesitates, absolutely still "To be something **other**. I didn't want to be somebody important, I just wanted not to have that thing choking me all the time."

See if you got the point. We have not in Kincaid's childhood, nor in the childhood of our children created anything of interest in our own environment which make our children want to go there, to go exploring, which quickens their interest and so deepens their curiosity about their island home and by extension the human condition. This paralyses them, in Kincaid's incredible words: It's a thickness. A heaviness. It chokes. We stultify people as children, women in marriage, and the stunting and stultification reaches its apogee in the deadening processes under the hierarchy of capitalist production.

It is a terrible thing to raise children whose curiosity cannot be quickened and whose sense of exploration whetted by the things we have created and left for them to be aroused by. Childhood cannot be valuable and valid, if it does not quicken curiosity and arouse the sense of exploration. This has nothing to do with poverty.

A few years ago, one of the most remarkable minds it has been my privilege to meet and know, B.T. Lewis, a most sensitive person and a fine engineer, said to me "I do not know Tim, that bringing up my children in my neighbourhood at Blue Waters can be good for them. Sometimes I think they are bored to death. And that's a helluva thing to impose on a child. I am now trying my best to diversify their environment.

Now B.T. Lewis lives in one of the best neighbourhoods in Antigua. Fine homes abound. Yet he said there was nothing in it for children. Kincaid made the same observation about her own life. We narrow children down to a very impoverished world. So narrow that it becomes a heaviness, a thickness, a choking experience. A condition and a world from which anyone must wish to escape.

Specifically, it is the result of our total lack of genuine interest in one another. A lack of meaningful interest. About others we gossip, to pull down, to denigrate. Meaningful interest is non-existent. Therefore we do not create an interesting environment, either socially or in the physical environment. Therefore too, our children escape into a sordid world of American TV. That is an horrific condition. A world of alien cartoons, Ninja mutant turtles, nintendo, plus an overdose of Miami Vice. School is regimentation for them, not the arousal and satisfaction of curiosity. We compel children to cram and to con by rote a host of useless information. And even where useful, we must remember, Alfred North Whitehead's aphorism that "A merely well informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth."

I think I have made the point. Kincaid is to my knowledge the most arresting writer I have read on modern childhood. I delight in the fact that she is Antiguan from a small place, making a universal and significant contribution to the examination of the human condition, and the most important aspect of that condition—childhood. For after all, the child is father of the man.

And now what? Until Antigua becomes interesting to and for our children, until it arouses in an endless way, our children's sense of curiosity and exploration we would NOT have created a new Antigua, no matter if all Antigua was transformed into Blue Waters and Crosbies and Antigua's GDP and GNP reckoned in tens of thousands of millions.

Anything else? This is too long already. However this. When Jamaica Kincaid was here on her only visit, Arah and I had the pleasure of her company at a memorable dinner. The food I do not remember. It was the conversation, the interaction that I remember. And above all, this: Arah said to me, Tim, when Kincaid comes back we must have her to dinner at home with all the children, especially Amilcar (the youngest). In other words, Arah wanted the children to be a part of Kincaid's interesting person and environment. Arah said this with excitement and infectious

enthusiasm which was her hallmark. She was too, making a statement about childhood and parenting. That a healthy interest in people, their concerns and pre-occupations is vital to arousing the curiosity and exploration of our children and all children.

Something else? Yes. When I began this I intended a comparison between ancient Homer of the *Iliad* and modern Kincaid of *Antigua*. However, Kincaid and childhood, far more important, got in the way. As did Kincaid and Arah. And so I end with Achilles' comforting words to Priam in Homer's *Iliad*.

*Let us put our grief to rest in our own hearts
rake them up no more, raw as we are with mourning
What good's to be won from tears that chill the spirit.*

Amilcar my youngest son said the same to his loving great Aunt who asked him why he was not weeping more at the murder of his mother. I hope to arouse his curiosity one day and make him explore Homer's *Iliad*, since Amilcar arrived at Homer before he read him. I hope from Homer he will move to Kincaid, and fill the space in between as his own curiosity and sense of exploration impels him.

Let us now set about to truly save the children. To do that reading Kincaid is essential. I swear.

Outlet, October 19, 1990

ANOTHER ANTIGUA WRITER EMERGES: ELAINE HENRY OLAOYE

Tim Hector

Elaine Henry Olaoye, a poet, had a book of poems, *The Aurella Collection*, published in the United States, where she lives and teaches at a New York College. Elaine Henry Olaoye holds a doctorate in psychology, was raised by her aunt, Ms. Ivy Roberts of Upper Newgate Street and Church Lane, her virtual mother and definite guide. She attended the Antigua Girls High School here. She is the sister of Dr. Paget Henry, whose brilliant articles in *Outlet* recently forced the government to reconsider its so-called structural adjustment plans. It is a rare thing to have a brother and a sister both with doctorates. Elaine Henry Olaoye holds her doctorate in psychology, which she also teaches.

Elaine Henry Olaoye said in the prelude or introduction to her book of poems that “my respect for and my desire to write poetry comes out of images, impressions and visions formed from life in Antigua”. Antigua is the fountain-head of her creative imagination. Continuing, she said that “I have finally been able to take my writing of poetry as seriously as I take my writing of psychology. I have finally been able to own both disciplines. I have finally been able to marry the two disciplines within me and not cause one to be forcefully subordinated to the other”. For Elaine Henry Olaoye, “poetry is first and foremost the voice of the human spirit. It is also for me a voice of contemplation, a voice of courage, a voice of bemusement, a voice of exploration, a voice of resistance and a voice of healing. Additionally, and taken seriously, poetry represents not surprisingly an ancient and honorable tradition”.

That ancient and honorable tradition, the muse so to speak, Dr. Olaoye said she imbibed here. “The Romantic poets, Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge were among the those who first introduced me to the pleasures and delights as well as the forms and traditions of the craft”. She was quick to acknowledge the debt to her teachers here: “I will ever be grateful for the teachers through whom I developed a keen appreciation for the world of the poet, the echoes of their voices can be found throughout this collection”. Listen to Elaine Henry Olaoye in her own poetic voice:

*Poetry unlike bread
Is not for everyone*

*Poetry like life
Is everyone*

*Poetry like thought
Reaches for understanding*

*Poetry like feeling
Plumbs the depths of experience*

*Poetry like pain
Cries out in great suffering*

*Poetry like joy
Releases, laughs, energizes, roars*

*Poetry like humans
Is multifaceted, unpredictable, varied, unique*

*Poetry unlike bread
Is not for everyone*

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321
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Or again but in a different of reference Elaine Henry Olaoye writes:

*I am that I am
My forefathers only hope of retribution
Their dreams and long defaced plans*

Or listen to her in Antiguan speech rhythms in, "Our Real History":

*Come here gal
Listen to wah me ah say
You never too old
To discover more about de white man way
Me just sat down and read me real history
From a book Desmond Nicholson wrote
For the Antigua Museum library
Ah didn't know dat people were here
Since 1775 B.C.
And dat the Caribs and Arawaks
Followed in 35 A.D.
Awright me did know dat the Caribs and Arawaks*

*Were here before we so
But what struck me like never before
Ah de timeline, indicating how long
Civilization be pon dis island.*

It is a poetic view with range and depth, plumbing the depths of experience, seeing the old anew, penetrating the neat clichés in which life is often encapsulated to reveal deeper meaning. On November 24, 1994, Elaine Henry Olaoye, thanks to the Historical and Archaeological Society here, staged at the Museum, a unique presentation of her poetry, along with well-known Antiguan teacher and actor Edison Buntin and the poet, Nakbar.

Apart from the splendid reading of her poetry by all three, making for a most dramatic evening, there was Marlon Roberts, the flautist, son of the distinguished ear, nose and throat surgeon, Dr. George Roberts. Few who heard it will ever forget it. What? The duet of Elaine Olaoye and Edison Buntin reading Elaine's stunning historico-comic poem, "Royal Redonda", introduced by Marlon Roberts doing a Purcell sonata was just breathtaking. It was a most a most unique, and most moving way of presenting poetry. It was as if two pieces of music were being presented, the sonorous tones of the lines at times rising to outrage, against Purcell's music, was a new exercise of point-and-counterpoint. To be sure, it made poetry, like bread for everyone, as moving for each and all.

The emergence of Elaine Henry Olaoye as a published poet begs this question. There is already the world-renowned Jamaica Kincaid, then there is Veronica Evanson, also published, and now there is Elaine Henry Olaoye. Is there an Antiguan literature within the impressive body of Caribbean literature? And why is this Antiguan literature led in the main by women? Is sensitivity, the response to beauty and human feeling, the exploration of our being in the world, the preserve of the Antiguan female? And is their exclusion from power, making the power of feeling, the understanding of ourselves, in time and space their special preserve? At any rate, the emergence of these female Antiguan writers taking a place in world literature is more than a phenomenon. It is more than the Lambs responding to Lions who alone wrote history and literature. It is perhaps the Caribbean, in Aime Cesaire's famous phrase, making a contribution "at the rendezvous of human victory".

VIV RICHARDS—MORE THAN BATSMAN, MORE THAN MASTER BLASTER. AN ARTIST SUPREME.

Tim Hector

Since being the Guest Speaker at the Celebratory Dinner at Royal Antigua on Monday 13th February to mark Viv Richards' 100th century (achieved incidentally, on November 13 in Sydney, Australia) his hundredth Test Match following shortly after, with his century of catches being simultaneous, a number of people have asked me to publish the speech. Though I sought to resist them, arguing that this is election time and it would be odd for me to be writing on cricket at this time all insisted that I publish it now. Now, they demanded. So here goes.

Hon Minister of Education and Sports and Mrs. Harris, His Excellency Sir Vivian Richards, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

To think of Vivi Richards and to speak of him on this unique and momentous occasion offers a challenge. A serious challenge. For an ordinary person is asked to assess an extraordinary person, a mere mortal is asked to evaluate an immortal. As a matter of elementary fact, Isaac Vivian Richards has immortalised himself, Antigua and Barbuda, the Caribbean. Indeed immortalised a people and a continent. To substantiate the latter point I was in Ghana when Richards played his 100th Test Match, and caught his century of Test Match catches. In Ghana cricket is not played at any serious level. Yet I was privileged to hear Ghanaians and black South Africans speak not only with pride but in rapturous terms of Viv Richards. He represents then, not just an island, not only a Region, but a continent and a people. His achievements, outstanding as they are, represent the noblest and best aspirations of a Region, a continent and its diaspora.

I am told that in India when Viv Richards last toured there, an Indian came up to him and extolled him. When the man had finished paying tribute, he insisted he must kiss Viv's shoes! Viv embarrassed, urged the man that this was not necessary. The Indian fan insisted. He must do so. His very being demanded it, the man insisted. The man shook with the emotion of the moment. Viv relented. Viv belongs to Indians as well and they see in him something ennobling about the human spirit.

Then there is the story which I recently heard on this past West Indies tour of Australia. A sign was put up in the Australian crowd, by Australians which read, **Viv is God**. Fortunately, in Australia at the time, there

was present a local lay theologian, Rendell O'Neil. He assured concerned Australians that the sign was not blasphemous, it was only announcing the view of even the rabidly partisan Australian crowd, that Viv was undoubtedly a God of cricket. (General laughter from the audience)

We are here to celebrate then Vivi's 100 first class centuries and 100 test catches in 100 Test matches. No other West Indian achieved that remarkable feat of 100 first class centuries. And with West Indian batsmen in particular, being excluded from English County Cricket, it is unlikely that any other will so achieve in the foreseeable future.

Perhaps the best way to measure the significance of Vivi Richards' achievement is to assay and assess his overall performance against that of the great and renowned masters of cricket. And therefore, speaking of cricket and a cricketer, we will keep our eye on the ball from here on. W.G. Grace, the unquestioned Father of Batmanship made his first class debut in 1865 and made his 100th century in 1895 after batting for 1, 113 innings. The great Sir Jack Hobbs, thought by many respected judges of the game to be the greatest of all English batsmen, if not the greatest of all time, scored his hundred first class centuries between 1905 and 1923 in 821 innings. Sir Walter Hammond scored his hundred centuries between 1920 and 1935 in 680 innings. To be more contemporary M.C. Cowdrey scored his hundred centuries between 1950 and 1973 and it took him 1,035 innings. Glenn Turner of New Zealand scored his hundred centuries between 1964 and 1982 in 779 innings. With that constellation of stars fixed in the cricket firmament Vivi's achievement can now soar into space, in time. **Vivi Richards scored his century of centuries after 17 years (the Packer interval not inclusive) between 1972 and 1988 in 658 innings.**

The argument that more cricket is played now is put to rest, the almost almighty Dr. W.G. Grace played for 30 years, 13 more than Vivi and it took the amazing Grace 555 more innings than our Vivi Richards to accomplish the remarkable feat of 100 centuries. Vivi is truly astounding and astonishing. On top of that, the superlative Sir Jack Hobbs took 163 innings more than Vivi, which is equivalent to all **Test innings** of the great Sir Garfield Sobers who played 160 Test innings.

To be brief, among the exclusive club of Masters with 100 centuries Viv took less innings to do so, than did Grace, T.W. Hayward Hobbs, C.P. Mead, E.H. Hendren, F.E. Wooley, Herbert Sutcliffe, J.E. Jyldesley, W. Hammond, Sandham, L.E.G. Ames, T.W. Graveney, M.C. Cowdrey,

J.E. Edrich, G. L. Turner and D.L. Amiss. Viv is truly phenomenal. But not the brightest star in the firmament.

Against Don Bradman however, we have to be more respectful. Bradman took twenty years against Viv's seventeen, [Bradman played no cricket between the war years 1939–45] but Bradman whose statistics seem to defy the law of averages, took only 295 innings to reach 100 centuries. To put Vivi one up on the superlative Bradman, Bradman was age 39 on his 100th century, Viv was 36. Bradman lifted the spirits of battered England and downcast depression blues Australia after the war, as people looked to sport after the nasty brutishness of war to restore a real and deeper sense of humanity.

Therefore, it cannot be insignificant that Vivi is the only one on the list of 22 batsmen in the entire history of cricket with 100 centuries who is of African origin. Zaheer Abbas is Indian. If Joe Louis' defeat of Max Schemeling gave people the senses that Nazism could be overcome, Vivi's achievement must give downpressed Africans everywhere, a new sense of hope and ultimate triumph over racism and oppression. At any rate, it must confirm that given the opportunity we can reach heights as yet undreamt of.

Permit me now to develop a cricket schema of my own. West Indies cricket can be divided into four phases. First the era of Challenor who laid the foundations of West Indian batsmanship. Then the Headley era. Followed by the Weekes era. Then by the incomparable all-rounder Sir Garfield Sobers. And now the Richards epoch.

Headley I must say, in his 22 Test matches carried West Indies batting on his shoulders as none before or since. He was not nicknamed **Atlas** for nothing. Headley's Test average of 60.83 is third in the world behind Sir Don Bradman again and Headley is only .14 behind Graeme Pollock. And now this which I suppose will stun even close followers of the game. Of those who played 100 Test matches "Sir" Isaac Vivian Richards has the highest average of them all at 52.83 at present. Obviously it is my view that he belongs with the cricketing Knights—an honour he should be awarded. Even the Gods on Mount Olympus would agree and would welcome him among them with a special place.

All of you know, that Vivi scored the fastest Test century off 56 balls, but few of you I suspect would know that Vivi scored one of the fastest half centuries off balls received in Test cricket. Incidentally, that was

done in front of you, right here in Antigua at the Recreation Grounds off 33 balls in 1986 against England. Only Vivi's friend, Ian Botham is barely faster with a Test 50 off 32 balls against New Zealand in 1986. I need not go into Vivi's phenomenal achievement of the most runs in a single calendar year. That ought to be well enough known.

But a comparison with that other West Indian master Sobers is in order. Sobers in 93 Tests scored 8,032 Test runs in 160 Test innings. Viv so far in 104 Test matches has scored 7,714 runs that is 318 less than Sobers, but Viv has been at the wicket in Test cricket for only 156 innings, that is, four less than the master of cricket versatility Gary Sobers. Sobers has 109 catches to Viv's 104 but my calculation, not infallible though, shows that Sobers fielded 3 innings more than Viv. Sobers as the games greatest allrounder in facts and figures, and more so style, is definitely fabulous, but Viv with 100 centuries, 100 catches, in 100 Test Matches, plus an unbeatable 6000 runs in One Day cricket and a highest world record score in that genre of 189 is definitely fantabulous.

Add to that 23 Test centuries, 60 scores of over 50 or more (another West Indian record) 1 triple century, 8 double centuries and 21 scores over 150 is definitely in his own class. By the way, he is the only playing Test cricketer today to end a series, and in Australia of all places, with an average of 96 in 1979–80. Truly marvelous.

Some personal speculation is now in order. Viv stands locally, and owes his origin to Arrindell Babats Joseph, Alford Mannix, Sydney Walling, Leo Gore—(the best user of his feet to spinners that I have seen) Oscar Williams, Derek and Earl Michael, there is too, Hubert Anthonyson and Winston-Soanes, Eustace Tuss Matthews and Sylvester “Dews” Peters. I am speaking of a tradition of batting, fielding, spin and fast bowling. Few I am told fielded better at cover point than did Sydney Walling. To me Tuss Matthews locally is unsurpassed, only Vivi comes within a hair's breadth. But I have deliberately omitted one. Malcolm Richards Vivi's father. It is my view that Vivi inherits the power and aggression from Malcolm Richards, as well as the electric movement and anticipation. But it is also my view that Vivi is one of the best defensive batsmen in the world, his 69 not out in Australia just recently, and that marvelous innings in India to win the Test Match at Delhi comes to my mind. I am of the view that his elegant defensive style, his moment of patient, calculating, steady, though not slow, studded with immaculate, chess-like placement comes from his mother, a very fine woman. An interjection here, Viv's actual hundredth century against New South Wales, on November 13th was seen to be slow.

Playing the West Indies out of a hole when they were 93 for 4 against New South Wales mammoth 401. Yet when Viv played Gregg Matthews to fineleg for two to record his 100th century he had made this off 170 balls! Boycott's fastest century is off 185 balls. The class is self-evident.

And now to end. The people whose judgment I most trust on cricket are, from reading, Ranjitsinji, C.B. Fry and CLR James. From viewing, I have the highest regard for Richie Benaud, Everton Weekes (the best) and the late Daintes Livingstone, and though only locally famous, Pat Evanson. All of them have agreed that there are three elements in the great batsman. He must see the ball early. He must be quick with his feet (Viv is the fastest I have seen, followed by Weekes, Graveney, Hutton and M.C. Cowdrey, Bradman I did not see and Compton I could not assess). And the third is that he must be quick with the bat. But I think that Vivi brought a fourth category to the art of the great batsmanship—a sense of authority. What distinguishes Viv among the great batting masters is that he has brought to batsmanship this sense of authority. When Viv is at the wicket, his unique style of batting sends an unmistakable message to his opponents. I will not be dictated to, far less dominated. Not by Thompson, not by Lillee, not by anyone, Bedi, Venkat or Prasanna. By none. Just no one. I believe that this is the particular and peculiar result of coming from a small island with an unended and unseemingly unending history of external domination. Vivi from this small island, on the small 22 yards pitch anywhere in the world, will not permit himself to be dominated. It is a matter of necessity. And, as we all know, necessity is the mother of invention. Vivi invents and innovates to overcome the possibility of the domination he abhors. He predominates.

I did not see Bradman therefore, I have to rely on the doyen of cricket writers, Sir Neville Cardus for my comparison of "Sir" Vivian Richards with Sir Donald Bradman. Cardus wrote "Not by Bradman is the fancy made to roam; he for me is wholly a batsman, living, moving and having his being in cricket. His batsmanship delights one's knowledge of the game, his every stroke a dazzling precious stone in the game's crown.... The stuff of his batsmanship is skill, not sensibility. **Bradman, as I see and react to him, is technique in excelsis**".

Viv, as I see and react to him, is sensibility more than skill. Viv, as I see and react to him, has a majestic rhythm governing the slightest movement, which is present even on his unfruitful days. He does, of course, deviate from the conventions to innovate and create. Because like the artist Vivi is, he cannot, simply cannot, go on taking the line of least of resistance.

Vivi is forever seeking for the sheer joy of doing what was thought to be impossible. He punishes the length ball as well as the short. He plays the short ball, hooking it around, in duty bound, but with artistry supreme, off **the front foot**. He punishes the length ball, on a perfect length outside the off stump, through midwicket and mid-on, and can do so off **the back foot**. Like Chopin in music he chooses to write a study in black notes only. As Viv sometimes does by choosing to score in a particular innings mainly on the off or on, as the fancy roams. Like Picasso the master of time, he makes us see beyond the mere three dimensional. Often the daring, exhilarating, joyous stroke as Picasso did with his brush work. Of course it is risky, and now and again he pays the penalty. And we in our dejection will often sink as low as we rosse in and to his sublime moments. I am told that his father Malcolm Richards was angry all night into the morning when Vivi attempted to hit the spinner out of the ground at Sydney and perished, and with him West Indies hopes. But that is in the nature of the artist. To me Bradman was the technician, the craftsman in excelsis. Viv Richards is an artist—A supreme artist. He stands for all that is creative, innovative, joyous and excellent in us, urging us to do as he does, in our other fields. Thank you Vivi. Thank you all.

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328

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Outlet, February 24, 1989

ANTIGUAN MAKES GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO OVERCOMING UNDER-DEVELOPMENT: PAGET HENRY

Tim Hector

It would seem that a new era, in thought and therefore practice, is dawning for Antigua & Barbuda. There is a first rate novelist from Antigua, already reviewed in these columns, with Jamaica Kincaid having established for Antigua & Barbuda, a niche in the pantheon of world literature, with two top-flight novels. We remind, that in the long dark night of colonialism lasting some 350 years, only one novel barely deserving of the name—*With Silent Tread* by Frieda Cassin—was published in 1890. Other than that, colonialism was an immense blight and weight choking the creative spirit, more so in this small island.

It is therefore not accidental, that since 1980, the year of *Outlet's* regular publication, people from this small neck of the woods, have come to feel that our thought matters, that ideas matter, that there is significance in our history, that our sojourn in this 12 by 9 islet beneath the stars is fitting material both for the imagination and the rigorous analysis of the social scientist. Do we claim too much for *Outlet* and *ACLM*? Perhaps. But we think not. The truth of the matter is that people know that when they write, be it our fine playwright Dorbrene O'Marde, our noted literary critic Alphonse Derrick (whose critical essay on Naipaul has been recently published) or the outstanding Jamaica Kincaid, that they will receive critical attention and due acclaim in *Outlet*. That is no small incentive to the imaginative writer or the social scientist.

More than that, against the tide, with little or no money, but with a dedicated and committed staff, *Outlet* has dared to publish, has risked imprisonment as a daily routine of life, in order to parse and analyse public affairs, to bring matters of Arts & Letters to public notice and concern, to provide quality sports coverage, and examine in-depth, and not in news in briefs, world events, as well as ideas and trends which are moving humanity in our time. This must have had some impact on writers in various disciplines from this small part of the world. That cannot be gainsaid. All that was written by no means in self-praise, but to draw to the attention of Antigua and Barbuda, another Antiguan writer who has just published a major work on Antigua.

This writer is Professor PAGET HENRY who has just published *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua*. It is a fine book

worthy of a fine mind. I want to make myself clear from the beginning. This, the first of the serious political and sociological analysis of Antigua in book form, will have lasting value, not just for Antigua, but the entire Caribbean. Secondly, it is a major event, and an inestimable contribution to the cultural history of the Caribbean. And, in my view, the book breaks new ground in the examination of our cultural history in the region, by seeing the cultural as part of a continuum of the political and economic. I would want to say that as political and economic history this book by Paget Henry does have its equal and perhaps its betters, but as analysis of cultural development or underdevelopment it is unsurpassed by any I know.

With that said I must begin with one of Dr. Paget Henry's fundamental theses, "That as a result of EXTENDED external control the sectors and subsectors that comprise these (cultural) systems tend to lose their links with local cultural demands". He continues with his crucial point: "Consequently as the demand for cultural products increases, it does not necessarily result in the growth of the local cultural system, or an increase in the output of its products. Rather these demands tend to be met by the outputs of the cultural system of the dominant power. As a result, the more the peripheral project succeeds, the more will certain sectors of the cultural system experience LONG PERIODS OF CONTRACTION". Now I am sure that you will see why there was the long introduction to the piece. It is my contention that we could be at the end of one of "the long periods of cultural contraction" in terms of local output, with this burst of high quality output from a number of Antiguan sources.

But before I go further, Dr. Henry's point must be established beyond dispute. Between 1960-1970 the Antiguan economy grew at the rate of 8.5 % per annum, as a result of further peripheralization of the economy. That is to say, Antigua became more and more dependent on the Metropolitan Centre—the U.S.—for investment capital and became more and more a peripheral society. In spite of this economic growth, local cultural output contracted, and cultural demand was met "by the outputs of the cultural system of the dominant power". In this same period Mas declined from Splendours of Egypt, Skele-hoppers, the Mexicans, and Atlantis Revellers, to the rinsel and pretty paper of a number of unimaginative presentations. The Steelband fell off from its throne till it has become a tourist Dinner side-show, and even more of a side-show to the Hi-Fi's at Carnival. Except for Dorbrene O'Marde, Drama became the presentation of the vernacular with line after line of crude slapstick jokes, signifying neither terror nor pity, or laughter, with tears. We could

go on and on, but suffice it to say, that Television in Antigua has given no fillip to local cultural output, but has become a medium where the dominant power—the U.S.—might display its wares, its endless bouts of blood-letting or its topless and bottomless (or both) performers in a series of simulated or real copulations. The mind is first morphined, then leadened, afterwards deadened except by the most gross stimulation.

Permit me a necessary interjection on another topic. Paget Henry makes a contribution to the debate between Dr. C.Y. Thomas and myself about the nature of the Colonial State, that it did not develop SEPARATE from plantation slavery and that mode of production, but that the Colonial State was INTRINSIC to that mode of production. Writes Dr. Henry, unaware of the debate, “Consequently throughout the entire mercantile period (1500–1845) the Antiguan State remained highly militarized. The political status that it imposed on the imported working class was that of a conquered people. Thus in addition (to warding off) Carib attacks, the role the State played in acquiring a working class contributed greatly to its militarization.”

So that it is clear the State, the Colonial State, in these parts has a long history of the application of brute force, or military force, or the threat of military force as the solution to political and social problems, as the best means of preserving the status quo to the profit of an external power and an absentee owning class. I need not elaborate the point here any further.

Dealing with the post-emancipation period, Dr. Henry makes some telling points, he proves that the Missionaries, through Christianization had first of all “to contribute to the legitimization of slavery”. The Church sanctified slavery. That is, or ought to be, well known. After emancipation and “with this long exposure behind them, the ruling elites, both local and imperial, very quickly made Christianization the POLICY of the State in the period following emancipation. In this phase of the program, the Methodists and the Moravians were joined by the established Church.”

Allied to this Colonization by Christianization was the colonial education system, which following Shirley Gordon, Dr. Henry shows that the Colonial Office laid it down that “the lesson books of the colonial schools should also teach the mutual interest of the mother Country and her dependencies, the rational basis of their connection, and the domestic and social responsibilities of the coloured races.” In other words, the oppressed, were to reproduce themselves in the image and likeness of the

oppressor, through education and religion, thus re-inforcing the dominant ideology of the white superior race, whose dominant position in the economy was also justified and sanctified by education and religion.

In plain terms, Antigua like many other Caribbean colonies, had no Hindu or Moslem religion, no independent knowledge producing system to use as resistance against the colonizers. Consequently we become defenders of the very Empire that subjugated and subordinated us as race and as nation. This is a serious, perhaps unique predicament. The point as made by Dr. Henry is not new, it is the synthesis of the political, economic, religious and educational which is new.

I want now to come to a key point, the very key point, the essential contribution of Dr. Henry to Antiguan and Caribbean history. He is accounting for what he terms "the state of static underdevelopment in Antigua" from the late 19th century and into the 20th century.

Dr. Henry's point had to be stated at length. It is a new interpretation, all the more valid, and therefore a paraphrase would not do justice. Dr. Henry shows that with the emergence of liberal capitalism in England during the mid 19th century, the old mercantilist protection of sugar production for the English speaking Caribbean, as the sugar bowl of Europe, collapsed. According to Dr. Henry "this new international (capitalist) order had created an impasse for Antiguan society from which its ruling elites could not extricate it. In other words they were unable to manipulate or transform the economic system so that it could continue to grow under changed conditions." Continues Dr. Henry "This would have meant doing one of the following things. In the first case, it would have meant finding a way to restore Antigua's peripheral importance through cheaper sugar or a shift to a new staple that was similar to the shift out of tobacco." This Dr. Henry is very profound and he is pulling no punches. He is requiring and insisting that Antiguan at least understand their dilemma historical and current. Let him continue. "In the second case it would have meant abandoning the peripheral role and creating a NATIONAL ECONOMY with deeper roots in the local and regional markets."

Needless to say the planters did neither. The latter course, creating a National Economy was unthinkable. Because they, the planters, felt no sense of belonging to Antigua. Born here or born here not, their home and their Culture was England, the same novel, *With Silent Tread*, by

Freida Cassin, records this state of mind amply. The English, (like the Americans) could not and cannot create an Antiguan National economy.

The point is that the nationalist movement, led by Bird here, repeated the same horror of the Planters. They persisted with Sugar until the planters collapsed. And after the collapse of the British Planters, they found American planters to set up tourist plants. National economy they could not and did not establish, hence “the state of static underdevelopment.”

I am not suggesting that Paget Henry makes this point about the National Movement and its chronic and persistent failure to establish a national economy oriented “to local and regional markets” but not excluding international markets. Making that point, would have made the book revolutionary rather than academic. The point is, that point is inescapable once he establishes that premise.

He is precise and concise, in condemning the failure of the planters to transform the economy even in their own interest. As he wrote the planters settled for “stabilizing the social order around or in spite of this blockage” and concludes Dr. Henry it was from this “internalising of the blockage that the subsequent stagnation and underdevelopment of our society derived”.

You cannot want it more scientifically put. Bird and the nationalist movement were called into being to remove “the blockage” to the creation of a national economy. They too failed miserably. PLM came. They likewise failed miserably, side tracked into stabilizing the social order. It is for that reason that ACLM exists, called up by history to remove a century old blockage.

I would want to draw to Dr. Henry’s view a point which he made. The planters too, like the present neo-nationalists in power, tried “structural adjustment.” The difference is that there was no IMF to direct and determine this “structural adjustment.” What did the planters do in 1890? Let Dr. Henry speak: “Wages dropped between 20 and 25 percent and unemployment reached such proportions that in 1897 the Governor considered opening soup kitchens to feed the hungry.” The workers bore the structural adjustment without soup kitchens as at present, though there was no Industrial Court then to mercilessly or tardily regulate wages to the disadvantage of the worker. “Under these condition” continued Dr. Henry “workers’ demands for land increased, but the planters refused to

entertain any discussion on the question of land distribution. Not until the Royal Commission of 1898 recommended a land settlement program for peasants were the planters forced to make concessions.”

Dr. Henry carries the argument even further: “But these were so minor that by 1917 the program (of land reform) had virtually collapsed. Consequently the economic situation of the working class remained basically unchanged”. Always unchanged for the working class. Nor is he done with the analysis at that point, for, says Professor Henry “This blocking of the path to an independent peasantry resulted in outbursts and confrontations that gave rise to nationalist resistance”.

At that point Dr. Henry stops. I go further. The very nationalists called into power to create an independent peasantry as the basis of a national economy, betrayed the very cause that brought them to power. That betrayal has produced not only “a state of static underdevelopment” but it has led to the political demoralisation of an entire country, as it spreads its private and public parts for the ceaseless penetration of foreign domination.

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334

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Dr. Henry, to be sure, has made a remarkable contribution to the understanding of our political economic and cultural underdevelopment. His point, to be fair, is not so much the analysis, but the hope that analysis will contribute to the overcoming of the dilemma.

TO BE CONTINUED

Outlet, June 21, 1985

ANTIGUA HAS REACHED A FORK IN THE ROAD: PAGET HENRY

Tim Hector

Early in his book, *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua* Professor Paget Henry shows, that just “below the Christian surface” there persist among the Antiguan population, a great attachment “to the magical traditions” known more commonly as “Obeah”. “Consequently” writes Dr. Henry “the belief sector of this cultural system came to be dominated by highly anglicized versions of Christianity that rested on a layer of magic”.

As Africans, our African traditions were deculturized out of us. From different parts of West Africa, even East Africa, there was no unifying religion, no general view of the world and the place of man in it, which is what religion provides. But the sense of dead ancestors or spirits of the nether world who intervene in this world for good or for ill, persisted. Indeed, Christianity with its hierarchy of good Angels under St. Peter, and its hierarchy of evil spirits re-inforced this belief system. And up until today people balance this profession of Christianity with this practice of placating or invoking evil spirits through obeah. Psychologists might suggest that the co-existence of these two belief systems necessarily produces a split personality, a schizoid character. And, to be sure we are plagued with this phenomenon among ALL classes of the population.

The essential point to grasp in that combination of magic and Christianity in the belief system of our society, is that it is directly related to the economy of the country. The problem is economic, and since politics is a concentrated expression of economics, then it is also political.

The mass of the population in Antigua or any Caribbean country are always on the borderline. The job lost, means another not easily found, and the hardships attendant upon that condition. The middle classes have no investment in industry, large-scale agriculture, banking, tourism or insurance. They are insecure, in spite of their higher salaries. No class, except the foreign entrepreneurs, accumulates capital, and develops the SOCIAL CONFIDENCE which comes with ownership, participation and control. All classes are terribly insecure. And as Shakespeare long ago laid it down in one of his famous tragedies “Security is mortals’ chiefest enemy”.

The consequence of this is that people naturally seek security in religion, the benevolence of God, and failing that or supplementing that, they seek protection in their insecurity from the ministrations or prepa-

rations of the Obeah man or woman. For it is held they do not succeed, they cannot get a job, not because there are no jobs, but because there is an evil spirit. To secure what they have, they must “guard” themselves. To get what they do not have they must be assured that the crystal ball has ordained it for them. And so on, and so forth, and so fifth.

The synthesis of religion and magic (obeah if you prefer) is economic. It is rooted in our lack of ownership and control. It is rooted in our lack of creation and participation. It is rooted in the fact that we do not, through social participation, exercise social control over the factors that shape our lives. Therefore magic and religion become essential props as we make our way through the jungle of insecurity, fraught and teeming with dangers—known and unknown. Hence the split personality. Hence too, the fatalism, the resigned acceptance of injustice and inequality, even inferiority. Whatever else, Dr. Paget Henry has got to be congratulated for bringing this problem out of the closet and into the open. My only regret (and a writer cannot say everything) is that he did not elaborate on this with his searching scientific analysis.

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336
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We now have to make a big leap. Dr. Henry is discussing the two-party system as it existed and exists in Antigua. And again he is most profound in his observation. Dr. Henry wrote: “In spite of the formal commitment to a permanent opposition the attitude of both parties [that have governed—ALP or PLM] to the management of state power is exactly the same as their attitude toward party politics The real object of party competition thus becomes the elimination of the opposition, not just winning”. He goes on to point out that patronage has become more and more important whereby the ruling party uses state funds to keep a large mass of supporters in no real productive work, but ensuring their hapless dependence on the State and therefore the party in power. The Party in Power begins the contest with these “votes” in the bag, by controlling this mass of livelihoods. Regardless of its policies and its outrages, the Party in power controls this mass of livelihoods, dependent on State patronage. Democracy disappears in the facade or charade of such elections. Thus, Dr. Paget Henry clinically observes, that “the major abridgements to democratic practices that have occurred in the post-colonial period have been attempts of the party in power to control the actions of the opposition”. A system is destroying itself.

Dr. Paget Henry is not done with his analysis yet. He accounts for the demise of the PLM. He says that the merger of APM representing the professionals, and ABDM representing the conservatives, plus a left-

wing led by Tim Hector, and the whole superstructure based on a Trade Union with the same limited labourist conceptions as the parent AT&LU from which it sprang, was inherently unstable. It therefore fractured into its component parts. APM or APP merging with the Bird regime it had opposed. ABDM collapsing as the rump of PLM, and UPM becoming the political expression of its labourist trade union base. The left wing of the PLM remaining intact and consolidating itself as the only viable unit, WITH A CLEAR VIEW as ACLM. "Consequently" writes Dr. Henry "in the period following the election [in 1980] public debate has been primarily between the ACLM and the ALP. This debate has moved predominantly on the ideological level without clear electoral implications".

I am not interrupting the writer, in the interest of allowing his own observations, and hypotheses, to emerge. In its role says Dr. Henry "the ACLM continued to articulate the cost of the dependent model of development and began outlining the major features of its socialist alternative. These activities forced the political elites to produce appropriate arguments that justified the model of development and the capitalist order of society. As a result, these two perspectives became the major competing frameworks for the interpretation of Antigua". Continuing on the same theme Dr. Henry observes "In spite of its poor performance at the polls, the ACLM has remained a vital force on the ideological scene. It is responsible for one of the two competing perspectives in which Antiguan society and its problems are discussed. The political elites represent the other perspective, which is no longer dominated by the technocrats of the Caribbean Commission but by those of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank".

I do not wish to quibble with Dr. Henry about how he sees ACLM. I do wish to state that to have developed an alternative perspective for this country to articulate the cost and dangers of the current model is a kind of contribution which parties that have won elections have not made.

On the question of ACLM's "poor performance at the polls", little need be said. ACLM contested only one election. In that same election, ACLM contested only 9 of the 17 seats. ACLM knew that with two mass parties ALP and PLM in the contest, there was no way that a third party could seriously alter the electoral results. ACLM entered the 1980 election for two reasons. Number one, ACLM was demonstrating by practice the theoretical principle that once the Electoral road is open, a revolutionary party must participate. Secondly, ACLM entered the 1980 Election confident that it would be agitating for a new programme and a new policy.

In that, we succeeded, because friend and foe acclaimed the 1980 ACLM manifesto, not because it was filled with promises, but because it showed a profound understanding of the problems facing Antigua, and put forward solutions.

Yet honesty demands that we say in public what we have said in private. We were disappointed with the 1980 Election results. But we did not cry foul. We did not attribute our loss to fraud, or the intervention of imperialism. He who loses one day will win on another. The loss, by no means meant, that we were wrong. Events have proved us more right. Next time ACLM will contest, and win or lose, the struggle for change will continue, in spite of the power of the IMF and World Bank who are responsible for the perspectives of the ruling elite against whom we struggle.

It remains enough for us to note that Dr. Henry observes that "After thirty years, the effort to make Antigua into a locus of production for the major (imperial) centres is indeed a disappointing one and must raise questions about the viability of this strategy". Moreover says Dr. Henry "this failure" stems from the "almost impossible situation in which their program has been caught." For says Dr. Henry with irrefutable sense, common and uncommon sense: The situation is impossible because industrialization by foreign capital "is based upon capturing some of the capital and the entrepreneurial skill that the central countries have been exporting to the periphery. But export capital does not have as its primary goal the industrialization of the periphery. Rather this export of capital takes place because it can further the expansion of capital accumulation in the centre". So indeed, the more they invest, the more they export the product and the profit of our cheap labour, and the more we remain underdeveloped.

The concluding words of Dr. Henry's book are important and instructive. Antigua in his view, at this juncture of history "has reached another fork in the road, another point of possible transition".

The phrasing here is in my view wonderful. The certainties are expressed with scientific certitude, the probabilities are expressed in the knowledge that predictions would be speculative. As social scientist par excellence, Dr. Henry understands that it is the movement of people which both makes and changes the course of history. The best of the social scientists have always conceded, that fundamental changes in history come "like a thief in the night". No one knows the hour, and no one knows the issue. One engages and one sees.

Dr. Henry's book in its nature does not have the narrative style of Thucydides or Gibbon, of Carlyle or a Michelet, of a Charles Beard or a CLR James. Dr. Henry has written a textbook designed for the student which is not to say it cannot be read by the general reader with profit. However his account of the rise of the ALP, its twisting and turning from its original and "mildly democratic socialist" objectives, till it has become the hand-maiden of external powers and capital should be read by every Antiguan with profit. So too his account of the rise and demise of the PLM, but his discussion of the contraction or static underdevelopment of cultural production is indispensable to understand our predicament.

Dr. Henry has established a school of Antiguan scholarship on things Antiguan and Caribbean on a high plane. Few scholars can match with such economy his account of the rise of the U.S. commercial empire and how its tentacles nestle everywhere and settle anywhere, creating wealth and power at the imperial centre, and creating deepening underdevelopment in Antigua and the rest of the Third World. Dr. Henry has made an inestimable contribution to the understanding of our history and our current dilemma. Antigua owes him a debt of immense gratitude.

Outlet, June 28, 1985

NOT BY SPIRITS, BUT BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF OURSELVES AND OUR OWN CREATIONS THROUGH STRUGGLE: PAGET HENRY

Tim Hector

I come now to the last, but not the least of 20th century thinkers and artists from Antigua and Barbuda. Such will come into their own in the 21st century. They will be accepted and acclaimed by their own, only then, as our definitive contribution at the rendezvous of human victory over usurpers acclaimed in the name of Capital.

I shall not keep you in suspense. He is Dr. Paget Henry. A man, a tenured Professor at the distinguished Brown University in the U.S., who returns here every year at Carnival and who is never asked, not once, by Radio or TV to say a word on what passes for culture here and now. Official society does not wish to know and does not wish society in general to know. Knowledge is the enemy. Dr. Paget Henry's book *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua* bears the long and difficult name of his doctoral thesis. Properly seen, it is the definitive History of Antigua and Barbuda. It is, as such the most powerful tool given to Antiguan and Barbudans after independence, and in 1985, by which we could understand ourselves, our struggles, our apathy, our submission and subjugation, even our confusion. Globalisation makes this confusion twice confounded. Paget Henry, his historical work provided a key to unlock the padlock of that confusion.

It is now a commonplace aphorism that a people without knowledge of its past history is like a tree without roots. It is my view, that no Antiguan and Barbudan, can lay claim to be educated, that is, rooted, who has not read Dr. Paget Henry's history of Antigua & Barbuda. It follows then, that it is my view, that for every fifth form and sixth form student Paget Henry's book, should be required reading. It is not so. Not so because we do not see the work and struggle of and for decolonisation as our mission, personal and national. One reason why Paget Henry's book is not read here is that it very sharply contradicts the present. Dr. Paget Henry's book asserts that "where growth is dependent it leads inexorably to the denationalisation of the cultural system." It is that denationalisation we are now experiencing as the rulers trumpet false and dependent growth, based on Dato Tan or a Texan.

To the best of my knowledge, and I have read not a few, Paget Henry's work is one of the first history books of the English speaking Caribbean,

to assert on behalf of the people of Antigua and Barbuda, that here “African political tradition were kept alive by the symbolic crowning of kings of various ethnic groups.” Hence King Court, which an English apologist for slavery, bastardised and fictionalised into “Prince Klass”. We today accept that fictionalisation. We live, most comfortably, not with Claude Levi-Strauss ennobling myths, but with the fictions of our downpressors about ourselves. That is why we are as we are.

On the contrary, Dr. Paget Henry in his work, tried to show how in shaping our culture, ordinary people, tried even symbolically, and long before the symbolists in art and literature, to preserve the essence of our African existence, against overwhelming odds. In Paget Henry’s history of Antigua, is one of the most brilliant and insightful explanations of the Belief Sector, in the entire historiography and sociology of the Caribbean. I am suggesting that this prevailing religious practice, obeah, never spoken seriously and often hidden, is at the root of our deranged society. Let us see.

I am going to quote it at length. For every time I read it myself (and I have done so more than a score of times) I am enlightened. Dr. Paget Henry argues, no, demonstrates, that from the time of our crossing the Middle Passage, what went on here was a process of “deculturalisation”. He wrote it this way: “In the belief sector, major losses were notable in the basic ontology [the theory of being] that unified the system of religious beliefs. Absent from the pyramid was the apex, or the supreme being, and the two sides that represented the nature-gods and the ancestors. Along with these were lost the mythologies that explained the creation of the world and the place of man in it.” Straightforward, but make sure you grasp every word.

And now comes the gravamen of the matter. “Essentially what was left” writes Professor Paget Henry “of the original pyramid was its base. Thus magic and some degree of ancestor worship became prominent features of the emerging Afro-Caribbean cultural system.” Now, this Paget Henry is a deep fellow. Though when you see him in the flesh, like Ralph Ellison’s, *Invisible Man*, he becomes invisible because “you refuse to see him.” However, follow him carefully. He says: “This magi-cisation of the belief sector resulted in the prevalence of a world-view [Hegel’s *Weltanschung*] among Afro-Antiguans that is still known as obeah.” This obeah then, is a kind of prism, if you prefer, a glasses, through which Afro-Antiguans see and interpret the world. That is a profoundly serious excavation of our true selves. Remember well, we

lost the essence, the apex rather, of our own African religion. What remained was the base. And it is the base that became the super-structure, the world-view. And says Paget Henry "Like that of the Caribs, this magical world-view was largely devoid of religious devotion and centred around rituals for securing the assistance of evil powers in solving life-problems."

(I am not in agreement with Dr. Paget Henry that obeah involves appeal to "evil powers". I think he falls into metaphysics there. Believers in obeah believe that, by its practice, they are fighting "evil spirits" which is the real cause of their woe and downpression, and which have been placed on them, by the alien other, their neighbour or former friend. All woe comes from the envy and evil of our neighbours and friends. The obeah practitioner is not seeking evil spirits. He or she is seeking to overcome all-encompassing evil. However, the disagreement is only a refinement, not a fundamental issue.)

Crucially, Dr. Paget Henry continues "This (obeah) world-view assumed the existence of a number of vengeful, malicious, nocturnal characters called "jumbies". Jumbies were believed to strangle children, rob people, and frighten older people." More correctly, the setting of jumbies on you, by another, was the cause of your downpression, illness and general woe, the real cause of poverty and misery becoming greater immiseration. The external exploiting enemy was not the cause of personal and national woe, but the neighbour, the friend. The problem was not caused by social forces, but by spiritual agents.

Continues, Professor Henry "From the existence of these beings, (Jumbies or Duppies) there followed a whole series of rituals of contacting them" [through a mediator between man and the spirit world. The mediator known as the Obeah man or more effectively the Obeah woman]. Invariably, one "saw" the obeah man or woman, not to initiate the setting of jumbies on another, but to ward off omnipresent danger. Or, because one was convinced that something had gone wrong in one's life or family. Invariably the obeah man or woman confirmed the suspicion that it was a neighbour or friend who was the cause of the misery complained of, and not the system under which one lived. It was indeed a world-view and it permeated all levels of society.

With characteristic humour, Dr. Henry adds, that "A popular and still well-known way of getting rid of a jumbie that you have unexpectedly run into is to take off your outer garment and to put it back on inside out."

I suspect that with the coming of electricity one does not unexpectedly run into these spirit characters anymore, either as European ghosts or African jumbies. However, with or without electricity, the belief system persists. Especially in the political realm, in government and opposition, but no less in the daily realm of everyday survival, of everyday citizens.

Dr. Henry continues: "The roots of this world-view are clearly West African, as similar ones could be found there. On Antigua, however, they came to constitute the essence of a belief system that had lost its mythic and religious dimensions. Along with this magicisation, the belief sector also experienced a degree of hybridisation. That is, either because of its losses or subordinate position, the (obeah) system absorbed some of the magical elements of the European system. A good example of this was (is) the divining procedures based on the use of the Bible."

Then Dr. Paget Henry makes the quantum leap to which his descriptive analysis has been tending, ineluctably. Says he:

As in the case of the English cultural system, the arts and knowledge producing sectors of African cultural systems proved impossible to re-constitute. Compared to its vitality in traditional Africa and its close relationship to the belief sector, the arts system of the creolised cultural system that developed in Antigua was virtually dead. All that remained of this vibrant sector were music, dancing and vestiges of folklore. The rich tradition in sculpture, carving and painting did not survive as they did in Haiti, which broke out of peripheral domination much earlier.

Grasp the branch of the point and not the leaves. In Antigua the essence of the African religious system was lost by slave captivity and enslavement itself. Especially so with the polyglot of tribes which were thrown together at random and in subjugation here. Overwhelmed with the sorrow of alienation, the African could only hold onto the base of his once vital religion, through which he once determined his equal and dignified place in the universe. Subordinated in plantation degradation of his humanity into "thingness", mere labour power, to be owned and exchanged, he relied upon "spirits" to ward off the threats coming from both alien slave brother and sister, and moreso from oppressing master in plantation relations of production. The daily way out of this misery, this excruciating suffering, was found in dependence on jumbies, who would "guard" him or "her" against ever present disaster. This became the prevailing world-view.

“Man to man so unjust, you don’t know who to trust”, “keep way from company”; “God made us high and low, and ordered our estate”; “only you friend can hurt you”; “partnership is leaky-ship”; “only His grace can save a wretch like me”; “don’t put ‘pon put”; “stoop to conquer”; “look out for number one”. All these are but a few of the conceptions by which we live making all social cohesion, all class interests, if not impossible, then, for sure, superficial.

Locked out of large-scale agriculture, large-scale commerce, large-scale industry and banking, the certified elite turns non-participation and non-involvement into Respectability. Respectability, in its essence, seeks reward in un-critical, undisturbed, long-service, satisfying only consumption imperatives, with honours from alien King or Queen, as ultimate reward.

Ever mushrooming schisms among Christian denominations cross divides and subdivides the divided mass. Race, colour and variegated shades of skin compound the divisions of the social whole. A community is not formed. Foreign control becomes more foreign. Diversification of the economy becomes diversification of the foreigners in ownership and control. A people have been freed. But, a community has not been formed. And less and less so.

Remember in the Belief Sector obeah deals with these life concerns. Concerns such as love and marriage, promotion on the job, health, and general insecurities, in short all the fundamentals of life and living. While official religion deals with after-life. Each however, drawing on the other to create the delusionary world of an alienated existence. In the current context, unregulated entry of Caribbean migrants, mainly of the unskilled, intensifies the dislocations, the obeah practices, the worker-on-worker violence and the woman-and-woman contentions. Divisiveness, violence, crime and apathy increase.

Despite, or because of, the emergence of a local political directorate, foreign domination manipulates the political-directorate, in government and Opposition, as though they were social putty, always softened by ‘anonymous’ donations. The political directorate, in turn, relies upon patronage and the cunning of the con-man, in matters large and small. And so they keep the divided, isolated, atomised and therefore, unconscious mass in their place. Then and therefore, do they maintain their toe-hold on political power. In sum too, this inauthentic Belief Sector, which mediates actual economic and political experience, supports the

inauthentic and foreign controlled, but always volatile, social arrangement or derangement.

In this inauthentic potpourri, politics degenerates into singing-meeting and prayer-meeting. Added to this is the verbal hype of show-boating, or empty-headed populism, plus a substantial dose of modern razzmatazz, as new magic. The manichean division from the world of obeah, namely: They, scoundrels; and We, goody-two-shoes, predominates. Only the most unrelenting critique of this inauthentic Belief Sector, while laying bare economic and political realities, plus a categorical rejection of its simplistic populist ways, can lead to a new organisation of production in diversification. This, of course, with the producers democratically self-organised at work and in community. And too, in firm alliance, with an ideologically equipped and committed, but ever-expanding core. Otherwise, the inauthentic Belief Sector mediates and reproduces the inauthentic economic and political sector, as now.

In consequence, not by struggle did we see ourselves becoming masters of the island, but by spirits, jumbies, by magic so to speak. And this plus say, the Psalms of the European Bible, became the way and the light, wither to relief or personal salvation. Obeah was the sigh of the oppressed, the opiate of the oppressed masses, the illusion of a delusionary world. An inauthentic social derangement which reproduces itself, results.

Because, unlike Haiti, we were more cut off from the vibrant apex of our African religious system, we were cut off too from its rich traditions in sculpture, carving and painting which did not survive as they did in Haiti. Haiti liberated itself at the beginning of the 19th century, while by the end of the 20th century we were still not masters of the island, still dispossessed, still, as in the beginning, carriers of waiters and makers of beds for alien capital accumulation.

In sum then, Dr. Paget Henry has shown that the economic situation is the basis of social consciousness. But other elements such as the Belief Sector, also exercise influence upon the course of historical life, and in many cases such beliefs predominate, in that they do not allow people to see their real conditions of life and the real causes of our wretched and dependent condition.

I kidded myself that in one article I could have discussed Reg Samuel and Dr. Paget Henry. But you will have noted that if you do not understand Professor Henry, you cannot fully understand the Maestro, Reg

Samuel. For in him, Reg Samuel, the rich tradition of African sculpture and the European tradition have transcended the Creole hybrid, to become its own independent statement.

Moreover, Paget Henry, a 20th century intellectual giant of Antigua and Barbuda, is one of the few historians, West Indian or Metropolitan, who discusses the Belief Sector both in its conception of Being and as a theory of Knowledge, and how that Belief Sector, mediates both the economic sector and the cultural sector. It is a triumph of history and historical writing.

(More on Dr. Paget Henry next time.)

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DR. PAGET HENRY AND AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

Tim Hector

This is Black History Month. And I am discussing Dr. Paget Henry who is Black and is a Historian. But as a black historian Paget Henry since his student days, his doctoral thesis, his history of Antigua and Barbuda published in 1985, concerned itself with what Black and West Indian historians, even metropolitan historians do not concern themselves with. Namely, the **Belief Sector**. That is why we have economic history, or social history, or military history. Far too often what women and men believe, and how these beliefs mediate the social and economic conditions in which the very men and women whose story, or history one is relating at a given point in time in a particular space, forms no part of the story or history. Paget Henry went in a new direction. Glory be to him. It was logical then from this discussion, his delineation of the Belief Sector in Antigua and Barbuda's history, that Dr. Paget Henry would go on to discuss **African philosophy**.

African philosophy is supposed to be a non-existent category. Africans, western civilisation would have itself and all others believe, thought nothing. The same could not be said about the Chinese, because the works of Confucius or Lao Tse have been preserved. Nor about Indians, because Buddhism has exercised world influence. But it could be said about Africans, because the philosophic writings of Africans were destroyed by **conquest**, beginning, say with Alexander of Macedon, known in Western history as Alexander the Great, and continuing with Islamic invasions and conquest. The truth of the matter is every people, be they Europeans, Indians, Chinese, Africans must, **as an act of living**, reach determinations about the universe. How they came to be, what they exist for, and how they can become more human, that is, less and less of the animal evolutionary past.

Now I am going to say that Dr. Paget Henry is making a most distinguished, indeed a world-historical contribution to African thought, that is to say, African philosophy. He got there, mark you, by first working on the history of Antigua and Barbuda and inquiring why our world view manifested itself primarily as **obeah**. That is, African conceptions, cut off from their original base, by our random distribution here without tribal continuity. We saw that in the first part of my article. Now we are going to go into some deeper waters. But don't worry dear reader, we shall ride

every mounting wave, however high, not only safely but with pleasure on this journey into uncharted seas.

Professor Paget Henry says cogently that “throughout the **African world**” at this point in historical time, there is “the loss of economic sovereignty.” But, says Dr. Henry, it is at this moment of loss of sovereignty in Africa and the Diaspora, which he calls quite nicely **Africana**, that there is a growth of “philosophical autonomy and creativity.” He says this is most appropriate because with the decline in the economic sphere, we might find “the potential for important intellectual innovations,” which will strengthen “the foundations of our collective identity”. So, the exploration of our own African ideas and systems of thought might give us, shall we say, new impulses, for being in this world, in a new way, and collectively.

I want to tell you then that Dr. Paget Henry is doing this in a wonderful piece entitled “*Philosophy and the Caribbean Intellectual Tradition*”. This article is what I call his prolegomena. Or, for simplicity’s sake, his introduction to his major philosophical work entitled **Caliban’s Reason—An Introduction to Afro-Caribbean Philosophy**. So let us embark, on a canoe, in deep philosophical waters, in which, unlike Ulysses, we may at the seafarers end, find a new way of being, collectively. This is no play-play journey.

Dr. Henry says straight away, this: “The philosophical contributions of our African heritage are **not** engaged.” That’s heavy hitting. But what follows is even heavier: “The **invisibility**” writes Professor Henry of this African philosophic tradition “is to a large extent characteristic of our intellectual tradition **as a whole**.” Thus we are in no position to grasp “the significance” of being “African” let alone the “African heritage”. Indeed, Dr. Henry, thorough-going as ever, says that our intellectual tradition, like the Western intellectual tradition, “has resisted and continues to resist”, with might and main, “the intellectual contribution of African philosophy”. This, to say the least, has been to our peril, and is largely responsible, for the perilous and parlous state of our economies. Therefore, the inquiry into African philosophy is of paramount importance at this conjuncture of time.

What then is this African philosophy? Every philosophy poses the question or rather answers the question “what does it mean to be man”? I have to interject here so that we may be less abstract and more concrete. The art of being human has to be considered against its opposite. That

is how can I, as a **human being**, be other than the **brute beasts** which human beings in the original state find themselves surrounded and preceded by. Animals eat. Mate or have sex. And provide for their young or off-spring. Human beings, like animals, need food, must reproduce themselves, therefore must have sex, and must provided for their off-spring. These characteristics we share with the animal kingdom, as well as natural selection.

But humans, unlike animals, **change nature** by **work**. Thus we provide food and clothing, as well as shelter against nature's hostile elements. Caves were not enough, so man had to construct huts initially, houses eventually. So animals find nature as given. They cannot **change** it. They eat grass. They cannot grow grass. They can hide under nature's trees or in the caves. They cannot construct houses as protection against nature. Animals drink water, they cannot make storage for it. Nature is a given. Fixed. Humans at first have to abide by nature so to speak. That is, our first clothing is natural—a fig leaf. Then she or he **makes** the fig leaf into cloth. (I suspect, but cannot prove, women first **created** cloth, probably as a matter of womanly necessity, and became the first creators. But we will not gender quibble.) Unlike animals, humans make things from nature.

I want you to follow me carefully. Animals have cognitive processes. They hear sounds. They respond to sounds this way or that way if the sound is deemed dangerous or non-dangerous. They **know** danger or non-danger from past experience, or their memory of it.

I am being very deliberate. And you will see why later. So the animal has some **basic** cognitive processes. But because the animal does **not make things** from nature, its cognitive processes do not develop beyond the point of what we subsume under the category "instinct".

The essential difference between humans and the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, and the beasts on land, is that humans **make things** from nature for survival and comfort. In making things humans develop cognition, that is, thought. But the essential difference between humans and animals is not thought, but that humans make things. The essential characteristic of man is, therefore, **work**. Work is the process by which humans make things from nature, or from other human-made things. Clear. Cognition is a process towards work. One conceives of a chair in one's head, then one works and creates the chair. Work is the realisation of thought.

Simple as this may sound, I have been arguing here that the essence of the human, and being human, is not to be found in Thought. That is, “I think therefore I am”, as the Rationalists have held. Or, in the authentic moment which punctuates the ceaseless ache of boring everydayness as the existentialists have held. What I am postulating is that the whole of what is known as world history is really the creation of the human through labour. As a matter of living, that is, as a matter of necessity, we are compelled to transform nature to satisfy human needs. In the process of doing so we **change nature** and simultaneously **change ourselves**. In that process too, we produce and reproduce ourselves physically, socially and intellectually as we acquire new needs, powers and capacities.

However, it is just as erroneous to give primacy to intellectual work (the order-giver) over manual work (the order-taker), as it is to assume that human beings, or being human, can only attain its historically possible levels of development only through work. Full human development requires the all-round development of our capacities and powers for work and for enjoyment of our mental and physical potential, **away from work**. The one reinforcing the other. The need for work and the need for leisure are intrinsically (dialectically) related. They are unity-opposites.

It is therefore not accidental that we humans, at the end of the 20th century, are so alienated at work that we wish to be liberated from work. Liberated from work to the hedonism of pleasure. Interested only in the quantity of pleasure we can get away from dehumanising, unfulfilling work. That is, the satisfaction of sensual pleasures and sleep. Happiness begins and ends in the bedroom—preferably after doping by TV! Not unexpectedly then, sports becomes a mass source of pleasure, substituting emotionally, beautifully and physically for the dread scene of meaningless work.

With that foundation we can proceed with Dr. Paget Henry at a higher level as he gives us the essentials of African philosophy. Dr. Paget Henry goes to the heart of the matter. African sages he says had the notion of **sunsum**, he uses the African word in this case, the Akan for the ego. This **sunsum** or ego, in African philosophy, says Dr. Henry, is the ‘organ’ or structure that mediates our “I” or our sense of “personal autonomy” and if I may simplify Dr. Henry, mediates and instructs our sense of free will. “The **sunsum**” then says Dr. Henry “is the organiser of our everyday consciousness.” Put simpler for easy comprehension this **sunsum** is the means by which we make sense of and relate to the world daily.

Then says Dr. Henry this **sunsum** through which we apprehend the world daily “often makes errors in choosing the possibilities which will define itself.” Again by way of interpretation, this **sunsum** or ego, may, out of the possible choices, choose that which leads to growth, or that which is static, or negative. “These errors are often” says Dr. Henry “compounded by tendencies of the **sunsum** to centre and enclose itself around its chosen possibilities leading to a condition that Wilson Harris [the great Caribbean writer and thinker] described as “ontic closure”.

Now we are quickly in very deep waters. The choices we make daily through the **sunsum** or ego, which I would call, encoded past experience, makes us closed, limited to our yesterdays, and there are no tomorrows. We are closed. Our being is centred in the repetitive, hence “ontic closure”. We have locked out ourselves from new possibilities, so to speak. However, before we leave the **sunsum**, the ego, or what I call for easy comprehension, the encoded past experience by which we make sense of the world daily, we must grasp this other defining characteristic of it in African philosophy.

Dr. Henry says “The particular moment of **ignorance** that leads the **sunsum** into error is its **ignorance** of the parts of itself that **are not social**, but **spiritual** in nature.” Now this is many, many fathoms deep. And what is this “spiritual” part which the **sunsum** is not fully aware of, and therefore falls into error. In African philosophy it is **okra** to use the African word. And what in African philosophy is this **okra**? [Not for heavens sake the vegetable which, by its slipperiness, distinguishes fungee from wet and balled cornmeal. Hope you laughed].

Dr. Henry says that in African philosophy the **okra** “is the **divine spark** of the creator which exists in **all** human beings”. Note well divine spark. So, in African philosophy there is a divinity. This **okra** “often escapes our awareness or we are usually conscious only of our **sunsum** and our **honan** or body.” All three together, **sunsum**, **honan** and **okra** says Dr. Henry “constitute the unity of the human person according to Akan thought or African philosophy”. Incidentally, these concepts can be found among the Bantus or Hottenots, with varying emphasis here and there.

Now get this. Dr. Henry says that in African philosophy “What is special about the **okra** is that it carries within it the Creator’s **plans** for each individual.” Each individual in African philosophy is endowed by her or his Creator with an **okra**. That is, the Creator’s specific plan for that

specific individual. It is more, you will note than the Christian “soul”. It is the Creator’s specific plan per individual. And, profoundly, one can either fulfill the specific okra, the Creator’s individual plan, or betray it.

Let me use Dr. Henry’s inimitable compression of this grand idea: “To achieve full humanisation, the **sunsum**, [the ego, the “I”] must carry out its self-creative activities **within** the guidelines encoded in the okra.” If we through the **sunsum** do not follow the guidelines of the okra we remain unfulfilled, frustrated, shall we say truncated human beings living in “ontic closure” or an inauthentic existence.

I think we have gone far enough out to sea, for us to take advantage of the calm, and rest on our oars. Then we can see where this, Paget Henry African and philosophic, bark has taken us through.

Now, what is defined above and in rudimentary fashion are the elements of a philosophic system. By that I mean, a body of thought which comprehensively lays out how to **be** human, and how to **become** more human, realising the okra, or the Supreme Being’s divine plan for each individual.

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352

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The African, for example, through this system of thought, said that the individual **sunsum**, as parent or parents could **not** raise a child. The child would develop an attachment to the individual parents. However it took the collective **sunsum**, if you like, the collective consciousness of a group to raise a child. Then the child at a certain stage, through rituals, (worship) mainly the dance, could be brought in touch with its okra and so the Supreme Being’s individual plan for the child within the group and in furtherance of the group would be realised if each child, correctly brought up to recognise the deeply human, made the right choices. This worship, or rituals, meant appealing to the departed ancestors, cleansed by death, who were the mediators between the individual and the Supreme Being.

Now let us see what this means in social, or actually live terms. At first in African society all things had they in common. Needs were met in common from the common work of all. In time, war with other societies, created a class of warriors, who by collecting the spoils of war had more than the “common” group. A leader or King emerged, who now settled disputes, between his immediate followers who had most, the warriors who had more, and the larger common group who had far less. A class of priests emerged who served as the memory of the society, keeping and

reciting its history even writing it. This same class of priests healed the sick. Studied the stars and related human behaviour to the stars and its spiritual nature.

Dr. Henry calls this “philosophical anthropology.” Here he and I part company. Properly and philosophically this belief system has to be called “**metaphysics**”. The belief that human **being** or the **being** of humans on earth, is spiritually predetermined in a divine plan is known as metaphysics. So to speak, in African metaphysics, it is one’s correct relation, through the **okra**, to the spirit world, which made one more human, as one realised the plan of the Supreme Being not in the **next** world, but in **this** world. On death, **becoming** ceased. After death one joined the realm of ancestral spirits. Ancestral spirits collectively aided those on earth to **become** more human by imparting ancestral wisdom and guidance, on appeal, through the rituals of worship. These “leaps” were celebrated with special festivals.

It will be noted that African metaphysics is essentially different from European metaphysics. There is no divinely revealed word. No divine prophet foretelling the future. The priests or griots or “shaman” were not “holy”. They recorded. Kept the healing powers and unctions of the group. They recorded too, in long recitations, of call and response, the leaps made by the group, the community, the state from one stage to another.

The point here is that, armed with this African metaphysics, Dr. Henry is now going to walk all over, and with absolute confidence and certainty, one of the pillars of Western thought. Professor Henry is in his black professorial majesty as he does so. It is a wonderful moment in time. George Wilhelm Frederick **Hegel**, Dr. Paget Henry writes, “excluded this [African] philosophy from the table of humanist discourse on the grounds that it lacked an awareness of any power higher than the **sunsum** or ego.” For Hegel [and here he quotes Hegel himself: “religion begins with the consciousness that there is something higher than man.” Paget Henry continues “Hegel makes this awareness the foundations of all culture and morality”. And again Dr. Henry quotes Hegel: “For only with the consciousness of a Higher Being does the (human being) reach a point of view which inspires him with reverence.”

Now this was a big deal when Hegel wrote that. He, of course did not say that he had learnt it in his theological studies at Tübingen from the work of the African, St. Augustine of Hippo. Just in passing, it was St. Augustine, the African, who used African metaphysics to rid Christian-

ity of its millennialism, the return of Jesus after the millennium, to rule for a millennium, with 144,000 Saints as his Cabinet. Anyway, what Hegel (1770–1831) said, his conception or misconception that only with the consciousness of a Higher Being does the human being reach a point of reverence, presumably his highest form of **being**, is said today, as a commonplace, by any Antiguan or Barbudan housewife, water-front-worker, maid or busboy. It has become so commonplace that it leads to “ontic closure”.

But let us continue with Dr. Paget Henry: “Hegel wrongly claimed that Africans have no knowledge of the immortality of the soul” and that among us Africans moral sentiments are non-existent. Hegel compounded his errors further when he attributed these absences to the lack of an awareness of a higher power among Africans. **Everything I have said about African philosophical anthropology contradicts Hegel at every turn, and suggests a systematically distorted [racist] reading on his part. Indeed knowledge of a higher power, the spiritual regulation of the sunsum [by the okra] and the impossibility of achieving full humanisation without its co-operation, are the prime lessons of African philosophical anthropology**” which I call African metaphysics. Dr. Paget Henry has left Hegel in racist tatters in this particular regard. Hegel is set on his feet by Dr. Henry. Begging one hopes for forgiveness for his arrant racist strictures against Africans. Dr. Henry, in turn, stern and taciturn, tells Herr Hegel that only when racism ends can there be forgiveness.

There can be no doubt that this refutation of a giant of Western philosophy, Hegel, with concrete African philosophy, by Dr. Henry clears away a lot of debris which has sat on the head of African people on the continent as well as in the African diaspora. Dr. Paget Henry, by his work, on and in African philosophy is an Antiguan and Barbudan giant of the 20th century.

I want to take issue in conclusion, with what I call one of the great Western revolutionary metaphysicians, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci today appeals to many Caribbean thinkers—not without merit and justice. Gramsci though lead them into the paths of abstraction, and therefore, inertia and inaction, from which the Caribbean intelligentsia suffers, historically. It is a plague worse than AIDS, in my view, at any rate.

Gramsci in a celebrated passage says: “The starting point of critical elaboration of consciousness of what one really is, and is knowing ‘thyself’ as a product of a historical process to date, which has deposited in

you an infinity of traces, ...**without leaving an inventory**, therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory.”

I am going to be sharp, over-sharp, and say this is well constructed nonsense. Gramsci says that to know yourself, one has to know oneself as a product of the historical process to date. OK, not much quarrel with that. But Gramsci says, that the historical process to date has deposited in you an infinity of traces without leaving an inventory. Quite true too. But says he, it is imperative at the outset of doing anything worthwhile or authentic to compile such an inventory. If you were to embark on such an inventory you would spend more than **ten** lifetimes compiling that inventory, that infinity of traces deposited in you by the historical process to date. In the end, you would know everything except yourself. Gramsci's error, is the error of contemplative philosophy, one who, of necessity, spent much of his thinking life in prison, cut-off from participation in daily struggle.

One knows because one is born in a given **race**, in a given **social class**, One's **becoming** is helped or hindered, by the strictures on that race, and the obstacles in the way of the social class into which one is born and in which one grows. It is by **engaging**, with those of your social group or race, to roll back all that impedes your forward movement, that one knows what one is capable of, and it is with that knowledge one understands “the historical process to date.” One engages and one learns what are the essentials in the inventory of history. The more one struggles with others against the dehumanising enemy, the more one learns the humanising validity or invalidity of all traces history has deposited in the combatants of both sides. The more one escapes from the struggles of the day the more one becomes **inhuman**, imprisoned in the fetters of the **ego** (the sunsum) and the body (honan). In short, the inauthentic existence.

Put another way, one is born into a society which makes things for distribution and exchange. That process of production, distribution and exchange, has become quite **unequal**. The richest **20 per cent** of the world's population living in developed countries controls 86 per cent of the world's **GDP** and 82 per cent of the **international markets**. The same 20 per cent has 74 per cent of the telephone lines, represents 93 per cent of Internet users and consumes 86 per cent of all that is produced. The **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** of the **seven** most developed countries, with 685 million inhabitants, is **triple** that of all the underdeveloped countries whose populations surpass **4.5 billion** people. Our house, our street, our village or town, our parish or province, reflects that over-rid-

ing reality. Where one is born, or the position one comes to occupy in this arrangement determines one's **sunsum**, ego, or organ for adjusting daily to that arrangement.

If one does not engage with others to change that arrangement, one becomes an inert, immanent being—sucking, eating, sexing, accumulating. Or, to use Dr. Henry's word an "ignorant" victim of it. It is by overcoming the individual "I" "ego", through acting with others, that one knows both what one is up against—the historical process which made human creations humans' very own enemy—and how, by national and international networking (the okra) to overcome the antagonisms which stand in the way of full and truly human realisation, individually and collectively, **in this world**.

The point here though, is Dr. Henry has made an inestimable contribution through African philosophy to that overcoming. We shall overcome. Or, we will be overwhelmed by the brutal barbarism in our world and deposited in our being over time. Being truly human means overcoming that barbarism, internally and externally, personally and globally.

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"TO MAKE THEMSELVES MASTERS OF THE COUNTRY"—250 YEARS AFTER: BARRY GASPAR

Tim Hector

There is a book recently written on the history of Antigua, and published in the United States by **The Johns Hopkins University Press**, which ought to be in every school in this country, with several copies in what passes (shamefully and disgracefully) for a Public Library. The book is entitled *Bondmen and Rebels* by Barry Gaspar of St. Lucia, who is one of the fine new school of Caribbean historians.

You will recall that in my article of last Friday, which surprisingly was making the rounds in Canada by Saturday night, I said that for the great modern poet T.S. Eliot April was the cruelest month. But not for me. For me it was October. When I wrote then, I knew that Maurice Bishop had died on October 19 and so had Mozambique's Samora Machel. I knew then that **King Court** otherwise known as **Tackey**, and who has been vulgarly, and cruelly fictionalised in history as Prince Klaas or Prince Klaas, was brutally executed on October 20, 1736, exactly 250 years ago. October, then is the cruelest month for me.

The fact that Antigua did not celebrate the 250th anniversary of the death of the only man—**King Court** also known as Tackey—who deserves the honour of being our **Number One National hero**, tells us a great deal about the Bird regime. It tells us too, a great deal about **King Court** himself. (By the way, nowhere in Barry Gaspar's book is King Court ever referred to as Prince Klaas or Klaas. Gaspar dismisses such a name as pure, unadulterated and vulgar fiction).

In November 1735, as Barry Gaspar so wonderfully demonstrates in this magnificent historical work *King Court, Tomboy, Hercules* planned to overthrow the white Colonial planter government of Antigua. And crucially, the purpose of this revolt was "**to make themselves (the slaves) masters of the country.**" As the colonial Court which tried these Antiguan revolutionaries in 1736 declared "Although unsure of the slaves' system of time reckoning, the judges nevertheless concluded after having sifted through slave confessions, testimony and information, **that the plot was an islandwide** affair and had been "**undoubtedly in Agitation**" since November 1735, if not earlier."

Now frankly, I do not wish to be critical of Barry Gaspar, for no writer, no matter how much he writes can say in the course of one book, ev-

everything that can be said. But I want to note first of all, that in 1736 in the planned King Court Conspiracy, that this was **40 years** before the American Revolution and **53 years** before the French Revolution. The first point I want to make, is that King Court's plan differs from all other slave revolts up to that time in these parts. In that it aimed at a **national Revolution**—to make **themselves** masters of the country—in **national independence**, and more importantly in Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. I know that Barry Gaspar will forgive me for saying so, for this is the most crucial point of all **to me** about the 1736 King Court Conspiracy. Namely, that it embodied the **ideals** of the French Revolution and the objectives of the American Independence Revolution **long before these events took place**.

Now both King Court and Tomboy, who, according to the Colonial Court of the time, and as Barry Gaspar writes, "were the mastermind behind the plot. King Court was a Coromantee slave, alias Tackey, aged about forty-five, belonging to Thomas Kirby, justice of the peace and Speaker of the Assembly. Court's chief accomplice was **Tomboy** the creole (island-born) slave of Thomas Hanson, Antigua merchant and planter". Now too, there is no way that King Court and Tomboy enslaved here, could have read Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau, the main figures in the French Enlightenment which influenced and created the ideological framework of the American Revolution and the French Revolution. How then did they arrive at these ideas, about national Revolution, executed through **an islandwide Revolutionary organisation**, aiming at making the slaves "masters of the country" in a new social order founded on Liberty Equality and Fraternity? How did they arrive at these modern ideas in 1736? The answer calls for the most profound examination of our history and ourselves.

I have some ideas on this, which I will develop later. But for now get my contention clear. There were other slave revolts before King Court's but they were planned on one estate (for example Justice Hethersall's in Barbados in 1646) but never before an "islandwide affair" aiming at National independence. How did they arrive at this, so early in human history and why did they arrive at this? **Most fascinating**. But into it we cannot go now. For now let us stick to what happened, **in this article which is the only celebration of the 250th anniversary of the King Court Conspiracy**.

Let me therefore quote Barry Gaspar at length, describing **how** the King Court Conspiracy was to be effected: "Court, Tomboy and the other

slave leaders involved in the conspiracy **planned an islandwide insurrection** to commence on the night of Monday October 11, when the annual ball commemorating the King's [George II] Coronation was to have been held in the capital town, St. John's, in a 'great house' owned by Christopher Dunbar, probably a prominent island figure.... A **carpenter** by trade, **Tomboy** was to have secured the job of making the ballroom seats **in order to get into the house and plant gunpowder** there "to blow up all the Gentry of the Island while they were in the height of their mirth."

Continued Barry Gaspar in this very fine work: "In their report the judges explained that when the company was dancing, fire was to be set to three trains, upon the notice of firing a Gun and beating a Drum which were a notice also to the Negro Musicians in Attendance (who were to be let into the Secret) first to depart." Nor was this all: "when the Blast was over" said the Colonial Court who tried King Court "and all in the utmost confusion, three at least, if not four Partys [parties] intended to **consist of 3 or 400 men EACH** were to enter the Town at Different parts, and to put all the White people there to the Sword". **Court, please note, had organised and trained some 1200 men in this revolutionary plan.**

King Court, Tomboy and the other slave leaders were even more thorough, more organised. For meanwhile, "Seven strong guards [were] to be placed in the out parts of the Town to prevent Relief from reaching the beleaguered whites." Nor was this all. For here we see at work astonishing organisational skills, involving at least 3 groups of 400 men. Thus in one part 1200 men were organised. Besides that, Guards were to be posted at various vantage points.

Beyond that "St. John's Fort was to be seized with all the shipping in the harbour and Signals were to be given to those in the country, to begin there the same scene, and proceed towards the Town destroying all in their way". And further yet, "The slaves had also planned to seize Monks Hill our chief Fort and Arsenal" noted the judges "and the Arms distributed; The Guard there destroyed and all the Avenues secured by strong Guards of Slaves".

Every Antiguan would immediately recognise that Fort James is at one end of the island and Monk's Hill at the other with St. John's in between so to speak. King Court and, Tomboy had not only planned, but had actually organised an islandwide insurrection to transfer power from the oppressors to the oppressed and thus "to make themselves masters of the country." What we must recognise also, is that King Court and Tomboy, the two are inseparable, planned, organised, even initiated this Revolt

after months, perhaps years, of patient, systematic, unspectacular and pains-taking **effort**, —the patient labour of the negative one philosopher called it. They had perhaps 2,000 slaves organised in this task when the population of slaves, men, women and children, did not exceed 8,000! **Incredible**. King Court and Tomboy were unquestionably men of genius.

I want to emphasise that this is not an insight from me. It is specifically, even matter-of-factly stated by Barry Gaspar this way “For months the slave leaders had gone about planning their revolt and recruiting followers”. I do not want to interject my own view. So let me continue with Barry Gaspar, who makes the greatest effort at historical objectivity. He wrote, though King Court, Tomboy and the other slave leaders “were **careful** not to arouse the suspicions of whites, their luck ran out when the authorities postponed the ball to October 30, the King’s [George II] birthday, and forced them to reconsider their plans”.

And then Barry Gaspar writes this absolutely crucial sentence, in this profound analysis of the **essential** moment in Antigua’s history. Writes Dr. Gaspar staying close to the records of the Colonial court: “A critical dispute arose at this point “whether or not they should Execute their Plot, by immediately falling on with Fire and Sword, or wait for the ball.” There were the lines of division “Tomboy being young and fiery was for falling on directly”. On the other hand “King Court, being of more phlegmatic temper opposed him and was willing the business should be done **with as little loss of their side** as possible”. He had his eye on the business, the serious business, not just of seizing power, but of Reconstructing this society to meet their own human needs.

History shows that too many of the more conscious layers of the population fall in the war of liberation creating severe problems in the all-important work of construction of the new society. Was King Court aware of this? We cannot now know. Therefore let us settle for the obvious he was moved by humanitarian concerns to lose as little lives as possible. I insist though that he did not acquire that humanitarian approach in the brutality of Antigua slave society. He came with it in his head and his social personality developed in West Africa. More on this later.

Barry Gaspar himself sums up the dispute thus: “King Court obviously preferred not to discard the originally **carefully drawn up** plans in favour of a **new hastily** devised scheme that might have had to be very differently organised”. Please note here that we have the classic confrontation here between **Organisation** on one hand, which King Court stood for,

and on the other hand **spontaneity** in organisation which Tomboy stood for. For now I will say no more on this score, except to say my head is with King Court, but I would have followed Tomboy.

But I want to tell you that even Professor Barry Gaspar who strains for objectivity throughout this book, broke his customary restraint in the service of historical objectivity and gave his own subjective view, even his hope! Professor Gaspar wrote “**Had Tomboy had his way**, Antigua would probably have been rocked by a **full-scale** slave revolt at a time when probably no **astute** observer of Caribbean slave societies would have anticipated such a thing”. Please note that 243 years later Maurice Bishop and his party did precisely the same thing—intervene dramatically in Caribbean history when it was least anticipated or expected. He reached further than King Court.

I want to add something else from Professor Gaspar. He wrote: “Court succeeded in **persuading** the rest to wait for the ball and to proceed with the revolt as originally planned”. The wait was to prove fatal. Someone squealed. The plan was revealed, and mercilessly crushed.

But that is not what is important. First of all, note the **democratic Revolutionary** organisation which King Court and Tomboy had built. There was a disagreement. A profound disagreement. Tomboy stated his position, namely, seize the time **now**. Court differed. He preferred acting on the **long prepared** and **organised** plan. The matter was debated. Court won by persuasion of the majority. And the minority, did not take off and call it quits. Tomboy’s supporters abided by the will of the majority. That is a high order of democracy. Very high indeed. We are profoundly in Professor Gaspar’s debt for highlighting this disagreement and its democratic resolution. The British did not teach us democracy. We came here from **West Africa** with a democratic ethos already in our heads. That is an inescapable conclusion. But the proof of that later.

Now I want to note something else of the greatest importance. King Court was born in Africa. He was in fact a Coromantee. Coromantees had a particular history. I will for the sake of brevity confine myself to a quotation from one of the finest historians in contemporary America today, George Rawick, to establish who the Coromantees were. Rawick wrote “Despite the fear that Coromantee slaves would be leaders of slave revolts, they were part of the ‘mixture’ thought **necessary** to build a work force for plantation economies.” I am going to return to this.

In other words, King Court **belonged** to a most advanced grouping in West Africa, a settled society, which had an advanced system of social organisation and production. West African society **before** the slave trade began were trading **societies** well accustomed to the organisation of production not just to meet **subsistence** needs, but the production of **surplus** for trade. King Court therefore put a high premium on organisation, and execution of the task at hand according to plan.

On the other hand, Tomboy was born here. He resented slavery. He wanted to finish it, once and for all, without waiting and most of all without compromise. King Court, au contraire, having been born in a West African City-State, would have had in his head, **a clear idea** of what and how he wanted a free Antigua to be constructed. Tomboy wanted to abolish slavery. He couldn't wait. King Court waited, and in the interim, a slave named "Johnny, belonging to Mr. Mercier" squealed.

But the key point here is related to that I raised at the beginning. Where did King Court come from and where did he get those advanced ideas, ideas of national independence which were later to realise themselves in the American Revolution.

People here have been educated to believe that our West African ancestors were savages. **Nothing is further from the truth.** Indeed a "savage" could not have been broken into plantation society and made to work, routine, repetitive work, in the agro-industrial organisation of sugar production. It is not an accident that the Caribs and Arawaks could not be broken into plantation production. Africans could—not because they were stronger—that would be an equally racist myth. Africans could, **because they were accustomed to a similar organisation of production** in West African society **before** the slave trade.

Space compels me to be concise. Therefore I must substantiate the above. The American historian Rawick contends and proves that West Africa and Europe had reached a **similar stage of development** before the slave trade began. Rawick, among other things, proved that "By the fourteenth century, West Africa had developed an **elaborate productive system**. In normal times, food, shelter and clothing adequate to human needs were produced. In many areas there was a surplus traded as a part of an elaborate system **that linked** West Africa with **Egypt and Europe**, although the needs of the market did not dominate even a sizeable portion of production. These marketing activities did require the creation of markets, merchants, caravan directors and agents, money-lenders and account keepers".

This is the type of West African society from which King Court came. This is why I contend he could develop ideas, ideas about organisation, about “making themselves masters of the country”, ideas about an island-wide movement for national independence in a new city state with trade links based on modern production. As a Coromantee either he himself or his father would have been trained as a soldier in West Africa, with the specific task of protecting the trade routes.

Finally for now, I want to state, that King Court’s momentous effort to take over the organisation of production here in Antigua, by organising an islandwide revolutionary organisation, engaged in democratic debate, with a view “to making **ourselves** masters of the country” **has not been achieved yet!** Therefore, in this 250th anniversary of this most significant watershed in our history, our rulers, who have kept us in **dependence** cannot, repeat **cannot** celebrate the first, and all important effort to make us “masters of this country”.

Indeed, if King Court returned to Antigua now, and lived here for a month, he would begin exactly where he left off. The only difference this time, is there would be an organisation—ACLM—which he could join. We are his logical successors. And therefore, we alone can honour and note his historical significance. On this the 250th anniversary **Long Live the memory of King Court. And Tomboy too.**

Outlet, November 7, 1986

“TO MAKE THEMSELVES MASTERS OF THE COUNTRY”—250 YEARS AFTER [PART 2]: BARRY GASPAR

Tim Hector

Last time I detailed the organisation, the democratic nature and debate within King Court's and Tomboy's **islandwide** revolutionary organisation in 1736, and its historic implications. I attempted too, to put him, from his particular place in Antigua, in universal history. This time I want to attempt something even more difficult. To attempt to give some outline of King Court's character as a man, a leader, and more importantly, to point out the influence of culture on King Court's dramatic effort to establish Antigua in **national independence**, by way of **national Revolution** as early as 1736. This task is most difficult, demanding great rigour, but it must be done, at any rate, attempted.

In his excellent book *Bondmen and Rebels* Professor Barry Gaspar writes “Coromantee Court, alias Tackey, reportedly arrived in Antigua as a boy of ten years and lived there until his execution at the age of about forty-five years.” Others, have shown that he was about age 15—which view I share—when he arrived here. The difference is important, but into that I cannot go now, but will provide hints as I proceed.

The Judges who tried **Coromantee Court** (the name I prefer) and sentenced him to the most cruel execution had this to say about King Court. They were informed, said the trial judges, that Court was “of considerable family in his own country [the Gold Coast, now Ghana] but **not** as was commonly thought of Royal Blood”. “Considerable family” clearly implies a ‘developed’ state with class distinctions. My point of last time is again demonstrated.

It seems certain that older Coromantees in Antigua **educated** Court in the essentials of (1) **Akan** religion and (2) the nature and purpose of **Akan** institutions.

Madeline Manoukian, an authority on the **Akans**, especially on the question of leadership among the Akan states makes this key point essential to an understanding of Coromantee Court and his time. She wrote that a leader or chief was considered the intermediary between “the **community** and the royal ancestor spirits”. Kofi A. Busia, another authority on the subject wrote that the chief was “important not only as civil ruler who is the **axis** of the political relations of his people and the one in whom the various **lineages that compose the tribe** find their **unity**, he

is also the symbol of their **identity** and **continuity** as a tribe and **the embodiment of their spiritual values**" (I could have quoted Dr. Danquah, another authority, but space forbids.)

It is relatively safe to assume that the elder Coromantees in Antigua saw in Court "the lineages that compose the tribe" and perhaps from early, saw in him "the embodiment of their spiritual values". (As an aside, he could hardly embody those spiritual values at 10, but more likely so after the age of puberty 15, when those rites had already been performed in the fatherland.)

Court then, it is certain, was perceived and regarded as a **civil** and **religious leader** of his people in Antigua long before 1736. And, it is upon these twin pillars that he developed his tremendous organisation and the plot "**to make themselves masters of the country**". In the process, taking control of all the resources, and evicting or eliminating all the enslavers. Antigua as a City-State, was in the making. It has been reversed and set back, making only decimal degrees of progress. One day it will make a quantum leap. At that time, King Court will return in all his splendour.

Now, assuming that Court, came here in 1701, he would already have been a grown man, in what has been described as the **restless 20's** in this country's history. The 1720's in Antigua was a time of ceaseless agitation **among** the slaves and **by** the slaves. Various leaders emerged then, leading small bands of runaways and space confines us to mention only the names and not the exploits of these rebellious leaders of the 1720's. They are **Sharper, Africa** (one of my favourite Antiguan historical figures) **Frank** and **Papa Will**. Such activities and rebellions—Robin Hood in character—culminated in the planned revolt of slaves in Antigua in 1728-29, when slaves on Colonel Nathaniel Crump's estate planned an abortive revolt.

I am thus avoiding mere speculation, when I contend that **Coromantee Court** would have seen the failure of these limited revolts, (and if he were fifteen at the time of arrival here he would have been initiated as a **soldier** either in the Asante State or the Ashanti State to protect the trade routes used by these African States). And therefore, he realised the need **to go beyond** those limited rebellions, **and to organise, agitate and educate for a national revolution**. He first fanned the flames of national liberation and let them freely burn till earthly passions turn.

Coromantee Court was not only exceptional to the Blacks enslaved here. He was exceptional, and so regarded, by the whites as well. He lived in St. John's, with his master Thomas Kerby, performing the functions of head of the household business, valet and waiting man. The sun did not smite him by day, but the moon may have done, as he made his rounds by night, organizing.

The historical record shows that his master Thomas Kerby permitted him "to carry on a Trade and many other greater Indulgencies than were allowed to **any** slave in the Island." He must have had considerable force of character to gain that standing even among the dominant and domineering whites. Indeed, the trial judges' report states, "Indulgencies from his master were great and uncommon which gave him an opportunity of acquiring much more money than slaves are usually Masters of" (I have kept the capital letters used as normative in the English of the time). Not only did Court acquire money, but he saved it, over years, saving it exclusively and principally for the planned revolt—years later. He was distinguished by his thrift.

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366
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Tomboy too, lived in St. John's, but he and Court, please note, were **not** friends. Court befriended him late. For up until 1736, there was considerable tension, occasionally hostility, between those slaves born in Antigua (Creoles) and those born in Africa. In fact, the Coromantees, unlike the Ibos and Papaws here, seemed to have insisted on re-creating their own life, in particular their own **religion**, resisting all efforts to domesticate and emasculate them with the "slave obey your Masters" docility which passed for official Christianity.

There is little doubt, that Nathaniel Gilbert well known to the methodists, and who was one of the three judges who tried and convicted King Court and scores of other slaves, actively disliked Coromantees for their "haughtiness" and what he described as their "heathen practices." Court, no doubt, thought the same and worse of him, but kept his thoughts to himself.

For, Court was well liked. So much so that only at the late minute did his Master reluctantly accept, that Court, seemingly so gentle and so mild, had long planned this revolt, with careful military and logistical detail. He was, in his Master's view, too good, too acculturated to revolt.

However, it must be noted Court was never perceived, as having the slavish characteristics of the Sambo or Quashee, which slave society sought to produce wholesale and retail. The Judges, no doubt influenced

by Nathaniel Gilbert, described him as “artful and ambitious, very proud and of few words”. Others among the slave-holders described him as a “Dark, designing and insolent fellow.” If the word “**communist**” existed then, Master and Sambo alike, would have applied it to him. That phenomenon occurs and recurs in history.

And for now, excluding any type of speculation, let me give this final cameo of King Court’s character. At his execution, the judges said that he “endeavoured to put on the Port and Mien [the deportment and carriage] suitable to his affected Dignity of King”. I beg only to say, that he did not put it on, his dignity was innate, that is, both natural and acquired. What and who King Court was shall far outpass the power of my human telling for none can guess his grace, his faith in his fellow men and women, his boundless certainty that freedom is the only true human reward.

Now what were the cultural media which the slaves used to organise this following? Feasts and Oath taking ceremonies, and much more. One of the slave traitors, Jemmy, a garrot if ever there was one, provides this elaborate description, in giving evidence **against** Court, of one such feast, held by **Tilgarth Penezar**, alias **Targut**, a creole slave “at Lyndsey’s Plantation”. Note well the Feast was held at Lyndsey’s with the master’s permission. I will have to give you a long quotation from Jemmy’s testimony as to the nature and style of this feast.

“There was” says the traitor Jemmy “a feast at Lyndsey’s—can’t say how long ago whether before Mr. Carlisle went to England or not. All the Town People almost were there”. He goes on to describe who were there, when he went and that they were kept waiting as Targut, the host, went to fetch Court, Tomboy and others. He said they were affronted by having to wait. And that “there were forty slaves and more waiting when I went: **Mullato** Ned and many of Chesters Negroes, many of Doc. Haddons”. At length and at last, relates Jemmy, “I saw Targut coming up from the Town and several Town’s people at a distance. Targut arrived first and others came after, viz. Court, Tomboy, Hercules Hoskin’s Quashie, Wilkerson’s Quashee, Morgan’s Ned and Jack and other **Creoles and Coromantees**”.

Jemmy relates how on going inside they were given “a Cool drink” and then that “Marcia” presumably his wife “Sat at the table and she looked very Black on Seeing So many Coromantees there and she and I made signs of contempt to each other”. The tension between Creoles and Coromantees was great, and the revolutionaries were obviously breaking down this artificial divide, which allowed them to be ruled over, by this feast.

Then Jemmy tells us that there “was a white man that dined there with us and there was a short white woman” whom the planters said was “Her-cules woman”. She was later banished for “her parte in the plotte”.

What comprised this feast? Related Jemmy: “A Boiled course was served up first and then a Roast course, there were two dishes almost of every sort. There were Fowles, Two sorts of Pies, Turkey’s boiled and Roast Porke, boiled and Roast kid, three sorts of puddings—Boiled, Baked and Custard Puddings”.

It is obvious that here was a mixture of African and European style cooking, and I record here the views of a culinary friend of mine, who reminds that African cooking as kept in the Bahai State of Brazil, is regarded today as third only to French and Chinese cuisine!

“After Dinner” Jemmy the garrot tells us, that “the women went away then Targut brought in Punch, Sangaree and Wine which we drank.” And then there was the first discourse. Light talk “and banter”. After which, the whites left. “Tomboy then took up a Bottle and filled into a Glass and said “Gentlemen I am going to toast a Health, and damnation to them that wont pledge it or wont give their Assistance. According to their Pledging their health.”

The speech went on, and at its end, slaves pledged assistance in guns and pistols and a special oath, with great ceremony was then performed binding **all**, committed and the uncommitted, to **secrecy**. The oath taking was elaborate, involving much by way of ritual, involving too, a Libation “to the ancestors” with “grave’s dirt”. **The whole was presided over by an Akan priestess.**

Space hastens me. “On Sunday October 10, 1736, just days before the plot was discovered” writes Professor David Barry Gaspar, “the Creole leader Tomboy (whom some slaves called Thomas Boyd) held a “very sumptuous Publick feast” to which were invited a great number of slaves and “several white persons were spectators of it”. Much the same Oath taking and pledging took place but only this time more elaborate in ceremony.

However, before that and on October 3, 1736, Coromantee Court was crowned King in an elaborate ceremony. Court presented his Coronation as “a **Play** from his country” and many white people, planters and overseers, were present.

But Court's **Play** was far from innocent. No mere drama, as it appeared. It was, in fact, an Akan war ceremony preparing the participants for war, or if you prefer, the final Jihad, —Holy War—against the whites. It took place, writes Gaspar "In broad daylight at two o'clock in the afternoon of October 3, 1736, at Mrs. Dunbar Parke's pasture near St. John's, white and black onlookers were treated to a dazzling display of Akan Ceremonial when Court staged a military "**Ikem**" or **Akyem**. In Akan, ekem or Akyem means a 'shield'.

From the Court records we get a very detailed account of this Akan war preparation and I give it to you in full.

That it is the Custom in Africa, when a Coromantee King has resolved upon a War with a Neighbouring State, to give Publick Notice among his Subjects, That the Ikem-dance will be performed at a Certain Time & Place; and there the Prince appears in Royal habit, under an Umbrella or Canopy of State, preceeded by his Officers, called Braffo & His Marshall, attended by his Asseng (or Chamberlain) & Guards, and the Musick of his Company; with his Generals & Chiefs about him. Then he places himself up an advanced Seat, his Generals setting behind him upon a Bench; His Guards on each Side; His Braffo and Marshall clearing the Circle, and his Asseng with an Elephants Tail keeping the flies from him; The Musick playing; and the People forming a Semicircle about him. After some Respite, the Prince arises, distributes Money to the People; Then the Drums beating to the Ikem-beat, he with an Ikem (i.e.) a Shield composed of wicker, Skins and two or three small pieces of thin board upon his left Arm, and a Lance in his Right hand, begins the Dance, representing the defensive Motions of the Shield, those of throwing the Lance, and the several gestures by them used in Battle. When the Prince begins to be fatigued, The Guards run in and Support him; he delivers the Ikem and Lance to the Person who next Dances; then is lead Supported to his Chair, and is seated again in State. Whenever he arises, he is in like manner Supported. Then the Same Dance is performed by Several Others, but without the Ceremony of being Supported. Then the Prince Stepping into the Area of the Semicircle, with his Chief General, and taking a Cutlass in his hand, moves with a Whirling motion of his Body round a Bout, but dancing and leaping up at the same time from one Horn or point of the Semicircle, quite to the other, so as distinctly to be viewed by all; and then returning to the Center of the Semicircle, with his General, makes several flourishes with the Cutlass, gently touching with it the Generals' Forehead; and having at the same time, the Ikems (the number of which is uncertain) held between his own and the others

Body. He takes an Oath highly revered by the Coromantees, which is to the following purpose. He Swears to the General, that where he falls, He'll drop by his side, rather than forsake or desert him in Battle; and that he will behave as a brave prince ought; but in case he should fail in his Oath he agrees with and desires his subjects present, to take off his head, and makes them a Grant of his Houses, Lands, and all his Substance. This Oath (tho in the first Ceremonial part directed to the General only) is nevertheless, understood to be made to the people as well as him. If he is answered by three Huzzas from those present; By the Custom of their Countrey it signifies, not only a Declaration of their believing, that he will Observe his Oath; but it is an actual & Solemn Engagement on their side to do as he does, and to join and go forth with him to the Warr: For the breach whereof they are regarded as Traitors. Braffoo Standing behind Court with a wooden Cutlace Cryd Tackey, Tackey, Tackey, Conguo: which Signifies King, King, King, Great King; which words are used in the Coromantee Countrey Every morning at the Kings door by Braffoo.

Most wonderful, and not just dazzling. I need hardly state that Court had **not** only **re-created Africa** in the Caribbean, by this Akan war drama, but the **re-creation** was utilised for Caribbean Liberation.

Now it is clear, that by these feasts and this “dazzling Ceremony” that King Court and the Slave leaders recreated their own independent life-style and engendered a sense of one-ness, of common goals, **of common nationality**. It was a stupendous achievement on the grand scale.

I guess there are some cynics, or better, skeptics, who will conclude that this sense of **nationality** this sense of **national purpose**, this sense of **national liberation in unity**, between Coromantee and Creole, between Town Slave and Country Slave, between Mulatto and Black, between Ibbo and Papaw is exaggeration on my part. Let me lay the cynics and skeptics to rest, in peace I hope.

One of the white legislators of the time, Councillor **Vallentine Morris**, told the legislature that “**by the evidence of 16 Witnesses, by the examinations taken against 150 conspirators there was hardly a sensible negro** in the island of **either** Sex, but was engaged in it [the plot] Either as an Actor, Abettor or Approver “And, he further added, “**Most** of the free Negros [his spelling] and free Mulattos were **actually** engaged in it”. The national unity was so complete as to be almost stunning. It bears the unmistakable stamp of genius. **This was the first instance of National Unity for National Liberation. It is in that national Unity lies most of**

King Court's and Tomboy's heroism, and not least Ned's. (More on Ned another time when I am capable of the physical and mental effort). But I would be greatly amiss, and do a terrible violation of history, if I did not add, that there was one other key factor in this National unity for national Liberation in Antigua in 1736. And it is an astonishing key. It is **Literature**.

How could largely illiterate slaves (King Court for sure wrote his own African language as well as English hence my insistence that he came here at 15) be said to have a literature which was used for national cohesion and national consciousness?

I have, of necessity, to compress much in little. But the beginning is important. Others can take it up and further it. And too, I must add, that I am **not** criticising Professor David Barry Gaspar for not including the role of literature in what CLR James lately called "National Consolidation" for national liberation. Anyway with that said. Here goes. Slaves came here, to be sure, as frightened human beings. They were thrown, atomised, among strange men including fellow slaves who were not their kinsmen. Race was **not** a unifying factor among Blacks. Kinship was. These slaves were thrown helter skelter here on the same plantation a mix of separate kinship groups and languages, customs and habits. And from this stage of fear and trembling they went to what the great W.E.B. Du Bois describe "as the general strike whereby hundreds of thousands of slaves deserted the plantations, destroying the [American] slave South's ability to supply its army" in the American civil war.

Weakened and psychologically undermined by capture, the Middle passage and enslavement in the New World, the slave resorted to myths and folktales in which a relatively weak creature, overwhelmed by might, succeeds, in at least, surviving in his competition with greater beasts, usually by trickery. Trickery, I remind, is the first resort of the oppressed, overwhelmed by military power. At times this creature wins, but sometimes he loses, but even in loss there is a certain if not grandeur, then optimism for the future. This folk hero in the folktales is often absurd, but he is also filled with life and keeps struggling against his situation of being dominated and oppressed. Ever struggling. Even though a little bit like Sisyphus but not as hopeless.

In West Africa this folk-hero is often identified with Legba, he is both human and godlike, or if you prefer, natural and supernatural. In the Caribbean this literary figure was **Anansi**, messenger of Legba. He survives

by his wits, often outwitting the more powerful **Lion** and **Tiger** (Sparrow has a modern calypso which is on the same theme) or the more venomous and deadly **Snake**. Sometimes in the Caribbean he becomes Br'er Rabbit. No matter what, this Anansi, Br'er Rabbit creature does, even when defeated, he gains the sympathy of the weak, the disadvantaged, the downpressed, and the hatred and contempt of the downpressors, the powerful. And he always seems to have the greater share of the **classic human virtues** than do his powerful enemies.

These were the stories told, and retold, mainly by women to the young slaves at night, which made desperate, fearful, alienated trembling slaves into a homogeneous Community—sharing common myths, hopes, aspirations, and which, above all quickened a thirst for freedom.

It is on that literary foundation, on which King Court, Tomboy Hercules and Ned the Mulatto, built this tremendous instance of national unity, indeed national consolidation for national Liberation. It is still unsurpassed in Antiguan history for sure, and hardly ever again attained in all Caribbean history, with the possible exception or comparison of Cuffy in Guyana. That is high praise indeed for King Court. But it is also, a precise estimate of where we have **not** reached, and why we have been made to forget King Court in this the 250th anniversary of his momentous achievement—**organising a nation for national liberation in 1736**.

Outlet, November 14, 1986

**A NATIVE BALDWIN WILL COME: A REVIEW OF
SCHOLZ AND STEVENS' *HISTORY OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA 3000
BC–1981***

Tim Hector

Recently, a long-standing female friend of mine, one of my most enduring and endearing friends, gave me a short history of Antigua and Barbuda in manuscript form. This study purports to cover the history of Antigua and Barbuda from 3,000 B.C.–1981. That claim is far too large. Small though we are, it attempts too much in too little. The snippets on what we may call the pre-history of Antigua and Barbuda do not warrant the classification “history”. For it tells nothing of what people did here. And not much that is new but a few things which ought to be, but are not generally known.

One of the peculiarities of Antigua and Barbuda, and indeed much of the English speaking Caribbean, is that though education began here in the mid-nineteenth century, for more than a hundred years, until 1967, nothing at all of the history of Antigua or of the Caribbean was seriously taught and learnt here. Few people anywhere have had, for so long, such lack of knowledge, of their own sojourn beneath the stars. Man, know thyself, exhorted wise-man. An entire people did not and could not know themselves, individually or collectively.

Naturally, this produced a peculiarity. People here wish to know little about here. And they boast, at the drop of a hat, that they read mainly about things and persons “overseas” or abroad, the further North the better. The self-contempt is manifest. They are convinced, despite evidence to the contrary, that nothing good can come out of Nazareth. It is the result and still enduring history of alienation. It tells in everything we do. And everything we do not do!

For instance, I was startled on Tuesday by the number of people who called me, to express appreciation for what I had written about the late Stanley Walter and the Recreation Grounds. No person is more identifiable with any institution in Antigua, than Stanley Walter was with the Recreation Grounds. Yet not a single room at that institution bears his name. Not a single picture in recognition of him. The Cricket Association which he served so faithfully, more faithfully than he served himself, never held a memorial service, let alone a match in his memory or his honour. It is that lack, that miserable and immiserating lack,

of a sense of history, why we honour no one, no matter how dedicated and honourable their service. We have been and are now convinced of our own irrelevance. Except the innocuous mediocrity who imitate the alien other and echo their clichés, such are acclaimed in their lack of meaning.

It is not an accident that the past students, the Old Boys of the Secondary School here, which is more than a hundred years old, could not, did not and cannot sustain an Old Boys Association. The sense of belonging, of *alma mater* if you will, is not native and natural to our being. Likewise, with the oldest club, St. John's, gone with the wind. We preserve nothing, value nothing or no one, because we lack a sense of history. We were **made** into a **history-less** people. It has to be overcome. Now more than ever in the on-rush of globalisation. Mark you history has been taught but is was taught as "otherness," as something unrelated or only indirectly related to our being in the world. There was for a time too here, a sense of oral history. The old repeated histories of their genealogy. Mainly at wakes and weddings, as they tried to preserve a sense of their own connectedness. That too passed. Passed under the crushing weight of imported modernity. We import everything. And consume it all without evaluation.

None of this Norbert J. Scholz and Richard Stevens address in their *History of Antigua and Barbuda 3000 BC–1981*. As history this book seems oblivious to historical theory.

A well-known thinker, R.G. Collingwood writing in *The Idea of History* had this to say: "the historical changes in a society's way of life are very rarely conceived as progressive even by the generation that makes them. It makes them in an obedience to a blind impulse **to destroy what it does not comprehend**, as bad, and substitute something else as good. But progress is not the replacement of the bad by the good, but of the good by the better. **In order to conceive a change as a progress, then, those who have made it must think of what they have abolished.** This can only be done on condition of their **knowing** what the old way of life was like, that is, having historical knowledge of their society's past."

Read it again. It is a simple but wise passage. The law-making process here, one of the main instruments of change, is devoid of public discussion here. It is devoid of "historical knowledge of this society's past." Over and over again, I have heard my UPP Parliamentary colleagues moan and bemoan about the shortness of time given them to discuss

changes in the laws. They can do nothing about it. Because, “The ayes have it.” But the crudeness and crassness of the law-making process here, tells that the law-makers in government are motivated “by a blind impulse to destroy what it does not comprehend.” Alternatively a history of a country, a phase in a country’s life, or of an event is valid, in so far as it increases popular comprehension in the society about itself. Men and women would know themselves, and regulate relations, with sober senses, one with another. But that is the future.

I have selected passages from this very short study of Antigua, from 3,000 B.C. to 1981 to aid that process of popular comprehension. Scholz and Stevens write “It is impossible to determine exactly when the first people settled on Antigua. The remains of the first settlement were discovered at Jolly Beach [Previously known in my youth as Heath’s Bay] and date to about 1775 B.C. It is likely that before they established permanent settlements a paleo-Indian people of the Ortorloid family, commonly known as the **Siboney** or **Ciboney** temporarily lived on the island for about 4,000 years. The earliest remains of the Siboney have been located at **Little Deep** at **Mill Reef** and date back to about 3,100 B.C.” Interesting eh!

It continues to amaze me, that this knowledge has been available for at least 50 years now. A notable colonial governor here, **Earl Baldwin of Bewdley**, wrote of it here in 1948. To this day the spot is not marked, not developed. And worse, it remains inaccessible and unknown to Antiguan youths.

If that amazes me, this stultifies me. In this tourist conscious age, as we seek to develop attractions, how is it we have not tried to re-create at Little Deep some idea of what that ancient civilisation was like which existed here for as long as 4,000 years? This would interest thousands of visitors. More importantly, it would give some sense of place, of space and time, to thousands more living here. It is to be hoped that a native Baldwin will come and fill the void and cause this ancient past to be re-created for our historical and economic good.

Let me again add this from Scholz and Stevens’ short history of Antigua: The next people who were here long before Columbus were the Arawaks. “During **the first millennium BC** they left the Venezuelan mainland and spread throughout the Caribbean. Different branches of these Indian people established permanent settlements along the coast, **most notably at Indian Creek** (about 35–1100 CE), **Mill Reef** (500–900 CE), **Mamora**

Bay (900–1200 CE) and **Freeman's Bay** (1200–1580 CE). Each of these settlements had its own distinctive ceramic styles and artifacts.”

Could we not reproduce one of these settlements, with their own “distinctive ceramic styles and artifacts” for exhibition as well as for sale? Why have we not done so? Our leaders have no sense of history, and therefore no sense of a national economy. Reproducing one of these ancient Arawak settlements would change the nature, character and organisation of our vendors, by their total involvement. It is to be hoped that a native Baldwin will come and fill this enormous void.

It is of necessity that I remind that it was the Arawaks and not Europeans who introduced **here**: corn, sweet potato, peppers, beans, pineapples, guavas, and believe it or not, tobacco—without the high concentration of deadly nicotine added deliberately for addiction by the modern tobacco industry—indigo, and too, cotton. There are at least 7 different species of cotton, growing wild in Antigua brought by the Arawaks, none of which has been researched. There is too, evidence, though slight, that Arawaks planted and used marijuana here. That has been erased from history, no doubt in obeisance to American prohibition, in the service of Dupont's industries.

I will digress a bit to a fairly useful bit of information which Scholz and Stevens give, and which aroused my curiosity as they put it all together. It is this:

Hurricanes are a recurrent factor of life, in the Caribbean. They usually (though not exclusively) occur during the ‘hurricane months’ of July to mid-October and often cause severe damage to property and life. They occur in varying intensity and irregular intervals, and affect different regions of the Caribbean. Among the recorded hurricanes the most disastrous ones appeared in 1722 in Port Royal, Jamaica (400 lives lost); 1765 Havana (1,000 lives lost) and 4,000 houses destroyed); 1768 (4,000 lives lost at Barbados; 9,000 lives lost in Martinique, 2,000 Spanish sea-men perished at sea). 1899 in Puerto Rico (3,000 lives lost); 1930 in Santo Domingo City (2,000 lives lost); 1931 in Belize (1,500 lives lost).

If I were to juxtapose against this the long series of slave revolts, I would have to write pages and pages. But just a few 20th century revolts, chosen at random, the riots which shook Antigua in 1918, British Honduras, Belize, Trinidad in 1919, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Barbados, Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti in 1937–38. Antigua and Grenada in (1951) Anti-

gua in 1968, Trinidad in 1970 down to Grenada in 1979—we might find a tale. Namely the Caribbean has been shaken by natural disasters, and by human upheavals in search of a better life. But, after natural or human upheaval, the old order restores itself. It is a chilling and not chastening deduction. But that is not Scholz and Stevens story in their history. Such a perception is lost in their narrative.

This though, is their story: “Virtually unknown in Europe until the 16th century, **sugar** consumption steeply rose during the next two centuries. In Britain, for example, sugar imports increased more than **twelve** times between 1663 and 1775. So great was the **global** demand for sugar that cane sugar was probably the **most valuable commodity** in all the world’s trade of the 18th century. Brown sugar and molasses were still the single most important items of all British imports.”

How comes it then, that after centuries of producing the world’s “most valuable commodity”, Antigua and Barbuda is still a poor country? That is a theme which Caribbean historians avoid like the plague. The answer gets lost in the voluminous detail. They miss the forest because of the leaves. Says Scholz and Stevens continuing on this theme with important detail: “Immediately before the American Revolution, the British colonies in the Caribbean accounted for 45.7 percent of British exports to its Atlantic empire, 34.9 percent of all exports to all colonies and dependencies.”

How comes it then that we are underdeveloped still, after developing this kind of wealth. The answer is, for I will not beat about the bush: We had “jobs”. We worked. We produced. And **they**, the foreign Other, accumulated and accumulated and accumulated the wealth from our labour, or if you prefer our “jobs”. I am sure you can see why this present pre-occupation with “jobs” and not with social ownership and control, maddens me. Unless you have a sense of history, you remain utterly indifferent to this plight, and worse perpetuate it. Lester Bird is the grandmaster of its perpetuation. And Robin Yearwood is his Batman.

I come now to a related theme. Scholz and Stevens give a most interesting view of the history of corruption in Antigua in discussing Governor Daniel Parke, the only American Governor of Antigua. Parke was the son of a rich Virginian landowner, who won some military distinction when he was aide-de-camp to the Duke of Marlborough at the Battle of Blenheim. For his services, he expected to get the Governorship of Virginia, but instead, got the Governorship of Antigua in July 1706. Write Scholz and Stevens:

When Parke came to Antigua, he tried to whip the administration into shape, which provoked the rage of the planters, especially since unlike his predecessors, as well as Colonel Codrington, **he refused to accept bribes**, usually described euphemistically as “presents”. What angered the planters most were his attempts to reorganise the island’s defences **with the help of slaves** which deprived them of much needed plantation labour.

This is a most interesting interpretation of this bit of Antiguan history. Parke refused to accept bribes. And this in a society where the planters used bribes for everything. More dangerously, Parke attempted to involve slaves, Africans, in the defence of Antigua, during the War of Spanish Succession 1702–1713, when Britain and the Netherlands fought against the Spanish and the French.

Scholz and Stevens however, accept the superficial reason that it is because the black slaves involved in war preparation by Governor Parke, deprived the Planters of their labour time. That was certainly true. But I do not accept it as the whole truth, far less nothing but the truth. The white planters suspected, or even knew, that once their black slaves were involved in fighting the foreign enemy, it would be impossible to continue slavery. For as Hegel says, it is in “**fighting it out**,” that the slave, the oppressed, become **conscious** of himself or herself as an independent being, and equal being. With that consciousness it is impossible to keep him or her in an inferior, sub-human status, regardless of the terror employed.

It is not an accident then, that after every war, or during, that oppressed people rise up against their internal oppressors, **after** fighting the external foe. Had Parke succeeded in incorporating African slaves in the Antigua fighting forces, the history of Antigua would have been very different! But **Incorruption** lost to **Corruption**, not for the last time in Antiguan history. The victory of Incorruption is the rare exception, rather than the rule, in Antiguan history! We can be that glorious exception this time around. But back to the past.

Scholz and Stevens record Governor Parke as doing something else. They wrote “he attempted to make the legal system more **accountable** by supervising the passing of laws, and to curb illegal trade [smuggling] with the French, Dutch and Danish.” And then Scholz and Stevens add this: “Finally Parke sought to improve the island’s dismal credit rating.” To substantiate this they quoted Parke himself in an address to the Council of Trade where he said “In Antigua today any man may choose whether or not he will pay the debt though one has his bond or judgment.”

Today in 1998, that is not true just of any man, **the very government of Antigua** honours no bond or no judgment of the Courts, be it Appeal Court in the case of the teachers, 1984, or the High Court in the case of the media, 1997, or the Privy Council in the case of *Outlet*. And so the beat, the awful beat, goes on.

In 1709 Parke said the debt crisis was so bad, “that it was a very great scandal to ye island, and if timely provision be not made to prevent ye some for ye future, it will prove of fatal consequence.” Parke’s words of 1709 are even more valid in 1998! History, a wise man said repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. We are living the farce now under Lester Bird.

Back then Parke, however, was doomed. The planters resisted all his attempts at reforms. If the word “communism” existed then he would have been deemed “a terrible communist” “the worst type of communist.” The planters in 1710 petitioned England for his recall. He was recalled. And Parke disregarded his recall. He had a sense of mission to clean up Antigua. Parke, it seems, was most attractive to the opposite sex, and the Planters among a series of lies, seized on this and accused him of “debauching the wives and daughters of some planters.”

On December 7, 1710, the members of the all-white Assembly, rallied other whites in the countryside and they flocked to St. John’s. They gave Parke an ultimatum “to leave the island or die.” Parke resisted. And the planters overcame the 70 soldiers who stood by him. Were any of these 70 soldiers African slaves? I am not sure. And Scholz and Stevens did not investigate. The corrupt planters entered Parke’s room wounded him, “broke his backbone, dragged him by the heels down the steps, suffering his head to fall from step to step, tore of his shirt, reviled him, and shot him in many places after dead, exposing even his private parts” (Source Letter to Colonel Gendhill CSP Vol. 25 Jan. 9, 1711)

Parke had been murdered, fighting corruption. So deadly was the planters here that Parke’s successor Colonel Water Douglas, “who was commissioned to investigate his predecessor’s murder, expressed his inability to do justice because he feared for his own security!” Corruption triumphed. Parke was, in many ways, a tragic figure. A man more sinned against than sinning. Need I say more. Not now, at any rate.

I must however, give you Scholz and Stevens conclusion about the history of Antigua in the modern era. It is most noteworthy. Even striking. This is what they write:

To sum up, between World War I and independence (1981), Antigua's economy was transformed from an export-oriented plantation economy to one dominated by [import-oriented] tourism. **Both stages are a direct continuation of the colonial economy as it existed under the system of slavery.** As in the past, **foreign interests are the dominant forces.** **The political leadership encouraged these developments** by voluntarily forging an alliance with foreign investors in order to improve the living standard of the population. **[This was their oft repeated excuse as they enriched themselves in their alliance with the foreign extractors and accumulators of wealth from our labour, our "jobs".]** To a certain extent they achieved this aim, but the lack of economic diversification leaves Antiguan workers at the mercy of the fluctuations of international tourism, **similar to their ancestors**, whose fortunes rose and fell with the unpredictable fluctuations of sugar prices and natural disasters.

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380
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It is worse than that. For Scholz and Stevens do not speak of the alienation of a people from their own development, even their own affairs. But it will do. This is the lesson, or the comprehension of the past, which Scholz and Stevens seek to teach the present. So that we no longer "act on blind impulse." It is a lesson we must learn, or perish in the barbarism of alienation. May a native Baldwin, in unending partnership with the people, tackle this age-old problem for our own redemption. The struggle continues.

Outlet, March 13, 1998

ANTIGUA THEN—ANTIGUA VISION, CARIBBEAN REALITY: MARGARET LOCKETT

Tim Hector

Antigua and Barbuda is a peculiar place. For over 50 years, since 1948 at least we have been producing intellectuals and professionals from what was then the University College of the West Indies and what is now independently known as UWI. Before that we produced scholars, judges, poets, mainly white, who travelled far and wide gaining distinction. For instance there was living here a Richard Terry, organist at St. John's Cathedral Antigua in 1892. By some remarkable or necessary change of religion this same Richard Terry, a born Antiguan went on to become organist at the Roman Catholic Church in Westminster, England, "and was knighted by the Queen in 1922 because of his great service to English music, especially Church music." He is unknown.

Or too that in 1929, Charles Lindbergh and his brother the first to fly a plane across the Atlantic actually landed at Antigua. Nothing marks the occasion in Antigua and Barbuda where tourism is supposed to be the main industry. Or too, that Mrs. Churchill, wife of the British war time Prime Minister, said to be Britain's greatest modern leader, actually came to Antigua, long before her husband did in the 1960's and wrote of Antigua. But I am leaping well ahead of myself. Two books have been recently published about Antigua, one about Antigua between 1920 and 1943, by a Margaret G. Lockett, daughter of one of three directors of Bryson's and Co. Ltd, easily the oldest firm ever in Antigua and Barbuda.

It is a strange book, this *Antigua Then—Scenes From a West Indian Childhood*. As the blurb says it purports to tell a story even a history of "The Government of Antigua, mostly sent out from Britain and known as the colonial services, which was [Believe it or not, that someone could write this utter nonsense!] apolitical like a civil service and benign, though no citizen could vote. There were no racial laws, a black and coloured middle class existed [each at war with the other] and civility was practised as well as encouraged."

In other words between 1920 and 1943 Antigua was the best of all possible worlds, where blacks, without the right to vote, were ruled by whites from England where wealth was accumulated by whites and returned to the "motherland", where their children also stayed; and where blacks accrued poverty "and children" the process of acquiring the latter—the

children—"was their only source of pleasure." It is an incredible story. It is perhaps not even racist. It is worse than that. It is white. The only way ordinary white people can view the world, their place in it, and the servile place of every other race, especially Blacks.

To the imperial child, man, woman, grandfather and grandmother, is that given the conception that they embodied all that was human, we as other races, especially Africans had to be seen and were automatically seen as the negation of what they were—human. This did not really require thought on their part. It was, if you will, an automatic way of seeing and being which came with their mother's milk.

The other book, under discussion here, is believe it or not, written by the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Lester Bryant Bird. It is, as you would probably have guessed from my title on this article, entitled *Antigua Vision—Caribbean Reality* and subtitled "*Perspectives of Prime Minister Lester Bryant Bird.*" It was written before, as a compendium of his speeches. It covers, therefore his perceptions and events over a period of time, of 25 years, when he was the longest serving deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Antigua with an unbroken 20 years in the **only** independent government of Antigua and Barbuda, in which he was deputy Prime Minister, or Prime Minister, for nearly all of the time. It is therefore an important book.

However, such a book has received little or no attention in Antigua and Barbuda. It is almost dead in the water as though it were never written. Neither scholar nor thinking politician has seen it fit to comment in print. And it is not a bad book either. It is most worthy of discussion. The Philistines are at large, perhaps even more so now, than when Margaret G. Lockett reminisced. And she herself, now 82 and living in Seattle, Washington, despite being steeped in racism, her childhood entirely locked in a lily white world, in a black country, Antigua and Barbuda, was wise enough to quote Guiseppe di Lampedusa that: "There are no memoirs, even those written by insignificant people, which do not include social and graphic details of first rate importance".

If that is so for insignificant people, what then of a deputy Prime Minister of 10 years and a succeeding Prime Minister of eight years, with five preceding years as a member of a colonial administration, appropriately dubbed Statehood in Association with Britain. Whatever side we are on in this polarised, no, tribalised society we will never see this wealth of political experience again, especially when his father Sir V.C. Bird wrote

next to nothing of his years in politics 1943 to 1994. The longest serving parliamentarian, the late Ernest Emanuel Williams, wrote less than nothing of the history he made. And we have nothing from the most perceptive of them all from the 1939 era, Sir Edmund Hawkins Lake, about his time as Legislator, Minister and diplomat. Antigua and Barbuda impoverishes itself, for we are totally unconscious of the value of anybody, except successful or faded cricketers and calypsonians, mostly retarded, who entertained us with nonsense unlimited, in which we find pearls of wisdom. Here as Sir Vidia Naipaul said: "Generosity, the respect of equal for equal is unknown." Abuse and derogation both reigns and rules.

But let us turn our attention to Ms. Margaret G. Lockett, who never gives her maiden name or that of her father who commanded wealth and power here as one of three directors of Bryson's & Co. Ltd, and then passed from history to die off his substantial dividends in England, as though he had never existed, and which substantial dividends supported his wife, son and daughter for over 20 years after his return and death in England.

The reader learns early enough from Margaret Lockett, née Bryson that «By the time we arrived in Antigua in 1920 the slaves had long been emancipated, **but the legacy endured:** too many people trapped on a small island, with an economy unable to supply the jobs needed to support a decent living standard by the majority." Therefore plain and simple, racism the worse of humankind, was not only necessary but inevitable. The whites on top in unelected power in legislature and over the economy. The Portuguese first as indentured labourers or grocery owners. The Arabs as store-owners and petty traders. The Blacks as eternal servants, subordinate and servile, encouraged into subordination and submission, otherwise called "civility" under oppression, of which it was absolute rudeness, gross insubordination and unacceptable incivility to speak, let alone oppose. Painful truth to tell, that was the state of affairs then between 1920 and 1943. It has changed only in appearance since, but not in substance.

The daughter of this Director of Bryson's writing this memoir, is without any sympathy for any one black, and naturally so. No Black gets a single paragraph of mention, even those with whom she went to the Antigua Girls High School, on St. Mary's Street at first and then on Newgate Street where it still is amidst the hustle and bustle, the fever and the fret of the city, and where games, so necessary to learning, are all but non-existent. It was not so then when this privileged white woman wrote and

attended the Antigua Girl's High School. In her white and privileged time as she herself wrote "On three afternoons a week games were **compulsory**, starting just after four and ending about six when night abruptly descended year round in the latitude. There was a big field for **stool ball**, two great **tennis courts** and a **grass basketball court**. And there was an area for rounders, a juvenile kind of baseball." And she continued later "On the noncompulsory afternoons, one could still go to the school and play any game one wanted, and the Girl Guides also met on one of those afternoons to do all the busy work that Girl Guides do."

With the white majority under private ownership, at that, games were commonplace for girls. But now under public ownership of the nationalist movement less than 40 years after, games are virtually unknown, space for play has disappeared at the Antigua Girls High School. So all academia, the passing of subjects, and not the acquisition of skills in a technological world make Jack and Jill, exceptionally dull boys and girls, philistine for sure, given to Nintendo, early sex and inanities of every kind. Dropouts are the largest end-product for both boys and girls, though girls now exceed boys in achievement, in a society which places little or no value on genuine achievement.

But as I have written this privileged white woman, who believes without question that the meek shall not and can never inherit the earth, and that there can be no equality within races let alone between races, is brutishly realistic in her unquestioned and unquestionably racist way of seeing and therefore being. In many ways she is better than most because she accepts that 1838 with the abolition of slavery meant little in terms of freedom or liberation—except that one could not be bought and sold as a thing—but one's labour became a commodity, cheaper than cheap slavery itself. Says this privileged woman, at the summit of racial oppression here: "But the harsh legacy of slavery lived on, for the huge numbers of freed slaves overwhelmed the capacity of a small island of only 108 square miles to provide them all with work. They had little choice other than to go on working on the sugar estates planting, hoeing and cutting cane as they had done before, now earning wages, it is true."

Do not believe for a moment that this child of racial privilege and power was by any means unaware of the economics of slavery and that of the post emancipation period in which she lived here from 1920. Says she: "Because of the huge pool of labour caused by long-gone slavery, and the continued need for this labour in the labour-intensive cane fields, **life on the estates continued in the traditional pattern** but with a quite different

return on investment, which had once allowed **the life of conspicuous luxury** that Miss Schaw had witnessed in Antigua in the 18th century. The world price of sugar, now very competitive, dictated a middle class [white of course] at best, income to the estate owners, allied with the still comfortable home life made possible by cheap and plentiful “black servants.”

In her household alone, on what was then East Street, there were four times as many black servants waiting hand over foot on four whites, and this to her was as it should be, as natural as the sun rising in the East and setting in the West. Not a few blacks, by one means or another, maybe, osmosis, came to inherit that way of seeing, now dignified with the term neoliberalism.

Forty years ago, I could not read Anthony Froude because of his racist Froudacity, nor for that matter the historian Carlyle, nor the philosophers John Locke and John Stuart Mill. Their redolent racism enraged me, and for some time I read them second-hand as I did the great George F. Hegel. Time, and I suppose maturity healed the deep racist wounds they left, and if not healed, allowed me to see the forest of ideas in spite of the racist trees that passed for the Eurocentric scholarship. At that time, forty years ago, I would not have been able to read Mary G. Lockett, without constantly hurling the book against a stone wall.

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385
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Take this one. She is writing of Governor Eustace Fiennes, after whom, incredibly the Fiennes Institute, the home of the lonely poor, the helplessly indigent, and the uncared for geriatrics are still named. “Sir Eustace Fiennes,” says the woman of privilege power and pomp “was a worldly Edwardian, living at a time when the best of everything was readily available to the rich and well connected”. And Sir Eustace had known the best. He had rubbed shoulders since childhood with the great and near great, when the British Empire was still at its zenith before the debacle of the First World War. His aristocratic way of life could never be a one man tour de force it required plenty of expensive outlay.... Social life under this Governor’s aegis had a lively tempo.

Himself a gourmet, Governor Fiennes lived in grand style. His white South African wife belonging to the rich and famous of any and all time. On leaving Antigua & Barbuda Fiennes returned to aristocratic splendour in England.

That such a man, such a grand marquis, could have an alms house, a geriatric home, named after him here, and still so named in 2002, tells

beyond all reasonable doubt that we have not **decolonised**. We still see the world through British colonial eyes, maintain its ways, and uphold its class and racist traditions as though they were our own. Hence our Parliamentarians and Ministers, every session of Parliament, with its ancient “ayes” and “nays”, swear “allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen her heirs and successors” regardless of the scallywags they are. Of course, we think it is anti-Westminster, anti-monarchical, and therefore heathen and republican to swear allegiance to the Constitution and people of Antigua & Barbuda. We are mired in a colonialist past deep-dyed in racial oppression, which we have come like Margaret G. Lockett, to take as natural, native, even “our culture”.

That Sir V.C. Bird lived under Governor Fiennes, knew of his profligate ways, his aristocratic bearing and over-bearing behaviour, and still maintained the “Poor House” as named in his honour, tells that we, 20 years after independence, 370 years after Antigua Barbuda was settled in 1632, still prefer the colonial interpretation and nomenclature of our history and our institutions rather than our own.

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 386 ... Even the author of *Antigua Then*, a white woman born to privilege, and borne aloft by an army of black impoverished servants noted that “Things had changed but not radically. Antigua was a far cry from the American Middle West, where farmers toiled in the fields from early morning to night and rushed to buy labour-saving machinery as fast as it appeared and could be afforded.” Even she recognised that agrarian reform, creating the black commercial farmer was long overdue in Antigua and withheld by white colonial and black independent governments alike. The disgrace is our modern history, our so-called Antigua vision and Caribbean reality.

Before Sir Eustace Fiennes, through Sir V.C. Bird, down to Lester Bryant Bird, the system designed by Prospero for Sycorax, the mother and Caliban, the son, after more than three centuries still persists, though Caliban has travelled and learnt in and from regions that Caesar never knew. To be fair though, the hegemony of Empire, the one on which the sun sets, and the other of unprecedented power and wealth was too much for the insular pieces of dust on which we tried to construct independence.

But simultaneously, as CLR James, Aimé Césaire in *Discourse on Colonialism*, and in particular Frantz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth* has shown so clearly: “When we search for a **Man** in the technique and style of Europe, we see only a succession of negations of man, and above all, an

avalanche of murders.” European humanism was drenched and drowned in the blood of colonial peoples, and then their own in remorseless pursuit of world dominance. It is we, the colonised, the damned, the humiliated, the poor, who will have to lead humanity to a new and different humanism in this the 21st century.

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