

THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA REVIEW OF BOOKS



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Dr. Foster Hill

Asha Frank on Barbuda

Dorbrene O'Marde on Barbuda

Elaine Olaoye on Barbuda

Paget Henry on Frank Walter and Walter Parker

Anique John on Brenda Lee Brown

Mali Olatunji and Paget Henry Interview Dr. Foster Hill

Lawrence Jardine on religious reading of COVID-19

And 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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A&B Review – Editor’s Note 2020

Once again, welcome dear readers to this issue, Volume 13, of *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books*, the official publication of the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association. This is quite a different introduction to write as so much has happened since our last issue. Among the most important things that filled this intervening period was of course the COVID-19 pandemic that has taken so many lives around the world, and interrupted so many of our activities. Indeed, it stood in the way of our annual in person meeting, preventing us from gathering together. Never was I so terrified of traveling to my beloved Antigua and Barbuda. It took away my motivation to work on our *Review*, as I had to make the adjustments involved in teaching online. I am still such a classroom person, that it was not easy for me. So, in spite of all that, and with vaccines coming stream, welcome to the delayed 2020 issue of our *Review*.

The second big event in our world since the 2019 issue has been the formal opening of the fourth physical campus of the University of the West Indies at Five Islands here in Antigua and Barbuda. This is a very significant development for us here in Antigua and Barbuda and also for the University of the West Indies. On behalf of the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association (ABSA), we would like to congratulate all who made this signal event possible. We (ABSA) have had a thirteen-year partnership with the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies, putting on conferences and art exhibitions. We look forward to a continuing and a deepening of this partnership in the years ahead with the above expansion of the University. Forward ever, backward never.

In keeping with our tradition, this volume of our Association’s journal is an important and interesting one. It opens with three tributes to two outstanding men from Antigua and Barbuda. The first is in honor of the legendary steel band player and leader of the equally legendary Hell’s Gate Steel Band, George (Nugget) Joseph. The first of these two tributes was written by his son, Zucan Bandele, and the second, by our outstanding poet, Edgar Lake. The second person honored in these opening tributes is the effervescent, ever curious, and education-loving man that we all called Teacher Ramsey. In one of his best poems yet, and with breathtaking elegance, Edgar Lake honors and celebrates the sad passing of Teacher Fitzroy Ramsey. Thematically, this volume expands on some important concerns from our previous issue and also introduces some new ones. With regard to the concerns from the previous issue, I am referring to the theme of rebuilding Barbuda after the 2017 devastation of our sister island by Hurricane Irma. The response to that rebuilding effort produced some significant papers on various aspects of Barbuda’s

history, political economy, system of land tenure, legal and constitutional status. They were presented at our 2019 conference, although not all were ready in time for inclusion in the 2019 issue of our *Review*. The papers that were included were written by Dorbrene O'Marde, Lionel Hurst and myself. These papers all suggested that this post-Irma period was indeed a significant transitional period for Barbuda. Recognition of the need for major change was unanimous, yet at the same time these suggestions and attempts at change were locked in conflicts of identity differences and also conflicts of ideological difference between the central government and the Barbuda Council.

The papers on Barbuda that are included in this issue are revised versions of those papers that were presented at the 2019 conference that did not make it into that year's issue of our *Review*. Thus, we open this issue with a paper by Asha Frank, a Barbudan author and former member of the Barbuda Council. Our second paper on Barbuda is by the irrepressible Dorbrene O'Marde. In this work, he develops more fully his views on the deep distrust and social inequalities between Barbudans and Antiguan, how they were amplified by the impact of Hurricane Irma, and the efforts at reconstruction. Finally, in this section on Barbuda, we have the paper by Dr. Elaine Olaoye, our well-known psychologist and poet.

With regard to the new themes that this issue puts before you are the works of two very important but overlooked visual artists of Antigua and Barbuda: Frank Walter and Walter Parker. This essay that I wrote on these two gentlemen began as two reviews. The first was a review of Prof. Barbara Paca's book, *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man, 1926–2009*. The second was a review of the exhibition at the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda of the works of Walter Parker, which was organized in August of 2019 by Mali Olatunji and Desiree Edwards. Before completing the first quarter of my review of Prof. Paca's book, I said to myself: "this will have to be a review essay". By the time I was at the halfway point I knew that it had to be a full-length essay. Although the selections of Walter Parker's paintings that were exhibited at the Museum were much more limited than the selection on Frank Walter's, the quality and themes of Parker's paintings merited full treatment in their own right. Those were the origins of my essay, "Visual Art in Antigua & Barbuda: Frank Walter and Walter Parker".

Returning to the older but ongoing Afro-Christian theme of our *Review*, I am delighted to put before you an interview with Dr. Foster Hill, one of Antigua and Barbuda's most celebrated organists. The pipe organ has been his instrument of choice, and the music of the church his life. In 2018,

Mali Olatunji and I visited Dr. Hill at his home in Sarnia, Canada, and surrounded by all manner of music books and a medium-sized organ, did this interview.

In our rather depleted book review section, we have an excellent review of *London Rocks*, a novel by the well-known Brenda Lee Brown. It is reviewed by Anique John, a Londoner of Trinidadian roots, who earlier this year received her PhD in social justice studies from Arizona State University.

We close the issue with a brief comment by Lawrence Jardine, a long-time activist and founder of the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Enlightenment Academy.

Before I depart, once again I must thank the department of Africana Studies at Brown University for their continued support of our *Review*. Thanks also must go to Ms. Janet Lofgren, editorial assistant, for her careful and dedicated work. Enjoy these Antiguan and Barbudan treats!

Paget Henry

Happy Earth Transition: George (Nugget) Joseph

Zucan Abiola Bandele

If I were to speak through my father, on behalf of my father
I know he would appreciate me saying in his voice,
“Don’t worry. No worry, man!
Don’t worry for our family, for yourself,
Or for the Black African family Community
Just don’t worry
No problem, man!”

If I were to speak
He would want me to say
You know we are a damaged people
We have inherited a toxic substance from the Colonial Captors
And have internalized this substance to our core
This substance is called a parasitic hypocrisy
And it is polluting our consciousness
Sucking the life force out of the community and family
Trough the false notion of the blood of the false Jesus, the Christ

This parasitic hypocrisy toxicity
Has us stuck in the euphoric false notion of some after life salvation
of hopelessness
Waiting on the return of some Son of God
As if the divine omnipresent, omniscient Prime Source Creator
Has one and only begotten son
And this one and only begotten has abandoned us
Because for some unknown reason
We are not worthy
Such toxic hypocrisy

If only I were to speak for my father
I know he won’t mind me saying as a free thinker
Think for yourself, man.
Think, instead of having someone else think for you
Black people! Black people!
My father would say they are so stupid
Tupid! Tupid!
But I love them.

I Know my father considered himself a Deist
A free thinker of Deism
And he would say the Divine Prime Source Creator's creations
Gave natural sovereign man knowledge of reason
Not religion
Not Judaism
Not Islam
And certainly not Christianity!

If I may speak through my father's voice
On behalf of my father I do say
I appreciate it not his carcass lying up in this here church
Going through this here ritual

If I am to speak freely
I would say, Go to hell!
Let's go HELL'S GATE!
Gates open wide to hell with this Christian ritual
Let's go play Pan
Play some Steel Band music
And some Iron Band, some Jambull and Highlanders
And celebrate life
Not death
For death is not just the used up unwanted carcass
But rather a positive pure entity in nature
Pure energy
For there is no such thing as death
There is only pure light wave frequency
Travelling on knowledge in the mind body of pure energy
Pure! Self! Free Life!
Light free to express the fulness there of
With the attitude of gratitude
Such a dude!
Nugget, my dad!
THANKS!

Ancestral Tribute to George Manóah Joseph

Edgar Othniel Lake

Manóah, – A great chorus of songs has welcomed you!
For we have not ever forgotten our languages –
Gourds emptied of grain, – spill with polyphonic notes!
Once, your feet beat rhythms from Winthorpe's to Poynte;
Lashed to the arkestra of bamboo pipes, some beat pans
While your people hammered wide: Popeshead & North streets

Look! – A host of clouds and winged musical harps greet you!
Women who stirred the mortar of earth sing with their feet
Bertha Higgins sent from the Bamana people stood alongside
Chantwells who tore the stubborn Treasury vault –
Re-issuing our notes, deserving and long overdue; still –
G.K. Osei of Ghana placed Fundu's rondo, as Bertha's tithe
Next to a photograph of Cape Coast University women!!

A soft flutterer of white mallets descend, doves: to clothe you:
"The Boys" – Senufo balafon-players of Mali & Burkina Faso
And you – inspecting Cote d'Ivoire's NCEGELE xylophones
Their gourds swelling as battle-axes; Baoule mocks Picasso
Your dark mask of resolve flaunts Wilfredo Lam's center-part
Songhai disguised its xylophone as your horse: Nugget's rib

Timbuktu opens wide her treble-pitched gates to you!!
Now, – See her emissary, Joseph Townsend's gilded courtyard:
You taught us: – "See beauty & justice among castaway irons"
Every coin – and copper – tithed for Alexander Robert's offering
We hear laughter blunting struggle; stirring rumbling Strikes
We reached for heav'n, yet together burnished Hell's Gate!!

We are comforted that you reached home safely in Mende Country
Mande peoples of Guinea cried when your grandfather left
Soumaoro Kante shouts for the bala: "Play the sacred Sosso Bala!"
"You, who kept the Boys together: wooden xylophone-turned-steel
"Sunjata Keita, – let Balafaseeke Kouyate explain such magic!
"We heard Grand-Papa play at Saint Andrew's River 'Panyard'
"Take off his felt hat, his Bowler; give them to his grandchildren!"
The King's Horse prances in purple feathers, again! Wait Papa –
Let Sudan's Ahmed Baba Kake part the waves of Homecoming
Nugget's long sojourn of grace and justice has brought him home!
Past Upper Volta – where the leaf-carvers write of him in Vai Script
Listen! – Kake recites of Love in familiar murmurs of the base drum

For disguised as the King's musicians – we are God's children –
On the move from the plains of Central Asia, through Yucatan,
And as AFRICANS – we have set his pillow of rest beneath him!

None Dare Claim his Body

Edgar Othniel Lake

(In memory of Teacher Fitzroy Herbert Ramsey)

[This excerpt is from a book-length poem, "None Dare Claim his Body", based on the life and sojourn of Fitzroy Herbert Ramsey. This passage is taken from the first of four Books: (*Yolk of Crucifixion*; *Concession to Twilight*; *Pantheon at Belfry*; & *Committal to a Consanguinity*.)]

Sad news you say! Not on such a day: —
It is 'good': — Good Friday
when we rhapsodize of childhood;
of shoes that burned our feet; and
dresses with ample white collars;
with bows, ribbons of soft pink that
commemorate departed siblings –
born of the 'blue foot', or Hydrocephalus
The simpering cry of our post-natal mothers
met by the carpenter's rhythmic
calisthenics: guiding the hand-plane over
the little coffin, — big as a bread-box
And he, some errant Michelangelo
daubs coats of varnish thick as cartilage

What is it now? The fatted calf is slain
The peas are soaked and ready
The hour is late and yet it feels like
someone is departed. Some mice's
miscalculation between Papa's hatbox:
an omen — sure as butchers' rising prices
Or, were they among Tante's dancing shoes,
twisted in the morning light;
a bunion's protrusion —
no longer a betrayal of her minuet;
Or, were they scampering between
stones grown heavier that she once
carried to the open field
amidst fireflies for Rounders games;
grown larger now: —
and bearing up the four corners
of her abandoned house
overrun by vines?

Why is her house abandoned; peeping
through a veil of English Spinach blossoms?
The Jack-Spaniard threatens
Tellers of the Tale of sojourn;
threatens with patrols of frightening
regularity — lest we tarry
But one stubborn Man-child, indifferent to
the lance's sting refused to hurry on;
Gathering the tales of Old Wives; eating
the flesh of persistence, defying the whip
Stuffing in his sack of memory every
lament and victory. It is such a 'harden-hole'
Child who becomes the chronicler of the clan
The thorn in the Savior's side
He, who has nothing to lose but the
unthankful trail of the milk cows' meanderings

Who else? I pray you, remind me!: — recalls
the unthankful trails of such a herd?
Or mastered the waterwheel of cooling cups
Dreaming of passage to Venezuela while
keeping a watchful eye on the sleeping infant?
We know of only one; but he left for colder
climates: climates of alien wandering
Where those who once slept with you
in the bedding now hurry on; those who
shared the elastic bread-plait, twisted
as our early-morning stomach, — now,
just post the smallest distant wave of hand

So we sent a Messenger: an older child
One that knows the orchestral cacophony
of midnight dinnerware: chipped of
enamel; nothing braces multiplication
like the pie-dish, the Gobli gourd that
pitches in to serve as soup-bowl; and all
the while the magisterial calabash
warns: this is The Child of whom the Magi spoke
Do not mistake hunger for ravenousness
The bottom of the tin-cup is his only mirror:

There he sees himself afresh, without blemish
Eyes as big as fortunes buried in the early
Family-morning worship Book; savage ritual

where kneecaps groan beneath the
cane-field water-carrier's epic call of lament
Each sibling shifts in anticipation to finish
An unfinished line from Genesis; fighting sleep
Resisting the seduction of slumber
Shifting under the weight of some endless prayer.
like some restless steamer riding the swell
of tides; prayers treasured as much as
the forgotten Tante's mints left on the dresser
As the taxi honked its horn three blasts for
her trip to Mother England: three blasts
for Wifredo Lam's prayerful mother: —
only offering three eucalyptus leaves
to her departing son
Yet he takes the cathedral of the towering
Breadfruit tree; the sheer geometry of the
Banana grotto in his breast-pocket

So all is at rest, this Good Friday morning
The mangled aluminum-cover dances to
fierce chattering steam of the Dove pot;
where miracles of green tomatoes lend
kaleidoscope to the simmering sauce;
Such trill, as fresh rain-water drips from her
hand transforming the sizzling pressed corn oil;
Aromas pungent as the uprooted yam bunch
The umbrella of eddoes-tops has shaded
every hope and dream. It is news to the
wallowing pig, his snout raised without shame
to register the aromas: — that he might be next
The clucking hen keeps far her chicks
as bacon thick as beating-strap, resists shrinking
For, what is a morsel but a delayed banquet
that will come; a bank-note, heralded by barking dogs
running alongside the postman's rickety bicycle?
What bedlam, now, of cheering children
touching the judge's growling Humber sedan:
shiny of Indonesian forest teak;
polished by the indolent chauffeur
sweating in his undersized Summer Suit?
The crumpled ridge of his Admiral's cap —
no Bogey Peak; erased through touristic notions
Symbolism which betrays deeper doxologies

Turn, turn the aching axle, bringing
the banner of white-washed tires to halt;
the bulbous headlamps —
bring dark curvatures to the hamlet
We sent a Messenger by donkey;
not to play the ass.
How now comes this funereal contraption?
This shiny chrome of radiator's grill eyeing
the measured teacup of pond-water?
This lingering Thing has driven the milk-cows
into single file; interrupting their wayward ways
It portends trouble: cow-chains uprooting
House-corner stones; who will pay?
And, the gate is fragile from its contrived hinge:
A pair of Papa's shit-mashers, gone bad
Who will summon Mother that milk is requested?

For if there is a drop of milk remaining
It is tribute to her steady hand:
never spilling neither cream nor crop;
For, a teardrop is an ocean
to the infant's dreaming;
And, vigilance forces her to practice the
anthropomorphic gaze of royalty:
Her cornrow plaits, —
precise as surveyed cane-plots,
The Child, once-comforted in slumbering-suck;
Its tiny chubby hands upturned behind
her back, finds her washed hair
plaited to a needle's point; —
and He, a prickly-heat cherub, hums once again
Though this time, — you say: — his arms
were upturned in rigor-mortis
It is the gait of crouching Atlas bearing
the weight of an immoral world;
A world freighted with greed,
with blind ambition; unschooled in the
Arts of compassion.

Messenger! — What could such outstretched
arms by Fitzroy have further meant?
Was it the embrace of some Madame, —
Latterly glimpsed at the unfashionable boudoir? No!
Some fatal blow to reclaim a bag of rags? Hardly!

Or, was it but a lonely man swamped in dreams;
Hands raised in testimonial sleep: —
Affirming a mother's cry within himself?
And dreaming, searched; and searching dreamed -
of wiggling plaits, again; sprung from his own seed;
A searching Father, — searching still!

Such Good Friday days were pillars of our dreams
The faded photographs, displayed; obtuse
To the glare of morning light
Shaded beneath the baby-breath ferns;
Ferns, flourishing; but aphids threatening fast
We framed those faces with brown paper;
a cut of windowpane glass – cleaned in vinegar:
Some required no further Good Friday cleaning.
We tasted the hyssop of separations
in our Saturday-morning house-cleaning ritual:
Restoring these fragile sun-baked wafers; and
Drank silence from the reliquary of these chores
Our only genuflection was to the scissors, a broken Cross;
Our sacrament: — white-flour pasting, doughy binding;
Until we graduated to the turkey-berry's paste
And, still, those framings held: spanning muted
Good Friday's: — of mutton-stew; and meatballs
And holding hands along the Park,
Oblivious to its shadows of Mansfield; of Mungo
Never stopping to memorize the Latin names
for Jospeh Bank's botanical flora; we were the fauna —
never knowing the variegations of exile

The Good Fridays of parched groundnuts
crackling from our grandmother's garden
The spotted periwinkle shells adorning
her Chinaman's cabinet; holding still, the
color-tinted postcards from Curacao:
with boat-bridges undulating
lullabies to the sun-baked harbor of
smudged ink-waters connecting
once-torpedoed harbors; fiery rescues
And radiant towns of symmetrical roofs;
Such candy-colored facades! — where,
we believed, black registrants must've stayed;
learning the Certificate in Electrical Trades, and
Diesel hydraulics. Not so!

Still, we dreamed of labeled gifts — at Christmas —
“Fitzroy Herbert”...dreaming on Good Fridays:
Studious at clothes-repairs learned from
Mother’s darning-needle; who can forget
the halved razor-blade, precise as
the surgeon’s deft touch? Mother,
Reversing Papa’s greasy collar;
His Gabardines stiff-starched, now —
Awaiting the terror of the ironing-geese:
belching its ash-cloaked fire coals
like some ocean-going Steamer; offering
betrayed honeymooners house-work jobs
promised in polluted Birmingham

You may have forgotten, Mesenger, —
The Massy Fergusson field-cultivation accessories;
Papa’s kaki shirt soiled from axle-grease, from sweat,
fluttering like a flag next to Mother’s pinafore:
If we were a colony, then;
we were a country-in-the-making
Dreams strung between the factory’s whistle;
the end of morning sifts; beginning afternoon burials —
The food-carrier strung like a spider’s purse:
radiant and beckoning; its sauces enticing strong men
to far ports, — cruel as the grave

But, Good Fridays come; for come they must
When we read aloud the ‘Par Avion’ envelope
from top to bottom, the faded postal date —
circular as our Roundabout; or the village Pound —
where our dreams, too, were impounded
And, with huddling Elders, sold to the lowest bidder
We were poised on its crumbling wall, oblivious
the cost of a valise which expanded, —
as much as the voyager’s ‘passage-money’,
Pennies saved, jackets borrowed; —
And the pleasure of posting a Welfare bond
For every bawling offspring

If Pentecost came, Messenger; it came so briefly —
as when we were asleep —
No doubt, a rich relative had come!
Come, visiting with pock-marked features,
Grizzled from cold Birmingham’s meat-packing jobs,

Or, Sheffield Town of Redhead's Jacobins-men
Dark men that packaged Christmas Hams; a ham
I learned how to gratefully offer to the peg-leg
salt-seller, Mrs. Knight; stationed outside the Fish Market;
an angel who washed my father's face in the tub;
before her Waterloo with diabetes
Once pretty as a meadowlark; now, on Friday evenings; —
Like some broken-winged stork, stoops to pick the
encrusted loaves in brackish waters at Salt Pond
Her donkey-chariot, impatient; ears pinned to the tune:
"Nearer, My God, to Thee...E'en though it be a cross that/
Raise the me.../ " And, braces still, —
she hoists on his hammock-back
It is Jacob's dream — a ladder-song reached
to heaven; she has known no fable of Titanic
So, unable to chase after her own dream,
now sells salt for the Wound
Every week, Fitzroy hears her tragic sonnet: —
"In for penny; in, — for a pung!"

What do you know of miracles, Messenger?
With what loaves do we eat this salted fish?
The shiny breadknife used to stab
the careless lover, came from Sheffield!
And so, Hard Labor, is metered out; yet,
warrior-hearts were hammered out;
beaten on the anvil of the sun; laments sung
atop the stone-heap pyramids of the quarry:
Stones, like hearts, crushed beneath the mallet
And arias of disappointment; of near-chance are
Sung to the sleeping infant, slung across the knee
And still, the sleigh-ride in the wooden houses
headed to St.-Johnston's Village — moved us
Raised up off corner-stones, on oil drums:
Th dark men sing a haunting chant: "Once! — Yes!
Twice! Yes! Up, again, boys!"
Until the sheltered crabs scamper; and flapping
window-shutters bark like djembe drums
Dreams, rolled on to backs of swaying lorries
A black figure, no mere Neptune, rides
Aloft; and, separating wires with his bare hands

animates memories of High John the Conqueror
Who was he? Who were his children?
We do not know. We paid in rum, and Good Wishes

He did not tarry: — that shirtless black figure;
So, take a hint, panting Messenger!
The seasoned-rice was late, in ‘coming-in’
The meat-grinder, unwrapped from the table-cloth;
The red onions, cloves and thyme – thrown
Into its corkscrew vortex promised everything —
and nothing: unless the sums were right!
It had to add up! All of it! Our mothers’
forgiveness of our father’s midnight pedaling
to his jealous lover; torn by her smothering
kisses he came home: slithering into his
pajamas; fooled by Mother’s heavy breathing
So, canceling murder plans — she faced the night
before our first Good Friday, newly moved
And, whispering The Lord’s Prayer, milk came
at dawn from the milkman: delivered by his son

And, yet, Messenger! -Tomorrow’s dawn,
is still borne by her singing:
the same song over and over again;
flapping his shirts angrily, hanging them —
Expertly pinning them to the clothesline
The laying-hen mocking her: chasing butterflies
A home had to be made, — for the children:
ledges for their toys and New Testaments
A verandah had to be mortgaged with blood
To rehearse their annual Christmas recitations
To make us proud, proud! At Christmas Service
As Mother stared at the Pay-book,
the dog-eared borrower’s ledger; the
recalcitrant shopkeeper — stuffed with envy
The oozing salami sausage hung aloft:
luring flies with pepper-corns, tempting
as a Christmas fly-catcher: all to make
school fees for those pouting sons

Good Fridays ushered in accustomed Dread,
The vulgar smell of varnish, so pungent, —
The senses sharpened; suspicious half-moons
Traveling behind clouds: twisted mouths —

The curse for peeking; moaning dogs at midnight
Clouds of departed loved ones: loved ones who
had visited just the week before; uncles
bringing a bowl of peas, — free of worms;
But worms that would meet them
in far-off burial grounds; shadowed cemeteries
where children were sent to harvest vines:
The coralita's pink flower wrestled from
the bower of unforgiving bees; Stingers,
disturbed from their familiar rounds:
They heaped their leafy tributes,
Vines that soften falling thuds of clod. Thud! —
against the coffin's nameplate: "R.I.P" John Foote";
Thud! — ushering the last stanza of "Shall We Gather..."
Thud! — against the swooning widow's collapse;
Thud! — Stirring the lingering contralto: "Abide With Me..."
And, not understanding their low whimpering,
Recoveries, we would hold Granny's hand;
Her wedding-band hanging like the gallows —
loosely on her gnarled quivering finger; bone
curled like some pirate's hook — yet full of life!
Electric as an eel, cautioning my skipping-steps —
that it was The Week of Good Friday

How, then, Messenger — had we left so quickly?
So vaingloriously — dancing to the ocean-liner?
Leapfrogging up the Lady Boat's gangplank;
Tugging on the arm of our aunts, broken
from their after-hour jobs, — just to make the
traveling fees. It was the Age of Innocence:
of perfumes and shaving-brushes; of wrist-
watches cushioned by triangular handkerchiefs; —
Yet, too small to tell the Grim Time!
It was a Time of blaring enunciations,
at sad ports-of-call; and Truman Airport-goodbyes:
PA System's ceiling-speakers cruelty echoing
pert pronunciations:
"The Departure of Flight 551 – Bound..."
There was that inexplainable word! —
A word that would haunt us far beyond
the Good Fridays missed, not returning home
Even as the letters came that Mother
was losing her eyesight to cataracts.

The clouded upturned eyes, the trembling hand
Yet, — and, so persistent was the enchanting
Announcer; calmly claiming our young hearts:
“ — Bound for New York!”
Or, tersely: “Departing now, — for London...”;
And, with some shiny coin in fold of fob;
A short-brim Felt Hat — with a sparrow’s feather —
My hero and I must have urged-on some
elderly relative, some reluctant Guardian
For, bound by some unspoken secret pact: —
Perhaps a favor for a twin-sister who was
saved by another from drowning —
Not among pond lilies, — but from
a smooth kisser’s enchantment;
felicity, perhaps on my behalf, smote
the gushing village water-tank; and she,
acquiescing, — take us to the Forbidden City

Messenger! — Shift your weight; take a minute:
look hungrily inward! Forget the smell of nutmeg!
It all seemed so breathtaking, so bountiful
The trip to Radio City Hall, the smorgasbord
The Swedish waitresses’ imploring accents
Working for tips with disguised contempt
The roast duck, and baked turkey-wings;
the glazed ham with pineapple garnishing;
The beckoning rolls and tarts...!
Upstairs, the roar of the June Taylor Dancers
Still kicking up their heels, embracing: even as
the rotating-set whisked them offstage —
to the joy of the sadistic organ-grinder!
A far, far cry from the vicious landlord’s
caustic Rent-note at 1535 Vyse Avenue!

Still, none worse than the letters from back home
demanding every earthly gadget;
every Rolling-pin and hair-setting kit;
and sorry was the village postman, unable
to answer for the long-lost package;
the electric skillet that mocked our voltage;
Tante Beatrice, unable to golden-fry the
frozen chicken parts; the barbecue-recipe
We found them in the German war-refugee
dentist’s office, magazines strewn like cabbage leaves —

on the floor; our mothers' 'Day's Pay', docked!
Depending only on Papa's coals-kiln —
smoldering beyond the eucalyptus grove
We were, so suddenly, brought down
to the warm unceasing earth

Comes the message — without a Messenger!
He is dozing off! Mouth hanging in disbelief
Perhaps he is being fitted for some dreamy return;
Some journey into a mirrored banquet-hall
One, — not unlike the Grand Lodge Hall;
White sepulcher, kept closed, at
The Fibrey's lapping edge: some wooden mansion;
ebullient Greeting House; where Pharonic rafts return;
Gilded pallets of brassica studded with barnacles like
Rhinestones in the Fibrey Village moonlight
It was as if shimmering couples
Gracefully stepped from their periwinkle-
strewn yards again; the rustling crescendo
of shells announce a Court of Bone; or, some
Autumnal orchestra heralding percussions
They stepped on land in slippers of glass
Made from the spherical buoys,
Round as the blowfish —and just as
Incandescent. And all the while,
A cool wind stirred; ghosts of applause
from the 'barracoons'; men and women,
Little girls; chained until auction-time
at ghosted Fibrey's Wharf

The specter of floating shingles, swollen like
First Communion wafers, lapping
at the Studiation Brown's ware-house;
Stacked with bags of flour, of sugar, —
Gracing our broken Tanner Street gutter;
Four, like our match-box racing boats,
Once within reach, yet not fully within grasp
Yet, such ironies hardly deterred The Faithful
from traversing Friendly Alley;
narrowest gauntlet of the Lowly Ones:
Where Fitzroy met generous godmothers;
Tearful hugs marked this crosstown path;
Highway of Pennies, of kinship encounters;
A quiet artery of un-bowed princes, un-broken

princesses — deprived of cruelties
They thirst for the cool destination of rest;
Down pencil-thin periwinkle-shelled pathways:
— between the cedar sideboards
of Fibrey's matchbox homes; citadels of
grand solitude: of goblet water, lemonade
Homes of thumbnail backyard plots; fences
festooned with orbed glass buoys; fishing-nets
fracturing the drapery of scented sea-moss
that beckon king-crab strolls, far from the
refuge of holes; the vertical hoist of fishermen's
traps; nets slung around the hulking shoulders
Like sandaled gladiators; hurrying before dawn

And, Tell us, —Messenger! —
What chance, — the Scouser, our Liverpoolian cousin
genuflects at the sunken mariners' graves?
African sons-of-the-bayside who left
villages like Fibrey's Village; sailing Seven Seas
Entering Cardiff Bay; building ships' Locks and
dreadnoughts; yet, refused room and boarding
Still, such mariners fed their Welsh offspring;
inspiring Conrad to write, The Nigger of the 'Narcissus':
Some black protagonist from St. Christopher
Whose dying purifies a conflicted crew
But here, where the briny green waters
Mark the bleeding-away of Tanner Street sons
Such healing-waters flow into the gap-tooth bay
Friendly Alley: A desolate shortcut path to Tarsus

But, you resemble Fitzroy. Messenger! Your
Robes ae wind-torn from defiance;
The burrs of One that left the beaten path;
A cartographer of the donkey-paths
that projects horror to the respectable shrews
You are scaly, and ill-creamed, but you
Smell of bay-sides; Did you wander
Underneath the gaze of those women
Who daily watch for the rising boats?
They are the salmon-lookers; they know the
genealogies: who can catch what; who
Is not allowed to handle fish, due to custom
Few know why such women are draped in
torn-waist dresses; carrying crying toddlers

They disguise a sacred function, believing that
Twins control the weather; they match the Groupers
Praying to the wind and the rain — for Jacks

So, re-Consider, Messenger:
These distant dry hills lack rains; and yet,
Women carry clothespins by the mouthful;
admonishing children: “Watch for
‘White-man’ coming down! It is a lookout call
For the rains, where the infant’s blanket
must be saved; the Matriarch’s night-robe, too!
Otherwise, sanguinary conflicts are
conjured between villages, more the
Memory of ancient ritual imploring
to the weather gods; and for harvesting

So, — Tell the Superintendent of Cemeteries:
Do not be startled that we gave Fitzroy
to the World; for, only after the revels —
does the World glimpse its own social death.
He has going to open the gates
Gates marked by thick dark smoke
Driving away mosquitos at evening-tide;
He was appointed to open those gates by the
Choppers of the Green-Wood.
Smoke in cooking-yards burn infants’ eyes,
but, they are a tithe to the sacred sylvan guards
of the King of Wood of Abyssinian shores
And in the temple-yards of barest earth,
of stone-heaps and clucking hens,
Children hopscotch continents of dust:
Leapfrog over Rome, and Mussolini’s Italy;
beating biscuit tins into plough-shares:
A Carnival of Sisyphus, all their own

So, Cardboard Crowns — to Fitzroy! He’s tired
of masquerading as King of the Red Bean;
It is Passover, past the Twelfth Night
And his body is exhausted, and cold.
Still, it is the pause before our fright
We scream, involuntarily mimicking
the broken-teeth mask, worn:
the Bishop of Fools unmasks
our huddling; there, the herring-box

betrays abbots of Reason dressed in robe
Grandmother's nightgowns, gone to market
They, – the last figures playing Dawlie House
Unaware of the grim Lord of Misrule
parading in trance his assumed character
Still, the rains come for the Saturnalia
For we export burlesque figures,
funky in the fugue of dissipated promises
Here, prickly glories sprout
before retreats of self-destruction,
where harvests of sobriety, and
supplication have been replaced
by the mule's collar turned Cat o' nine;
And we feign grief, confusing
it with genuine delights

Setting our own Agenda: Negotiating inclusion and accepting culture

Asha Frank

Day seven hundred and four. Strikes up generator. EC\$28,160 spent on gas. Davia asks her mother “Mommy, if we can’t soon get electricity and we are so small, what will Antiguan do when they get hit?”

My experience as an Irma survivor really opened my eyes to various issues. Climate change, the importance of practicing sustainability and the urgent need for systemic change in governance. As a member of the Barbuda Council during the aftermath of Irma I remember attending meetings where the discussion was about building codes. The UNDP hosted meeting, that was supposed to focus on building back better in Barbuda, became centred on Antigua because ‘regulations that were not in place in Barbuda were hardly being implemented in Antigua due to unregistered builders, an understaffed DCA and a prohibitively expensive building code at EC\$300’.¹ The example I have just given of trying to start the rebuilding process in Barbuda (after Antigua was untouched by Hurricane Irma) is just one of our post Irma experiences that brought to surface the need for better governance, clear policy and sustainable planning.

Today my focus is to present how we, as the leaders and members of our communities, can improve the relationship between Antigua and Barbuda benefitting the overall social and political advancement of both islands. Looking at the inclusion of Barbuda whilst respecting the cultural differences between the islands and ending the conflict that has continued in modern times. In this context I also want to focus on how worldwide movements are pushing for more community planning to create better governance and sustainable plans that provide longer term solutions in order to manage a major worldwide crisis such as climate change or what it has most recently been labelled as climate crisis. Day seven hundred and four. EC\$28,160 spent on gas because we STILL don’t have electricity—that is my family home.

Barbuda has a unique history in the Caribbean and in comparison to our sister island Antigua. I want to take you back in time to this history with a quote from my book *Dreamland Barbuda* (a short, simple historical reference book written for young Antiguan and Barbudans to give them

1 United Nations Development Program, (2017) ‘Session 3: Building Code’. Personal minutes for the meeting Building Back Better: Technical Workshop on Lessons Learned and Way Forward December 2017, Halcyon Hotel, Antigua

a glimpse into our special history): ‘The slaves on Barbuda were free to develop their own methods; their daily routine was based on growing food and rearing animals to supply provisions for the Antigua plantation and their own use. They were not managed by anyone with strict authority although there were often a number of white overseers on the island, living somewhat harmoniously alongside the slaves and surveying the daily routines. *The Codrington Papers*, the letters of correspondence between the Codrington family and various administrators and overseers on other islands provide evidence of this lifestyle.’²

According to a letter from John James (Governor of Barbuda) in 1824 ‘There are but two white men with myself on the island and I frequently leave my wife and daughters there without a fastening of the home... corporal punishment I never allow.’ As written in *Dreamland Barbuda* ‘The Codringtons never developed any institutional structures such as a legal framework, a public administration or a police force on Barbuda, which contrasted with Antigua significantly. This meant that the slaves developed the freedom and the necessity to develop their own systems of land administration and regulations. This was like no other Caribbean island during slavery, and after emancipation the slaves continued to maintain the island using their own methods.’³

Over the last 300 hundred years Barbudans have been practicing sustainability. Our different history has contributed to the slow, sustainable development of Barbuda. In many aspects of our society we practice this sustainability still today. In Fisheries for example, on a local, small scale level, Barbudans continue to use traditional fish pots and have adopted newer methods such as rods, fishing guns and small boats. On a national level the Barbuda Council has implemented a sustainability policy and passed a law to ban the fishing of parrot fish as it is considered to be the primary cleaner of reefs and sand producer. This has come about because we have had four years of scientific research inputted into Barbuda’s fisheries and coastline from the Blue Halo initiative funded by the Waitt Institute. These historical differences, as I describe in my book, explains how the traditional use of land and sea has contributed to our overall sustainability to the present day.

Other examples of sustainability on Barbuda can be seen in the building of homes. Most Barbudans own their own homes and, according to the 2011 Housing and Population Census, 77 percent of Barbudans own

2 Letter from John James (Governor of Barbuda) in 1824, *The Codrington Papers*, British Library, London, RP 2616/27

3 Frank, Asha, *Dreamland Barbuda; A Study of the History and Development of Communal Land Ownership on the Island*, (2018), Antigua: Asha Frank, pg 7

concrete homes (which are considered a more hurricane resilient material) in comparison to Antigua's 39 percent of the population, where more houses are built of wood.⁴ After our experience of Hurricane Luis in 1995, the intensity of the storm and the number of homes that had to be repaired in both Antigua and Barbuda caused some insurance companies to fail to meet their obligations. So it became clear that building concrete homes was the sustainable answer as we move towards a future of climate change.

Another practice that has led to a more sustainable development in Barbuda, is that the community expects consultation in all decisions made by the Barbuda Council. According to UN Habitat, the United Nations Human settlements program, 'Public participation should be an indispensable element in human settlements, especially in planning strategies and in their formulation, implementation and management; it should influence all levels of government in the decision making process to further the political and economical growth of human settlements.'⁵ Village meetings are held frequently in Barbuda by the Barbuda Council discussing varying topics from hotel developments, giving updates on what is happening in Council and in particular the recently repealed Barbuda Land Act 2007. This act which supports communal land ownership specified that any development over \$5,400,000 had to be passed by a village meeting first where members of the community were given the opportunity to become fully informed about any development and give permission for the project. It was through this method that Barbudans established their first hotel in 1959. Barbudans consider leasehold, a more sustainable method of land management, as it does not alienate the land from the local population but still takes advantage of direct foreign investment. The following hotels were successfully leased on Barbuda from 1959: The Coco Point, The K Club (1988) Palmetto Hotel (1991) The Lighthouse 1998 and most recently Barbuda Belle. As a result of this vital consultation process, Barbudans have been able to practice sustainability in tourism.

On a global scale people are recognising the long-term benefits of involving communities in planning through consultation. Community participation lies right at the heart of sustainable development. *The Community Planning Handbook* by Nick Wates provides examples of the

4 Government of Antigua and Barbuda, (2011) Population and Housing Census return for Antigua and Barbuda, Statistics Division, First Floor Market and Church Street, Available at https://antiguaobserver.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Antigua-and-Barbuda-2011-Population-and-Housing-Census-2014Antigua-and-Barbuda_population-census_2011.pdf (Accessed July 2019)

5 Delegate Communique, United Nations Habitat 1 Conference, Vancouver, 1976

long-term benefits of consultation. ‘When people are involved in shaping their local surroundings the benefits include additional resources, better decisions, compliance with legislation and responsive environment which ultimately leads to a speedier development.’⁶ A community led focus not only provides for long term solutions but also creates a happier and healthier populace and environment. According to an article in *The Guardian* by economist Joseph Stiglitz, who is a nobel laureate in economics, “GDP is not a good measure of wellbeing. What we measure affects what we do: if we measure the wrong thing, we will do the wrong thing. If we focus only on material well being—on, say, the production of goods, rather than on health, education, and the environment—we become distorted in the same way that these measures are distorted; we become more materialistic.”⁷

Another key example is the New Zealand government who have recently implemented a policy that states ‘all new spending must advance one of five government priorities: improving mental health, reducing child poverty, addressing the inequalities faced by indigenous Maori and Pacific Islands people, thriving in a digital age, and transitioning to a low-emission, sustainable economy.’⁸

These examples show the need to reconsider methods of governance as practiced in Barbuda. It explains how inadequate metrics have led to deficient policies in many areas in developed countries.

The need for systemic changes that are sustainable as mentioned above comes at a crucial time as we head towards a different world. Eight-hundred million people—11 percent of the world’s population—are currently vulnerable to climate change impacts such as droughts, floods, heat waves, extreme weather events and sea-level rise.⁹ Two years on from Hurricane Irma approximately 1,000 of the 1,500 Barbudans have returned home. There is still a lack of infrastructure such as a functioning hospital, lack of electricity and the primary school and bank have taken two years to reopen. As a member of the Barbudan community, I was asked once “why don’t you just move everybody off the island to live in Antigua?” Barbudans are a part of the 11 percent of vulnerable people in

6 Wates, Nick, (2000) *The Community Planning Handbook*, UKI: EarthScan Publications, pg 4

7 Stiglitz, Joseph, (2018) GDP is not a good measure of wellbeing—it’s too materialistic, *The Guardian*, (online) <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/dec/03/gdp-wellbeing-health-education-environment-joseph-stiglitz> (Accessed July 2019)

8 Peat, Jack, (2019) Economic Growth is an Unnecessary Evil, *The London Economic*, (Accessed June 2019)

9 Conservation International, (2019) Climate Change 11 facts you need to know, Available at: <https://www.conservation.org/stories/11-climate-change-facts-you-need-to-know>, (Accessed July 2019)

the world who are HAPPY where they live. If you consider that question on a global scale is mass migration (moving 800 million people) really a feasible solution to the problem of climate change? Especially when you consider the nationalistic policies that are being considered in developed countries such as in America with Trump's Wall.

So how do we foster greater relations between the islands through sustainable governance? A report was conducted by the Commonwealth in 2000 because of the continued conflict between Antigua and Barbuda reaching a peak with issues such as sand mining which was being exploited from Barbuda by the Central government. The team visited both islands to work on amicable solutions. The report mentioned 'devising suitable governance structures for geographically separate territories in the context of a common sovereignty within the framework of a unitary state is highly problematical'.¹⁰ It is an intricate balance that requires cooperation from both sides. The report stated 'Solutions must be sought taking into account the complex interplay between the psychological impact of that history and the insights derived from modern theories of governance'.¹¹ Primary observations that were made by the Commonwealth Team were that 'consultation processes between the government and the Barbuda Council have been inadequate'.¹² There was no consultation about the repeal of the Barbuda Land Act 2007 in 2018.

Solutions that were provided by the report were as follows:

- A committee must be formed consisting of high-level participants from the Prime Minister's office and/or Finance Ministry and the Barbuda Council.
- The gradual transfer of Utilities of which the Barbuda Council through the Barbuda Local Government Act of 1976 has powers to control.
- Recognition of role and responsibilities whereby no matter the political allegiance of the Barbuda Council the Central Government recognise the powers of the council and vice versa it is the duty of the council to cooperate.

10 Benn, Denis and Bienvenu, Pierre (2000) Review of the Operations of the Arrangements Between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Council, London: Commonwealth Secretariat, pg 2

11 Benn, Denis and Bienvenu, Pierre (2000) Review of the Operations of the Arrangements Between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Council, London: Commonwealth Secretariat, pg 3

12 Benn, Denis and Bienvenu, Pierre (2000) Review of the Operations of the Arrangements Between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Council, London: Commonwealth Secretariat, pg 17

- Quarterly advances from Central Government as opposed to receiving funds in arrears
- Improved infrastructure
- A functioning port of entry
- And lastly education—a lack of knowledge of others can instill prejudice.

This kind of good governance as suggested in 2000 by the Commonwealth report has yet to be fully implemented.

Moving Barbuda forward involves primarily the cooperation of the two main stakeholders—the Government and the Barbuda Council—which, in its simplest format, is to sit and negotiate and to reach a point of agreement using the assistance of a third party when topics become heated. It is through consultation that the Central government will be able to achieve this cooperation and the Commonwealth report is a great starting point. This could lead to other practical solutions for both islands such as reducing the size of the council workforce through small business grants, privatisation of some aspects of local services, and better paid positions for skilled and qualified Barbudans to return home. Going forward, Barbudans should concentrate on the sustainable areas such as fisheries that have proven to benefit many persons on the island, the further development of eco-friendly tourism, and an improved land management system that has more financial reward.

If you want to be a part of the solution to the problem and want to know how you can contribute on a personal level, then your first step is to take a visit to Barbuda. The strengths of both islands can be brought together to work towards a more sustainable solution, a more progressive outlook by learning from each other—that will show the international community that Antigua and Barbuda are a shining example in the Caribbean. We have the potential to be #antiguabarbudastrong.

ANTIGUA/BARBUDA: A Reparatory Justice Approach¹³

Dorbrene E. O'Marde

I react to one of the questions Dr. Paget Henry posed in his invitation to participate in this conference on the future of Barbuda. The question is: 'How do we heal and close the deep fissure between Barbuda and Antigua? I am sure you will all agree that the process of healing requires accurate diagnosis. Healing methods may differ but all depend on the knowledge of what you are attempting to treat, to heal...to make whole. The diagnosis must be rooted in historical fact and reasonable interpretations of social and economic behaviour.

Between 1671 and 1901 Barbuda was British Crown territory leased to various members of the Codrington family and other fortune-seekers, who were either absentee landlords or residents of Antigua. Barbudans, were considered tenants of the Crown—living on leased lands first as 'enslaved persons' and since 1834 as 'freed' persons. Governor Hamilton writing to the Duke of Newcastle describes the post-emancipation situation on Barbuda as follows:

The inhabitants of the island have always been the subjects of the Queen...the island belongs to the Queen, by whom it is leased to the worthy Codrington family under which the inhabitants enjoy their lands.

Joy Lawrence in her *Barbuda and Betty's Hope: The Codrington Connection*¹⁴ unearths 1820 correspondence between colonials cautioning 'that Barbudans "acknowledge no master, and believe the Island belongs to themselves"'.

Similar correspondence in 1824 describes the enslaved in Barbuda—suggesting that "many have ten to eleven acres of land to cultivate, the produce of which is their own property". In other words, Barbudans had—what my lawyer friends refer to as 'usufruct rights'—legal rights to use and enjoy the advantages or profits of another person's property¹⁵. This is a decade before emancipation.

13 Many ideas/interpretations etc. expressed in this address were previously stated in a newspaper article 'TOWARDS WIN/WIN: ANTIGUA/BARBUDA CROSSROADS' December 2017

14 Joy Lawrence: *Barbuda and Betty's Hope, The Codrington Connection* (2015)

15 Sluyter, Andrew and Potter, Amy E., "Barbuda: A Caribbean Island In Transition" (2012). *Faculty Publications*. 19.

http://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/geoanth_pubs/19

History, in all forms—except some elements of Barbuda commonsense—rejects the claim that the Codringtons either sold or willed or gave as reparations the lands of Barbuda to Barbudan inhabitants. The family never owned the lands; it was a lease holder of Crown lands. The record shows that the Codringtons since 1870 had no authority over Barbuda—certainly no authority over the lands of Barbuda that they once managed as a single estate.

The communal basis of the land tenure system in Barbuda evolved through a number of significant socio-economic and environmental facts:

- All lands (and waters) were controlled by a single lesser. The island of Barbuda was the estate of the Codringtons. There was no need for fences and other boundary markers.
- The economy, unlike those of other Caribbean territories, was not sugar plantation-based. It included cattle herding, goat and sheep farming, hunting deer, wild hogs and land turtles—all activities facilitated by large open land spaces where fences and barriers and private plots would be anathema to national production¹⁶. The position that all citizens had '*legal rights to communal land—the 'usufruct rights'*' mentioned earlier—made sense, and
- Finally, the confusion created on Barbuda by the Emancipation Act of 1833—which mandated the human rights of Africans and their descendants in the Caribbean.

Codrington woke on the morning of August 2nd 1834 with the realization that there were now five hundred persons on his leased property over which he no longer had chattel control and whom he would be forced to employ to maintain his estate. In addition, he could not remove them—they resisted—it was the only homeland they knew. He lamented: "Negro emancipation seems to have made the Proprietor the slave. The former will reside in my property and have daily wages whether I have work for them or not".

There is no doubt however that since 1671 Barbudans have been virtually 'left alone' on Queen/Crown property—as the island transitioned from 'private estate' to 'colony of a colony' and now to a seeming 'dependency' within the nation of Antigua and Barbuda. Barbudans have exerted nationalism and developed cultural traits and lifestyles based on their

16 Ibid

interpretation/assumption that they ‘owned’ the lands in common, a position they have steadfastly held even in the face of police and political aggression.

A Special Demand

This may be an aside but the nationals of Antigua and Barbuda should make an immediate demand to authorities that the name ‘Codrington’ be removed from the main settlement in Barbuda. Who was this Codrington?

- He openly campaigned against abolition.
- He pocketed a whopping £6286 18S 11D (*of the British £20 million reparations to planters and enslavers*) on the 2nd Nov 1835 for ‘freeing’ four hundred and ninety-two enslaved persons on Barbuda.¹⁷ In total, he received twenty-two and a half (22,450) thousand pounds for fifteen hundred and thirty-nine enslaved human beings—his supposed property in Antigua and Barbuda¹⁸. He also received another £8558 2/2d for another four hundred and ten (410) Africans and their descendants he had enslaved in Barbados.¹⁹
- Joy Lawrence helps us paint the picture: “After 185 years of domination by one family, the people of Barbuda found themselves in a little village called Codrington—landless, penniless and with an uncertain future”.

His name—Codrington—like many other names in this nation should be removed forthwith from our public spaces. His name—like many others—has been through negative indoctrination, associated with positive aspects of our colonial history, when in fact they were nothing but enslavers, those who committed crimes against humanity.

Back to Insularism

Our venerable leader Paget has suggested in his call-for-papers that:

- A particularly toxic form of insularism, even by Caribbean standard, has developed between Antigua and Barbuda

17 It is important to note that he opposed the British parliament’s Emancipation Act for his ‘slaves’ as Barbuda was not mentioned in the Emancipation Proclamation—probably based on the notion that Barbuda was a part of Antigua and/or that Barbuda in colonial eyes was seen as the estate, not an island. Codrington changed his mind after he was advised that he could not receive compensation.

18 Codrington owned estates Betty’s Hope, Barbuda, Clare Hall, New Work, Cotton, Garden in Antigua and Barbuda. He also owned estates (and therefore enslaved) others in Grenada and Tobago

19 Claim made NOT in Codrington’s name but by James Heywood Markland, then treasurer of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts

- He offers an economic reason for this—that the ever-widening developmental gap between both countries helped to make existing ‘insular differences’ toxic as they were equated with moral, intellectual and performative differences between Barbudans and Antiguans.’....and in addition has produced attitudes of Antigua-first and Antigua-centric forms of politics, which Barbudans have instinctively resisted.

This is the persistent heritage of toxic insularism that continues to divide us. This resistance has been a major obstacle in the way of the central government’s attempts to develop Barbuda and to close the gap between these territories of our twin-island nation.

I think we must know what are the elements of the ‘toxic form of insularism’ and why do they persist, deepen even.

A Trip to Barbuda

I went to Barbuda a couple weeks ago to see the land again, to see some friends, to get a sense of the prevailing atmosphere—the infrastructure, the repair processes; the people—their mood, their politics, their interpretation of the past, of their present...their view of the future.

There I reflected on my age long work-and-play relation with Barbuda. I go far back, I realized, as part of the management/design team of the Springview Hospital—later named the Hannah Thomas Hospital. Before that, my father was warden there in the early nineteen seventies—I visited on a number of occasions. I was part of the team that prepared the National Physical Development Plan, and I led it at the Barbuda consultations. I was project manager at National Solid Waste Management Authority, and led the construction of the landfill there and developed its solid waste management system. I did the Royal Bank sponsored competition—Young Leaders—that involved secondary school children and their teachers. I held group meetings there when I prepared the strategic plan for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. I have done cultural work there, I know the original “Timbuck-one”. I have participated in an African Liberation Day march...been there for fetes and a funeral. There is reason for me boring with you with all that I just said.

My visit there a few weeks ago was uncomfortably different, at times off-setting. But as I reflect, maybe much of it was in my own mind. I experienced both trust and distrust at extreme levels. There was welcome but alongside that welcome lurked resentment, a sort of diluted hostility—diluted. But there was also talk of warfare, a talk I never heard before.

I didn't get the sense that the diluted hostility was directed to the persona that many know on Green Door steps or around the domino table, on the radio or at the head table in the former Council Building. On this visit, I was Antiguan. What I report is not the result of a long stay or any even pseudo-scientific poll. It is what I experienced and I do not doubt that others may have had completely opposite or different experiences. The evacuation for Hurricane Irma and many associated events in Antigua during the post-evacuation period have intensified—what Paget refers to as 'a particularly toxic form of insularism.'

Impact of the Evacuation

Not too many Antiguan during the post-evacuation period gave space to or attempted an understanding of the behaviour and attitudes of many dislocated Barbudan-employed property owners, in many instances. Not too many tried to understand the physical and psychological challenges occasioned by the trauma of disaster, the loss of life work and savings, the discomfort of group living in wide open spaces, the uncertainty of day to day living, the longing for home!

Not too many Barbudans have expressed gratitude for the efforts of the central government and many, many generous persons here in Antigua who opened homes, accounts and their hearts to those faced with crisis. Both sides retreated to historical myth that informed commonsense knowledge. The Antiguan view of Barbudan—big, 'strapling' because he or she was descendant of those selected to serve on a stud farm; the primitive native fascinated by moonlight-pan-stick—what it is alleged that Barbudans called street lamps—surfaced, aggressively; a greedy citizen with universal rights in Antigua and Barbuda but with, in addition, special rights in Barbuda; a lazy inept Barbuda public servant employed by the Barbuda Council with taxpayers' money—underworked, unregulated, overpaid.

The Barbudans—in both defense and aggression—deepened their claim to communal ownership of the lands of Barbuda. They remember the schemes of government ministers attempting to import llamas to Barbuda shores; they suddenly remember the shipping containers belonging to some fly-by-night white investor that they had to overturn at River into the sea to stop foreign occupation of their lands. They remember APUA trying to 'pollute' the lagoon with effluent from the osmosis plant and the pick-and-shovel resistance that forced that organization to do the right thing. Today, every and any slight gets magnified.

Some Barbudans sob neglect—with reason. Some public buildings are still without roofs; many are without electricity and running water; the Hospital functions as a two room clinic, school buildings are still under repair eighteen months later. The roads...the roads! Everything around them seems rudderless. A friend sent me a video of the Dominican recovery—‘miraculous’ she labeled it—‘so unlike what is happening here’, she sighed. The pre-independence call for ‘secession’ is now known as ‘separation’ and it is strong. This is where we are today. Many scabs have been ripped off.

The Deeper Roots of These Insular Conflicts

But what is the genesis of this—these insular differences between both populations. I search the record—Paget Henry, Susan Lowes, GL Richards, Brian Dyde, Natasha Lightfoot, Amy Potter and a number of visiting white scholars, and of course Joy Lawrence where many of the insularities are described. I stick my neck out in interpretation of the contributions to identity formation that placed these two people—of the same race and of the same slave class—on this perpetual collision path.

Many of the contributions to national—really—‘island’ identities can be found in the enslavement and colonial periods. An examination of the 1858 post enslavement riots that took place here in the Point reveals these oppressor/oppressed anomalies. We see how an ‘Antigua stevedore vs. Barbudan stevedore’ conflict grew to an ‘Antigua working class vs. Barbuda working class’ major confrontation to a ‘Black working class vs. mixed race police and white colonial authority’ national riot.

An Antiguan stevedore accuses a Barbudan stevedore of cheapening labour—undercutting existing rates to get jobs. A fight breaks out—the Barbudan is victorious. That evening his house is surrounded and ripped apart by an Antiguan mob—Antiguan women proceed to beat Barbudan women. Antiguan women roamed the streets protesting that “foreigners had come to take bread out of the mouths of ‘the people’”. Foreigners vs. the People—some struggles don’t go away. The riot must have had an underlying Barbudan/Antiguan conflict. Those conflicts must have been deep for the eruption to be so violent. We therefore need to go back, before the riots, before 1858.

By 1835, over one hundred Barbudans had relocated to Antigua. They formed an ‘island’ community in the Point Area—there was a Barbuda Alley, a Montserrat Alley also. Competition for work was severe; housing must have been poor and crowded; sanitation poor. The colonial conditions in which all lived were stressful as was the white

authoritarianism. Lightfoot²⁰ points us to consider how “oppressed peoples’ resistance can carry the potential of oppressing similarly disadvantaged others” and “how the constraints of colonialism can place its subjects simultaneously in the positions of both oppressor and oppressed”. Island identities are formed through experience:

- During the period of enslavement, Barbudans were transferred to the Codrington estates in Antigua as punishment. Antigua was seen then as an unfriendly, harsh country. And once you see the country as hateful, the journey to seeing the people of the country as hateful is not long.
- Enslaved and later free Antiguan saw Barbudans as privileged. They had an ‘easier’ slave and colonial life. They did not know the horrors of plantation life. Barbudans, supposedly here for punishment would meld in the existing Barbudan community experiencing ‘freedom’ as ‘they fell outside the jurisdiction that limited the freedoms of Black Antiguan’. Both jealousy and anger may have been engendered²¹.
- The different levels of development between both countries allowed the Antiguan to see the Barbudan as primitive, crude, uneducated. Barbudans defended themselves by reacting verbally ‘aryu no had no land²²’. The pride in land ownership ran deep.

Both peoples however spin in a vortex where history does not matter. When I point out to Barbudans that the historical record does not support the Barbudan claim to communal ownership of the lands, the response runs like “anybody can write what they want in history, my grandmother tell me we own it, so we own it”.

When I point out to Antiguan that the historical record does not reflect any evidence of ‘stud’ farming on Barbuda, the response runs like “is not everything man write in history, since I small I know that, so is so!”

The ancestral relationship of the Barbudan to Barbuda lands provides a cultural and economic basis for national identity. This common bond has knitted Barbudans at home and abroad—primarily in the USA and the UK—into a transnational community. Less than one year after the attainment of associated status for Antigua and Barbuda, Barbudans in

20 Natasha Lightfoot: “Race, Class, and Resistance: The 1858 Riots and the Aftermath of Emancipation in Antigua”

21 Ibid

22 Conversation with an 80 year old former Point resident

New York formed the Barbudan United Descendants, which one year later started the publication *Barbuda Voice*—a newspaper that had aim of keeping “Barbudans, the Antigua Government, Caribbean leaders, the British Government, US legislators and many influential friends of Barbuda aware of all the major developments in the island”.²³ The paper was published for twenty one years (1969–1990). In 2011, more than half of the applications to lease a plot of land to build a house or open a business came from those living abroad²⁴

The transnational Barbuda maintains that the future development, in whatever shape or form, must have the issues of land ownership and control as critically central to any decision-making, political and/or otherwise. It is a defiant community that is not without resources.

Where Are We Today?

Barbudans make the case that these rights persisted to 31st May 2018 when the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda with Governor General’s assent passed the BARBUDA (AMENDMENT) - No. 7 of 2018 that amended the Barbuda Act, Cap. 42 to affirm the colonial position that “*Barbuda inhabitants are ‘tenants of the Crown’ and ‘shall neither hold nor deal with any land situate within the said island’*”.

This reversed the position of the 2007 Barbuda Land Act that made legal the then existing system of land tenure in Barbuda, confirmed that all lands in Barbuda are vested in the Crown [Governor General] on behalf of the people of Barbuda, who own it in common! Barbudans also make the case that they have had their present relationship with land since Emancipation. It is a relationship that existed through all forms of colonial government, made legal in national government since 1981, and reconfirmed in 2007. The amendment of 2018 is being challenged in the courts and therefore is not in force.

In addition to the case for the existence of ‘usufruct’ rights mentioned earlier, Barbudans therefore must and do hold some legitimate expectation that their ownership of the lands of Barbuda remains now and into the future—the destruction of Hurricane Irma notwithstanding. This expectation seems reasonable and valid, and although not a legal right, simply asks for constructive consultation and fairness in reviewing established 300+ year old practice.

23 Joy Lawrence

24 Sluyter, Andrew and Potter, Amy E., “Barbuda: A Caribbean Island In Transition” (2012). *Faculty Publications*. 19.

http://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/geoanth_pubs/19

Barbudans see the present Government of Antigua and Barbuda as uncaring and dictatorial. They see in the present ALP leadership the same land-grabbing and exploitative approaches of the Lester Bird administration, an administration plagued with corruption charges, one which they resisted strongly.

Antiguans see both the present and older generation of Barbudan leaders as sealed in a bubble of old traditions—old ways of thinking, of seeing, of doing, of bargaining and negotiation. It is seen as without deep understanding of changes swirling around it, in regional and international politics and government, in finance and economy and foreign investment, in physical and environmental complexities.

The national challenge is to find a bridge or bridges between pain and anger on one side and disdain and disgust on the other. It is also an emotional challenge. The issues of governance and land ownership and relief money will find solutions in the process of psychological repair.

National Reconciliation and Reparatory Justice

I therefore call for a process of national reconciliation. I bored you with my Barbuda resume to make the point that I am not ‘taking sides’—especially political sides. It is the type of accusation that is swung easily. I am fully committed to the nation of Antigua and Barbuda, one in which all citizens are enabled to fulfil their potential. The CARICOM Reparations Commission defines its work within the understanding that ‘only a reparatory justice **approach** to truth and educational exposure can begin the process of healing and repair.’²⁵

I do not at this time have a fully formed view of the reparative justice approach outside of the criminal justice systems within which it was originally designed. But I am thinking of a process designed to expose truth and logic—through educational programmes—the insularisms poisoning the relationship between Barbuda and Antigua; to balance the defined communal interests of the leadership and people of Antigua and of Barbuda and to have this balance codified in law and constitution.

The process must be defined, accepted and respected as ‘non-confrontational and conciliatory’. It must be recognised that the impact of UK colonial rule is persistent in our lives and that it is within that rule that we find the kernel for the insularism existing between our countries. It must also recognise that the UK colonial rule also was responsible for the unbalanced development that stokes the insularism. This is how Codrington left Barbuda—1870... Joy Lawrence again: “When the

25 CARICOM Reparations Commission 10point plan

Codringtons surrendered the lease, they left a land devoid of amenities necessary for a viable community—no school, no hospital, no running water, no public building, no proper roads, no strong buildings, no police or courthouse, no law and order. The island provided no opportunities for wage labour”.

The process must expose to light—without fear or favour—the various trends of the complex antagonisms between both islands especially since Independence and make recommendations on inter alia, governance & supporting constitutional changes, environment/ecology, finance/ investments, customs and ports, and land tenure. One product of the process should be, for example, a 2030 vision for the nation. The nuts and bolts, the practicalities of the process should be developed elsewhere, but I envisage a series of interactions at various levels in both islands moderated by a regional agency/organization and involving regional and international organizations at all levels. The moderator(s) must bring skills in reparatory justice approaches.

I think that this is a glorious opportunity to demonstrate to the world our maturity—that we can handle our own insularisms through an internal reparations process. We should not bypass this opportunity to communicate our seriousness in our call for European reparations for the slave trade and African enslavement.

The process starts with sincere formal apologies—from antagonists on both sides of the pond.

A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS of insularism in postcolonial Antigua and Barbuda

Elaine H. Olaoye, Ph.D.
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*Antigua
Barbuda
Redonda*

*Emerald jewels in the sapphire waters of the Caribbean-Atlantic Ocean
Home for the Siboney Stone Age people
As far back as 1775 BC.
These tropical ecological structures
Limestone, volcanic and coral wonders
Are geological-historical sisters three
Antigua and Barbuda in Pleistocene times
(That's about 9,600 BC)
Were joined
Then there was 200 ft less of depth of sea...
Yet Antigua is made of rocks about 30,000,000 years of age
This island emerged from an eruption on a volcanic stage
Followed by northern coral deposits of a later age...*

From "Antiguan Fantasia" Olaoye April 22, 1 (2008)

The devastation of Barbuda by Hurricane Irma on September 6th, 2017 in contrast to the almost perfect preservation of her twin island, Antigua, provides an opportunity to examine this, dramatic difference in island status, through the dynamics and patterns of behavior that are part of the historical development or underdevelopment of the islands: colonization and decolonization and the economic, political and social pathways that have followed. Earlier speakers, notably Paget Henry detailed the many geographical, historical and political issues that set these islands, once joined together, on very different trajectories. In spite of these different trajectories, they are currently perceived as twin islands throughout the world, one cannot name one without the other. Failure to do so results in getting corrected, or receiving a scolding, or generating resentment, or being guilty of deeply offending someone... This successful binding of the two names very much belies, what can be shown to be an inevitable set of very different insular, social and political identities that have left these two islands very far apart on many important issues.

With regard to similarities, the islands are both beautiful tropical isles, one being only just about twice the size of the other. Both boast exquisite beaches, some with pink sands, one beach in Barbuda is called Princess Diana Beach, with reason... and Antigua would not be the celebrated tourist destination without its pristine white sand beaches. These distinctive shorelines so visible from the air on both islands are positioned to separate the waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

Significant similarities end there. Barbuda's inhabitants do not number 2,000 while Antigua's population is over 80,000. Historically Antigua has harbors that have been and are still world famous providing critical shelter and rest for the likes of Lord Nelson and other textbook famous British commanders. By contrast Barbuda's reefs and rock served as a wrecking port for ships that were lured into her treacherous harbors. Not just the coastline but also the land mass offered very different terrains, though both islands were not favored with adequate rainfall from the non-rain bearing Trade Winds, Barbuda had by far the more severe drought problem. While Antigua was able to profit in a timely fashion from the harvesting of plantation crops for export, this was never an option for neighboring Barbuda.

Still another fateful contrast in need of mention here is the governmental and social structures that emerged on each island. While Antigua did live under British colonial rule and benefited in some ways from the imposition of that structure, the island of Barbuda, all 62 square miles of it was run as private property, the island leased, as is well known, to the Codringtons for 185 years by British Imperial powers! As if that was not a long enough to hold an island as a prison, it was subsequently leased to two other English men, and none of the three made any attempt to provide any governmental structure or recognize the right of the inhabitants, who had been slaves of a particularly brutal and unique order.

From a social psychological perspective, these different insular histories resulted in markedly different socializations processes on Barbuda and Antigua. In turn, these different socialization processes resulted in different identities being formed by the people of these two islands. Compounded by passing of the centuries, the miles of sea water between Barbuda and Antigua, and the inequalities in British colonial policies, the two islands developed at different rates and in different directions.

Social Psychology (SP) is a discipline within a discipline: whereas much of psychological inquiry and resultant research and knowledge focuses on the individual, social psychologists focus on the group, in this case an island, in the context of international forces effecting the island's behavior, its geographic and political structures, as well as the dynamics

and passage of events unfolding over time. A social psychological analysis is helpful because of the central role that the personality factors and communal bonds have played in the histories of Barbuda and Antigua. Application of a social psychological analysis to behaviors, histories and options facing these two islands in the pre- and post-Hurricane Irma periods can be helpful in providing a keener understanding of underlying insular attitudes and prejudicial dynamics, and so contribute to the clarification and changing of some of these attitudes, strategies and behaviors necessary for moving forward politically, socially, and economically.

The application of a Social Psychological (SP) analysis will use some concepts from this discipline to show

1. The natural and inevitable emergence of some of these divisive attitudes and behaviors based on social psychological research.
2. The expectation based on social psychological research that the high levels of distrust and disaffection will require mediation and education as well as adjudication.
3. The observation that because many of these attitudes and behaviors have a very long and painful history, (older than social psychology), their cultural and generational roots will be deep and not readily displaced.
4. The expected outcome of this analysis will be recommendations of patient processes, which take into account some of the many hidden variables and categorizations that social psychology will highlight.

Practically, and specifically a number of concepts of SP will be discussed to shed light on how they have been operating in the observed relationships between Antigua and Barbuda. First, *social categorization* (Allport 1954/1979), a natural often unconscious cognitive and emotional process by which we place individuals into social groups. This is often activated with *outgroup homogeneity* where we tend to see members of the outgroup as more similar than we see members of our ingroup. SP researchers have also observed *ingroup favoritism* where we tend to respond more positively to members from the ingroup than the outgroup (Sherif 1961), as well as ascribe positive traits to our ingroup and negative ones to outgroups. These strategies of group construction lead to another socio-psychological phenomenon, social identity. The latter is often a critical anchor of personal self-esteem and collective identity vis-à-vis other groups. These variables were delineated because they can now be expected to be operating in all Antigua/ Barbuda relations with one caveat, to a much greater degree. If an increasing awareness of these ingroup/

outgroup attitudes is not cultivated and steps taken to deal with the obstacles they present, attempts to negotiate agreements are likely to be a failure.

This is readily predictable because of the differential history identified earlier, the great inequality between Barbuda and Antigua that currently exists, the former's relative underdevelopment and paucity of resources, and its resented 'dependent' status in relation to Antigua. These differences and inequalities tend to evoke all the anxiety and fears associated with the brutally exploited period during colonial times.

SP research also indicates and predicts that when individuals feel that the value of their ingroup is being threatened and demeaned, they will respond as if they are trying to regain their own self-worth, they also express more positive attitudes towards their ingroup and more negative ones towards the outgroup. This can now be seen as the dynamic that drives what is described as the well-known "communal" relationships of Barbudans, which is further reinforced by the fact that they constitute a small population.

There are many groups and also many factors to take into account in doing a realistic analysis: There are at least three groups and two major structural factors that need to be defined, disentangled and then re-engaged from a variety of points of view:

The three groups, their roles and contributions that need to be defined are:

1. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Council.
2. Barbudans and Antiguan
3. Globalization as embodied in the United Nations (UN)

The two factors which must be recognized:

1. Geographical and historical factors, patterns and processes
2. Socialization and structural opportunities or lack thereof in creating differential wealth.

To increase understanding of the many dynamics at play, the intellectual terrain of this paper focuses on six issues that complicate these five factors, which must be recognized, and their weight and influence taken into account. Failing this, we risk derailment by, what may turn out to be positions or agreements built on faulty premises:

1. Issues of identity.
2. Issues of insularity
3. Issues of inequality
4. Issues of responsibility

5. Issues of fairness and humanity
6. Issues of rights.

It is hoped that keeping in mind and examining to whatever extent possible, these unavoidable stakeholders with their intersecting social, political and environmental demands, can lead to less finger pointing, pontificating and self-defeating argumentation, and focus instead on productive communications and collaborative actions anchored in helpful strategies for both sides.

This is an ambitious goal for any paper, and particularly one by a psychologist, as opposed to an economist or sociologist or better yet some combination of all, but faint heart never won a fair gentleman... In the limited confines of this paper, I will try to get us to start thinking about the positive attitudes and productive possibilities that embracing the above complex of issues can deliver, and in doing so I will have at least planted some good seeds. I will address briefly each of these three groups, the two factors, and begin to show how and where the six issues intersect and contribute to likely outcomes.

This paper will conclude with an emergent analysis of how some these factors reflect a larger Caribbean zeitgeist and also current global trends, as well as, what lessons can be learned from Antigua/Barbuda's bid for some form of unified government, in the face of these significant social and psychological challenges.

The complications regarding relations between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Council are many in number. The contrast between these two governing bodies could scarcely be greater. It is important to state at this time, that the Barbuda Council was established in 1976 by the then ruling Antigua and Barbuda Labor Party. The Council introduced structures of self-rule and replaced the old Warden system of Governor-rule from the colonial era. Thus, at the time of Hurricane Irma, the Barbuda Council was 41 years old, and Barbudans had been practicing self-rule within the parameters of the central government for just about four decades. The Council has been populated by men and women from the three parties: the Barbuda Democratic Movement (BDM), the United Progressive Party (UPP), and the Antigua and Barbuda Labor Party (ABLP). These were some of the earlier and ongoing relations between the Barbuda Council and the government of Antigua and Barbuda.

Unfortunately, as Paget Henry (2019) documents carefully in his paper, relations between the Barbuda Council and the Central government have been very polarized and difficult. This polarization has had a lot to do with the dynamics of in-group favoritism and out-group hostility noted

above. Given the fact that Barbuda and Antigua are separate islands some of these in-group/out-group dynamics are to be expected. But given the history of socio-economic inequality between these two islands, these in-group/out-group dynamics have been greatly intensified and inflamed. Attempts at working together have been plagued by many major obstacles: the desire of some Barbudans for independence from Antigua, conflicts over where the authority of the central government ends and that of the council begins, and major differences in policies and strategies of economic development. Like Anguilla, in the lead up to political independence for our unitary state in 1981, Council leaders petitioned the Queen, notably asking for status of a colony. But it was too late The Barbuda Council was told simply, that being a British colony in the 20th century was no longer an option. These separatist impulses are still quite strong and will require recognition and pragmatic responses.

What was the alternative to returning to the status of a British colony? Deal with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda who without necessarily meaning to be unkind, was embroiled in establishing the two-party political system governance, and had little time and energy to take on the problems of Barbuda. Henry's account of how Barbuda's interests and development got sidelined again and again, sometimes by what seemed to be just bad timing, is a fascinating and not unimportant piece of the history of Antigua/ Barbuda relations.

While one can make an argument for limited blame in the past on the part of Government of Antigua and Barbuda, for their treatment of Barbuda, the current conditions demand a different stance. Several emergent factors indicate that it is now time for Government of Antigua and Barbuda to make Barbuda a priority. Not only because there will never be a perfect time to do so, but also, as we shall see when we look at our third group, UN-centered Globalization, Barbuda's current hurricane disaster, has garnered worldwide attention and has been the focus of a larger community that is interested in helping with this devastation. This then raises the complicating issue of responsibility, and that's all I do here, I just raise it, I do not attempt to resolve it.

A second complicating issue worthy of discussion here are rights: it is well past the time when the rights of Barbudans should be more fully respected and clearly defined. The other complicating issue is that of fairness, which maybe, though difficult to sort out, at this time, be coupled with compassion. Climate change is upon us as Glenn Sankatsing (2016) reminds us: these adverse climatic conditions are likely to increase if we do not find the political will, to acknowledge and use our imaginations,

cognitive and political skills to draw upon the humanistic and strategic reserves, that Sankatsing is confident remains within us all, as human beings.

If Barbudan issues somehow got lost in the shuffle in the past, Hurricane Irma has put her closer to the center of the stage. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, having been the head of a colonized twin-island state, and has managed to dig Antigua significantly out of that status, is it willing to let this kind of social unrest fester on Barbuda, its former dependency? In social psychology we have researched and identified the concept, “identification with the aggressor”. This psychological mechanism reveals that people tend to identify with the powerful figures in their lives. As a result, when we come to positions of power we very often treat others in the same or similar ways in which powerful people in our lives treated us. These are tendencies with ourselves that may be hidden, but are likely to surface in difficult situations like this one. Thus, instead of pointing fingers, we should all take the time to educate ourselves about these interpersonal power dynamics, with the hope of becoming more conscious of these types of attitudes, and the impact they can have, as we bring them to negotiated situations like this one. This phenomenon of the identification with aggressor was researched in concentration camps, where this surprising phenomenon was observed. But those circumstances were far more extreme and desperate than the ones we are looking at here. There are not only strong incentives here to move past such regressive patterns of behavior but the environmental reality of climate change, a key factor of this conference, reminds us all, that this level of devastation can happen to Antigua also.

Without attempting to address all of the complications with the central government, we will look at the role of Barbudans and to a lesser extent that of Antiguan. But first of all, I would like to acknowledge that this conference is a step in the right direction on behalf of both Barbudan and Antiguan intellectuals. This will give still wider attention to the problems and complications and attract more expertise and action.

Antiguans in general shouldered significant amounts of responsibility by taking in Barbudan family members, manning shelters and in general supporting the humanitarian effort to make the inhabitants of Barbuda cope with their abrupt loss of just about everything, including the awkwardness of their displacement. But if they are truly a part of the country listed everywhere as Antigua and Barbuda, Antiguan political leaders will have to respect more deeply and cherish more dearly, the history, rights and socialization of the people of Barbuda.

As referenced earlier, Antiguan and Barbudans through no fault of either group, are not cut from the same socio-cultural cloth. Complicating issues that naturally arise from this difference in insular heritages provide evidence of uniqueness of the identities that have emerged on both islands. These differences in identity were further reinforced by the terrains of the islands being so different, the insularity produced by miles of sea water between them and the inequality in natural resources as well as accumulated wealth. In learning to adapt to their very different ecosystem one would expect Barbudans to develop a communal loyalty and a love that helped them to make life work in spite of very harsh social and political factors, as well the difficult geography of the island. This of necessity has led to the development of skills, personality factors and social attributes less likely to be found in Antiguan. In a world that is being forced to learn quickly how to deal with and accommodate diversity, a fundamental condition of diversity is that there is the development of more options and strategies with which to face challenges yet to come.

If Antiguan, in spite of being in the stronger position for now, can recognize the personal and cultural resources of great value that Barbudans are bringing to the table, even as they struggle to get on their feet again, in spite of a great deal of mistrust and resentment, some of this negativity can be tamped down. Where differences, especially differences as large and as ingrained, and let's admit egregious as many of these are, these attitudes of mistrust and hostility are predictable. Some would call it natural and others inevitable. But the fundamental fact remains that as humans we always have a choice. Therefore, if the central government, Antiguan and Barbudans can all come to the table and face the reality of their common vulnerabilities and also their strengths together, they will open up possibilities that can surprise everyone! However, insularity remains a stumbling block to cooperation between the Caribbean islands. The failure of the Federation in 1962 can also be attributed to insularism, but those circumstances differed in important details from this one.

Without discussing all the many complications of the foregoing relationships, we turn our attention to the role of the third group, Globalization as embodied by the United Nations (UN). For the better part of the last two years, I have given into one of my mentors and have been attending meetings and doing volunteer work at the UN on Thursdays as a representative of International Council of Psychologists (ICP). Psychologists have inserted themselves as NGOs into the work at the UN. For example, we were instrumental in creating the Sustainable Developmental Goal SDG #3: Good Health and Well Being. Frankly in the past, I have been very cynical about the UN, seeing it as a collection of pontificating heads, rather than active strategists. But my attitude

has changed. While The larger nations have given the UN and continue to give the UN, a hard way to go, the UN has managed despite these major obstacles, to lead in encouraging and executing high levels of collaboration, and helpful actions in relieving some of the problems around the world. A major victory for them was the achievement resulting in serious reduction in extreme poverty, as a function of setting the Millennial Development Goals MDGs.

This achievement emboldened the UN to set its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in which they hope to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Jokingly it has been observed that not even Jesus was that ambitious: He said to a supplicant, “The poor we always have with us”. However, UN Development Plan (UNDP) will have to go after the next level of poverty, so the poor will be with us after 2030... I was in attendance at an INDIA-UN Development Partnership Meeting on June 6, 2019. I was happy to note based SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities Antigua and Barbuda had *been* granted a budget of \$1,000,000.00 for the “Resilient Restoration of Pivotal Public Infrastructure for the Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Island of Barbuda, Post-Hurricane Irma.” This project’s aim is to rehabilitate and equip the Hanna Thomas Hospital and Barbuda Post Office. Preliminary activities were reported to have been ongoing since June 2018, employing the principle of “build back better” which includes utilization of high quality materials. The clearly highlighted beneficiaries were the inhabitants of Barbuda.

Also reported in the same booklet was a testimonial from H.E. Walton Alfonso Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the UN. “The ravages of hurricane Irma brought the true meaning of South-South corporation truly alive. The partnership and urgent response from South-South partners such as India came to the rescue of the island. Working with the South-South model, we were able to respond relatively quickly in rebuilding homes, replacement of roofs and make Barbuda habitable again” Some of the presenters at this conference visited Barbuda as part of its activity and were able to observe where and how the monies, in partnership with local partners and government have made “Barbuda habitable again.”

The Post Disaster Needs Assessment (Hurricane Irma Recovery Needs Assessment) (PDNA), jointly carried out by the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, estimated the total damage (destroyed physical assets) of Irma/Maria for Antigua and Barbuda as EC\$367.5 million (US\$136.1 million), while losses as amounting to

approximately EC\$51.2 million (US\$18.9 million), and recovery needs amounting to EC\$600 million (US\$222.2 million). Approximately 95% of the houses on Barbuda were damaged or destroyed, based on the results of the Post Disaster Needs Assessment, the total recovery needs for this sector estimated at USD 79.6 million.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PROJECT
DOCUMENT Antigua and Barbuda 1 Project Title: Housing Support to Barbuda Project Number: 00117863 Implementing Partner: United Nations Development Programme Start Date: 30 January 2019 End Date: 29 January 2021 PAC Meeting date: 14 February 2019. The European Union is contributing 3.25 million to building 150 houses in Barbuda.

The project will support the efforts of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in the recovery of post-Hurricane Irma Barbuda, through the repair and rebuilding of 150 residential structures, using the “Build Back Better” (BBB) approach, in compliance with the 2015 OECS Building Code, as well as the Antigua and Barbuda Building Guidelines. The project will further contribute to the return of displaced families, the resilience and ultimately the sustainable development of the hurricane-prone island in the short to long term.

In line with the 2017 Post Disaster Need Assessments (PDNA), the Building Damage Assessment (BDA) and the recovery strategy established by the Government with the support of UNDP, the project will adopt a comprehensive approach to effectively meet the needs of the most affected population on the Island of Barbuda. To this end, the project is designed to contribute to on-going initiatives by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, including UNDP early recovery interventions, in coordination with other humanitarian and development actors and supporting the acceleration of the Barbuda recovery process.

According to the Building Damage Assessment BDA, conducted in October 2017, 44 percent of buildings in the island were extensively damaged or destroyed (buildings classified as having a Level 3 and Level 4-type of damage), which represents more than half of the houses that were occupied before Irma’s landfall.

To date some significant intervention has been put in place to specifically address repairs to houses affected by major damage, and in line with the Government’s phase approach to recovery, this intervention represents a significant contribution to the restoration and the long-term recovery of Barbuda. The project’s intended outcome, increased disaster resilience for the most vulnerable persons in Barbuda after the impact of Hurricane Irma, will be achieved through the following outputs:

Output 1: One hundred and fifty (150) private houses of the most vulnerable residents of Barbuda (level 3 and 4) repaired/reconstructed.

Output 2: Capacity of the local population enhanced to prevent and/or cope with future shocks through increased knowledge of standardized resilient construction techniques.

As the implementing Agency, UNDP will carry out the implementation of the project in close consultation and collaboration with relevant national authorities, such as the Office of the National Authorizing Officer (ONAO), the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), the Public Works Department (PWD) (Ministry of Works), the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, the Development Control Authority (DCA) (Ministry of Housing, Lands and Urban Renewal) and the Barbuda Council. UNDP, in coordination and close collaboration with the relevant national authorities will manage, monitor and report the achievements of project results.

Early recovery of post-Irma Barbuda has witnessed important interventions in the housing sector through collaborative efforts between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and humanitarian and development actors, including international non-governmental organization (NGO) Samaritan's Purse and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Efforts were undertaken by the population with the support of the government and national and international partners for the removal of part of the disaster debris accumulated in and around structures, as well as for salvaging materials and the conduct of simple repairs where possible. Importantly, UNDP has implemented a roofing project to restore 250 damaged/destroyed roofs with funding from the People's Republic of China, through Build Back Better principles, providing high-quality materials and quality assurance for the installation process and supporting the Development Control Agency (DCA) to ensure safe construction techniques and limit risk. In addition, as part of this initiative, UNDP implemented capacity building of constructors, inspectors, architects, other national technical personnel, as well as of the local population on climate resilience through BBB principles and provided construction tools and equipment to local construction entities. Finally, complementing this rehabilitation initiative, and through a Regional grant by the Central Emergency Relief Facility (CERF), US\$65,900 were allocated to Antigua and Barbuda and utilized to implement a for cash-for-work (CFW) debris management project to clear disaster as well as construction waste from the premises of 272 houses, exceeding its target of 250 houses.

The above details were supplied to provide evidence in support of a global policy that integrates care for the environment with development, on the fundamental understanding that every country must do its part to combat climate change.

These statements are important and provide some possible indications regarding global responsibility to small islands and other vulnerable geographies. This could also be a warning with respect to global financial assistance that is promised and then actually received. Antiguan and Barbudans have a role to play in becoming familiar with global funding sources, monitor their implementation and show that they are willing to match them with the energy, expertise and creativity of local skills and talent, for it will contribute to attracting more attention and investments when these are put to good use. In short, issues of identity, insularity, inequality, responsibility, rights and fairness and humanity intersect with geographical and historical factors as well as availability of financial, natural and social resources to dictate quality of life for the peoples of Antigua and Barbuda.

Henry's (2016) historical analysis of the political culture that developed in Antigua and Barbuda's will be used to better situate the emerging social psychological conflicts these twinned islands have been facing in the aftermath of the destruction caused by hurricane Irma. According to Henry (2016) the political culture of the two islands falls into three broad periods.

The first period was defined by a political heritage where an African monarch's powers were limited by peoples' councils. The second period was controlled by European imperial 'rights' that gave them the 'right' to rule island territories in the Caribbean. This resulted in the well documented subjugation of the labor, the freedom and the humanity of black Africans brought to the islands, and Antigua and Barbuda were no exceptions. The third period saw the opportunity and ability to throw off this imperial yoke and to reclaim their freedom, their humanity and the dignity of their labor. This was a period of widespread decolonization throughout the islands, as well as, a time of development and expression of island cultures and identities. The destructive forces of hurricane Irma with its implications for freedom and independence have become complicating factors in this line of development.

With regard to the issues of control over one's island affairs, these issues are no longer with European imperial powers but now with a sister island. How will this bigger sister exercise its power? As a formally decolonized island, what have Antiguan learned that might allow them to treat Barbuda as an equal? To what extent do the difference in economic and

natural resources of the two islands permit this? What emerges here is a predictable confrontation between a politically expedient vision on the part of Antigua for Barbuda and the passionate and fierce commitment to self-rule, that grew out of historical conditions in a Barbuda, that still lacks economic viability.

The population of Barbuda was approximately 2,000 before hurricane Irma. Among small island nations, this is very small, especially as this number would decrease rather increase under the circumstances. But historical imprints of identity and insularity have left Barbudans with very strong ties to their island which they organized and cultivated communally. This sealed a communal relationship between these citizens that created social bonds similar to family ties. Given the history of slavery and the difficult experiences with drought, social psychologists would predict a significant strengthening of the attachments to these communally owned lands. This fierce bonding around the land persists to this day, giving these citizens a hard-earned inheritance to protect. Here was a social psychological experiment worthy of exploration. Where would this sense of communal ownership lead? In a zeitgeist that was fast becoming individualistic, could it survive? Could it make a unique contribution to an alternate form of societal relationships?

Despite the small size of their country, Barbudans before hurricane Irma were fiercely proud and were committed to not only maintaining but building on their practices of self-rule. However, the economic foundations for this greater self-assertion have not yet been put in place. Unlike Antigua, Barbados or Jamaica, Barbuda is having a difficult time developing a capitalist tourist sector within its communal economy. The two are difficult to link together as they are organized on very different principles. I can remember when Antigua was going through this same transition, our ambivalences, and the many marches organized by the churches against the casinos and the gambling that would come with this new industry.

Barbudans still take great pride in the communal economy that they have created on the lands they collectively own and from the surrounding waters. This economy has been primarily a fishing, animal, fruit and vegetable farming economy. Along with fish and ground provisions, Barbudan farmers have raised cows, goats, sheep and horses. Lobster fishing and deer hunting have been activities for which Barbuda has long been famous, and still is. These were the activities around which Barbudans built their communal economy and it did meet their basic needs.

However, because much of the production has been for family consumption, the Barbudan economy has not been a high income generating one. Thus, it has not been able to meet those demands of the population that go beyond the basic ones. Consequently, significant portions of the population continue to migrate to England, America, and Antigua. As noted earlier, Barbuda has lovely and even more pristine beaches than Antigua. Hence it has as much tourist potential as the latter. The Coco Point Lodge was for a long time the prime symbol of this tourist potential. However, because of the communal roots of their economy and distrust of the central government, Barbudans have been more ambivalent about transitioning to a tourist economy than most other Caribbean islands. Given the small size of the population, Barbuda could very easily be overrun by the influx of people coming in as tourists, workers, managers and investors—significantly changing the racial/ethnic composition of the population. Sacred property right—vital to the Barbudan identity would have to change. Thus, the transition to a tourist economy would change much that is vital to the social psychology of the Barbudan identity. However, this shift would significantly increase to total income generated on the island. In short, Barbuda is on the horns of a dilemma or point of transition which is being made more difficult by a number of unique social psychological factors. Because of the latter, even this apparent economic problem will have to be handled with great care.

The Antigua/Barbuda standoff in some ways is a microcosm of what is occurring in many parts of the world in a post-colonial era. To what extent are the demands for independence by particular territories sustainable? What kind of new relationships can be forged that will assuage the need for assertion of unique identities and address the separate economic, financial and social resources that each require? The establishment and maintenance of industries, agrarian activity, civic and regulatory structures, hospitals, banks, schools, colleges, administrative buildings, police stations, fire houses, etc. require large investments of capital that requires a tax base to create. With a small population relying in part on remittances from abroad rather than local jobs to maintain themselves, this can become quite difficult and not immediately possible. Currently almost everything, including food, is imported. Barbuda does not have a deep harbor to accommodate large ships and its airport is still very small. These provide very real limitations to sorely needed economic progress.

Social psychology would predict that this set of conditions would lead to a prolonged struggle. This is also the expectation, based on detailed observations and examination of the conditions resulting from a visit to islands July 17–29, 2000 by a Commonwealth Review Team. In their “Report of the Operation of the Arrangements between the Government

of Antigua and Barbuda and the Barbuda Local Council” October 2000. The report notes a deep distrust that existed even then, between the governmental structures of each island. Hurricane Irma causing a radical shift in issues of dependency, under these identifiable attitudes of mistrust, negotiations in good faith could be predicted to be slow at best.

A visit to the island in August, 2019 saw the restoration of the Barbuda Local Council operating in its chambers with all the passion and self-determination that could be expected. A luncheon meeting with a past member of the Council revealed some emergent ideas and problems: Asha Frank was in the process of setting up an NGO to strengthen relationships with the United Nations. She also was thinking about a matter confronting most young people in the ‘small’ islands, getting a proper education. Already in possession of an undergraduate degree, Ms. Frank felt the need for a graduate degree and sought advice about which degree would best serve her and Barbuda’s needs. She would most likely pursue a degree in the UK since she has family there, but at this time she was very committed to returning to Barbuda. This raises the specter of the brain drain that all these ‘small’ islands tend to suffer from.

A second related issue was investigated while on the island: The response of the current Government of Antigua and Barbuda to the challenges of reconstructing and developing Barbuda in the post-Irma period. It is a response that challenges directly the time-honored tradition of communal land ownership on Barbuda. Not surprisingly, it has been a major site of conflict and resistance between Mr. Trevor Walker and the leadership of the Barbuda Council and Prime Minister Gaston Browne and the leadership of the Antigua and Barbuda Labor Party. The prime minister’s offer was very much on the minds of the citizenry when I visited. At the heart of Prime Minister Browne’s response was the offer of individual titles to the lands they now live on at the price of \$1:00! This offer also included legitimate heirs of Barbuda who were not property owners at the time. Under the older communal system, Barbudans had claims to the land but no individual evidence of this claim or rights to this land. Under the Browne system, individual Barbudans, who for instance might want to develop or even sell land would now have the right to do so, or to use the land as collateral for loans. Mr. Browne’s vision was to move Barbuda into a new era of entrepreneurship in order to stimulate the economy and attract workers and foreign capital. This now individually owned acreage could be priced at its market value and provide wealth and income for its owner. For young people this would give them a financial start, enable them to leave for educational purposes and return because they had something to return to or to pursue varying paths to personal advancement on the island.

This in many ways is a well thought out entrepreneurial plan (it may have hidden agendas, real or perceived, related to other uses of Barbudan land, but we set aside those for now) that was greeted with ambivalence but primarily with hostility and outright rejection! Barbudan land has good market value because of the tourist industry. This was largely a result of the distrust identified earlier, as well as, a passionate commitment to a communal relationship.

However, there was a fault line, that I explored in my visit to the island. I predicted that the young people should find this offer attractive, but it was often presented as a unified Barbudan position. Interviews with a few young people while I was on the island, revealed some important differences as a function of generation: The older folk were the most passionate in their rejection. They were looking to the past, while the young people were forced to look towards the future; They had no need for individual resources to start businesses or get an education, they could continue to thrive under communal living. Also, they held a great deal familial and communal power and they were perceiving acceptance of Prime Minister Brown's offer as a betrayal of a sacred trust. These are motives and attitudes that social psychology would predict, to become very real stumbling blocks to moving forward. Indeed, they would require much listening, discussion and negotiations focused on building trust, as well as, what could be seen as a fair and honorable economic plan.

A social psychological assessment of this impasse can predict that it will take much time to resolve, the feelings are historical and deep, yet the times and circumstances have changed and require still more adjustments, from a people who have already adjusted to so much. In speaking with Asha Frank, a spokeswoman for Barbuda and a recent Barbuda Council member, eliciting her perspective on the problem, she felt that the October 2000 suggestion by the Report of the Commonwealth Team is one that for Barbudans, could be the way forward.

The path to resolution for Barbudans she felt rested on identifying a neutral external agency such as the Commonwealth Secretariat or other international organization to help with negotiations, monitor progress and maybe even offer some advice with respects to specific issues. This would require the support of external donors such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC). This could turn out to be a model that could be used elsewhere since the social and political dynamics are not unique but reflective of what is occurring in other parts of the world.

However, because the very emotional political, cultural and historical elements of this relationship, social psychological analysis predicts, that it will take considerable time for each side to analyze their perceived reality, underlying attitudes and to focus more clearly on the changing and changed reality they now face together (Banaji & Helpherz, 2010).

These identity crises are happening all over the world as communities emerge for colonialism, racism, sexism and other forms of socially dominating orientations. These, like Antigua and Barbuda, will require education and mediation, as well as adjudication, to help retrain some of the neuropsychological patterns of responding that have been reinforced for generations (Cikara & Van Bavel 2014). Embracing the two former recommendations, education and mediation, in attempting to effect productive group relations, would contribute to:

- (i) Increased cognitive and emotional flexibility on both sides of these 'isms'.
- (ii) Allow time for and encourage new norms regarding the behaviors of each group to develop.
- (iii) Increase the possibility of creating shared strategies and visions that benefit all.

One example of a relatively successful accommodation of differing historical identities, between two different groups, continues to develop in New York and other parts of the United States: While there are identifiable differences between Caribbean Americans and African Americans, quite often in work, educational and political settings, these distinctions are not always emphasized. Permitting oneself to be perceived as part of the 'Black and Brown people' has allowed members of both groups to be part of a collaborative response, to the overwhelming and persistent attacks brought about by systemic racism and the ongoing battles for racial equality in the United States. The two cultures have worked shoulder to shoulder, and have crafted attitudes, strategies and policies, that have been effective responses to racism, instead of fighting each other. (Olaoye 2008) In other words, Antiguan and Barbudans need to identify and embrace their common ideals and strengths, as well as their shared threats, like imperialism, insularism, racism and increasing environmental storms. They can choose to let the potential devastation of these conditions, drive new and cooperative Black and Brown bonds, that result in shared commitment, to support each other in resolving these vital and cherished concerns.

The Sherif (1961) social psychological experiments provided substantive data, based on replications, that a larger ‘overarching’ goal, that neither group can achieve alone, is another strategy or circumstance, that has been observed to bring sparring groups together. Such a condition, as represented by the four threats identified above, could serve to help break up the Antigua/Barbuda impasse, around establishing the nature of a collaborative relationship that will contribute to a better future, for these twin islands.

I close with these lines.

*Despite ideologies and histories,
Weak or strong structural economies,
Availability of resources,
Abundance of investors and monies,
As well as access to and use of technologies...
Often,
More than any of the visible
And/or readily measurable factors
Creation and protection of wealth
Is about capturing from the ever-moving flow
Of human ideas and discoveries,
Strategies that lead to healthy adaptations to ecologies,
Deep commitments to varying moralities
And abilities to learn from myths and our
Ancient anthropocentric intentionalities.*

Olaoye, August 2019

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FEATURE ESSAYS – VISUAL AND LITERARY ART

Visual Art in Antigua and Barbuda: Frank Walter and Walter Parker

Paget Henry

As in the other territories of Caribbean, contemporary visual art in Antigua and Barbuda has been inspired by the movements for national independence that brought an end to the centuries-long period of European colonial rule. These more locally oriented styles and practices visual artistic production have been exploring themes such as the future of the Antigua and Barbudan nation, our heritage of African spirituality, the legacies from the colonial period that still have to be overcome—such as class, race and gender inequality. Representing this nationalist trend in Antiguan and Barbudan visual art have been artists like Mali Olatunji, Zucan Bandele, and Heather Doram. These artists have done for the visual arts of Antigua and Barbuda, what Jamaica Kincaid, Edgar Lake, Dorbrene O'Marde, Joanne Hillhouse, Althea Prince and others have done for the literary arts of our country. For reasons that we will soon make clear, there are two important visual artists, who in spite of great work, have been overlooked in histories and analyses of the visual arts of Antigua and Barbuda. These two are Frank Walter and Walter Parker. The purpose of this essay is to further the work being done to correct these glaring oversights and to contribute to the raising of these two painters to their rightful places in the visual art history of Antigua and Barbuda. The works of these two men are also important contributions to the emerging field of Antiguan and Barbudan Studies, which has been a primary focus the Antigua and Barbuda Studies Association.

As an individual, Frank Walter was a widely known person in Antigua and Barbuda. He was a highly visible presence in the streets of St. Johns, our capital city. However, as an artist he was very under-recognized and his work under-appreciated. This was in part due the fact that he was a man of solitude and later lived a rather reclusive life. Thus, it has only been after the major 2017 exhibition of his work in Venice, Italy, that was curated by Barbara Paca, and the publication, also in 2017, of her book *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man 1926–2009*, that Walter and his work have begun to get the recognition that they justly deserve.

Unlike Frank Walter, Walter Parker was not a very well-known individual in Antigua and Barbuda on account of his early migration and long absence from our twin-island state. While away, Parker worked professionally as painter and a photographer. It was only after an exhibition of his work was organized by his niece, Desiree Edwards, Mali Olatunji, and Zucan Bandele in August of 2019, that the art community

and the larger Antiguan and Barbudan public really became acquainted with his work as an artist. The recovery and reclaiming of these two important painters constitute two very important developments in the field of the visual arts in Antigua and Barbuda. We will now take a closer look at the works of these two painters, starting with Frank Walter.

Frank Walter and Visual Art in Antigua and Barbuda

With regards to painting in Antigua and Barbuda, our under-recognized artist, Francis Archibald Walter, better known as Frank Walter is very likely to turn out to be our most distinguished and wildly recognized visual artist. He was a man of mesmerizing creativity, disturbing complexity, and also a classic case of a prophet being without honor in his own country. Born in 1926, he grew up as a mulatto or mixed raced young man in early 20th century, late colonial Antigua and Barbuda. Consequently, at the time that Walter was growing up, his society was going through the death agonies of its centuries-old sugar plantation economy. As such, it was a society that was still operating on values and practices of white supremacy and the superiority of everything European. Born into the middle strata of this society, Walter was tragically caught in the shifting but still grinding gears of this colonial and racist society. The members of this white-oriented class he described as secretly indulging in nose straightening, hair straightening, and bleaching practices” (Paca, 2017:29). Although a middleclass mulatto, Walter’s highest aspiration as young man in his twenties was to become a sugar planter, join the white upper class and restore what he imagined to be the past glory of his family. This rather unrealistic social goal he attempted but did not achieve. It was a social and professional collapse from which he never recovered. At the same time that Walter’s social and professional identity was collapsing, he was discovering and cultivating his exceptional artistic gifts as a painter, music composer, writer of poetry, plays, and extensive genealogies. He was also a nature lover, student of the flora and fauna of Antigua and Barbuda, and also an aspiring agronomist. In short, there were many aspects and related capabilities to the personality of young Walter, some of which were rising and others falling.

As if the above were not already enough, there was yet another aspect to Walter’s personality that we cannot leave out if we are going to understand both his life and his art. In addition to the above, Walter was also a reclusive spiritual visionary with impressive powers and capabilities for entering domains of the psyche that were beyond the reach and awareness of our everyday ego-bound social persona. This ability to step outside of his normal ego and operate on a different frequency can be seen from an experience he had as a young boy going to school in Dominica. He was at

the beach near his school and saw some porpoises in the water. As they approached, Walter felt himself “transformed into Neptune, the Roman god of the sea and of horses. And he sensed that the team of porpoises intended to take him away” (Paca, 2017:245). This experience would later be the basis for a painting entitled, “Neptune and His Sea Horse”. This was not a one-time occurrence but the work of spiritually literate persona that would supply Walter with similar experiences throughout the course of his life and would be incorporated into his art. It is the persistent work and presence of this persona why Barbara Paca refers to Walter as “St. Francis of Antigua” (2017:240)

Walter was aware of his multiple personas, the competing tensions between them and the complexities and breakdowns to which these tensions often lead. Thus, reflecting after one such breakdown, he noted: “most mental cases begin to be afraid of themselves and adopt a new personality, so becoming Schizophrenic, the other personality they believe could be more kind to itself. When they find a counter for two personalities in conflict, by oscillating from one to the other, they then become afraid of their environment and its other personalities, so they develop a mental syndrome” (Paca, 2017:128). These multiple personas and the tensions between them are extremely important keys for understanding Walter’s stupendous creativity and the originality of his art. Consequently, deciphering and pulling together coherently the many sides of this very complex and talented man is indeed quite a daunting task.

In this effort at deciphering the Frank Walter enigma, Barbara Paca has made a lasting contribution. Her already mentioned 2017 book, *Frank Walter: The Last Universal Man*, will no doubt be the definitive work on Walter for a long time to come. It recognizes and celebrates the aesthetic craft and values of Walter’s art, while at the same time shedding great light on the mysteries and complexities of his highly colonized and racialized inner life. Paca describes the start of her interest in Walter’s work as “an aesthetic love-at-first-sight” (2017:232). This love is palpable throughout her text, and is also evident in care with which she has organized, interpreted and exhibited Walter’s work.

In presenting Walter to her readers, Paca compares him to Adolph Wölfl and other modern artists “who lived a reclusive lifestyle beyond the mainstream and explored unconventional, fantastic and deeply personal ideas” (2017:234). In helping us to understand the complexities of Walter’s racialized mulatto identity, Paca turns to Frantz Fanon, and in particular to his classic work, *Black Skins White Masks*. Thus, it is with the aid of Walter’s reflections in the Fanonian mirror and also Walter’s reflections

in the mirrors of modern artists like Van Gogh and Wölfl that Paca undertakes her careful and insightful account of the life and works of the Antiguan and Barbudan visual artist, Frank Walter.

I must confess that I was one of those Antiguan and Barbudans who found Walter an enigma, and in not looking more closely at his art, definitely contributed to his being a prophet without honor in his own country. I often saw him in his studio on Nevis Street. As I was a sociologist and wrote books about both the past and the present of our twin-island state, Walter would always engage me on issues or points of history. However, I generally found it quite difficult to sustain a conversation with him regarding Antiguan and Barbudan history on account of the intrusions of his genealogical discourses and how they affected (in my view, distorted) his understanding of Antiguan and Barbudan history. These elaborate genealogies, extending centuries back that linked him to German and British royalty, would consistently get in the way of our conversations. I just did not know what to make of them and their related claim that they made him white, or as he termed it, Europoid. These prematurely ended conversations kept me from taking a closer look at his art, gaining a more comprehensive view of it, and thus from writing about it. Thinking about it now, it is also notable that our master scribe and reviewer of books on Antigua and Barbuda, Tim Hector, did not write about Walter, or review his book, *Sons of Vernon Hill*, when it came out in 1987. I suspect that he had similar problems deciphering the enigma of Frank Walter.

Walter was a very good friend of my cousin, Ottway Davis, popularly known as Master D, as he was a teacher of mathematics and physics at the Princess Margaret High School. As far as I know, Master D did not have a great interest in the visual arts, but very often in the late afternoon he would be in Walter's studio. As I walked by, he would call me and the three of us would talk. There was a definite bond between the two of them as they both appreciated intellectual creativity. In his later years, Master D became a bit of recluse and this I suspect was also a big part of the bond between the two of them. Increasingly, they shared a feeling of being outsiders from the mainstream of Antiguan and Barbudan society. This was also the basis of Walter's friendship with some of the Rastafarians and marginalized figures like Raycan, who was immortalized in a 1970 calypso by King Short Shirt. Leading calypso critic, Dorbrene O'Marde, described Raycan as a "hobo", who "in real life is a vagrant with amazing balance, seemingly never defeated by intoxication" (2014:58).

In 1989, Master D shared with Walter his copy of my 1985 book, *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua*. Without any comments or ever speaking to me about the book, in 1991, Walter, via Master D, sent me a copy of *Sons of Vernon Hill*. The inscription was as follows: “Best Wishes to Paget Henry of Brown University from Frances P.W. Walter, Franz Walthe, pen name, author, Antigua, W.I.”. On delivering the work, Master D said to me, “Antigua now has another published author”. I took it thankfully and an hour later opened it with some trepidation, fearing that reading it would follow the path of our live conversations.

I was immediately engaged by quality and style of Walter’s writing. Even more impressive was the global humanist perspective that frames the first chapter. Indeed, the first six pages was a powerful prophetic manifesto, which declared all that was wrong and therefore contributing to the decay of modern societies, including Antigua and Barbuda, the alternatives to be avoided—particularly socialism, and the deep moral and spiritual reversals needed to get modern civilization back on its right course. However, after page 9 the vision narrows and the problematic genealogies, such as New World Blacks deriving from “a lost army of Roman Catholic soldiers”, and the scapegoating of Jews, begin their taking over of the text. At this point, I began to lose interest in the book as I was sure it would be another version of our conversations. I did not look at *Sons of Vernon Hill* again until I read and enjoyed Barbara Paca’s book on Walter’s art. It made me take a second look at Walter, his art and his book. This second look did not change my mind about his book, but radically transformed my views of him and his art.

Frank Walter and the African Philosophical Heritage

I am not an artist of any sort, and I make no pretense at examining the craft and aesthetics of Walter’s paintings. I can only approach this impressive body of work that Paca has assembled from the perspective of a sociologist and a philosopher. As a sociologist, I often look for reflections of the socio-historical world in the work of the artist. In particular, I would look for reflections of how artists have experienced their societies, the major social problems shaping their works, and the sense of the future informing these works. As a philosopher, I very often look for reflections or imprints of the inner structure of personas and self-formative dynamics of the artist on his/her work. In other words, I often see works of art as spontaneous eruptions of creativity released by deep processes of intra-subjective conflict and inner transformation taking place within the psyche of the artist.

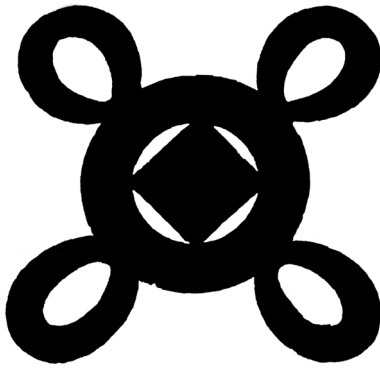


Figure 1

In making use of this philosophical approach to understand both Walter and his art, I find it very useful, but at the same time ironic, to turn to the African philosophical heritage, and in particular, the Adinkra theory of the human self. This West African philosophical tradition suggests that our origins are spiritual and that it is from this spiritual domain that we make our entrance into the earthly realm via our mother's womb. Our

journey or "*akwantu*" while on earth is to realize through growth the human potential of that seed planted in our mother's womb. To achieve this, we must create social personas that will sequentially establish us securely in the world of outer nature, the socio-historical world, and the inner world of the larger human psyche, which extends beyond a particular persona. This journey should not be thought of as a 100-yards dash to be completed by the sprinting of one persona. Rather, it should be thought of as a relay run in which at crucial transition points the baton of future growth is passed to stronger personas more capable of running this particular phase of the journey. Consequently, unlike, for example, the Cartesian view of the self, this Adinkra view does not see the human psyche a single and unitary formation but a formation that is a chain of multiple personas with different identities depending upon which of the above three worlds they are implanted and have adapted to (Figure 1). Assuming that secure adaptations have been made in all of these three worlds, the fulfilling of our human potential, our full flowering requires an additional and final step: that of the coming together or integrating of these multiple personas or participants in this relay run, and their collective return to the spiritual ground—the domain of the deities and ancestors from which each human individual first entered the earthly realm.

Particularly in the case of someone like Walter, who was so aware of his multiple personas the definite relevance of this intra-subjective view of human subjectivity should be immediately obvious. For purposes of clarity, I should add here that this approach does not reject or minimize the importance of inter-subjective factors, as adjusting securely to the socio-historical world is as important to this theory as adjusting to the intra-subjective dynamics of the human psyche. Two additional features

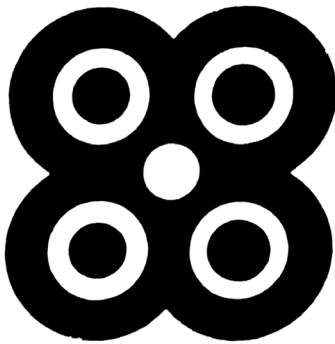


Figure 2

of this theory will further help us in deciphering the enigma of Frank Walter: the first is that the circular path of the human *akwantu* or journey is most often not completed. We often get stuck at one or more transitions points, which will make that collective return journey to the point of our origin, or the state of “*Ntesie*”, impossible (Figure 2). The individual would then remain in conflict and only be partially fulfilled. The second relevant feature of the Adinkra view of the self is that with the aid of drumming and the right

rituals, any of the personas of an individual can suspend and quiet its normal adaptive and self-preserving activities and be in contact with ancestors and the deities. In other words, under these conditions, it is possible for the personas of an individual psyche to step out of their normal ego-centered routines, expand their awareness of the larger psychic terrain and on a different frequency establish contacts with the ancestors and the deities.

Within a framework like this, we can begin to understand Walter's multiple personas, the creativity and the disturbing complexities to which they gave rise. Two things in particular stand out when Walter's life is cast against the circular narrative of the Adinkra *akwantu*. First, we don't see Walter's life as successfully securing itself in all of three worlds and then ending this journey of outer adaptation by returning to its point of beginning. For example, after getting off to a good start at establishing himself in the socio-historical world by becoming an estate manager, that adaptation went into crisis, declined and never really recovered, which created major difficulties for the remainder of Walter's life. Second, without the aid of rituals and drumming, Walter's personas were consistently being interrupted and their normal functioning suspended by vibratory communications from his ancestors. Within the framework of the Adinkra *akwantu*, such communications with the ancestors would not be a surprise, but a normal expectation. However, what is concerning here in Walter's case is the disruptive nature of these communications and the disorganizing impact on his earthy life. This points to a not so secure establishing of himself in the inner world of the human psyche. Together with the disruptive impact of the collapse of his socio-economic foundations, these communications from his ancestors produced a dysfunctional level of chaos in his life, but also energized his art, a level of chaos for which we must now seek a fuller explanation.

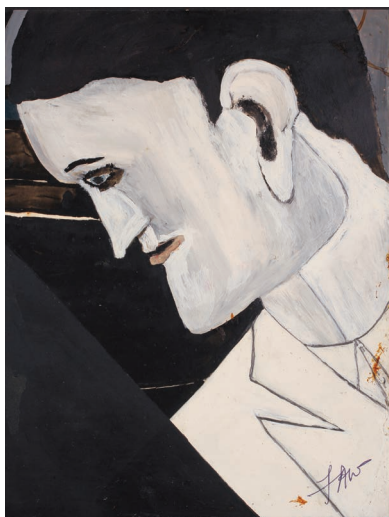


Figure 3

Frank Walter, Frantz Fanon and WEB Du Bois

To understand the observable chaos and the racial confusion of identity in Walter's life, we must supplement our Adinkra theory of the human self, which illuminated so well the inner structure of his personas and their intra-subjective conflicts. We must go beyond it in search of a supplementary theory that focuses more directly on the impact of colonization and racialization (in this case negrification) of pre-colonial African identities. The best on this subject are still the theories of WEB Du Bois and

Frantz Fanon. In his theory of double consciousness, Du Bois suggested that the colonized and negrified African subjects adjusted to their oppressive social situations by developing two opposing ways of seeing themselves: first sight and second sight (1969:16). First sight was the ability to continue to see and define oneself through one's own African eyes. Second sight was the new ability to see and respond to one's self through the eyes of the colonizer—in this case as “the negro” in the mind of the white European. The institutional power (the law, police, social norms) behind this white stereotype was such that it was internalized and became another active persona in the psyches of many young African Antiguan and Barbudans.

Because “the negro” was such a negative and dehumanizing stereotype, its internalization could only have been a major disruptive and destabilizing event in the lives of individuals like Walter. Rather than motivating African Antiguan and Barbudan self-formation and positive strategies of adaptation to the socio-historical world, it produced black self-deformation, practices of self-negation and devaluation. Given the inherent adaptive and survivalist tendencies of the human psyche, it will spontaneously generate more positive strategies to counter these negative tendencies associated with the internalizing of the stereotypical persona of “the negro”. Some of these counter strategies are good and aid the secure adapting of the psyche as a whole to its society. Other counter strategies, while they may make some personas feel better, they complicate and make more difficult the adaptation of the psyche to the

surrounding society and its important demands. Thus, in countering and compensating for many of the negative feelings and inhibitions associated with the negro persona, Fanon observed Black psyches adopting strategies that he called “white masks” such as speaking in very European ways, adopting other aspects of European culture, or taking white lovers.



Figure 4

In Walter's case, his psyche's turn to white masks in its efforts to erase and compensate for the negative values placed on his negro persona, took the extreme form of openly declaring he was white, in spite of his obviously mulatto colored skin. His was a classic case of Fanon's black skin, white mask. Walter made this dimension of his inner condition visually clear in one of his many

paintings of himself. This one was simply entitled, “Self-portrait” (Figure 3). It was an image of Walter in profile, exquisitely dressed in white for a formal occasion, but his face is that of a very white painted mask with unmistakable European features, and topped off with black European hair. This self-portrait is a perfect translation of Fanon into the language of visual art. Next to this painting in Paca's meticulously assembled volume, she placed the following quotation from Walter's unpublished autobiography: “I was transformed from a Blackamoor to a Pink Skinned European” (2017:91). The production and deploying of such white masks were subconscious complex Eurocentric developments within the psyche of the colonized African. These developments were outgrowths of the acquired capacity for second sight grounded in the internalized negro persona. These compounding outgrowths of the latter persona were the polar opposite of the self-formative developments needed for the maintenance and growth of first sight. Hence, we arrive at Du Bois' famous “two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (1969:17).

Walter's life and art can only be understood as expressions and creations of the unreconciled strivings of his double consciousness produced by his internalized negro persona. This persona can be seen in another of Walter's drawings: “Self-portrait in Red Trunks” (Figure 4). This is the polar opposite of the above mentioned, “Self-Portrait”. In the former, Walter is swimming all alone as a little Black boy in a vast ocean



Figure 5

surrounded by dark clouds. However, he has a golden tube around his neck that is helping to keep him afloat. Several other portrayals of himself as Black also take this form of a lonely and isolated young boy, who is a very long way from the figure wearing the white mask. The warring ideals of his extreme case of double consciousness helps us to understand the instabilities and chaos in his life and many of the images in his art. In Walter, second sight had advanced to stage of wearing many white masks—such as aspiring to be a sugar Planter—which never really succeeded in eliminating his capacity for first sight. As we have seen, his vision of the human psyche remained undeniably African. Hence,

we get the marked intensity of the conflicts between his inner strivings. The gallant efforts Walter made at negotiating between and containing his irreconcilable strivings was both sources of strength and weakness in his character and work. As Du Bois noted of this type of double consciousness: their internally contradictory seeking often sent them “wooing false gods and invoking false means of salvation, and at times has even seemed to make them ashamed of themselves” (1969:18). Further, in Walter’s case, the dogged strength of his black body was not always enough to keep his psyche from being torn asunder by these warring Black and White aims. Thus, we can arrive at the periodic breakdowns that were integral parts of his life.

Fortunately, these struggles and breakdowns produced by the warring ideals of Walter’s double consciousness did not consume and exhaust all of the energies of Walter’s psyche. In many ways they left intact and also fueled the already noted artistic, and particularly visual, creativity that had emerged early in his life. Further, as Paca has pointed out, Walter’s powerful visual imagination was reinforced by a photographic memory, which enabled him to paint scenes from experiences of decades past. Given the power of this exceptional visual imagination, Walter was able to use it to see and redefine himself through his own eyes and thus recover a significant measure of first sight. However, this was not the first sight of the African or Afro-Antiguan and Barbudan nationalist that was becoming quite popular with the rise of trade unions and political

parties. Rather, it was the first sight of an independent artist who was unable to free himself from the inner struggles precipitated by his double consciousness. It was the persisting entrapment of this artistic persona in the white masks of his psyche that brought Walter the rejection and strong disapproval that he received from both Blacks and Whites in Antigua and Barbuda. Indeed, this artistic persona will emerge and eventually displace the aspiring agronomist and sugar planter. In another of his self-portraits entitled, "Self-portrait as Christ on the Cross" (Figure 5), Walter painted himself as the crucified Jesus, overpowered by Roman society and nailed to a cross (Paca, 2017:168). This I think is a representation of the overpowering and crushing of his social persona, by the racial disapproval it encountered in Antiguan and Barbudan society, but most definitely also of his spiritual and artistic resistance. This racial rejection and social disapproval of Walter would continue even after the clear emergence of his artistic persona, and would progressively drive Walter into a life of social seclusion. Indeed, Walter would begin to embrace nature and long periods of self-isolation as his best companions. This life of self-seclusion clearly intensified Walter's artistic creativity, and thus justified Paca's comparisons between him and a variety of self-secluded artists such as Adolph Wölfl.

Frank Walter's Spirituality

Although Walter used his visual imagination to recover his capacity for first sight and so respond to the challenges of his double consciousness, this task did not exhaust the powers and energies of this imagination, nor did it determine its horizons. On the contrary, as noted earlier, its reach extended far beyond the borders and challenges of its racial double consciousness and was able to touch the shores of the eternal realms where we find the ultimate sources and foundations of our existence. Given the already noted inner instability produced by the sharp conflicts between his multiple personas, the more common degrees of ego-closure by which the deeper and encompassing layers of the psyche are usually blocked out, were much more porous in the case of Walter. The creative and growth-producing activities of these deeper dimensions of the psyche would often penetrate Walter's everyday consciousness and find representation in his painting. This openness to these further reaches of the psyche was the source of Walter's spirituality and sense of the eternal. It was this openness to a domain that the great Caribbean novelist, Wilson Harris, called "the factory of the gods", where we can experience ourselves being repaired, recreated, or making that turn towards the integrative state of *ntesie*. As noted before, Walter painted the experience of his transformation into the Roman god Neptune, and as we will see his

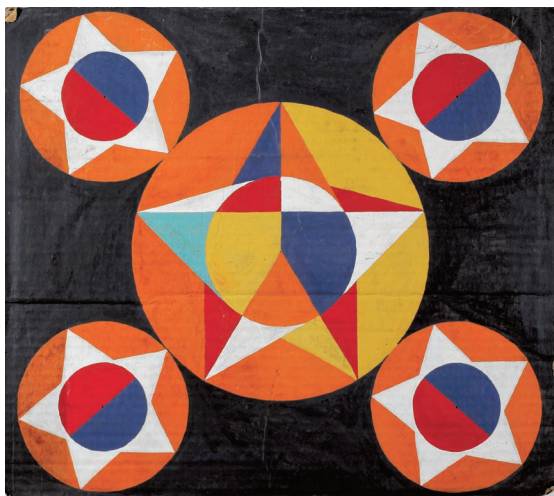


Figure 6

relatively weak ego-closure permitted his everyday world to be interrupted and intruded by his ancestors. This vibrational openness or pre-linguistic mode of being in contact with the gods and ancestors, we have seen, was and still is an integral part of the West African conception of the inner structure of the human self.

Walter had comparatively easy access to these spiritual domains beyond the usual borders of ego-enclosed personas. The insights that came from this access are as crucial for understanding his art as his struggles with his double consciousness and its white masks. Indeed, as Walter's rejection by his society increased, it was to this inner spiritual domain and to nature that he retreated, becoming even more of a reclusive enigma to those without access to these depths and farther reaches of the psyche. This spiritual domain that Harris called the factory of the gods, Walter referred to as the "Fourth Dimension".

As in the cases of many other visual artists, Walter represented this Fourth Dimension with the aid of a mandala type of drawing. Whether they are Asian, African or European, mandalas are drawings in which competing circles are being integrated to produce squares, or images in which this squaring of circles is complete. As we saw above, in the African Adinkra tradition, the mandala is used to represent the state of "ntesie" or the final portion of the human journey during which all the personas from the earlier phases are integrated as they collectively return to the original and eternal ground of the psyche. Walter made several mandala drawings. The clearest one he called "Psycho Geometrics" (Figure 6). It is a classic



Figure 7

mandala of circles and squares that is almost identical in form with the ancient Adinkra drawing called “sunsum” or self, shown above. Both of these drawings make use of five circles, four smaller ones of the same size surrounding a larger one in the center, with all five encased in a square. Walter’s mandala portrayal of the human self, with its circular or closed personas is done in arresting colors of gold, red, white and black, but does not show these circles or closed personas in their process of integrating and together merging into the spiritual square that encompasses them all.



Figure 8

However, in his painting called “Fourth Dimension”, we can see these circle-personas beginning to merge as they open to the creative spirituality of this dimension. But even in this painting the reconciliatory work of the Fourth Dimension is not complete (Figure 7). Its integrative work is being interrupted and blocked by forces abstractly represented by sharp angular and straight lines. In yet another portrait of this Fourth Dimension,

Walter portrays its integrative work as being blocked by similar sets of straight and angular lines, but this time they take the concrete image of a devouring shark (Figure 8). It is a powerful portrayal of the inner state of a psyche in which its circular and self-enclosed personas are resisting the integrative work of their common spiritual ground with teeth bared. This set of mandala drawings established for Walter his place among the ranks of spiritually inspired visual artists, while at the same time revealing

his specific level of spiritual development. His abstract representations of his meditative practices and the sense of upward flight they induced in him all suggest this (Paca, 2017:153). Walter clearly had been able to reach the eternal shores of the human psyche but was not able to dwell there comfortably for long periods of self-transformative and creative time. The instabilities in his life, the collapse of his planter persona, the double but contradictory strivings introduced by his negro persona, and the unorthodox meditative and ritually unsupported manner in which he would engage with his Fourth Dimension all made for a very unstable way of life. But, in spite of such difficulties, this “Fourth” or spiritual dimension was an integral and indispensable part of Walter’s life and art.

Frank Walter, William Blake and Adolph Wölfl

A good way in which to grasp this important spiritual dimension of Walter’s art, is to compare its place in the lives and works of two other well-known spiritually inspired visual artists: William Blake, the English poet and painter, and as Paca suggests, Adolph Wölfl, the Swiss painter, who was incarcerated in a mental asylum for most of his life. In doing this, we will be able to see how the different intra-subjective relations between their personas affected their visions of the Fourth Dimension, and the extent to which it was able to integrate their inner circles and return them to the square of their founding point.

William Blake was undoubtedly a gentle mystic who was less of a recluse than Walter or Wölfl, and whose social persona was much more securely rooted in the socio-historical order of British society. Because of the timeless, transcendent and cosmogonic qualities of the creative work that Blake observed on the more distant shores of our psyches, he saw them as the workings of what he called “the eternal imagination”. He wrote and painted from the position of its devoted witness. This imagination was for him the highest source of knowledge, far surpassing the science of Isaac Newton and Francis Bacon, which were in the process of eclipsing it. This eternal imagination, Blake’s Fourth Dimension, thus became a steady rock for him, a home from which he viewed the world, wrote and painted, while at the same time being also its staunch defender, earthly visual and poetic voice.

As such a voice of the eternal, Blake’s critical and creative interventions were motivated by his belief that the growing ecological, economic and class problem of British society all had their roots in its industrial eclipsing of the eternal imagination. Thus, the creative energy and vision that was Blake’s art took the form of a redemptive call to his countrymen and women to look beyond this passing industrial phase

with its mechanization of life and working-class exploitation, and grasp the light, inspiration and cosmogonic creativity still reaching them from the founding shores of their psyches. Drawn upward and toward these cosmogonic regions, their art, philosophy, economies and their souls would be aspiring to higher states of consciousness in which existing conflicts between art and science, society and human subjectivity would find better resolution. Blake called these higher and integrative levels of consciousness that he had been able to glean, the City of Golgonooza and visually concretized it in mandala drawings. It was from this City, this Fourth Dimension, or this state of Ntesie, where the oppositions of everyday consciousness were unified that Blake derived his vision of human history and his prophetic critique of British industrial society. In short, Blake enjoyed the privileges of the eternal imagination, using its “art” to inform and critique the order of life in his society. For him the Fourth Dimension was a more stable home and foundation and less a region that he would seek in order to escape the harsh rejections of his society.

Adolph Wölfli was born in 1864 in Bern, Switzerland, and thus was a contemporary of Blake. His experiences of that deeper and vaster spiritual realm beyond the edges of our personas, the realm that Walter called the Fourth Dimension and Blake the eternal imagination are also very useful comparative reference points for a fuller understanding of Walter’s spirituality and its relations with racial and other social inequalities of Antiguan and Barbudan society. Wölfli was orphaned at age 8, a trauma that he buried and thus from which he never recovered. He wrote that after this major loss, he “directly and radically forgot EVERYTHING” (Argüelles, 1975:195). This forgetting of everything was also the death of Wölfli’s social persona. This side of him did not get the chance to develop to even the degree that Walter’s aborted planter persona did, and was even further behind the growth of Blake’s social persona. Wölfli thus became a rootless child, who at age 14 was forced to work as a very unhappy itinerant farm worker. Between 1890 and 1895, the buried crisis in the formation Wölfli’s social persona began to manifest itself in violent attacks on others including two attempted rapes. The last of these attempted rapes resulted in his permanent incarceration in the Waldau Asylum. Between 1895 and 1899, these impulses and related states of deep depression continued while incarcerated.

Then in 1900, this inner turmoil ceased as this dysfunctional social persona was eclipsed by the emergence of an artistic persona of stupendous creativity. Most important for us, this persona was very open to Walter’s Fourth Dimension, the regions beyond the reach of circular or ego-enclosed personas. However, at the same time that his new intra-

subjective order made him unusually open to Blake's eternal imagination, it also left him unusually closed to the social world—much more so than in the case of Walter. Wölfler had no desire to leave the asylum. On the contrary, he clung tightly to the safety and protection it provided, and thus was much more of a recluse than was Walter. With the emergence of his artistic persona, Wölfler started being intensely creative. He started “painting, writing (cosmically endless autobiography) and composing music, which he sang and danced to, and played on paper trumpets of his own making” (Argüelles, 1975:197). As in the case of Walter, these artistic outbursts occurred with little formal training. However, in spite of this great outpouring of artistic creativity, the center of Wölfler's life became what he called his “trips” or visionary voyages during which the features and activities of this Fourth Dimension would be spontaneously recast into earthly images of mountains, valleys, cities, palaces with empresses, and often finally arrive at “the luxuriant and majestic Great-Throne-of-God-the-Father-All-Powerful” (Argüelles, 1975:201). Wölfler lived for these journeys to the Fourth Dimension while his art work was what he did when he was not traveling to these further shores. Needless to say, his paintings and writings were filled with images and narratives from these voyages. After these voyages and the paintings they produced, Wölfler started calling himself Saint Adolph 11. That development calls to mind Barbara Paca's renaming of Walter as Saint Francis of Antigua. Of the three artists that we are here comparing Wölfler's travels appear to have been the most extensive, Blake's second and Walter's third. One of the most engaging visual art results to emerge from these comparisons is that all three made use of mandala symbolism in representing and trying to capture the human impact of this Fourth Dimension.

However, similarities such as the use of mandala symbolism aside, there are striking differences in the extent to which our three artists were able to grasp coherently the significance of the insights they gained from their visionary journeys and were able to share them with us. On this score, Blake was the strongest and Wölfler the weakest. In the case of the latter, the very sharp break with the social world was never repaired. As a result, Wölfler made little attempt to link these two worlds with an interest in guiding and uplifting earthly life. As we have seen, in the case of Blake such attempts were central themes of his visual and his poetic art. In Walter, these impulses were stronger than they were in Wölfler but weaker than they were in Blake. In *Sons of Vernon Hill*, we can find passages that are in the Blakean spirit but not as systematically developed. For example, Walter writes: I cannot myself be therefore selfish, in my own judgement of public affairs. I use my mind as a spectrum to know any fact, and so arrange them cosmically, for the general servicing of Humanity” (1987:2).

Within the Caribbean region, Walter's intermediary location on these axes of race, spirituality and social integration, can also be seen in comparison with the life and work of Trinidadian painter and poet, LeRoy Clarke. The latter's relations with the African deities and ancestors are so much more intimate and comfortable that it cannot be missed. Both Clarke's life and art are inconceivable without the first sight and creative support they derive from these spiritual relations. This Fourth Dimensional perspective is definitely there in Walter's art and writing. However, the autobiographical and genealogical demands of his racial double consciousness interrupted and blocked these impulses to a much greater degree than in the case of Wölfli, Blake or Clarke.

Other Aspects of Frank Walter's Art

Before leaving the world of Walter's art, it is important to briefly point out that although very strongly centered around the themes of racial double consciousness and a transcendent spirituality, there were other prominent themes in his art. According to Barbara Paca, Walter classified his art into seven basic categories: "landscapes, portraiture, galactic, sign writing, abstract and scientific" (2017:307). Indeed, we do find all of these different categories of paintings in Walter's corpus of thousands. There are lots of images of Antiguan and Scottish landscapes, many trees, seascapes, portraits of Antigua and Barbudan women, images of Amerindians, cricketers at play, and of politicians.

Within this last category, we can note Walter's painting of his relative, former Prime Minister, George Walter as a rather fat and greedy-looking figure (Paca, 2017:46). Among the seascapes, there are lots of boats sailing very pleasantly in the water. However, among these is the painting, "Confronted by a Tourist Ship", which expressed very clearly the growing tensions that Walter experienced between his Antigua and Barbuda and the rising tourist industry. I have singled out this one as it calls to mind so clearly the painterly photograph by Mali Olatunji on the same theme, which is entitled, "Encroaching on the Environment" (Olatunji & Henry, 2015:121). In the science category, we find some truly amazing and visionary paintings of atoms, photons, genetic building blocks of life, moon craters, the sun, and some truly Fourth Dimension inspired images of our Milky Way Galaxy. These I won't comment on or try to describe. They just have to be seen.

These are just some of the additional themes that were caught in Walter's wide and far-reaching visual imagination. Because of the limitations of socio-philosophical perspective from which I have viewed this rich crop of images that have come from this imagination, I will refrain from

commenting on the craft and artistic qualities of these works. To put it more bluntly, I am a visual illiterate when it comes to dimensions such as the aesthetics of color and form.

Walter Parker

Although both Walter Parker and Frank Walter were spiritual persons and artists, the scope of their painterly visions were vastly different. Frank Walter's vision was a much more comprehensive one than Parker's. Frank Walter's vision encompassed the cosmogenesis of the planetary dimensions of our world as well as the ego-genesis of the human self. The vision of Walter Parker's art was concentrated on the human self, and the life and growth of a particular masked persona. As such, his painting was focused on the birth or ego-genesis of a particular persona, which I will be suggesting was his own spiritual persona. With this singular focus on the birth and life of this persona, the much larger issues of the cosmogenesis of the world remained very much in the background. There they performed supporting but distant roles in the genesis of Parker's spiritual persona. It was the more explicit inclusion of these cosmogonic factors in his painting that explains the larger and more comprehensive canvas of Frank Walter's art.

Born in 1939, Parker was thirteen years Frank Walter's junior. Given the start of the nationalist movement in Antigua and Barbuda in that very same year, by the time that Parker graduated from the Antigua Grammar School in 1955, our society had changed significantly since the time of Frank Walter's youth. The process of constitutional decolonization, which would lead to political independence, was well on its way. This was a Black democratic socialist working class movement, which was led by V.C. Bird and colleagues such as Novelle Richards, McChesney George, Samuel James and Ernest Williams. In 1951, the new constitution introduced adult universal suffrage without property qualifications, and also increased the number of the elected seats in legislature. The constitutional changes of 1956, introduced the ministerial system of government and at the same time opened the way for Antigua and Barbuda to be a member of the upcoming federation of the islands of the English-speaking Caribbean. It was as a member of this federation that Antigua and Barbuda was originally to gain its political independence from Britain.

Also changing at this time was the sound track of our society. The older tradition of Benna music (O'Marde, 2014) was giving way to the more lilting, upbeat and urbane sounds of calypso and the steelbands. Antigua and Barbuda was moving forward to the beats and steps of new rhythms. Facilitating this musical transition were calypsonians like Zi Maki and

Lord Canary, and also by pan genii like George Nugget Joseph. In this more celebratory spirit, the more ritualistic Christmas Celebrations of Parker's youth would in 1956 be displaced by a more festive carnival, which was also a major stimulus to the changes taking place in the arts of steelband and calypso. Finally, the sounds of church music in our society was beginning to change, taking a distinct Afro-Christian turn. Out of this turn that was barely audible in Parker's time, would come a number of outstanding organists and pianists, who would profoundly change and localize church music in Antigua and Barbuda. Mr. Jarvis, organist of the Anglican Cathedral in St. Johns, and Mr. Rock, a legendary music teacher, were at the foundations of these changes. These musical stirrings would continue into the present period, giving rise on the way to outstanding figures like Winston Bailey, Foster Hill, Knolly Hill, Philmore Hallpike, and George Roberts.

But let us not get too far ahead of ourselves and of Walter Parker's world. Our concern here was to indicate the new cultural and political sensibilities that were on the rise in Antigua and Barbuda of the early 1950s. But before we leave the older cultural world of Parker's youth, there is one feature of it that we must bring with us if we are to understand Parker's painting. Although very aware of my limited abilities to read the aesthetics of color, I would like to suggest that an important key to the aesthetics of color in Parker's paintings are the aesthetics of color in the dress of the bands of clowns that were such an integral part of the Christmas Celebrations. The most memorable of these was the band of that amazing artist, Arnold Prince. After leaving Antigua and Barbuda, Prince would become a professor of sculpture at the Rhode Island School of Design, and Sculptor Laureate of the State of Rhode Island in the U.S. When I look at the color aesthetics of Parker's masked figure, I think immediately of color aesthetics of Prince and his dancing clowns. Not being an artist of any sort, I would like to humbly suggest that this particular aspect of the cultural life of early 1950s Antigua and Barbuda left an indelible mark on Parker's painterly imagination.

Another important association that emerges here for me is a significant parallel between artistic careers of Arnold Prince and another great Antigua and Barbudan sculptor, Errol Ayangbem Edwards. Like Prince, Edwards started his artistic life as a dancer. As he got older and this mode of self-expression was getting a bit much for his body, this creative stream found its outlet in carving, a very African style of carving. In both cases, the turn to carving required little or no formal training. Edwards insisted that the muse and inspiration of his carving were the African gods. In this respect he is very much like the Trinidadian painter and poet mentioned earlier, LeRoy Clarke.

Enough with these associations and parallels. All that we need to take with us on our journey into the painterly world of Walter Parker is this influence of Arnold Prince and a good sense of the shifts discussed above that were changing social and political life in Antigua and Barbuda in the early 1950s. These shifts in both identity and cultural practices suggest that the fabric and feel of society in 1950s Antigua and Barbuda were quite different from the time of Frank Walter's youth. Patterns of racial and class stratification were changing as the power of the Planters were being challenged by the social and political movements of the middle and working classes. As a result, the racial and class challenges that Parker had to deal with were different from those that confronted Frank Walter, and these differences are reflected in their paintings.

In contrast to the case of Frank Walter, I did not know Walter Parker personally, as he had migrated to the U.S. before my family returned to Antigua and Barbuda from a four-year stay in Tortola. I started my term at the Antigua Grammar School in 1960, five years after Parker had left. It was his schoolmates from that period who best remembered him, and many came to 2019 exhibition of his paintings at the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda in St. Johns. Among this group was one of our most distinguished scholars, Professor Gregson Davis, who achieved legendary status in Antigua and Barbuda, after he delivered the valedictorian address on behalf of his graduating class at Harvard University. He is today a professor of Classics and French Studies at Duke University. While Davis was studying the classics at Harvard, Parker was at New York University pursuing a degree in economics. After graduating, from 1966 to 2000, Parker pursued a successful and stable career in human resource administration with the city of New York. This career path paralleled that of Davis' in the academy. Both of these career paths were in sharp contrast to the instabilities in Frank Walter's planter career and his experiences in England and Europe. Further, they pointed to the increasing role of the U.S. in the migratory horizons of Antiguan and Barbudans, and the breaking out of that classic colonial system in which Frank Walter was caught.

Given the more stable nature of Parker's social persona and his youthful encounter with a severely weakened social system of white supremacy, we would expect that the imprints of his inner subjectivity on his art to be very different from the impact of Frank Walter's more deeply divided subjectivity on his art. Parker's art occupied a different place in his life and performed very different functions than in the case of Frank Walter. Further, the issues and themes of racial double consciousness that were so prominent in the paintings of Frank Walter, are largely absent in the case of Parker. In her biographical essay on Parker, her uncle, Desiree Edwards

points out that although he pursued painting, photography and acting with great care and intensity, they were for him “hobbies”. They never moved to the absolute center of his life and being an artist his primary identity. In other words, unlike Frank Walter, Parker never really had to answer this question: if being a planter or a human resource administrator is not the meaning and purpose of my life, then what is? This question, with all of its weighty existential concerns, was one that Frank Walter could not avoid and had to answer through his art. The early collapse of his social persona made necessary the cosmogonic scope and scale of his art. The latter had to produce for him a new vision of existence, a new worldview to replace the collapsed one that had given meaning and direction to the early periods of his life.

Because of the strength and stability of his social persona, Parker was not as profoundly challenged as Frank Walter was. Consequently, his art unfolded on a smaller scale and largely gave expression to a side of himself that clearly did not find adequate expression or opportunities for growth in his professional work as a human resource administrator. Nonetheless, this social persona remained the constant center of Parker’s life, and important, if not primary, source of meaning and direction. This core sense of meaning and direction his art did not have to supply all by itself. In these vitally necessary creative activities of supplying Parker’s subjective life with a solid anchor and a deep sense of purpose, his visual art worked right along with his social persona. It is this cooperation between the two that is striking and it certainly succeeded in Parker’s subjective life green and buoyant along with its many other colors.

Looking at Walter Parker’s paintings, their amazing colors, symbols, shapes, mandalas and masked faces, the first thing that struck me was their transcendent qualities as well as their roots in color aesthetics of the dancing clowns of 1950s Antigua and Barbuda. Parker’s visual art was the medium through which his spirituality wrote itself into existence, announced itself, its place, its function and its aspirations. This was clearly a growing spiritual persona, which at peace, though not completely, supplementing and enriching the life of the human resource administrator, while drawing material sustenance and support from it. The sharp tension that so often exists between artists and their social personas they have inherited was much more muted in the case of Parker. Indeed, there seems to have been a rather mutually cooperative relationship between the two in the case of Parker, though not a perfect one. Very often it has been the internal war between social and artistic personas that became the source of the apocalyptic visions of many artists and prophetic figures. Even in someone like Blake, these tensions were the source of his apocalyptic projections and were clearly there in Frank Walter.

In Parker, we can sense something much calmer. It is a quiet seeking and reaching out for transcendent meanings and experiences beyond the purpose and satisfactions provided by his social persona. However, this reaching out was pursued without his painterly persona having to decenter and displace his social persona and substitute itself at the center of his personality. I can only surmise here that whatever its nature, this predominantly cooperative relationship was such that the visual artist in Parker did not have to go on the offensive or defensive to the same degree as many of the major painters or visual artists in the more modern and advanced societies of the West.

Thus, in Argüelles' portrayal of Western visual artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, he points to an ever widening and incompatible gap between the creative personas of these artists and the modernizing and industrializing conditions that were transforming their societies. CLR James, among others, suggested that the remarkable achievements of classical Greek art rested upon the distinct balance they had been able to achieve between the subjective agency of Greek citizens and the collective and institutional demands of Greek society. As Western societies have modernized, industrialized and became capitalist, a similar balance has eluded them, producing alienated subjects and frustrated artists whose self-expression had to include opposition, resistance, and rebellion. Like Arnold Prince, we did not find these agonistic elements in Parker as we did in the case Frank Walter. This strikingly calm mode of aesthetic self-expression suggests that during the period of transition from the era Frank Walter's youth, both Prince and Parker were able to establish delicate, rare and highly creative balances between their subjectivities and the external demands of living and growing up in Antigua and Barbuda of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Indeed, in the case of Parker, this delicate balance allowed the visual artist in him to take up in detail and with great care the deep spiritual concerns it had. Further, as the mandalas in his paintings this delicate balance allowed him rather peacefully to enter that spiritually integrative state that our Akan ancestors called Ntesie. However, as we will see, the masked faces in Parker's painting suggest that this strong spiritual could not quite show its face completely as it had to stay significantly hidden behind the larger figure of his social persona.

The first and most obvious clue that in Parker's paintings we are dealing with the tension and cooperation between two key personas is his consistent masking of one of them. However, these are clearly not Fanonian masks as their bright blue, green, orange, and red lines suggest. Yet at the same time they do point to an inner division. To my mind, this inner division is between a masked persona that still cannot quite

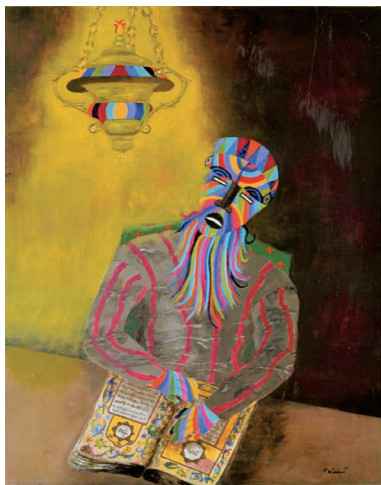


Figure 9

show its face in everyday life, but only in visual art. This persona is very different from the human resource administrator. He dresses differently, more artfully, has different interests, and surrounds himself with spiritual things. His dress recalls that of the African sage and is definitely a seeker after wisdom. In one of Parker's paintings, this masked persona is seated in a chair with an open book in his lap, which is written in an ancient script (Figure 9). Behind him, in addition to the electric lamp hanging from the roof of this sparse, brown room, there is a different kind of light breaking

into the room. This is a heavenly light coming into the room from above and outshining the quite fancy electric lamp hanging from the roof of the room. This is clearly an image of Parker's spiritual persona in one of his more perplexed states, searching for the wisdom and enlightenment that he has not yet found. His book made me think of Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*. In this particular painting, in spite of his colorful mask, Parker gives his spiritual seeker a very sad face, suggesting a moment in which he has not quite grasped where he is on his journey. It is a very sensitive portrait of him on his quest, which at the same time conveys the sense of calm and peace that was already an integral part of Parker's life and art.

Another possible source of this sadness of this spiritual seeker is his having to wear a mask, having to hide and conceal his distinct identity, and thus always having to dwell in the shadow of his stronger brother, the resource administrator. Thus, this sadness could be an indicator of the tension that did exist between these two personas and the lack of a perfect harmony between them. Even though, as noted earlier, there was good cooperation between these two, this spiritual persona still had to wear a mask and therefore was not able to emerge in all of his fullness. In all of Parker's masked portrayals of him, whether happy or sad, his eyes are never open. They are just blank slits in the mask—placeholders for real eyes leaving us with the distinct feeling that we really have not yet gotten to know the person behind this mask. Between these unreal eyes and mask, together they subtly but very pointedly suggest that we are



Figure 10

attempting to speak to us about his situation, his growth, his joy and the changes that he was going through.



Figure 11

not meeting directly and in the full flowering of his life the person who is behind the mask. But we know that this dynamic flowering is taking place because from behind the mask and from the top of his head (Figure 10) there are these shoots of colorful flames and plumes of energy, suggesting a playful dynamism of growth that is in sharp contrast with the absent eyes and the stiffness of the mask that conceals his spiritual identity. The overall effect is that of an unusual and colorful crown, which is quite reminiscent of the head gear of the dancing clowns of 1950s Antigua and Barbuda. This masked figure is at the center of Parker's painting as though he was

Support for the suggestion that this masked figure is a spiritual seeker comes from the fact that Parker consistently surrounds him with spiritual symbols. Among these and very important for this suggestion is the presence of the mandala symbol, which connects Parker to Frank Walter, William Blake, Adolph Wölfl, and the precolonial African tradition of visual art, all of which we examined earlier (Figure 11). In the latter, we have seen that the mandala was used to represent the important state of Ntesie in which, after making all of one's worldly identifications such as a human resource administrator, one begins that

process of integrating these multiple and sometimes conflicting personas of the psyche, while at the same time returning to one's spiritual origins and foundation under the guidance of the okra. This leg of the akwantu or journey of the human self is represented in many cultures and in the works of many artists as the squaring of a circle or the circling of a square.

Many such mandalas float around our masked spiritual seeker, suggesting the particular phase of his journey that he has entered. In addition to mandalas, Parker's spiritual seeker is surrounded by circles in triangles, squares, crosses, waves of color and other religious and ethereal symbols. Sometimes he floats above them, while at other times he seems to stand on a water-like formation produced by some of these flowing images of color.

My spiritual reading of this set of Parker's paintings was given some confirmation by his niece, Desiree Edwards, in a conversation we had after viewing the exhibition. She shared with me his strong faith and deep involvement in the life of the Episcopal church where he regularly worshipped. Also, she noted that he was an avid reader of theological works, both inside and outside of the Christian tradition.

Conclusion

From the above discussions of the works of Frank Walter and Walter Parker, there can be no doubt about the prominent place that they should hold in the history of visual art in Antigua and Barbuda. The visionary, spiritual and painterly qualities of their art make it very clear that they have been overlooked. Both have helped to make more visible the categories and outlines of our visual imaginary, and in so doing have made us more conscious of this important aesthetic heritage, which we have been inclined to overlook and forget. These highly valuable contributions to our cultural life are particularly true of Frank Walter, given the quality, quantity and international impact of his work. For this growing recognition of Frank Walter's visual art, we remain greatly indebted to Prof. Barbara Paca. Let us now build on the momentum of this exciting period in our visual art history, celebrate it, nurture it, advance it, and carry it forward.

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Putting Some Black in The Union Jack: A Review Essay on Brenda Lee Browne's *London Rocks*

Anique John

"There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack!"
(English Racist Cockney Rhyming Epithet)

This analysis of Brenda Lee Browne's 'London Rocks' provides the reader with a description of the predicament which faces Black Caribbean immigrant communities who must navigate urban London in the 1970's. Using the figure of Shakespeare's Caliban, I explore the personal struggles of the main character Dante who is a young Black DJ/MC. However, I go on to suggest that as a Caliban figure, Dante is rather weak. In the paper, I develop four criteria by which to evaluate his performance as a figure who should be resisting Prospero's domination. These are Black social conformity, the fashioning of alternative identities, the hypersexualization of diasporic people and countering the exploitation of Black labor. Apart from his choice of music as a strategy of resistance and achievement, I argue that Dante does not perform very well. I make this judgment because in spite of working hard at being a DJ/MC and trying to hold on to a measure of Rastafarian Black consciousness, he engages in behaviors that undermine the achieving of his goal of 'making it' as a DJ/MC. In particular, I argue that his rejection of education and his lack of interest in entrepreneurship really stands in the way of his success in 1970s Britain. Further, the way in which he responds to the hypersexualization of diasporic people is a major distraction from the goals that he is trying to achieve.

KEYWORDS: *Babylon Black British, Black English, hypersexualization, first-sight, second-sight, power, London, marginalization, Black consciousness*

As one may expect, depending on one's lens and experience, the title 'London Rocks' may represent different meanings. For one who may be visiting the metropolitan city of London, it may induce feelings of enchantment and exhilaration. A place, although cold and damp in temperature, it may nevertheless not be experienced as neither cold nor damp in spirit. It may present itself as a place which warms one's spirit due to the existence of camaraderie among people who have a love for country, its culture and its celebrated historical prowess. You may be one who considers London nostalgically without immediate reflection. For someone in this position, the title 'London Rocks' may make you recall the historical and political prominence of London, a city which is steeped in history where victories were planned and an empire was conceived. This positive perception of London may also be accurate for those who

experience London as a place of opportunities, belonging, excitement and ultimately, home. However, for others, the title *London Rocks*, may suggest the complete opposite.

For someone who may disagree with the sentiments described above, London may evoke feelings of exclusion, institutional racism, hostility which is encapsulated by the cockney rhyming epithet, “There ain’t no Black in the Union Jack”, quoted at the opening of this paper which can be considered as providing a powerful and painful reminder of a British culture which prides itself on the exclusion of Black people within various spheres of British society. It is from this premise that Brenda Lee Browne writes *London Rocks* where the characters in her novel navigate a society which despises their mere presence. Browne is a Londoner of Antiguan and Barbudan heritage, who was born and grew up in Britain, but now lives in Antigua and Barbuda.

London Rocks is an unassuming novel which, when considered carefully, provides more than a narrative about the love interests and challenges of a young Black man by the name of Dante, a DJ/MC who is a young man of Caribbean parentage, experiencing life in 1970’s London. He is a young man, who is a member of “Sound”, a DJ group that travels and plays music to awaken Black consciousness. He has dreams of being the best DJ in London and although being a DJ, is not a conventional career, it provides members of the Sound with a platform for expression and activism. The DJ’s are able to demonstrate a fusion of cultures, borrowing from the American Black power sentiment, American soul, English Lover’s Rock and Caribbean reggae. This fusion of music style comes naturally for the young Black members, some of whom are only “two steps away from the ‘Windrush’ [generation]” (p. 56). They use the Sound as an avenue to fuse music together and prompt a conscious awakening, at times, implementing cockney rhyming slang to express perceptions of the Black struggles in London whilst celebrating a Blackness in London’s underground entertainment scene through their DJ rapping.

Browne is able to address the predicament which faces Black youths in London’s society and the problem of institutional racism through the experiences of the characters of the book who are routinely dehumanized, treated as oddities in a society which invited immigrants to its shores in the aftermath of the Second World War. What is made clear by the dynamics between members of the Sound and the police is that Britain had not contemplated the inevitable. The inevitable being the permanence of Black people in England as having birth rights and claims to Britain, redefining what it could be to be Englishman or English woman in England. What this novel reveals is more than a society which is not

willing to accept the changing demographics of society. It highlights the challenges that face a young man who ascribes to societies' expectations of behaviors of the Black man, both good and bad. Browne is able to focus on the ramification for youngsters in particular who have been ostracized and hyper scrutinized.

Throughout this fictional novel, Brenda Lee Browne invites her readers to consider the complexities faced by Black youths. This was a period during which we saw the rise of Margaret Thatcher's austerity-driven neoliberalism, and the growth of what could be called popular racism. This popular racism exploded with the Notting Hill Riots 1958, and was a response to the arrival of large numbers of working-class Caribbean immigrants to Britain. Prior to the arrival of the 'Windrush', Caribbean immigrants to Britain were much more middle-class in background and were there more to study than to work. This earlier group of immigrants experienced strong forms of anti-black racism and organized to counter it. This tradition of middle-class organizing can be traced back to the early 1900's with the Pan-African conferences organized by Henry Sylvester Williams. In addition to Williams, there was the League of Coloured People, organized by Harold Moody. There was also the International African Services Bureau organized by George Padmore and C.L.R. James. Also, there was *The African Times and Orient Review*, organized and edited by Duse Mohamad Ali. Even these professional and highly educated Black men reported very difficult relations with the British police. These were some of the major pre-Windrush organizations of Black resistance which helped to organize Caribbean immigrants and to argue for peaceful integration and cooperation between the races in Britain.

After the outbreak of the Notting-Hill Riots, this calmer more hopeful integrationist period in British race relations ended. The riots gave rise to the Teddy Boys, The White Defense League and other White supremacist groups, who were shouting slogans like 'Keep Britain White!'. With the growing number of Black Caribbean workers arriving in Britain, Black Caribbean working-class youth began to arm themselves and to resist White violence. This changed sharply the tenor and mood of race relations in Britain. The killing of the Antiguan and Barbudan carpenter Kelso Cochrane several months later further inflamed things. This inflaming led to the further radicalizing of Black political resistance that resulted in a separatist Black Power movement in Britain which was led by Michael X, and was profoundly influenced by a similar movement in the US.

At the same time, Black Caribbean middle-class organizing continued. This is the period in which younger figures like Stuart Hall; Claudia Jones, Kamau Brathwaite emerged on the scene. Brathwaite organized the

Caribbean Arts Movement in 1966, which pulled together other rising figures like Orlando Patterson, Andrew Salkey, and Kenneth Ramchand. By the mid-1970's, the above Black nationalist working-class movement was on the decline, along with the wearing of afros and dashikis. Displacing these Black nationalist movements was the rise of the women's movement and the further ascendance of Black middle-class leadership. This was the era of highest visibility for scholars like Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Hazel Carby and others which produced a strong turn to identity politics and a return to policies of integration.

Also important for understanding this period of the late 1970's in which the novel, *London Rocks* is set was the explosion of the sexual revolution in Western societies that began in the 1960's. Greater nudity in films, more explicit sex scenes in movies and in theatres, the impact of the gay liberation movement and the movement to legalize marijuana. Big changes were also taking place in popular music. Classic reggae was transforming into Dancehall, Rhythm and Blues into Hip-Hop and Rap, Calypso into Soca and Salsa into Reggaeton. These were the new genres of popular music in which the figure of the DJ emerged and also the use of explicit lyrics in the songs and movies of the time. In her 1994 classic work on the rise of hip-hop, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, Tricia Rose described the rise of this music as follows:

“Hip-hop emerges from the de-industrialization meltdown where social alienation, prophetic imagination and yearning intersects. Hip-hop is a cultural form that attempts to negotiate the experiences of marginalization, brutally truncated opportunity, and oppression within the cultural imperatives of African American and Caribbean history, identity and community. It is the tensions between the cultural fractures produced by post-industrial oppression and the binding ties of Black cultural expressivity that sets the critical framework for the development of hip-hop.” (p.21)

In the Caribbean, the impact of these musical and sexual explosions was most evident in the dance clubs and in the region's carnivals. These were the dynamic and changing socio-economic contexts of '*London Rocks*' and life inside of the club in which the main character Dante performed as DJ and MC. Tracy Fisher in her 2012 text, '*What's Left of Blackness*', provides us with an excellent account of the changed nature of racial and gendered political organizing in Britain following the decline of the more radical Black nationalist period.

This was the culturally dynamic scene, which was set in a still racially hostile terrain whereby being young and Black was synonymous with being a threat. Therefore, for many of London's Black youth who were navigating society, in an attempt to carve out space to define themselves and their identity, there was little room in the mainstream for what they represented, which was diversity. This diversity challenged what mainstream society stood for and indeed, who it was for, which was "Whiteness". Blackness as presented by Browne through her characters, directly challenged notions of who authentically belongs to London and who is supposed to feel accepted within London. It is this apparent "challenge" which Browne is able to very successfully convey throughout the novel.

Along with Dante, Browne introduces her readers to the characters of the Sound. The Sound is a group of DJ's who, in the hope of gaining fame and prominence in a society which rejects those who do not reflect Eurocentric culture, navigate the rocky terrain of London and find comfort from being members of this collective. Darcus is the Sound leader; Del and Vince are also members of the Sound to which Dante belongs and are known as the three amigos. Each of the three amigos have their own different musical styles. Del is known for his reggae grooves. Vince is known for the commercial hits, imports, jazz-funk and Brit soul. Dante leads chants as a MC and also DJ. In the late 1970's these were new developments in Black popular music, which were taking it beyond classic R&B or classic reggae. Thematically, the chanting led by Dante spoke of

"The war on the streets, the SUS laws, the need for justice for those who died in police stations, the best sounds, the weakest sound, Africa and the Rastafarian faith." (p.6)

We also learn of Sheila, Dante's childhood sweetheart, and were together for a number of years before having their daughter, Micah. Dante's mother who provides him with support and would later become his manager, and Marcia, his new dark-skinned love interest who also follows the Sound. By introducing these characters, Browne gives us a feel for the family lives of members of the Sound and the economic and class pressures under which they are forced to live their lives.

Dante as Caliban

One way in which we can grasp the main character is to read him as a Caliban figure in late 1970s Britain. Caliban is of course William Shakespeare's now legendary portrayal of the colonized subject. In his portrayal, the colonized subject is racialized, dehumanized and economically exploited. In Prospero's view, Caliban mumbles and is unable to speak clearly. This inability to speak clearly Prospero, the

colonizer, takes as a sign of Caliban's embeddedness in nature, that he may be more of a brute than a human being. Consequently, the drama of the play turns on Prospero giving Caliban a 'real' language (English). Prospero's intent in giving language to Caliban is made explicit by his daughter Miranda. She says to Caliban **"I endowed thy purposes / With words that made them known" (I.ii.357-8),**¹ If Caliban was able to master this 'real' language and be creative with it, and endow his purposes with words, that in Prospero's mind would be proof that Caliban was capable of being civilized and therefore human, and not an animal. In the course of the play, Caliban does learn English. However, the first thing that he does with it is to curse Prospero for dominating him and to tell him to get off his land. Thus, although initially a dominated and anglicized colonial figure, Caliban is also a figure of anti-colonial resistance and rebellion.

As a subject of Afro-Caribbean heritage, Dante can be read as a Caliban figure. He exhibits the ambivalence that we saw in Shakespeare's portrait of Caliban. Both have internalized the colonizer's language and culture, but at the same time they are in rebellion against it. This ambivalence is what W.E.B Dubois called "double-consciousness" (1994). With this concept, Dubois was suggesting that the colonized developed two ways of seeing him or herself. The first is the retaining of the ability to see oneself through one's own eyes. This was first-sight. Second-sight for Dubois, resulted from the forcing of the colonized to see him/herself through the eyes of the colonizer. In this case, it was the ability to see oneself as "a negro" or "a nigger". These two ways of seeing oneself were often in conflict, a conflict that could only be eased by appropriate anti-colonial and pro-Black political organizing. Thus it was the history of political organizing described above, its earlier rising and its falling in the late 1970's, that determined the state of Dante's double-consciousness.

In order to grasp the importance of developing this type of critical lens on the predicament faced by the Black youngsters in London presented in the novel, it is important to consider several crucial themes which provide the reader with a greater appreciation for the various issues that have impacted the Afro-Caribbean Black British community in London in the 1970s. Firstly, Browne is able to highlight the inner conflict which is faced by her main character, twenty-two-year old Dante Brookes, as he attempts to de-negrify his subjectivity and carve out a post-negro space for himself in a society which created and at the same time rejected the image of the negro. This inner struggle can be seen as Dante tries to **assert his right to full recognition** in a British society that resists diversity and creolization.

1 Taken from Act 1 Scene 2, The Tempest

Secondly, Dante is trying to carve out a musical platform for his voice in resistance and rebellion against being negrified and exploited. Therefore his strategy for success is using music as a medium to strengthen his capacity for first-sight and at the same time to negate and destroy the negrified second-sight that he has been forced to adopt. As a Caliban figure in the late 1970s, Dante does not have the support of a strong ongoing tradition of Pan-African or Black nationalist political organizing as the Black Power generation of the 1960s, which developed after the Notting Hill Riots and the shooting of Kelso Cochrane. The organized support from the political culture of the late 1970s, was of a much more fragmented nature. Political organizing was focused on multiple issues including the environment, gender, class, and issues of sexual orientation. These movements were often in conflict and thus were not always mutually supportive. Therefore, the Black individual, particularly the Black male, as there was no Black male movement, was often thrown back on his or her resources in the fight to regain or increase first-sight. As a result, Dante is not the picture of a strong rebellious Caliban figure who is making substantial progress in extricating his identity from its entrapment in negrified second-sight.

To understand why Dante is not the picture of a strong Caliban figure, we must examine the basic strategies of resisting and overcoming his negrification that were available to him and his fellow members of the Sound. These strategies included social conformity of Black youths in England; fashioning counter identities to “the negro”; the hypersexualization of diasporic people; and navigating and resisting a society which garnered its success from the labor and exploitation of people of the African diaspora. With regard to Dante, the pattern of social conformity that marked his life was an ambivalent one that was found quite often among Black British working-class youth. As members of British society they were influenced by its linguistic practices, norms, values and ideals. However, both their class position and their racial status stood in the way of the appropriate practicing of these norms and values and the realistic achieving of British social ideals. This conflict is evident in Dante as he struggles to establish his place in British society and therefore claim permanence. He is being shaped by British values and ideals and at the same time, he is in rebellion against them as he finds it impossible to practice and realize them. This ambivalence is both class and race based. Thus, he lives as part of a subculture of exclusion that is also experienced in part by the White working-class. However, in Dante’s case, this exclusion is further compounded by his blackness. The language of Black working-class youth in Britain is one indicator of their ambivalent response to their position in British society. An integral part of

the Black working-class subculture is their language. To Black individuals born in the Caribbean, they sound rather British. But, on closer examination, we discover words, styles of expression, images, metaphors that are quite unique to this subculture, along with strategies of resisting and rejecting more standard modes of British speech.

The distinctiveness of this Black working-class subculture goes beyond linguistic differences and strategies of linguistic resistance. Rather they extend to a broader set of the features characteristic of this subculture. As Browne highlights through the characters of her book, in response to their exclusion and isolation, the Black youths attempt to create their own unique culture by embracing a fusion of both African-American and Caribbean urban culture, whereby grandeur and male prowess is measured by the rejection of the “Babylon system” (p.6). This is within a society which deems Black youths as disposable, as they navigate life in a society which categorizes them and their ancestors as being the epitome of bare life—the “homo sacer” where Black youths experience the wrath of a society which deems people of African descent as being disposable, where one “could be killed but not sacrificed” (Agamben, 1995 p.8) by the Babylon system. This creates the need for the awakening of a consciousness—first sight—where one considers their self-value outside of the concept. Operating within and conforming to many of the values of this ambivalent subculture, Dante is empowered to resist his negrification but limited in his abilities to navigate a path to individual success.

The second criterion by which we can judge Dante’s performance as a Caliban figure is the alternative identity to that of “the negro” that he is trying to fashion as he attempts to gain recognition in British society and also to carve out a path to “life success” (John, 2019). For Dante, this is obviously the identity of a talented and successful MC/DJ. The choice of music as a strategy is one that has been available to Black working-class individuals because of the power, originality and creativity of the music of Black working-classes across the globe. We need only think of Bob Marley, Aretha Franklin, Millie Small, Toots and the Maytals, Jimmy Cliff, James Brown, Johnny Nash and Biggy Smalls to see the salience of the choice of music. These are all individuals with strong working-class roots who carved out paths to individual success through music. Other well-known paths for Black males were of course sports such as cricket and football. For Dante the choice was clearly music. As an MC/DJ he showed signs of promise as he was able to get the crowd going with his chants. However, he did not like rehearsing as he was convinced that his words came from Jah: “This not real—my words come from Jah and you can’t tell Jah when and how he a go talk!” (p.39). A further indicator of Dante’s promise as a DJ/MC was the fact that David Rodigan, an English radio DJ renowned

for playing reggae music on commercial radio stations recognized Dante's talents. However, in spite of the promise that he shows as a DJ/MC, at the end of the novel it is not clear that this strategy of using music is going to get Dante the degree of de-negrification he wants as in the case of a Johnny Nash or a Jimmy Cliff.

The third criterion by which we can judge Dante's performance as a Caliban figure is the hypersexualization of diasporic people. In other words, how did he respond to the exploding of the sexual revolution that started in the 1960s. The intensification of this revolution in the late 1970s could be seen as a response to the greater economic pressure that working-class individuals were feeling with the onset of the de-industrializing practices of Thatcher's and Ronald Reagan's neoliberalism. This economic policy systematically relocated the industrial base of the British and the American economies to sites of much cheaper labor primarily in Asia and Mexico. In other words, neoliberalism pulled the industrial rug out from under the British and American working-classes, and severely weakening their long-established traditions of trade union organizing. Under these weakened conditions, wages fell and bargaining powers became considerably less effective. In short, life got significantly harder for the working-classes in these countries. Because Asian labor was also significantly cheaper than Caribbean labor this pattern of working-class disempowering was also repeated there. In all three cases, these harsher conditions manifested themselves in increased levels of poverty and more troubled relations with the police. In the U.S. this period also marked the start of policies of mass incarceration.

I am suggesting that the strong manifestations of the need for sexual expression and feeling sexually empowered were largely responses to socio-economic disempowerment and harsher living conditions. Sexual expression became a zone of freedom and empowerment for both men and women. Browne's portrayal of Dante's practices of sexual expression reflect this growing pattern of sex as an area of free expression. Earlier social and religious norms governing sexual behavior were being cast aside and were being replaced by more individualistic and hedonistic norms. These attitudes are seen in his involvement with multiple women and his hedonistic orientations towards sex. A good example of this was the way Browne describes him dancing very sexually with a young woman in the opening chapter of the novel.

These new attitudes towards sex and sexual empowerment affected not only working-class men like Dante but also Black working-class women. They too were finding it necessary to make the sexual arena a zone of empowerment and pleasure. Thus in the opening chapter of the novel

in which Dante is dancing in this very sexual manner with a young lady, she in no way resists or objects. This had now become the norm, while in the past Dante would have been pushed away or scolded in some way for dancing in too explicitly sexual a manner.

Thus, this was the period in which we can see marked increases in Black female sexual agency. Black women were asserting themselves sexually in new ways that seemed bold by old standards. The question for us here is: how is Dante using this sexual freedom as a Caliban figure? Is he using it in a way that is further his liberation or is it functioning as a distraction and as an escape from the political, racial and economic issues that he needs to be dealing with? From the way in which Browne portrays Dante's use of his increased sexual freedom it has become more of an obstacle to his racial, economic and political liberation. The way in which he pursues sexual pleasure makes it a significant distraction from the pressing tasks at hand. His pursuit of power over Black women so distracts him from the urgent tasks at hand that he is becoming progressively weaker in relation to the White power structure that oppresses him.

Dante's use of his sexuality further disempowers him vis-à-vis the White power structure because his sexuality is still inscribed in Eurocentric norms and values of Babylon. This is clear in his strong desire for light-skinned women who represent markers of "success" and forms of whiteness or Europeaness. In this regard, Dante reminds us a lot of the figure of Jean Veneuse in Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*. Fanon portrays Veneuse as a Black man who must marry a light-skinned woman, a classic example of what Fanon had in mind when he wrote of Black skins wearing White masks. Thus, to the extent that Dante in his pursuit of light-skinned women is wearing a white mask he is clearly contradicting his goal of de-negrifying his identity and recovering first-sight.

In this context, we can look at the Black woman as a Calherban figure and, as in the case of Dante, pose the question of whether or not her use of her new-found sexual freedom is an aid to her liberation or an obstacle and an escape. Calherban is a term that Paget Henry introduced as he attempted to build on Sylvia Wynter's pointing out of the absence in *The Tempest* of "Caliban's woman". Wynter discussed this absence in great detail but did not name this woman even though she was talking so much about her (1990: 114–117). So, Henry gave her the name Calherban, while at the same time suggesting that she too had problems of double-consciousness and negrification that had to be overcome (2011: 179–182). Hence the earlier question: is Calherban's use of her new-found sexual freedom and empowerment an aid or a hindrance to her recovery of first-sight, both as a person of African descent and as a woman?

As in the case of Dante, Browne's portrayal of the use of their sexuality by the women in the novel suggests that it is more of an escape and a hindrance to their overall liberation as women of African descent. Firstly, their sexuality is also still entrapped in Eurocentric concepts of beauty and desirability. We see this in the return of Black women to the straightening and styling of their hair in very European ways. Further we have seen in this period the 'blondification' of Black women along with the wearing of blue and green contact lenses. Even more extreme has been the case in Jamaica of dancehall queens and other women injecting themselves with chicken hormone in the hope of lightening the color of their skin. These practices suggest that since the late 1970s there has been an intensification of the internalizing by Black women of White standards of beauty and desirability. This construction of beauty and desirability, while it has in fact empowered and increased the sexual freedom and agency of Black women, at the same time these images of beauty and desirability are clearly functioning as Fanonian White masks. As such, these masks are clearly contradicting and undermining the liberatory project of Calherban and are definite obstacles to her recovery of first-sight. Therefore, I would suggest that this use of her sexuality contributes to Calherban's continued exploitation and secundarization by both Caliban and Prospero. In short, this continued sexual domination of Calherban in this period of greater sexual freedom by Dante is not advancing his liberatory projects or those of the women he is sexually involved with.

The fourth and last criterion by which we will evaluate Dante as a Caliban figure is the manner in which he chooses to resist the continued economic exploitation of Black people in Britain and other Western societies. As Tricia Rose pointed out, the economic setting of Dante's life is the deindustrialized Britain of Margaret Thatcher. This was the new economic environment, where the industrial jobs that Caribbean migrants were admitted to Britain to fill, were now being relocated in various Asian countries. To survive in this changing and more competitive economic environment, one had to either become more ruthlessly entrepreneurial or to increase one's educational or skill levels. From Browne's portrayal of Dante's economic strategizing we can reasonably conclude that he is neither attempting to become more entrepreneurial nor is he trying to become more educated. In this period of a more computer-oriented British economy, Dante did not make any significant moves to re-educate or re-skill himself in an effort to improve his labor market competitiveness. Rather, he continued to keep a significant distance from further education that would have been his means of increasing his annual income. We can see this attitude towards education in the following statement: "It is only now, older and more aware of how his color separated him in

the classrooms and on the streets, that he used the mic as his weapon of choice.” (p.74). Further, this attitude is clear in response to his girlfriend Marcia’s plans to attend college: “Marcia, look, I’m sorry. Listen I thought that you were not impressed with me and my lifestyle, you go to college and thing and I, I belong to a sound” (p.42). These two incidents support my claim that Dante was not attempting to use the educational route in his response to the changing economic environment of neoliberal Britain.

With regard to being more entrepreneurial, Dante does not appear to be responding in this direction either. The entrepreneur of the Sound is clearly Darcus, who seems to be much more of the organizer and decision-maker in the group. The Sound does not have a place of its own, it moves from nightclub to nightclub, and it does not appear to have continuous contracts with the various clubs. To survive and to increase one’s income in this neoliberal era, it was these types of expanded entrepreneurial activities that Dante and the Sound should have been attempted. However, these are precisely the kinds of activities that we do not see Dante and his group undertaking. Thus, by the time we come to the end of the novel we are by no means sure of Dante’s economic survival or viability. In short, from the perspective of resisting the continued economic exploitation of Black people, Dante does not appear to be a very strong Caliban figure. We do not hear him critiquing the nature of the capitalist system that oppresses him. He does not speak of trade-unionism, socialism or Black nationalism as guides to understanding his economic position and providing alternatives. As in the case of his attitude towards education, Dante’s response to his economic situation is to emphasize his music:

As Dante walks away, he realises that he has no plans, no vision of himself as an older man. It has all been about the music, the vibe, the weed, the lyrics; his fame feels accidental. And now he is tired of having to fight off Darcus’ long shadow. (p.75)

Throughout this novel, Brenda Lee Browne provides her readers with the opportunity to not only consider the marginalization of Black British youths, she provides the opportunity for the consideration of the “two-ness” of being both Black and a Londoner. More specifically, Browne provides her readers with an opportunity to consider the unique lens of members of this social group, who are faced with navigating the society which marginalizes members of its community who can be visibly identified as having a heritage which is not European. As a result, being of Caribbean parentage for English born Black people, means that you are easily marginalizable simply due to the fact that by one’s mere appearance, you can be identified as not belonging to the British mainland. However,

the binaries that are typically assigned to people who have been impacted by colonialism—such as colonizer/colonized, colony/nation, native/foreigner, are challenged by characters such as the young Black English born characters of Caribbean heritage of this novel. Being born in the UK, which is considered to be a White space, and being Black which denotes foreign, presents a complication for these characters who are born Londoners and are Caribbean only by descent.

Dante's experiences cause him to recognize how he is viewed through the colonizer's lens and he becomes acutely aware of the demise of the African diasporic person and how it has impacted his choices in girlfriends and as a result he has to carve out his own identity, a counter identity for himself in a society which marginalizes those who can be "othered". Being in this in-between space creates a 'rocky terrain. However, as Dante demonstrates, despite the rocky terrain that causes him to have to navigate life after the loss of two of his closest Sound members Del and Vince, Dante still has to address the struggles for power in the Sound by demonstrating his skills on the microphone and balancing his love and understanding for the desires of Marcia who prompts him into a different stage of his manhood once she returns from her vacation. It's no longer a matter of following the Sound and expectations of male prowess in terms of his encounters with women. Instead, he wants to demonstrate a loving connection with Marcia, who reveals her pregnancy which she chooses to abort, which becomes the new dilemma for the couple. This causes Dante to consider what it truly means to be a man in Babylon.

What is apparent is that Brenda Lee Browne aims to demonstrate the sensitivity of a young man navigating life in London in the 1970s. His experiences and life changing events cause him to analyze himself and his role as Black man whilst demonstrating how the rocky terrain can in fact assist him along in his journey to realizing his manhood as he navigates life, the hurdles or "rocks" that living in London presents for the young Black person.

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INTERVIEW

Music and Church in Antigua and Barbuda: An Interview with Dr. Foster Hill

Paget Henry and Mali Olatunji

PH: Foster, thanks so much for doing this interview and for inviting us into your lovely home here in Sarnia. Basically, I want to write a paper about a period in church music in Antigua and Barbuda that I think you, Winston Bailey, Philmore Hallpike, Maurice Roberts and a few other people have really exemplified. But it's changing, right?

FH: Yes, it is.

PH: And so, I want to capture it at this earlier phase before the current change...

FH: ... is fully implemented.

PH: Exactly. That's really what the paper is all about. It is really going to focus on church music, and church music that was centered around the organ in particular, and of course also, the piano. I know that you've been a big part of that. So, that's why I want to ask you these questions.

FH: Sure, sure.

PH: Okay, first question. When were you born?

FH: March 2nd, 1944.

PH: All right. So, when did you start playing music, just music in general?

FH: Oh, it was my parents who got me into it, Edward and Laurel Hill. They were the ones who started us, me and my brother Knolly, playing the piano. After they could not teach us anymore, we went to Dr. Rock. He was also a very well-known music teacher in Antigua and Barbuda. He was actually from Barbados. So, he took us to a different level. Then we also had lessons with Ms. Rannie. I don't know whether you remember her, she lived down on Newgate Street. She was from England and was quite knowledgeable in the piano area. So, basically that was how that evolved. After we graduated, we did a lot of exams with the Royal School of Music, the Trinity College of Music, et cetera. After that formative phase was up, I got my first job as I used to go to the prison every week with Reverend Hatch Syrette. I don't know whether you remember him. But he used to come for me every Sunday morning to the jail and then to Fiennes Institute. I would play there and then go home and do whatever else I had to do, go to school, whatever. After that I got another job. Oh, by the way, the job at the prison paid £5 per month. As a young guy, I was about eight,

I was so glad to go and buy candy or whatever the case was. The other job I got was at the St. George's Academy. I went there, and I played for all of the concerts with John Shoul. He was another pianist. We played there. And then...

PH: How old were you when you started going to the prison?

FH: Eight years old.

PH: Eight years old?

FH: Of course, I had to go accompanied by Father Hatch Syrette because of my age. So that happened and I did that for a number of years. Then I got the job to play at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, and I also did that for a number of years.

PH: So, how old were you then when you started playing for the Catholic Church?

FH: Okay, when I started it was about 1958, so I was about 14 years old. I did that for a number of years and then I started playing in bands with like Oscar Mason, Targets, Lindy Buckley, all the bands in Antigua and Barbuda. I did that at the same time I was playing for the Church.

I remember one evening I went with Ambrose Quintet. Do you remember him?

PH: Yes, Ambrose Quintet.

FH: We were playing in Willikies and took the piano in the truck with us. On our way back, this is about 2:30 in the morning, the truck was going uphill and then it kind of stalled out. What happened next was the truck toppled over with all of the instruments and the piano. When I realize I was still alive, I crawled out through a side window and I ran from wherever we were straight home, nonstop. I was so damn frightened. Straaaaight home!. Next morning about quarter to seven, I was on my way to play the organ at the Roman Catholic Church. I had a scrape on my face, the ladies asked me, well what happened? I said I nearly had an accident last night. Yeah, so, that was all part of it.

Then, I got involved with the steel bands. In 1963, the government announced an all-expense paid price trip to New York to the World's Fair. So, the guys from the Hell's Gate steel band got a hold of me, Manning, and it was this guy Joseph.

Mali Olatunji: He's 102 now.

FH: What's that?

MO: Nugget Joseph.

FH: Is he still alive?

MO: 102.

FH: Is he still alive?

PH: Yes.

FH: In New York?

PH: In Antigua. He's 102.

FH: In Antigua?

PH: Uh-huh.

FH: Really?

PH: Yeah.

FH: Yeah, yeah, George Nugget Joseph. Anyway, they got ahold of me and they told me they wanted to try the "Halleluiahs Chorus" against Brute Force, because that was the competing band with Arthur Bum Jardine and other guys. I agreed to work with them, so every afternoon after school, I would go down and teach those guys to play the "Halleluiahs Chorus" from memory. I would transpose it because it was written the key of D major. Back then, they couldn't play in any other key, but C major. So, I went down there with the score and then I wrote out all the notes because I did transpose it from D major to C major.

PH: Uh-huh.

FH: I got that as a talent from the time I used to go to the prison every Sunday. When I was allowed to go by myself, I would go just about two minutes late, deliberately. And then they always sang the same hymn: "We Love This Place Oh Lord". It was Number 368 in the Anglican hymnbook: We Love This Place Oh Lord. Sometime we would add lines of our own about the bugs, fleas and other creature crawling about in the prison. The hymn was written in the key of F major, right? But because of the guy with the bass note, they transposed it one semitone lower, so that forced me to play in the key of F sharp major, which is a very difficult key. So, I used to do that almost every Sunday, and when they would sing in a different key, it was always slightly lower. So, I was always transposing from one key to another, and quickly came to trust myself to transpose on site just by hearing.

When I came to the steel band now, it was in D major, so I had to transpose it on site to C major, right? I did that and for three weeks, four weeks, we wrestled with it, wrestled with it, wrestled with it until competition night. And then what happened Hell's Gate went up and everybody was clapping and Brute Force went up and down. The judges that decided the competition came to a unanimous conclusion that Hell's Gate was the winner. The price to the World's Fair dropped off. The 20th of August 1964, I was there. I was there, right there!

PH: Right.

FH: That was a night I have never forgotten.

PH: Yes, I can remember. I came to America that August also. I was there at the World's Fair at your booth.

FH: After playing at the World's Fair, I went into New York. That was in 1964. It was there I met Virgil Fox because before I left home, had been listening to recordings of Virgil Fox playing on the organ in the Riverside Church, and I always wanted to go there just to hear. After my time in New York was up, I came back to Antigua and I really studied Fox then. However, before that, wonderful trip to New York, I used to go to the Anglican Cathedral in St Johns as I always admired the way George Jarvis played the organ. But he was never really given credit for what he did. I always wondered why is it that nobody ever recognized Mr. Jarvis's accomplishments. I used to go to the Cathedral at 11 o'clock and I used to sit opposite the organ and I would see this man playing. He was moving his feet, pulling stops, changing keyboards, and using the swell pedal. I said to myself, how is it that person could just play without making any mistakes and accomplish that. It was unbelievable!

PH: Okay, that was great.

PF: I had great respect for Mr. Jarvis. But, one thing about him, he never showed us a thing musical. Knolly, myself and Winston Bailey, he saw us as a threat to him. But he would always show the Joseph girls, the Pestaina girls and Eunice Creque, he would probably show them everything. But the three of us boys, he would never show us one single thing. But at the time, we didn't really need him as I went to New York and heard the best and got all the instruction I needed. Often, when we would play the organ at the Ebenezer Methodist Church in St Johns, he would come in and say, "vulgarity! vulgarity!" You guys are playing too loud.

At the same time that I was doing all of work with the organ, I was still playing with the all bands in Antigua. I used to play with Playboys, Gardner's All Stars and Ambrose Quintet. I went to St. Martin to play with Ambush Quintet. We had a grand time at the Little Bay Hotel. I don't know where it still exists or not.

PH: I don't think so.

FH: But anyway, we were there and we had a great time. But when we were ready to come back, we flew on a one engine plane. God, up to now, when I think about it my heart, my heart still shudders. And I got the impression that the plane was kind of stuttering. That made me even more fearful. And I said am I going to get home? I'm too young to die not now. Anyway, we eventually landed and that was it. Yeah.

There was another important musician at that time, Walter Chambers. I knew him very well. But for lack of a better word, he was a very selfish person. He would not show you a thing. Anytime he's working on the organ or piano and one of his workers come along, he would stop. He would stop. He was supposed to be an accomplished person because records have it that he went away to study. But he was a very selfish. You'd never learn anything from him. I don't know why. But he just didn't want to show anybody anything. That was his way.

PH: Yeah, I heard about him a lot.

FH: Yeah, yeah.

PH: He might even have been asked to write the...

FH: The State Anthem, he did.

PH: Yeah, Right.

FH: Yeah. Yeah, he did.

PH: But he's one of these guys that ...

FH: He kept everything to himself.

PH: Now, I want you to talk a little bit more about Dr. Rock as both as a musician and as a teacher.

FH: He was very good as a teacher. We all had to practice scales, et cetera, et cetera. Winston Bailey, myself and Knolly, we all had to practice scales and go to lessons. He was very, very, knowledgeable as a teacher. Well, as a performer, back then it was always the hymns that he would play. He wasn't much good as an organist because I've heard him and it was back

then. But as a piano teacher, he was very, very, good. And he imparted what he knew. He didn't hold back his knowledge like Mr. Chambers did. He would impart it to you.

And I still have my books dated 1963. I still have my books. It's all in here somewhere. But I still have the books. Yeah. And strange enough I refer to them just for the study purposes to hear exactly, you know, what this sound like *et cetera, et cetera*. But you know, that was it.

PH: While you were doing all of these gigs in the prisons, in the Church, and other places, was there a musician or a singer who you think influenced you? I mean, who were the major influences on you in these formative years?

FH: You mean in Antigua?

PH: Yeah, in Antigua? Yes. I know you mentioned Virgil Fox already.

FH: Yes.

PH: But I'm thinking now within the Antiguan context, was there anybody who influenced you, and shaped the direction of your development?

FH: Well, yes. Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Branch. Mrs. Peters was the organist and Mrs. Branch was the conductor of the choir at the Ebenezer Methodist Church. Mrs. Branch encouraged the younger generation to advance, she'd show us things on the organ. But I was always a kind of renegade in a sense that I would always be adding notes. She always wanted us to play exactly what is written. For example, instead of just give her, playing in the key of G major, I would hold it as G-D-B, G-D-G to make it fuller, more circular. But she just wanted what was written, just let it be G major chord. She always gave me hell for that. On one occasion, Mrs. Bryant came along and asked me to play Gloria in Excelsis by Mozart from the 12th March, and she gave me that to practice and I was able to play with the senior choir at the time. That was about 13 or 14. As matter of fact, I thought I had the picture of that close by, but I still have it. I still have it, 13 or 14. So I played it and she was quite surprised and after that I just kept moving on. But she and Jarvis were basically the two people in Antigua and Barbuda, who influenced me.

But I want to get back to Jarvis. I hold Jarvis as Number One. Though of course, he didn't show us anything. But you know, you can learn from looking at people. And that's what I did. But if I am to say that anybody had a direct influence on me, it was Mr. Jarvis.

I remember one harvest night, everybody's at the cathedral. We're singing Psalms 147, 148, 149 and Psalm 150. So, Winston, myself and Knolly, we went close to the organ to see Mr. Jarvis. But we really wanted to hear what Psalm 150 when he pulled those trumpets out.

PH: Right, right.

FH: Man, and when he did, we were whispering, yeah, yeah, yeah, and looking at each other. And then there was the Te Deum by the choir boys all in front of the altar. And then the place was full. That's when people used to go to Church at night, Okay? But those are the things that I remember. But Mr. Jarvis, he was number one. And he was able to captivate the audience.

MO: He did that for me too.

FH: What?

MO: Yes, he did that for me.

FH: Really?

MO: Yeah. Me, Nick Cribbs, Connor Antonio, we used to go to church because we wanted to hear Mr. Jarvis.

FH: Yeah, so I can say that he was one with a major influence apart from Mrs. Peters. However, I don't remember Mr. Jarvis ever going overseas to be taught by anybody.

PH: Right.

FH: So, I investigated it. And I was told confidentially that there were some English people who came to Antigua especially in the winter because of the conditions in England at the time. They were graduates from the Royal Academy of Music. They taught Mr. Jarvis and they helped him. And that is why if you notice his playing is a little different from the rest. I don't know with you guys...

MO: Oh, it was just so clear for us, even though we didn't know music.

FH: So, basically that was the difference between the playing of Mr. Jarvis and Mrs. Peters. He was very good at what he did especially with the singing of the Psalms, which the cathedral people did so beautifully. How he did it, I don't know. But that is what it was—I was mesmerized by what he did. And I have to say, give it to him...

PH: Right.

FH: But I'm sorry that the government or whoever the people in power did not recognize his ability and awarded him whatever should have been coming to him. So that's part of it.

PH: No, when you were growing up, there were a number of other musicians around, Philmore Hallpike, Roland Prince, were any of those, in your interactions with them, important for you?

FH: Well, I think we...

PH: Oh, including Winston?

FH: With Winston, we always respected each other, even up to today. I can call Winston and say hey, look what's going on, what's going on, whatever the case is. We've always had that interaction and great respect for one another. Don't ask me who is good or who is better. That's childish.

PH: Of course. Of course.

FH: That's childish. The same thing with Philmore Hallpike and Roland Prince, but sorry about Roland Prince, he got into whatever.

PH: Drugs for a while but thankfully recovered and was playing again.

FH: But whatever, that was a talent that should have been fostered in the right direction without getting involved in other things. You know, I'm sorry, but I know he died recently.

PH: He died, Mali and I were at the funeral.

FH: Yeah. But it's a shame because that's a talent that Antigua should have harvested to much greater impact.

PH: Of course, of course.

FH: Yeah.

PH: No, I always thought he was super talented.

FH: Right, but Antiguan, they don't recognize the talents of the different peoples in the different areas.

PH: Of course.

FH: It doesn't have to be piano or the organ. It could be photography, painting, singing, whatever. Look at Manning from the Hells Gate. Manning was super quiet, but he was very talented and he imparted a lot of what he knew to the upcoming people, like, his children and the guy who wears a hat like you, what's his name....

PH: No, no, no, I know he's but I can't remember his name.

FH: Yeah, he was with the 46 North Street. 46 North Street. He was in the Union.

PH: Yeah?

FH: A union representative.

MO: I don't remember who that is.

FH: Yeah, anyway but he...

PH: So, this Manning was his full name?

FH: Eustace Henry.

MO: I've got two tapes of interviews with him.

FH: Yeah, Eustace Henry Manning is a very nice guy. But to me, they don't recognize these people the way they should.

MO: Still today.

FH: Up to today, up to today. People, they just say, oh, he did his time and to hell with it, and now let us get on. But these guys should have been recognized along with George Joseph. He did a lot for the Steel Band after being a part from his newspaper business. And...

MO: What about Ms. Higgins?

FH: Ms. Higgins. Okay, they were on St. Mary's Street. But I did not come in contact with them that much, because they were much older than we were at the time. And you know, with Justin, you know, so I...

MO: She did a lot with Hell's Gate Steel Band. Bertha Higgins was her name.

FH: Oh, that was before my time because I went with them in 62, from 62 onward. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But they were also very good musicians. But then again, nobody seems to know them. You know, that's the thing about Antigua.

MO: Manning did give a lot of credit to her in the interview I did with him.

FH: Okay, all right.

PH: Now I want to shift directions a little. For you, what does music mean personally? For a lot of people, music is entertainment. For others, it's an expressive medium that enables them to articulate and share something

they feel deeply. In other words, music is not just fun. It's not just entertainment. But it's an expression of something inside you. You know, a vision of life, feelings about life.

FH: Well, when I think about it, I have to go back to the Baroque period, the Baroque period involving George Frederick Handel, Johann Sebastian Bach, you know, all these great people like Mozart, and Beethoven. Many say that it's the white man music, but I don't buy that. I don't really pay a lot of attention to the skin colors. These gentlemen were all white in Germany et cetera, et cetera. But I don't care about that. What they have imparted in comparison to what we often hear today is very significant. The three-chord structure, I know it makes the money, you know, I did my part. There were days when I played in bands and I had to jump out of a window because bottles and stones were raining down on me, and guys stretching and covering themselves, you know. Yeah, that happened down by Side Hill, it used to be a popular...

PH: Nightclub.

MO: I used to go there too.

FH: Okay. So, we had that period no doubt still have popular music of that type. But the thing that really excites me is the Baroque Period in terms of music. When you study advanced theory, composition and harmony, the harmonic structures, which these guys have left for us, brilliant! They set my world on fire. The burning question for me was: how did they get these different structures together and make them sound so nice?

FH: Anytime I am listening to a beautiful piece of music, it is often just ecstatic.

PH: Oh, definitely.

FH: But now coming back to the three-chord structure, it's repeated over and over, and it makes the money today. But certainly, it doesn't mean much for me. You know, I like to hear the harmonic structure, the different progressions and what I really like also is jazz—Art Tatum.

PH: Art Tatum, yeah.

FH: Benny Goodman, all those guys, Oscar Peterson—wonderful! When I listen to their chord structures, to me they're on the same plateau as the Baroque guys. I play a lot of jazz too. People have always associated me with playing the organ and conducting. But jazz is right there, you know, even though the chord structure is different.

PH: Of course.

FH: That's what I like. But this three-chords stuff, not for me, because I happen to know better.

PH: Right.

FH: I don't want to sound pompous, but if you have not studied advanced harmonization, it would not mean anything to you. But when you have studied it and you know this is better, you gravitate towards it. However, if the three-chord structure was more advanced than the Baroque, I would go there. But I have to say the Baroque—superb! You know lot of jazz musicians study the Baroque, and have become masters of it.

PH: Sure?

FH: Oh, yeah. Oscar Peterson, he was very good at that. You have Benny Goodman, Thelonious Monk and all the other guys. I mean, you wonder where the hell they got all this knowledge. But you know they got it. I studied them, all of these shelves are filled with music stuff. This is all music and that is all music. Everything here is music. You guys are very fortunate to be down here.

PH: Thank you.

FH: Nobody can tell you, because nobody comes down here. I have too much stuff down here that I don't want any problems. So just a handful, just a handful. Right there, you have about 150 hymn books. I collect hymn books. Because I have more upstairs Joan, my wife, says, every part of the house is music, music, music. There's not one part of the house that's tidy. This is music here, music there. I have about 400, 500 cassettes.

PH: Yeah. I can see them?

FH: No, no, there is more by my bed. By my bed, and I even watch now on my iPad. I have the archives of recorded Church music from 1902 that's 115 years. Ephraim John and Mickey Matthew sent it to me all that. I used to listen to the program of epilogues that they did on ABS Radio. You know, I have great respect for both Ephraim John and Mickey Matthew.

PH: I was going to ask you about them. I was a big fan of the epilogues

FH: Antigua's radio station when you were growing up was the best in the Caribbean.

MO: Yeah, Sunday Music, oh god.

FH: And the epilogues at night.

MO: Yeah.

FH: Epilogues at night, I always remember them. So, when you really think of it, church music a cultural music, right? It doesn't matter what the religion may be. That is not everything. I am not that religious. You know, I'm not going to go curse anybody. But for me, I like what I do. And as you guys can see here, I can cross my legs and when I want to listen to whatever, I just go to the chair there, plan it a bit and I listen to Bach, Beethoven, jazz or whatever. But I cannot take this boom, boom, boom thing.

MO: May I ask you a question please? You don't mind....

FH: Yes. Sure, sure.

MO: Let's go back to the three-chord structure. Have you ever tried to reshape that yourself and refine if you want to use for your purposes?

FH: Well, okay,...

MO: Is it refineable?

FH: Okay, refineable in the sense that you have C-E-G, right? That's the root. That's a triad. Okay, now we can have C-E-G. Now we have refined it, these are the inversions of E-G-C is the same as....

MO: Uh-huh.

FH: Okay. And then we can have G-C-E, is the same C-E-G initially. But these are the inversions that they keep manipulating throughout. But it's the same. There's no F-sharp minor or anything coming in. So, when you say in terms of refining it, well, I don't know what are you thinking of?

MO: Well, Paget asked you the question, in terms of something instinctive, right? Because music, like the rest of the arts, it's primarily creative.

FH: Yes.

MO: And some part of it has to be you—Foster.

FH: Right.

MO: Right? Something that happens, like, in my work.

FH: Yes.

MO: So, I'm saying that you can use that as a basis to create another foundation. But maybe so many persons are already doing that in calypso and all that kind of stuff.

FH: That's what everybody does. Yes.

MO: But if you did something different with it. Maybe that might influence some of them. That's what I was asking.

FH: But there's only so much you can influence because you're still within the same parameters.

PH: In other words, I think Foster is saying that you can have all of these other sounds in F sharp, C sharp, E sharp, B flat.

FH: Right, right. Yeah, yeah.

PH: But in the three-chord structure...

FH: They're not going outward.

MO: I understand that.

PH: Yeah, yeah.

FH: Okay.

PH: So, the question is, why do you want to limit yourself then?

FH: That's right.

PH: Right? When you have all of these other sounds, you have this vast array of sounds, why are you sticking with these, just these?

MO: It's like the Baroque when you're talking about it, we had that in the arts as well, right?

FH: Oh, yeah.

MO: And then we had the Dadaists and Surrealists and stuff when people moved on. Is there anything like that in music itself, where people go off and do other things that actually challenges the normal...

FH: Yeah, but you don't want to be restricted though.

MO: Okay.

FH: Within the three-chord thing, you're restricted, you're not going out of it because you have the different sharps and flats and accidentals and double flats and double sharps. They don't touch that. Why? Because the knowledge of music is limited.

MO: Okay.

FH: That's why.

PH: Sure.

FH: Not that I don't like it.

MO: I got you.

FH: But the fact that it's limited and they don't want to go beyond certain parameters. Earlier when you said you're practicing a piece, a hymn, and then I just came and played it with my back to the piano, I don't believe, you know.

PH: It's true. I'm not lying. Absolutely true. I had not seen anybody do that before, so it would never have occurred to me to think or make that up. After I saw that, I said to myself, there must be something in this life that I can do that well, even though it was not music. It was light, fun moment for you, and very spontaneous. That is why I think you have now forgotten. For me it was formative and decisive moment that changed course of my life. I could never forget it.

FH: I don't believe it.

PH: No, it's true. But now, I want to go back to what you were saying earlier about Mrs. Peters and your urge to add notes and that sort of stuff.

FH: Okay.

PH: You see, that's why I was asking about whether or not music is for you something expressive?

FH: Okay, that's the creativity.

PH: Right.

FH: I do improvise a lot.

PH: Right.

FH: Yes, I do improvise a lot. Now, improvisation is music that's made upon the spur of the moment.

PH: Right.

FH: If you were to ask me to do it again, I would have to do something different and not the exact execution of the piece. So, it's my creative ability that forces me now to go outside of the box as it were and then create something a little different but yet come back to the original. So that, for example, a hymn may be written in the key of, say C major. Okay, I tell you, I'm kind of selfish in this sense. I was playing at Anglican Cathedral and I was asked to play one of the hymns. The hymn was written in the key of F major. I got up and instead of playing it in F major, I played it in F sharp major. That's six flat, six sharps. Most people don't play or sing in that key.

So, when I introduce it first, a lady was coming to play the piano. But she was playing it in the key in which it was written. So, there discord, big time discord.

PH: Right.

FH: She was trying to figure out exactly what key I was playing in. After the end of the second verse, I changed the key back to G major, but she was still trying to figure things out. She got up in disgust, went back and just stood there. From that day, she has never spoken to me.

PH: But this urge to innovate, the urge to improvise, would you say there is a certain mood, a certain feeling that motivates it?

FH: If it's nice hymn, and everybody sing lusciously, all of a sudden, things start to happen. What it is, I don't know but things just start to happen. And all of a sudden, my mind begins to expand and the creative ability, the creativity just unfolds and it just transfers to my fingers.

I have seen and heard the best organists this world has to offer. From Fox to Marcel Dupre in Paris, and Knolly you can clearly see the same thing. The French are very, very good, they're probably the best improvisers in the world.

FH: Gerry Hancock at 5th Avenue, Saint Thomas' Church was one of the best on the North American continent. Anytime I was in New York, while he's alive, I would be there just to hear him because he likes to improvise. When he does it, you can just feel it, feeel it! I've been to a lot of his master classes. Then you go to the great Marcel Dupre. In 1971, I was in Paris, standing over him at the big five manual console at Saint-Sulpice.

And then, he just got going, doing his thing and just effortlessly, just expressing himself. At the end of the service, they usually have a *Sortie*—it's French, means "out"—Man, the guy just let loose. And everybody just stood still, mesmerized. Knolly and I used to go to Saint Paul's in Toronto where Dr. Peaker used to play. And then all of a sudden, he pulls out the 32-foot stop. It was beyond words! It's big! Remember, when we were at my church here in Sarnia, I showed you the big wooden thing? It shakes the building. And, when Peaker puts it on, Knolly and I just looked at each other. You don't have to say anything.

PH: Right, right.

FH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, it's basically, it's....

MO: You can't express it.

FH: And yet, people think, you're crazy. But, you're not crazy. It's sort of an idiom, a motivating thing that just makes you express it. Like Sebastian Bach, he was the greatest improviser. What then is music that he's left here? Where did it come from? How could anyone write all that kind of music, after having 21 children?

PH: That was really good. I liked the idea that you're saying there is this sort of spontaneous....

FH: Spontaneous extemporization.

PH: Yes.

FH: Yes, yes!

PH: That, it's as though there is a spontaneous creative process driving the expansive nature of the works of these classical musicians.

FH: Yes, yes.

PH: I do like that.

FH: Yes, but we can't leave out the jazz people, either.

PH: Of course, of course.

FH: We could deal all day in doing just extemporizing in jazz, and...

PH: Yes, of course.

FH: You know, you can go from Oscar Peterson right down to Errol Garner, and Art Tatum is my man. But then again, he never quite got his due. Anytime I was there and he walked in, they said oh, God is in the house. He was, he was, so the question is: where did he get his knowledge? It was in large part from that spontaneous outpouring, that extemporizing. But do not forget he studied the works of Frederick Chopin. So then, to me, jazz and classical music go hand in hand, go hand in hand.

MO: It is just extemporaneous creativity.

FH: Yes. But, if you can write down the results of all of this spontaneous creativity, that's twice the battle, twice the battle! What you write it down, takes a lot of time, because you've got to put in all these bar lines et cetera. And, when you write it down you can't play it. Because I have a student here, he likes to improvise. He plays for me a lot of chromatic scales and I said sure. You should try writing it down. He told me, if I wrote it down, you probably couldn't play it for the next year or two. So, it's a gift or whatever the case is.

MO: That is the same thing in all the other arts.

FH: Well, yes, yes.

MO: It's a kind of aestheticism that no one can describe.

FH: Because even the painter... Joan paints.

MO: This is what I'm saying.

FH: Joan paints, and I have seen a lot of artists, just painting, this ability to create an imaginary scene or whatever. It just comes naturally, you know. But is it a gift or whatever you want to call it.

PH: Yes, I think it's a gift.

FH: Okay.

PH: A little earlier you were just saying that you are not like really, really religious.

FH: Let me come back to that question. Let me qualify that by saying I am not, going to steal from anybody, kill anybody. I'll treat each person as a human being, regardless of whether he is white, black, blue, pink. Well, I go to church. But to be honest, I could do without many of the sermons.

PH: Of course.

MO: And many are so long.

FH: My father, Eddie Hill, was a minister. He always said if you can't get your point across within 15 minutes, you're wasting your time. That's when I say bye to religion. I could do with shorter sermons and sing more hymns.

PH: Oh please, of course. But, the music of the hymns seems to speak to you.

FH: Yes, yes.

PH: Right?

FH: Yes.

PH: So, for want of a better term, can we say that a distinct set of religious emotions or religious feelings that get expressed in hymns—feelings of the sacred, the holy, a sense of things eternal that not only stir us but also can change us, or as the ministers would say, save us.

FH: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

PH: And that seems to have sort of engaged you from very early age.

FH: O yes, o yes, because I was brought up in it.

PH: Yes. But, I was too. And, as you can see, I did not do anything similar to the way you described going to watch Mr. Jarvis and being really engaged.

FH: But, what I forgot is this, yes, yes. You said I watched Mr. Jarvis, yes. But the hymn that really attracted me to the audience is number 34 in the Anglican hymnbook, On This Day the First of Days.

PH: Sure.

FH: [Plays hymn on Organ]. I don't know if you remember that hymn.

PH: Of course. Yes, yes.

FH: Okay. That Hymn attracted me to the organ. Right. The way which Mr. Jarvis played it, and how everybody was singing to it, I said to myself, I want to do that. Because you know when you sit at an organ, and you have all the array of stops at your disposal, you feel like king. The organ is known as the king of instruments, there's no other instrument in the world like an organ. You can take a violin, you can take a trumpet, you can take a saxophone or whatever fine, but nothing can touch the pipe organ.

MO: Because of its variety of possibilities?

FH: I took you guys up into that chamber today where you could see the inner workings of the organ at my church, and nothing, you can't touch that.

MO: It seems pretty intricate to me because those little pieces of thing over the wood for air to come out, that has to do with the sound...

FH: Oh yes, oh yes.

MO: And that's what they tune. I mean that seems so insignificant but then I realize with the sound, that is what it does.

FH: But you know something, there's a lot of physics there.

MO: Yes.

PH: Oh, of course, of course.

FH: Physics involved, you know, the temperature and the wind pressure. If you go to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and you go the main door—in fact, Elaine Olaoye, Joan and I went there one Sunday morning. When we got there, I made sure that we were standing up initially. I knew that those pipes were right up there and the guy fired them off. No, no seriously, oh yes, just like a locomotive sound right behind your ear.

PH: Yes. Yes, yes.

FH: Oh yes. Oh yes, so no it no that is 50 inches of wind pressure. Okay, the organ you guys saw today, right? That's right behind you there.

MO: Yes, yes.

FH: Now, there. The flute pipes around 2.2 inches of wind pressure, it varies up to nine to about 12, 15 inches of wind pressure. The big loud ones, higher wind pressure.

MO: Do you remember those tin-like things and I was asking you, did they tune this? And then I'm saying to myself quickly well it must change with the temperature in there, the...

FH: There's a dehumidifier in the organ.

MO: Okay.

FH: And those tin things were ...

MO: Stabilizes...

FH: The first time I saw it was at the organ in the Riverside church. After the church service they took us up into the inner workings. I could actually stand inside of it. Oh yes, stand inside of it and you know...

MO: Wow.

FH: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah, but of course they're very expensive. On Fifth Avenue at St. Thomas' church in New York, they're putting in a brand new organ for eight million dollars.

MO: Wow.

FH: Eight million dollars, Yes!

PH: That was very good. Now that we touched on the three-chord structure as opposed to music that engages a broader array of such structures, with jazz as an example of the latter, for you, is there a distinction or preference between religious and non-religious music or is it that you just like good music?

FH: Music is music. Well, a lot of it has to do with, in my opinion, how you were trained, what level of proficiency you have achieved.

MO: I got you.

PH: But the question is... okay. You could have somebody who is very highly educated, very sophisticated, and well trained. They play jazz.

FH: Yes.

PH: But you listen to jazz and then you listen to somebody who is equally well-educated, like you, who listens to the choirs at King's College at Cambridge University, you know, the music at King's College tends to be very religious, right?

FH: Generally, yeah.

PH: I'm just trying to figure out the difference between the two, and if it's meaningful for you.

FH: Well, a nice tune makes a difference. I gravitated to jazz because I liked the chord structures, the progressions. So, whether it's religious or not religious I still like it.

PH: When you listen to Baroque music, you can hear the influence of the Church.

FH: Well, yes, a lot of those Baroque composers they were employed by the Church.

PH: Of course, and a lot of them were also employed by Kings.

FH: Like Handel, for example. Handel, as compared to Bach, is very secular—like the *Water Music*. He and the King had fallen out, and someone suggested that if he wrote some music he might be able to get back into favor with him. Yes, and he did. He wrote the *Water Music* da-da-da-da. It's not religious but it has a soothing effect.

PH: Right.

FH: A soothing effect.

PH: Yeah. But you know that's my point. This is what I'm trying to get at—that to me, there's something specific about religious music because of the emotions that it evokes, right?

FH: Right.

PH: I don't know all of Franz Liszt, for example, but when I listen to...

FH: *Liebesträume*, for example?

PH: Yes, right. you can still hear the influence of the Church.

FH: Yes, but he became a minister.

PH: I did not know that. But, here I want to shift our discussion in a slightly different direction. How would you say coming to Canada has affected your music?

FH: First of all, we lived in Toronto, Knolly and I and Barry, our brother. The first church we went to was St. Paul's Anglican on Bloor Street, where they have that big five manual organ, you're pulling out the 32-foot pipe and you can feel the swelling effect that it produces. Dr. Peaker was there at the time He was from England, from Derby Cathedral. The way in which he played... actually give you the chills. It was impulsive. You wanted to go and hear what he had to say musically, and when you hear that organ start to lash out, man, you did not want to leave. We used to go there and read the lessons at times. But, we would also go there and just hear everybody singing out, singing out, singing out, and then from there, I went on to study with a guy called Freddie Geoghehn.

PH: Oh!

FH: He was an excellent player. Back then you had a lot of excellent players in and around Toronto and I was going to hear them, to hear what they're doing, to make contact with them, study and take lessons et cetera, et cetera. That was basically it. Then I started going to England. Fox told me, anytime you go to England, go and see George Thalben-Ball. Joan and I went there, to England. Oh man! Talk about music! You go to England especially if you want to hear good church music. Go to England and you get more than you paid for. They have got all these psalms and hymn singing singing... everybody. Well, it is a full congregation. They had a lot of tourists going to the UK back in 1973. Tourists like crazy from Canada because Canada was really British. But I would always be running to Westminster, running to St. Paul's Cathedral, running to all the different churches.

PH: Yes, to the cathedrals!

FH: If people were to spy on me, at the end of my tour, they'd say, "Well, where have you been? Are you religious?"

MO: *Chuckle*

FH: "Are you religious?" You are always going to church you know. That's what I do when I go to England. It was so good just to hear these big organs; same thing in New York. If you follow me in New York, right, I am going from the Riverside, to St. Bart's, to St. Patrick's, to... yeah all over.

PH: Bars no, churches, yes. churches....

FH: Yeah! That's my thing.

MO: I can see that.

FH: Nobody is getting me into bars anymore.

PH: Now, let's talk a little bit about what's happening with music in the church in Antigua and Barbuda today. First, I see two influences... the fundamentalist American influence, where you have a whole different musical tradition, and that's predominantly white. Then you have the influence of African American gospel, that you can hear on Observer Radio on Sunday mornings or even in the evening. You no longer have anything like epilogue. Or you begin to get the kind of music, for example, that Dr. Maurice Roberts does, reframing, classical hymns into the idioms of jazz, reggae or calypso. So, what I see is that somehow the further we get from that immediate situation of British colonization, it is as though people are feeling the need to change the music of the church. Your thoughts.

FH: Well, I have nothing against this new development—but I'm an old traditional person and I am going to stick to what I know. I'll tell you why. If they want to go in that direction—let them find their own words. Don't put *All Hail the Power of Jesus Name* to whatever music they want to jazz it up or whatever the case is. But, find your own words. Find your own words and set them to your own music. But, in general, I have nothing against what they're trying to do.

PH: Could this be like a transitional phase? Because really when you look, for example, at African American gospel, that was the way it began. You can see the evolution of it where they were literally taking Methodist and Baptist Hymns and transforming them, right?

FH: Right, yes.

PH: Until it got to the point where things evolved into what is now clearly a distinct type of music. If we look at the history of the African-American church, right after emancipation white churches and black churches separated and it's because they were so widely separated that this process of transformation and finding their own voice began to take place. In the Caribbean, because we gained our independence only in the 1960s and so this distance now is only five decades old, I'm wondering if we now are not beginning to go through...

FH: That same phase.

PH: Yes, or a similar one. I don't know, how that sounds to you?

FH: It could be possible, it could be possible. But it's not my cup of tea. It doesn't really move me. Therefore, it is difficult for me to say.

PH: Of course. You know....

FH: But I'll tell you something. I don't care what they say, the Caribbean people, when they hear the traditional hymns, they sing their heart out.

PH: Hmm. But you see, what I'm saying is that this could be a transitional phase in the history of Afro-Caribbean church, specifically in Antigua and Barbuda. Is it because this is now a different generation that is growing up? They've never seen people like, Jarvis, Rev. Hatch Syrette, Rev. Barrett, or Rev. Davidson, all those people, who helped to shape the church music of our youth. Nothing like that, right? So, for me the way they are going to relate to the music has to be different from the way we related to it. In other words, I'm just wondering if this need to do something new and different is not an expression of that distance from British colonialism I mentioned earlier.

FH: Like a rebellion?

PH: Not a rebellion but just an expression and an announcement that they are not experiencing the music in the same way. The other thing that's so striking is the movement away from the classical organ, you know, the pipe organ that you love and describe so wonderfully for us earlier today. Now, I know this has a lot to do with the American fundamentalist influence, and also on account of the high cost of pipe organs. Whatever the specific reasons, this trend has caught on very much in a lot of the churches in Antigua and Barbuda. So, that's an influence that is growing, that was not so strong when you and I were growing up. So, to me, all of these things are impacting how people are experiencing church music in Antigua and Barbuda today.

FH: Well, first of all, the pipe organ is a very expensive instrument and most churches cannot afford it. So, the logical thing to do is to go to an electronic organ. But the downside of it, it will only last 25 years. A case in point, the organ that was at Ebenezer that they wanted to throw out, put at Cook's Dump is now playing in Parham, like the day it first came from England. I think the people at Ebenezer were advised wrongly. When I went down to Antigua and Barbuda, they asked me to do an evaluation of it, and I checked it out.

I said there's nothing wrong with the organ, all it needs is some maintenance. Just like your car, if you don't change the oil, look at the tires, put gas in it, et cetera, it's going to stop on the road. So, I said that's all it needs. The Minister came and said to me, Dr. Hill, can you please tell us how we can revive this? I said, I got to call my technicians who look after this one in here in Sarnia. I called him up and I said, we need you to come down here to dismantle this organ and put it in another church.

Ah, well, what about September the night of September, they flew down to Antigua, within four days, they removed the organ, put it in boxes and shipped it to Parham Methodist church. They got it for free. Six months later, they returned and erected it. Just as good to today, and that organ came to Antigua and Barbuda in 1958. That's what, almost 60 years, 60 years next year. Now an electronic organ, because the way it's built will not last that long. In the 1970s, they had these Allen organs all over the Caribbean and they have to replace every one of them.

PH: Well, of course.

FH: Okay, so that's it. Longevity, you go for the pipe organ but you got to pay for it, okay. Now the organ in the cathedral, for example they took it down crudely, because they wanted to use, to go with the modern technology as they call it. So, they got—they got a Rodgers organ, but it's going to be short lived—25 years max, and that's it. A pipe organ will outlast you and I, our lifetimes twice over, because it's just a set of pipes the sound goes through. It's a constant pressure and that's it. The only way, if you want, to destroy the organ, is to take a sledgehammer and beat it to death.

Once there, it stays there. At the church you visited, the organ is over a hundred years old, and you heard what a racket it can still make, right?

PH: Yes, but to me a related aspect of this change is that attendance at the Anglican, Moravian and Methodist churches has been declining.

MO: Okay.

PH: Right.

FH: That's worldwide.

PH: Yes, and it's the the Church of Zion, the Church of the Nazarene and the more fundamentalist churches that are on the rise.

MO: That's right, the Church of Nazarene is probably one of the fastest growing churches in Antigua and Barbuda right now, right? And the music in that church is so different.

PH: Right. This is what our rising generation is growing up hearing.

FH: Sure!

PH: So that's where to me the change is coming from. Most of them did not grow up with pipe organs and stuff like that. When we were growing up the Methodist, Anglican, Moravian, Catholic Churches had little or no competition. No competition. These were the churches.

FH: Yes.

PH: Today they do, lots of competition. Lots of people are growing up who have never even been inside the Methodist, Anglican or Catholic Church. So, the religious scene is very different today.

FH: Oh yes.

PH: And I think that's a big factor in why the church music that we grew up with has changed.

PH: Anyway, that was the last question that I had for you. So, let me ask, now, is there anything else that you want to tell me that I haven't brought up. Anything else that you think would be vital here that has not come up so far?

FH: Well, I am playing for almost 70 years because I started very, very early. If all of the churches begin to go in the direction that they're going into now, I will retire from going to church. It has nothing to do with being religious. Remember Victor Scholar?

PH: Yeah, of course.

FH: I call him all the time. He says he's fed up. He says all those things that we use to sing and play and what not, they are gone.

MO: Oh, he used to sing a lot too.

PH: Oh, yes!

FH: I often went there to play for him. But strange, even Ebenezer is still full.

PH: Yes, it's still full. But if you look at the statistics they have been losing.

FH: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

PH: And, you can see that the combined loss of these more established churches has been absorbed by these more fundamentalist churches, such as the Church of the Nazarene and others.

FH: The Church of the Nazarene, they have more drum sets and...

PH: Drum sets, guitars.

MO: And some of them even have steel bands.

FH: Oh, the steel bands are right no, integral part of these churches. In Mr. Jarvis' day, oh he said, no, no, no. The Dean had to say, just come and listen and tell me what you think. So, he did go. And, oh, he was pleasantly surprised. But the first person who took a steel band into a church in Antigua was my father.

PH: Yeah, okay! That I did not know.

FH: Yes! The first person who ever took a steel band into a church in Antigua and Barbuda was my father.

MO: May I ask you a question because Johnny Gomes is in this band. You know, Johnny of course.

FH: Oh yeah.

MO: What is the steel band's name?

FH: The City South?

MO: Okay. Is, he's right?

FH: What?

MO: He is saying that they were the first that played at that church in Antigua and Barbuda, City South.

FH: In a church in Antigua?

MO: Yeah.

FH: No, no, no. Hell's Gate even played in the church before City South. Yeah, I took them to the Methodist church. But my father was the first person in 1948.

MO: Nineteen forty-eight?

FH: Forty-eight, yeah.

MO: There were not many steel bands then, they were just forming.

FH: Right, my father was the first one, he took them in at Parham Church, Parham Church.

MO: Okay, good.

PH: You see, this is what I mean when I say we really need to...

MO: Stay here.

PH: To write down some of this stuff. You see...

FH: And it was Canon Yabrey.

MO: Remember that name.

FH: It was Canon Yabrey from St. Peter's, Parham, who encouraged the steel bands. Let me go back a little. When we use to go to Parham every Sunday, as well and my first sitting at the organ, it was a G organ from Germany. Canon Yabrey was the one who encouraged me to sit on the bench even though my legs were too short at the time to touch the pedals.

So, my father said, oh get off! Get off! Canon Yabrey said, oh no, no, let him stay, let him stay. And he tried to show me how to peddle.

MO: All right. You hear that name in my household a lot.

FH: Oh, yeah. Canon Yabrey. He was the one who first introduced me to the pipe organ in Parham.

PH: So, how old were you at this time?

FH: Oh, I was about three or four.

PH: Three or four?

FH: Three or four.

MO: He's going to introduce into the pipe organ. Probably could have crawled through the pipe.

PH: See, these are the precious details about church music in Antigua and Barbuda that we're losing now... And then, there was the popularity of program Sunday Half Hour.

FH: Man, see that is what...

MO: In my house every Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock.

FH: At 4 o'clock, everything stopped. BBC Bush House, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick from London hymns started. And Ephraim John and...

MO: Mickey.

FH: Mickey, man. These guys I give my heart to. You know, when I went home back home, I saw Ephraim John. I went to say something to him, he never recognized me. He never recognized me.

PH: He's a little...

MO: When—I haven't seen Ephraim John since...

FH: He was at Ebenezer and I was there this Sunday. And I know...

MO: How long ago was this about?

FH: It was about five years ago.

PH: Mickey was a little more....

FH: Mickey died, yeah?

PH: Yeah, yeah, I know.

FH: I played for Mickey's funeral.

MO: Yeah, that was one of my problems because he wanted to talk with me and by the time I got back he was dead.

FH: Yeah, I played at his funeral at the Catholic Church. But Ephraim John man, these guys.... Radio Antigua was the top radio station—epilogue every Sunday night, every Sunday night. Now, you know where you can still get the epilogues when you go to archives of church music. Type that in and just search for it. All the epilogues, they used to come on a big 16-inch vinyl things. I think I still have some of them here.

PH: So, if you just Google them.

FH: Yeah, just Google it. Archives of Recorded Church Music from out of London, from 1902 to the present.

PH: Let me write this down.

FH: All the hymns and everything else you want.

PH: Archives....

FH: ...of Recorded Church Music. You just type it in and you'd be surprised to hear what you get. Oh, yeah. Yeah, so basically that's how the music scene is in Antigua. Yeah, but nobody will want to really know that part of my life anyway so.

MO: No, come on. Please.

PH: No Foster, I'm telling you, the newer generations, they are curious about the past because it's not there for them the way it is for us. That is why we have to write it down, we have to leave them some record of who we were and of our accomplishments.

MO: Definitely.

FH: Look, if Jarvis was still alive I would bow down to him.

PH: Sure.

FH: I respected him for his ability that much. Though of course, he never showed us anything. But what he was able to demonstrate is that it, that creativity, was always in him. But he only wanted to give his knowledge to the ladies.

MO: We gave a talk last night at York University. I know you know Barry Challenger. He was impressed with us. He said that the combination of us working together was great. We talked about my photographic work.

PH: And the book that I did on his work. I gave you a copy.

MO: Yes. And these people, they keep saying, you know, get it down, get it written down so, I...

PH: Get it down, get it down! Foster, this why I am getting you down, lots of the upcoming generation are interested and very curious.

FH: What Paget saying is absolutely true and I'm going to do more of that for the musical arts.

FH: Sometimes, I wish I could turn back the hands of time.

PH: Of course, of course!

FH: I wish I could turn back the hands of time.

COMMENTARY

God Forbid: But in Times of Crisis We Discover Our True Selves

Lawrence Jardine

There is a philosophical doctrine called Determinism that states all events are determined by previous events. Also, there is the concept of triggers. For example, it was believed in some quarters that the full moon triggered lunacy, and the transformation of humans into werewolves and vampires.

However, I am triggered—to feel a sense of national embarrassment and shame—by the general and religious ignorance that is being propagated via the local radio stations in relation to the causes and source of the current global pandemic, resulting from the Coronavirus and its disease, COVID-19.

For some members of the clergy and citizens alike, COVID-19 is retribution from a loving God to punish humanity for our evil ways. In a rush to judge God, some members of the clergy and public had initially forgotten of the scapegoat called the Devil. Daily in the unclosed media polls, the cause for COVID-19 is being proportioned to God or the Devil—both in part or to each as a whole.

I was trained as a sports coach to look for and evaluate triggers, and that—using the left and right brain theory—at various magnitudes of pressure, anxiety or stress, the less dominant side of the brain closes down. Respectfully, is COVID-19 closing one side of our collective national brain, or was that side already partially closed? To confess in true religious form, I concluded the latter after the CCJ/JCPC national referendum in 2018.

We need to slow down and desist with this fundamentalist religious rhetoric, and let level heads prevail. We are fooling around with a potentially volatile situation.

In Antigua and Barbuda, the church—generally speaking—is not accountable to or engaged in enlightening discourse with any scientific guild. It is a religious powerhouse unto itself. The religious community asserts ‘Biblical Truths’ and alternative facts at Mass without fear of opposition, as there is no Q&A segment at the end of Mass. In this Age of Information, Algorithm and Acceleration, and in the wealth of massive scientific data and incontrovertible facts, the church can remorselessly hold and propagate any unschooled belief. For example, from Monday to Friday, our students are taught the science of evolution, and that diamonds and fossil fuels are billions of years old. But on Saturday and Sunday, they—the very same students—are taught by the church that the Earth is still only six-thousand (6,000) years old.

Consequently, in every seven-day cycle (no pun intended), our students are conflicted by that diametrically opposed academic and church curricula. And our scientific community remains sinfully silent, thereby doing our vulnerable youth a disservice. I want to suggest here, the first responsibility of a society is to take care of and protect its offspring, especially from the purveyors of ignorance, falsehoods, and mental and physical harm, among other things.

I would like to advise the Minister of Education to prepare an online curriculum—now our ‘school children’ are captive and at home—to teach them about the history of viruses (that predates the computer ones). We must make our children wise and intelligent too. Pure academics coupled with this bombardment of religious fundamentalism is a recipe for perpetual national ignorance and intellectual stagnation.

This is early days yet in Antigua and Barbuda, but if ignorance is allowed to ferment during this pandemic, Heaven knows what a national panic might become as more persons are infected—and food and medical supplies become scarce.

For example, it is reported that due to COVID-19, gun purchases have alarmingly increased across the US, as citizens line the streets shopping to stockpile weapons and ammunition in anticipation of food shortage, theft and civil unrest.

A word to the wise is good enough...

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Asha Frank is an author, political activist, and an advocate for addressing climate change. She is a former member of the Barbuda Council, the founder of the NGO, BarbudanGO, and thus has been very active in the Barbudan Community. Her book, *Dreamland Barbuda*, is a study of the history of communal land ownership in Barbuda.

Paget Henry is professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at Brown University. He is the author of *Peripheral Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Antigua*, *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy*, then, *Shouldering Antigua and Barbuda: The Life of V.C. Bird*, and most recently, *The Art of Mali Olatunji*. He has been a strong contributor to the discussions on Antigua and Barbuda's development.

Lawrence A. Jardine is a specialist in the field of information technology. He has also been a long-time and very active member of the ACLM. He is now the leader and driving force behind the Antigua and Barbuda Enlightenment Academy.

Anique John received her PhD in social justice from Arizona State University in 2020. She received her MPhil and her BA in history from Brunel University in Britain. Her dissertation focused on the specific nature of the racialized and gendered experiences of Black women of Caribbean ancestry as they navigate their way into, up and around the spaces of British academia.

Edgar O. Lake is a distinguished novelist, playwright and poet. He is also an archivist and a past president of the Virgin Islands Historical Society. He is the author of *The Devil's Bridge* and of *The Wake of the Empress* (forthcoming). He is also a founding member of *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books*.

Elaine Olaoye is a professor of Psychology at Brookdale Community College, and also a well-known poet. Her area of specialty is stress management that incorporates the use of poetry. She is the author of the book of poetry, *Passions of My Soul*.

Mali Adelaja Olatunji is a famous Antiguan footballer, political activist, fine arts photographer, and aesthetician. He worked for 21 years as one of three fine arts photographers at Museum of Modern Art in New York. He is the co-author of *The Art of Mali Olatunji: Painterly Photography from Antigua and Barbuda*.

Dorbrene O'Marde is a playwright, health specialist, calypso writer, and cultural critic. He is the author of several plays including, *Fly on the Wall*, and is very widely recognized across the Caribbean region for his writing on calypso. He is the author of two books, *Send Out Your Hand* and *King Short Shirt: Nobody Go Run Me*. He currently serves as Chairperson of the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Commission.

