

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF EXPLOITATION STRUCTURES IN THE CARIBBEAN

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For any attempt to grasp present socio-political and economic realities in the Caribbean, it is important to understand origin and evolution of institutions and structures, as each island society has its own history and pattern of development, despite the common colonial heritage. This paper traces the origins of Caribbean as exploitation colonies and the way in which these islands have been integrated into the world economy, particularly under British colonialism beginning at around 1655.¹ Focusing on two colonies of the British West Indies, I show that colonisation and pursuit of profits led to the introduction of sugar cultivation that contributed to the emergence of particular structures in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Caribbean islands have, time and again, showed a structural continuity of incorporation into the world economy; from slavery and sugar plantation to post colonial 'industrialisation by invitation', which has only served to reinforce the feature. Hence the need to look at the historical processes of their integration into the world economy.

Caribbean scholars have argued that development in the Caribbean is a reflection of the qualitative development of European capitalism and colonial economic policy was the instrument of this.² The introduction of plantation system, the importation of slaves from Africa with the emergence of a robust Atlantic commerce, all gave rise to a profitable 'Triangular Trade'. While 'King Sugar' firmly integrated the Caribbean islands into the external political economy, it also determined the path of development in these islands. Since then, Caribbean economic history is one of booms and busts that seem to have become a permanent feature. Plantation economy is central to the understanding to the Caribbean development patterns and emphasised by all Caribbean scholars.

If one were to put the history of the Caribbean in a nutshell, the word is 'dependence'. This dependence is of a structural kind having its roots in institutions and legacies of colonialism. A singular feature that stands out in

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Caribbean history, past and present, is that the economic surplus generated in the region has not benefited the peoples living there. Instead, such profits have always accrued to people outside the region. How this has happened is interesting to study.

A structure refers to parts of a whole which over a period of time appear stable alongside others. Structures include social institutions, distribution of income patterns and labour, organisation of production and marketing and certain norms governing economic affairs (Gilpin, 1984:81). These norms or rules are provided by institutions. The institutions that emerge lay the grounds for the structure in which human interactions take place. Therefore, institutions that influence structures become important to understand historical changes of a given society. Within this institutional framework emerge organisations, and together, shape the pattern of development.³ The history of British Caribbean is that of pervasive colonial legacies, institutional slavery and plantation-type organisation from which has emerged the modern Commonwealth Caribbean. The social processes of colonialism, slavery and plantation ultimately culminated with political factors impinging on social and economic structures we see in existence today in the Caribbean (Knight, 1990).

The organisation of the economy was plantation-type, the rules of the economic game was provided by the institution of slavery. Together they constituted a structure of exploitation. While profits was the basic motive, the pillars on which this exploitation structure was based were mercantilism and monopoly.

The Pillars of Caribbean exploitation

The expansion of mercantilism in Europe was the catalysing factor in the transformation of the Caribbean islands into exploitation colonies. The demand for tropical luxury items in Europe set in motion a whole system of exploitation making profits the fulcrum of the system. Colonisation can give rise to two types of societies in the colonies: (a) the settler colonies and (b) exploitation colonies. George Beckford (1969, 1970) notes that the areas which developed as colonies of settlement and the pattern of agriculture that emerged in these colonies were markedly different from the tropical colonies where mainly capital and enterprise were involved in the movement from the metropole to produce 'colonies of exploitation'.⁴ The latter had certain distinct characteristics that makes it different in composition.⁵ Caribbean exploitation societies can be characterised in the following ways:

- I. Colonialists were only interested in profits. When profits declined, they conveniently moved on taking with them the capital.
- II. Exploitation colonies introduced plantation societies and a plantation culture based on the institution of slavery.

- III. They were an assortment of races, cultures and beliefs.
- IV. They lacked a common, unifying institutional basis, other than plantation.
- V. They were divided, divisive and mutually reinforcing cleavages within the social composition.
- VI. They perpetuated monoculture in the Caribbean.
- VII. They were highly import-intensive, especially of foodstuffs.
- VIII. Characterised by an absentee planter class.

The colonists' commitment to the Caribbean islands was only economic and considered these islands as large staple-producing factories. This overriding profit interest added to the poor quality of community colonial life and low ethos. Public facilities and infrastructure were underdeveloped - limited to the minimum requirements of exploitation. Life in the Caribbean plantations revolved around to sugar cultivation and profits. Planning, outside plantation organisation, was not considered relevant (Green, 1976, Williams, 1964). . In this sense, the British West Indies were not settler colonies.

The financiers (or British merchants) were not interested in investing in activities of self-sustaining agriculture in the colonies. Rather, their chief interest was investment in plantation system geared towards exports. Expansion of sugar cane cultivation in the latter half of the seventeenth century was a direct result of single-crop specialisation and the application of larger units of capital and labour to every acre of land. The whole process of Caribbean exploitation was based on monopoly via the Corn Act, the Navigation Act of 1651 and the Prohibition Act of 1776 which established the regulations for colonial commerce. The first regulation restricted all trade in goods to ships owned by British subjects. The second restricted the destination of colonial products for industries in Britain. In this way the Acts prevented any industrialisation to take place in the colonies.⁶

Caribbean Plantation System

Magnus Mörner (1992:3), a well known Swedish historian of Latin America, while discussing the legacies of slavery in the Americas aptly writes;

Even if you do not subscribe to the hoary notion of a "slavery mode of production", nobody can possibly deny the overwhelmingly economic importance of, in particular plantation slavery in the country or region where it is predominant.

The term 'plantation economy' is cautiously used to describe situations where the dominant pattern of agricultural resource organisation is the plantation system (Beckford, 1969: 325). Plantations formed the basic socio-economic units

in the Caribbean islands.⁷ It has been argued that the plantation system of the sixteenth, seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries had a very modern cast for their times. Sugar production in particular tied the field to the mill and capital investment in equipment was heavy. This relatively well developed plantation-based sugar industry had a sort of curious 'modern' element in it. Some scholars argue that the development of plantations to produce commodities for European markets was a vital first step in the history of overseas capitalism (Williams, 1964, Mintz, 1974). The expansion of the slave-based economies in the Caribbean (and in the New World) was an integral part of the 'triangular trade' and European commercial industry.

By the same token, the economic success of colonialism in the Caribbean islands had much to do with the growth and expansion of European industry in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is no doubt that the core of exploitation profits in the Caribbean has been labour. Enslavement under colonialism was one of "the modes of relating labour to land, while other modes serving this purpose also contained coercion, but did not make them the same as slavery" (Mintz, 1974:45).

The term Caribbean plantation generally refers to large estates exclusively cultivating sugar cane for most part of the regions history with intensive slave labour and factory-like organisation. Beginning in 1650, slave labour became identified with Africans through the institution of slavery within the system of plantations that lasted until late nineteenth century. The institution of slavery was that of enslaved *African manual labour*, engaged in the production of market commodities for *European consumption* on plantation-like organisation of *Caribbean land*, and the profits generated were expropriated by the *European planters* who were slave owners as well (Williams, 1964:16). Bonham Richardson (1992:41) identifies the following economic features that characterised Caribbean plantations:

- IX. Monetary profit has been the plantation's overriding goal.
- X. Control of plantation is normally centralised in the owners and their managers.
- XI. Plantations involved substantial investments in equipment, technology and labour.
- XII. The plantation labour force composed of imported labour in the form of slavery.
- XIII. Production was always oriented toward external markets.
- XIV. Plantations are a product of metropolitan capital and enterprise imposed in Caribbean environment.

Plantations were the units of production. The organisation of plantation gave distinct social features: (i) distinction between field labourers and masters/overseers; (ii) distinction in income, status and standards of living; (iii) rigid social order of plantation hierarchy and (iv) limited (or no) social mobility. The plantation system generally included a processing factory and developed transportation facilities. In this way, plantation was as much a factory as a firm, and the labour force is both agricultural and industrial. In order to reduce the unit cost, a large plantation was necessary.

The plantation system evolved into a mixture of class, race and colour that even to this day plague the Caribbean societies. The plantation owners composed a minority class of plantocracy making rules based on their own self-interest (i.e. profits). They imposed laws on the slave society. The laws were designed to defend and perpetuate the socio-economic order of the English plantocracy and to control the majority of slaves. The planters were as much dependent on the slaves for their profits, as the slaves were dependent on the planters for their own survival, at least initially.⁸ Even after emancipation in 1834, the plantocracy continued to adopt and exploit in order to reassert its hold over the ex-slaves, perpetuating their socio-economic domination and control.

The plantation system involved not just planters, but a whole network of profit interests - from planters to merchants to colonial administration to the Colonial Office and the West India Interest in England. Planters were often dependent on British merchants for credits which was a vital element of the West Indian plantation system. This led to indebtedness, and in times of recession, bankruptcy was common. Therefore, credibility played an important role. Merchants were rather unwilling to invest in plantations with debt as it constituted a liability to their mercantile interests. Planters also faced economic pressure from the colonial government, who expropriated revenue on the one hand, and dependent on the government for protection of Caribbean sugar in English market, on the other hand (Green, 1976: ch.2). If the planters were in debt and taxed, how did sugar plantation produce profits?

The whole system revolved around monopolistic policies mentioned earlier. The characteristics of monopolistic policies in the colonial West Indies can be summarised thus: (i) The colonies only imported metropolitan goods. (ii) The colonies exported only to the metropolitan country. (iii) Colonial trade was monopolised by metropolitan merchants. (iv) The colonies were to produce raw materials and not processed items (Williams, 1970: 171-172). The processing and marketing would be done in the metropolitan country. In this way plantation system in the Caribbean colonies came to be intricately tied to European metropolises. Therefore, the ultimate objective of such policies was to establish commerce and not to establish settlements. From the very incipient stages, the

Caribbean was imposed a structure of producing what it does not consume and consuming what it does not produce. This structure has outlived others.

Absenteeism and its consequences

A major feature of the emerging exploitation structure in the Caribbean was absenteeism; which has also been identified as a major cause for the failure to develop relevant institutions other than those serving mercantilist interests of the absentee planter class - or the 'West Indian Interest' in England. The materialistic base of Caribbean colonies made them directly opposite of the mainland American situation. The reason for absenteeism is found in the economic system and society that emerged in early 1700s. Treveor Burnard (1994), for instance, identifies two main reasons for the failure of settler colonies in Jamaica: (i) failure of natural reproduction rates among whites - this was due to higher mortality rates, disease and overindulgence; (ii) rise of the plantation economy - weak institution of marriage and increasing number of slave concubinage.⁹ These features reinforced absenteeism.

Having made their fortunes in the Caribbean, the British upper-middle class settlers returned home. The system of primogeniture also perpetuated absenteeism.¹⁰ The economic collapse of the plantation system in early 1800s, combined with absenteeism, resulted in a large number of heavily indebted estates that were foreclosed by English creditors.

In 1672, a special Council of Trade and Plantations was founded. This council proved to be a system of control in the colonies. The central body was situated in England represented by the communities of West Indies Interest and English merchants with Caribbean business connections. This system served to act as a forum of exchange of views, co-ordination of private interests, as well as advising the Crown on West Indian matters. They constituted a powerful political clout.

Their counterparts in the Caribbean - that is a smaller planter class catered to domestic markets. They converted their produces into commodities without incurring costs such as customs, freight or insurance by including these costs in the value set upon their crops. This kind of trading created a merchant class who handled the goods of their principals in England, collected debts on their behalf and made up the return cargoes. They also acted as brokers. Later, they themselves acquired estates and joined the planter class (Davies, 1951: 102-110).

By early 1700s, the affluent ruling class of planters had consolidated their position in Jamaica but had little interest in settling down there. While at the same time, Communities of wealthy West Indians were founded in London and

Bristol where the glory of King Sugar was shown around. They neither had the interest nor the inclination of settling Caribbean colonies. Eric Williams (1964:85) quotes one such absentee landlord;

The climate of our sugar colonies is so inconvenient for an English constitution, that no man will chuse to live there, much less will any man chuse to settle there, without the hopes at least of supporting his family in a more handsome manner, or saving more money, than he can do by any business he can expect in England, or in our plantations upon the continent of America.

Another agent for Barbados (cited by Williams, 1970:119) in England wrote in 1689;

Nothing but England can we relish or fancy: our hearts are here, where ever our bodies be. If we get a little money, we remit it to England. Where we are a little easy, we desire to live and spend what we have in England. And all that we can reap and rend is brought to England.

The West Indian colonies generated profits for not just the planters, but even for the merchants. The planters and merchants were bound by an unholy matrimony; namely, credit. Planters were often in debt with the merchants. More important, when the planters wanted to maintain monopoly prices, the two were at loggerheads. It was said that these two groups had so much of rum and sugar that 'could make all the water in the Thames into punch' (Williams, 1970:132).

Nonetheless, the two groups with their enormous wealth generated in the West Indies constituted a powerful 'West India Interest' of the eighteenth century. Their Caribbean plantations and slaves became the distinguished qualities of these West Indian 'Gentlemen'. This West India interest became, in the words of Eric Williams, the *enfant terrible* of English politics until the American Independence struck the fatal blow at mercantilism and monopoly.¹¹

In economic terms, absenteeism resulted in the repatriation of profits from plantations to England. This feature, coupled with the North American trade relations, drained the islands of foreign exchange and capital for reinvestment in productive activities. In social and political terms, absenteeism denied the Caribbean of leadership and initiative to establish settler colonies and institutions. Nepotism was widespread with most unscrupulous people (the clergy not excepted) occupying honourable and profitable posts. Education was totally neglected. This in turn reinforced absenteeism. The appointment of managers to run the affairs on behalf of the absentee planters resulted in uncontrolled abuse of slaves (rape, child abuse and sadism). These overseers/estate managers grossly mismanaged economic affairs and depleted the capital of the plantations in order to procure high profits. The reasons for such mismanagement and maltreatment of slaves by overseers was because they were paid on a commission basis. The desire to get more commission made them

force slaves to work beyond the human their limits causing invalidity or death. This meant that more capital went to purchase new slaves.¹² It must be noted that resident planters treated their slaves better and more humanely than the overseers of absentee planters (Patterson, 1975: 33-51). In Jamaica, there emerged a dual elite system: (i) An absentee elite, predominantly English, living opulent lives in England and constituting a powerful West India interest. (ii) A resident plantocratic elite which was predominantly Celtic in origin.

The demise of slavery did not improve economic equality in the Caribbean. While it gave freedmen opportunities of social and economic mobility, it did not remove the unequal distribution pattern of income and wealth. This inequality has been the breeding grounds for many a Caribbean unrest - The Morant Bay Revolt in 1865, the Black Power Movement in the Caribbean in 1938, the Rodney Riots in Jamaica 1965 and the Black Power Movement in 1970, to name only a few, are all manifestations of this deep cleavage in wealth.

Thus, as Sidney Mintz (1974:46) notes, for instance, that the feature making Caribbean colonies so distinct from other European colonies elsewhere is not just its 'ancientness', but in their function as regions of settlement for exploitation, their role as an assortment of migrant populations, and of course, their special forms of agro-industry that flourished pretty early in their colonial history. This is what makes the Caribbean a 'qualitatively different variety of colonialism'. Michael Manley (1974:20) while discussing the cultural displacement caused by slavery writes in the following words;

Jamaican, indeed Caribbean, experience has this significant difference, however, in that the African slave was torn from his family, transported across an ocean and there assiduously prevented from forming new family groups which could pass on the remembered culture of the homeland. It is in this cultural vacuum that colonialism held unbroken sway for three centuries.

Another major social impact of plantation system was social stratification it created - that is, division of labour among the slaves were functions of their socio-economic relations to the white group. What it created was a distinction in colour and status among the majority of the slave population. This in particular has time and again worked against the blacks. The slaves internalised these colour ideals of the coloured group, while the coloured group internalised the ideals of the whites and identified themselves with the whites (Patterson, 1975: ch. 2&3). Douglas Hall (1959:254) observes this distinction in the following words;

For nearly all of the first two centuries of British occupation the practice of slavery apparently simplified but in fact greatly complicated the social structure. There was a sharp line of demarcation between the free people and the slaves, but on each side of this line there developed complex social structures in which race, colour, wealth,

position, education and religion all influenced the standing of the individual in his group hierarchy, whether free or slave.

Caribbean slavery

The virtual annihilation of indigenous populations gave rise to labour shortages. The rationalisation of slavery and the African slave trade had begun as early as in 1511. But the establishment of slavery as the principal labour institution after 1650 is related more specifically to the expansion of the sugar industry. The decisive issue, notes Eric Williams (1970:109), was an abundant supply of cheap labour force, that could be beaten into docility and "degraded to the point which sugar cultivation required. The white servant satisfied none of these desiderata. The African slave seemed to satisfy all". The spread of sugar industry in the Caribbean increased the demand for slave labour. This changed the economic fortunes and the demographic patterns in the region. The common feature of all Caribbean islands colonised was the dependence upon African slave labour to sustain expansion, economic viability and, of course, profits.

Slavery is an extreme form of domination, that is; the exercise of total power and control on the one hand, and total helplessness and powerlessness on the other. The following definition by Oruno Lara (1994:9) summarises slavery;

Slavery in the Caribbean was more than an institution with its own laws and customs and methods of keeping order. It was literally a "totalitarian" system of economic, political, social and sexual exploitation based on force, violence and the ideology of racism. The ceremonial in which the slaves were integrated into the system was meant to blot out their past and their culture, and kill them as free men and members of society.

Orlando Patterson argues that slavery was nothing but institutionalised human parasitism. Slaves were structurally marginal - economically, socially, politically and culturally (i.e. natal alienation). This marginality made it possible to use the slave in ways that would otherwise not be possible. Patterson relates slavery to parasitism because it emphasises the asymmetry of human relations. The master, in the whole process of dominating his slave and making him dependent, also makes himself dependent. Therefore, dependence of the master on the slave becomes reinforcing factor for the use of violence. Parasitism may vary from minor dependence or exploitation to a major dependence on the master, while it could be life threatening to the slave. To quote Patterson (1982: 337);

Instead of individual holders and slaves constituting the units in the relationship, the institution of slavery is conceived of as a single process that operates on the total social system. The systematic parasitisation of the slave holder's culture and society naturally reinforce the direct personal parasitism of the slaveholder on his slave. In this sense, the slave may be said to suffer both personal and institutional parasitism

The master in order to conceal this parasitism created mental constructs defining the slave as dependent on him. Masters regarded their slaves as hopeless parasites and dependants whose survival is entirely linked to the master's superior mind to direct labour and ensure slave's happiness.¹³

Slavery thus constituted an important invention in human history - as a means of controlling the labour of men that acquired institutional form. Central to the ideal of the slave is that of instituting property rights to one person over another. Under certain circumstances, such rights take the form of capital accumulation (Mintz, 1974:63). Like the plantation system, slavery was a socio-economic institution of exploitation in the Caribbean. As slave societies on plantations expanded, there was a concomitant decline in free labour. In the long-run, the use of slave labour contributed to inefficiency and rising costs. The slave institution that was to benefit a group of masters at the expense of another group of enslaved became its own *raison d'être*.

Slave population in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago

The increase of slave population fuelled faster growth of the Jamaican sugar industry, particularly in the eighteenth century. Between 1739 and 1774, cane cultivation had expanded and occupied 300,000 acres of land. Total land area under agriculture was 640,000 acres. The number of plantations during the same time increased from 429 to over 700. The production of sugar increased from 33,000 hogsheads to 80,000 hogsheads. Although the extensive production of minor staples contributed to the wealth of Jamaica, sugar accounted for 76% and rum 13% of total exports in 1770 (Carrington, 1988:18-21)

Trinidad and Tobago entered the family of British Caribbean at a very late stage of colonisation in 1797. By the time British acquired these two islands from Spain, they had already a mixed population of white planters (French and Spanish), slaves and freedmen. It is this fact that made plantocracy rather weak in the new colony of Trinidad, in contrast with a strong entrenched one in Jamaica. Merchant interest now turned to the virgin soils of Trinidad. Contrasting with Jamaica, Trinidad by 1797 had a relatively diversified agricultural economy dominated by cocoa. The fertile plains in the south soon came under the clutches of King Sugar. These plantations had the largest concentration of slaves (56%).

Table 1 shows that Trinidad had a lesser number of slaves (75.1%) compared to Jamaica (85.7%) or Tobago which had the highest (91.8%) in 1810. Interestingly, the percentage of slaves on the eve of emancipation in 1830 shows a drop in Trinidad (54.1%) and Tobago (88.7), but not in Jamaica (84.4). The percentage of freedmen almost doubled in Tobago and Trinidad from 4.1% to

8.1% and 17.8% to 38.0% respectively during the same period. Freedmen in Jamaica increased by only 3.2 percentage points. During the same period the white population decreased by 1.9% in Jamaica, 0.9% in Tobago, but increased by 0.8% in Trinidad.

Table 1 - Estimated populations of slaves, freedmen and whites in Jamaica, Tobago & Trinidad, 1810 and 1830 (in percentage)

Colony	Slaves		Freedmen		White		Total population	
	1810	1830	1810	1830	1810	1830	1810	1830
Jamaica	85.7	84.4	7.4	10.6	6.9	5.0	404,200	378,050
Trinidad	75.1	54.1	17.8	38.0	7.1	7.9	35,270	42,065
Tobago	91.8	88.7	4.1	8.1	4.1	3.2	19,600	14,150

Source: B.W. Higman (1984: 77)

The table also shows how entrenched slavery was in the older British colony of Jamaica with almost total domination of blacks in the population composition. Whereas Trinidad shows a higher level of cosmopolitan population. The pre-English settlements had left behind groups of French and Portuguese Creoles to constitute Trinidad's social composition. Slavery in Trinidad and Tobago was ephemeral to have any deep impact on the islands, as was the case of the older colony in Jamaica. Therefore, slavery in Trinidad and Tobago did not produce the special social structures that existed in Jamaica or Barbados. Even the slave population was relatively low compared to Jamaica. Table 2 shows that the concentration of slave population depended on the area of the islands. By 1834 (the year of emancipation), slaves composed the largest portion of the population in Jamaica.

Table 2 - British colonies of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago: Concentration of slave population to total population and area (1834)

Colony	Area(sq.miles)	Slave pop.	Total pop. ¹	Slaves/ sq.mile	Colonisation
Jamaica	4,411	311,070	378,050	70.5	1655
Trinidad	1,864	20,655	42,065	11.3	1797
Tobago	114	11,545	14,150	101.3	1763

Source: Higman (1984: 41, 79).

¹ Total population as of 1830.

King Sugar and the 'triangular trade'

Until 1624, the major commodities produced by the European settlers in the Caribbean were tobacco, cotton and indigo. The fall in the profitability of tobacco made it necessary to explore alternatives. Sugar was not on the list of alternatives, since it involved a peculiar mix of large labour for cane cultivation and required capitalists and technicians for the production of sugar which the

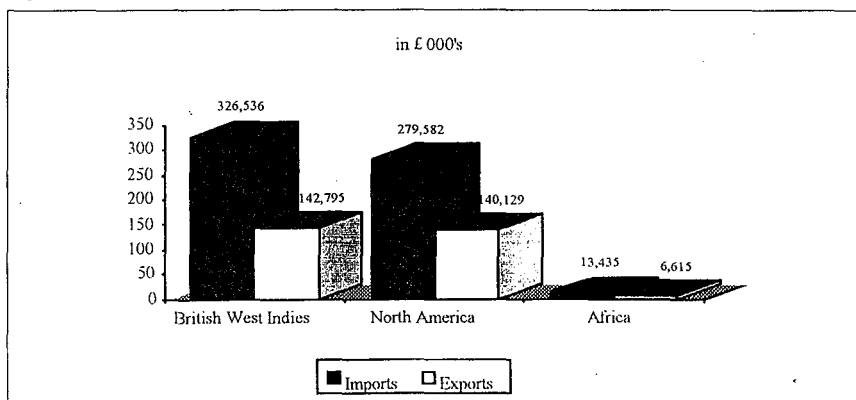
settlers in the Caribbean lacked (Williams (1970:26).¹⁴ The favourable prices of indigo in the European markets, naturally, made it an attractive alternative. But like sugar, indigo was capital-, technology- and labour-intensive.

Between 1624 and 1640, the price for indigo steadily increased 4.13 guilders to 8.10 guilders per Dutch lb. (Carlyle Batie, 1976: 50). It is only after 1640 that the prices fell. Prices for sugar and cotton were not as yet high. From this, it is not difficult to know why Caribbean settlers were not as yet keen on shifting to sugar production. Moreover, the period was a turbulent one in English politics - the Civil War - the struggle between Royalists and Parliamentarians was even transferred onto the Caribbean possessions.

Sugar cane was introduced in Barbados around 1640 by the Dutch from the north-eastern parts of Brazil. From here, sugar cane cultivation spread rapidly to other islands. But what contributed to this rapid spread of sugar cane cultivation in the Caribbean?

Between 1645 and 1654 there was a gradual shift in emphasis from indigo to sugar. This shift was induced by the demand for sugar in the European markets. The process was further complemented by influx of slaves that made sugar production on plantations a viable alternative. It was this availability of cheap slave labour that induced planters to shift in the production base. However, the main advantage favouring the shift was that when the English took possession of Barbados, the Dutch who preceded them had already introduced the cane, instructed locals in planting techniques and transported raw sugar to the Netherlands to be refined (Richardson, 1992:50).

Figure 1 - Britain's triangular trade in 1697 (in 1000's of £)



Source: Eric Williams (1970: 141, 142)

Slavery, the slave trade and the plantation system (not to forget, the sugar boom) all combined to give rise to a robust 'triangular trade' based on the principles of mercantilism. This trade stimulated navigation and new industries based on the processing of colonial raw materials. It also gave rise to commerce in the West Indies and made these islands valuable colonies for Britain, France and the Dutch. The triangular trade was also a source of government revenue as it involved manufactured goods from Europe sent to West Africa, then slaves transported to the West and to the Caribbean region, and tropical products shipped from the Caribbean back to Europe.

Figure 1 shows that the triangular trade made West Indian colonies valuable to Britain. They were good markets for British manufactures and foodstuffs. In return, the colonies supplied sugar and other tropical products to British processing industries and markets for consumption and re-exports. It is estimated that Britain's total profit from trade amounted to almost £ 2,000,000. Of this, the plantation trade accounted for £ 600,000, and the re-export of plantation produce for another £ 120,000. While trade with Africa, Europe and the Levant brought in another £ 600,000. This Atlantic trade represented 36% of Britain's commercial profits.

In 1773, British exports to Jamaica were 30% more than those to New York and Pennsylvania combined. For instance, during the period 1714-1773 alone, British imports from the island of Montserrat (which is only 33 sq.miles) was three times the value of those from Pennsylvania, from Nevis (50 sq.miles) double those from New York. Imports from Barbados was double those from the "bread colonies" of New England, New York and Pennsylvania combined (Robinson, 1971: 1

Slave society: a divided society

Division and disunity was the main strategy planters consciously adopted in the plantation system based on slavery. Planters deliberately mixed slaves originating from various parts of West Africa in order to avoid social solidarity among slaves. This proved an effective way of exercising control over the outnumbering slaves. Control was central for the survival of the plantation. What was important to the planters was that labour force was 'politically defenceless enough for the work to be done cheaply and under discipline' (Mintz, 1974:150). It was this need to control that made planters repeatedly use force to break the spirits of slaves, as Patterson (1982) points out in his discussion on 'natal alienation'. This form of control was an effective strategy given the materialistic basis of the origin and structure of slave-based plantation societies.

The need for social stratification and the division of labour among the slaves were the functions of their socio-economic relations to the minority of white planters and overseers. This led to the creation of division among the slaves along the lines of colour and status which were internalised by the slaves. "Colour was wedded not to slavery but to sugar" (Williams, 1970:190). While the creation of such colour distinction was fundamentally economic and political, it later developed its own social consequences.

This formal division between White and Black soon became more complex with the emergence of mixed population of brown men and women. This resulted in the gradation of skin and colour with occupational types that have had a lasting impact on the Caribbean societies. The failure to devise any kind of slave laws only accentuated these social characteristics. Thus, occupation became the dividing factor in the slave society, and this in turn, was the function of colour of skin. There emerged a clear-cut distinction between field slaves, domestic slaves, new slaves, Creole slaves and men of colour (Green, 1976).

Consequently, the West Indian society internalised the distinctions of subordination with race and colour becoming the main determinant of status. The whites economically exploited the slaves, sexually exploited the coloured, and held both in contempt. The attitude of white planters, needless to say, was shaped by slavery. Their social, political and racial prejudices reinforced their profit interests. When emancipation came to the Caribbean, the plantocracy successfully used the 'freemen of colour' as a buffer between themselves and the majority of black population, thereby perpetuating their control and power. This appearance of a coloured population constitutes a critical (unique) problem area in the study of Caribbean societies.

Freedmen of colour emerged as an appendage of slavery. Their culture and social organisation originally involved an exit from the slave community. With this the Afro-Creole complex was further altered as the free coloured population became differentiated into a separate strata. This strata served as a source of stability. They developed a sense of identity, albeit their constant interaction with black slaves. The institutionalised racism compelled them to seek for themselves an identity. The narrow occupational difference among the men of colour served the purpose. From this, norms and values developed among themselves, while they considered themselves as sons of the soil. This expression of new identity secured a new place for themselves in the structure of the society (Sio, 1987: 150-159).¹⁵ Thus, a complex social structure took roots in the Caribbean. This was later made even more complicated by indentureship.

Slave emancipation

The discussion on slave emancipation is an interesting one. The very institution that generated British wealth, generated in that country a controversy which split the British society. While some claim that emancipation was the result of the Anti-Slavery Society in Britain in early 1800s, there are others who argue conversely. Emancipation was to a large part the fruits of the resistance put up by slaves in the islands. Secondly, there was this changing wind in Britain from mercantilism to free trade. Slave trade had given rise to a heated economic polemics of the era (Williams, 1970:138).

1783 - 1833 was the period where Britain was undergoing economic and political changes, sparked by the industrial revolution. The capitalist interests began to replace monopolist interests. The tide of free trade was sweeping through the country. The introduction of Beet sugar in Europe further eroded on West Indian profits under monopoly. The repeal of Corn Laws in 1846 eliminated sugar taxes. In addition, the loss of the American colony was the final blow to the monopolistic Navigation Laws in 1848. These two laws, the pillars of British mercantilism, were swept away by the rising tide of free trade. The monopolistic Slave Trade Winds changed course to become the Free Trade Winds. The very interests that supported monopoly now turned against it.

The grant of £ 20 million by the British government was to satisfy the requirements to solicit the co-operation of West Indian planters (Murray, 1965:201-204, Williams, 1970:332). The compensation paid to planters- in terms of total number of freed slaves - in Trinidad, Tobago and Guyana were higher than the compensation paid to planters in the older colonies of Jamaica and Barbados. The average compensation paid to planters for every freed slave in Trinidad was £ 56, Tobago, £ 25; Guyana, £ 58.5; Jamaica, £ 23 and Barbados, £ 25. By 1833, the British West Indies were socially an inferno and economically an anachronism (Williams, 1964:133, 1970:281).

The abolition of slavery came about basically because the system had lost its economic and commercial importance. The cost of sugar production was higher than the sugar price in the markets, and slaves became a liability rather than an asset. On the other hand, the financially dried up plantations and fall in demand for imports represented a declining market for British exports.¹⁶ India and Brazil emerged as the regions of profits for British manufactures. Added to this, the less expensive beet sugar glutted European markets that made slave-produced Caribbean sugar non-competitive (cf. Figure 3). This in turn affected the British shipping business whose commercial profitability was based on sugar and slave trade to the Caribbean plantations. Moreover, the British sugar refineries demanded more raw sugar to maintain their commercial viability which the Caribbean colonies were unable to supply; and even if they did, it was

more expensive compared to the French colonial sugar. Hence, it has been argued that attack on slavery was actually an attack on monopoly.

The political reasons of abolition were the political changes taking place within England, notably the rise of a working class and the organised articulation of the anti-slavery movement. The British Government adopted a gradual approach towards emancipation, as it was under pressure to satisfy the planter interests on the one hand and the restless slaves, on the other. The government was more interested in legislating improved conditions for slaves rather than negotiate a complete abolition. The abolition of British slave trade in 1807 created a labour shortage for plantation work in newly acquired fertile Trinidad and Guyana. This sparked an interregional slave trade. Thus, the traditional West Indian planters who opposed abolition became the most vociferous advocates of the cause of humanity. Monopoly of sugar market survived the Emancipation Act in 1833. Sugar monopoly, argued the British free trade clout, taxed the British working class while making the emancipated slaves rich. They then joined the band wagon of the abolitionists against the West Indian planters.

The other reason for the abolition of slavery was more internal to the islands. The growing unrest among the freemen and the enslaved in the wake of economic crisis and food shortages fuelled slave resistance. Haiti, however, set the precedence and resurrected the spectre of revolt in the Caribbean. The pressure began to grow from below in several islands; notably, in Jamaica and British Guyana.

Of the reasons given above, it was the economic reason and the slave unrest that speeded up the process of emancipation which left to the political course would only have served to prolong slavery with such nuances as apprenticeship.

The West Indian planters cleverly devised a system of apprenticeship. Under this system, the freed slaves were to work up to twelve years and they would be required to pay a portion of their wages towards the price of their manumission. In this manner, when emancipation did finally come, on 1 August, 1834, it did not guarantee equality - economic or political equality. The plantocracy continued exploiting in order to reassert their domination over the "ex-slaves" through the apprentice system. Abolition in 1834 brought legal equality to former slaves, but political equality was a century beyond and more (Robinson, 1971:16).

Moreover, planters were the major representatives in the local legislatures and made everything possible to retain their control. For instance, they imposed rents on land to deny access to the freedmen. They introduced taxes that benefited the plantation owners. They enforced laws against illegal occupation

of land and squatting. They conceived of everything possible to deny political rights to the liberated masses. In this manner, the planters retained their oligarchic position and completely controlled trade and marketing networks. Plantation structure and plantocracy survived slavery.

The ex-slaves had little choice but to work for wages or starve. Those who owned pieces of land lived on subsistence cultivation. They were particularly affected when prices for sugar dropped. The planters then made a futile effort in shifting to labour-saving techniques to improve their productive efficiency.¹⁷ Emancipation was not totally accepted in islands that produced agricultural exports under slavery. This gave rise to political disagreements and public controversies, particularly in Jamaica. Relations between Blacks and Whites became more estranged.

The free Black men had neither the knowledge in political administration nor any property, but they refused to remain subservient to plantation labour. When planters tried to coerce them to work, they retreated from the vicinity of the estates into the interior. The situation of acute labour shortage put the planters into a critical position. They then started to sell their "backlands" as a means of recovering their losses to those freemen who could afford to buy.

Thus, even in the wake of emancipation, labour was the determining factor. Profitability of plantations were dependent on cheap labour that used to come in the form of slaves. The higher costs of free labour sounded the collapse of plantations system. The planters failed to get renewed credits from merchants who were unwilling to loan. Hence, mortgages were closed and credits ceased. This contraction of money supply jeopardised the estates and aggravated the crisis among the planter class. Planters were cornered from two sides - they were financially strangled by debts and literally at the mercy of free labour.

The free labour further exposed the weakness of the planters when they struck work while cut cane lay in the field. The planters either had to meet the demands or suffer crop losses. As incentives, the planters then offered daily allowances of food and rum in addition to wages. Workers were also granted rent-free provision grounds. But all these features increased plantation costs.

Nonetheless, the abolition of slavery did not change the basic structures - economic and social - of the Caribbean colonies.¹⁸ Emancipation replaced the master-slave relationship with the employer-tenant relationship, while the attempted apprentice system served to bring the planters and local assemblies closer. New groups of Creole cultivators, peasant farmers and native politicians soon superseded the plantocracy and merchant monopolists. They ascended in the economic power structure and social status. However, with emancipation, race and colour consciousness also tended to get accentuated.

Emancipation added another socio-cultural dimension to the already complex social structure of the Caribbean islands; notably, indentureship. This indentureship while pushing the Black labour force out of the labour market, gave rise to ethnic hostilities that even to this day plague the Caribbean.

This immigration started around 1838 and ended in 1924 during which period an estimated 500,000 East Indians (Coolies as they were called) were introduced into the Caribbean.¹⁹ This indentureship further drained the economies. The immigrants repatriated savings in large sums to India. The flow of this cheap labour also acted as a disincentive to agricultural modernisation and perpetuated the structure established during slavery under the cover of contract. Economically, it proved a disaster for the islands. It only reinforced the already existing structural impediment of surplus labour. Furthermore, the scheme proved costly as the colonies had to bear the expenses which were raised through taxes.

Contradiction of slavery

A slave was the property of another and was regarded as a disposable "chattel". But at the same time, it was not possible for the master to deny that the slave was a human being. Because the slaves were natally alienated, they could be exploited in any way that the owners wanted for the production of wealth. This exposed the reality behind the free labour which was radicalised by the existence of slavery. This constitutes the contradiction of slavery (Patterson, 1982).

The three centuries of slavery in the Caribbean, ultimately turned the tables through the spread of slave labour into economic sectors, particularly in the local economy. The presence of slaves discouraged the growth of free labour. This excessive dependence on slave labour contributed to inefficiency and rise in production costs, especially in the early 1800s. In order to cut down on the costs, the planters allowed slaves to cultivate their own provision grounds. These provision grounds on the peripheries to the plantations were allotted to slaves to produce their subsistence. This possibility of slaves to organise and produce their own subsistence emerged from the contradictory nature of slave relation itself. Thus, the traditional peasantry that emerged after emancipation actually originated from within the processes of the development of slavery and plantation system.

The slave's attachment to his provision garden provided the basis for struggles over the conditions of staple crop production. The planters' efforts to contain them within the bounds of production relations based on slavery created within slavery a class structure and paved the way for free labour (Tomich,

1990: 304-318). Ultimately, slaves not only produced for their subsistence, but also domestically marketed their crops. They developed a network of slave marketing that the whole colony became dependent upon their produce of foodstuffs.

The internal economy during slavery in the Caribbean

It was noted earlier, that the slaves were allowed provision grounds to grow their own subsistence to cut down on plantation costs. In due course of time, slaves organised and controlled a secondary economic network. The provision grounds and the products coming from it were more than an economic activity as it was enmeshed into broader social and cultural patterns through the slave markets. These markets provided the basis for skill acquisition, exchange of commodities, supply of foodstuffs. This feeling of independence by the slaves enabled them to establish an alternative way of life that had its own consequences on the slave society as a whole. The domestic markets also became a source of acquisition and accumulation of wealth which in the post-emancipation period saw many ex-slaves affording enough money to buy land, and the emergence of a Caribbean peasantry.

The provision grounds also reduced the dependence of the slaves on their masters (not the other way around), which constitutes the greatest contradiction. It contributed to a coercive control over subsistence activities and petty commodity production. So robust was this internal market that it is estimated that in Jamaica alone, out of the £ 50,000 circulating in the island, at least £ 10,000 or 20% was in the hands of the slaves (Mintz, 1974: 199).

In this way, slaves had made a place for themselves in the islands economic activity and accumulated substantial liquid capital. Some of the items grown on the provision grounds also found their way to foreign markets like arrowroot, castor oil, turmeric hides, oil nuts and wood products. Slaves were also one of the best customers of the local traders or "shop keepers" who bought and sold to the slaves. Thus, slaves acquired for themselves items of comfort that could not be furnished by the estate owners.

By 1832, Jamaica's GDP accounted for £ 5.5 million of which plantations contributed 50%. The slaves' contribution from their provision grounds amounted to £ 1.5 million and they dominated the domestic food production for local consumption. Over 27% of the island's total agricultural produce came from the slave-cultivated 'polinks'. In this way, the very institution devised by profit interests undermined the colonial system when it allowed slaves to produce and participate in the economy that they were supposed to serve (Turner, 1988: 152).

The towns became dependent on supplies from slave-grown products. The slave provision grounds tied the whole domestic economic activity - from slaves to township households to local merchants to retailers and moneylenders. Thus, on the eve of emancipation, the grounds for a peasantry were already established. Caribbean peasant economy and the typical market pattern had its roots in the slave-based plantation system.

Post-emancipation

Emancipation to the planters was like a double-edged sword. It meant decline in production and increase in costs. Planters found themselves competing with one another for the services of the free labour. But the free labour established themselves on small landholdings, producing crops for local markets. Thus, in the immediate years of emancipation, there was a sudden boom in domestic economic activity marked by considerable diversity. Free labour became strong by cultivating their lands for sale in local markets. Such was the dynamism of free labour that it made the planters lament; as one of them expressed in the following words (cited by Hall, 1959:21);

If the lands in the Interior get into the possession of the Negro, goodbye to lowland cultivation, and to any cultivation. You are aware, I dare say that very many of the Apprentices are purchasing their Apprenticeship and buying 5, 10, 15, 50 and even 100 acres.

As table 3 indicates, Jamaica's sugar production had already reached its peak by 1815 after which it started its decline. The island was on the verge of economic decline. Furthermore, most of the investments were now diverted to the newly acquired territories. The fertile virgin soil yielded better and more cane. Thus, we see rising exports for Trinidad, and Guyana. In both these islands, exports increased more than six times. The share of sugar exports as percentage of total exports by 1894 in Jamaica was only 18% compared to Trinidad 57% and Guyana 70.5%.

Table 3 - Sugar exports (in tons) from selected British Caribbean colonies (1815-1894)

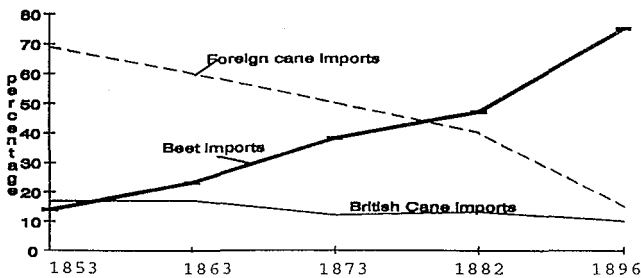
Colony	1815	1828	1882	1894
Barbados	8,837	16,942	48,325	50,958
Guyana	16,520	40,115	124,102	102,502
Jamaica	79,660	72,198	32,638	19,934
Trinidad	7,682	13,285	55,327	46,869
Tobago	6,044	6,167	2,518	599

Source: Eric Williams, 1970: 365.

The period between 1815 and 1852 was also a period of struggle for British sugar market, that is, free trade or monopoly. By 1852, free trade was

established and struck the blow to British West Indian sugar monopoly. Britain was now only interested in buying cheap sugar which was flooding European markets. Consequently, the price of refined sugar fell from 28 shillings per hundredweight in 1882 to 13 shillings in 1896. This benefited the refiners and consumers even as beet sugar substituted cane sugar (figure 3 below). Between 1853 and 1896, British imports of beet dramatically increased by four times while imports of foreign cane fell by almost three and a half times. Beet sugar produced in Europe almost perfectly substituted cane sugar.

Figure 2 - British beet and cane imports, 1853-1896 (in percentage)



Source: Eric Williams (1970 & 1962 : 383 & 157).

For the West Indian planters, this spelt disaster. They had little comfort in this trend, since the emancipation already increased economic costs of the plantations. Lacking in any modernisation of production, they were dependent on slaves to keep up the production. Planters had to meet the overhead costs and costs in fixed assets, one hand, and maintain a certain level of output in order to make their enterprises viable. The combination of emancipation and free trade bit deeply into the planters' finances. Higman notes that while sugar markets contracted, the cost of production dramatically increased and the planters' credits were stretched to the limits (Higman, 1976: 204-205). In another work (1984: 397) he writes;

Within the British Caribbean, the dominance of the large sugar estate reached its climax during the period 1807-1834, and its demographic impact was mitigated only by the external pressures of amelioration and the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade.

Conclusion

In summing up, the early stages of British colonisation was marked by acute labour shortage. Slavery constituted the principal institutions through which labour was increased, thus shaping Caribbean demographic patterns. In addition, indentureship in the post-emancipation period further increased the

addition, indentureship in the post-emancipation period further increased the labour force and kept wages low. In this way, rationalisation of slavery constituted the base for Caribbean problem of surplus labour that only seemed to have accentuated through time. Furthermore, the very pillars of British mercantilism (the Corn Law, the Navigation Act and the Prohibition Act) also became the pillars of exploitation. Other than this, widespread absenteeism and rentier mentality of merchants constituted the core of exploitation in the Caribbean.

The institution of slavery defined the rules of production under the plantation-type organisation. This, together with monopolistic policies, created in the Caribbean a structure of producing what they did not consume and consuming what they did not produce. Debt and repatriation are not new phenomena to the Caribbean. In a matter of three centuries, the Caribbean was transformed from sparsely populated to labour surplus islands. Once plantation structure and monoculture became firmly rooted, the development later became path dependent, reinforced by British colonial policies. In this way, the emergence of Caribbean as exploitation colonies had set the path of a development pattern marked by cheap labour surplus, import of foodstuffs and constant movement of capital and wealth from the islands.

NOTES

1. Exploitation is here understood as profit seeking dominated by a rentier mentality. The Caribbean islands were restricted by Colonial Acts to the production of raw sugar to be exported to England where it was refined and re-exported. The profits accrued to merchants and industrialists in England. Little, if any, profits was reinvested to establish sugar refining industries in the islands or even diversifying economic activity. Such economic decision-making was vested in the hands of the Colonial Office and a class of profit-seeking merchants and planters. This accounted for the failure of the islands in developing productive forces and the rentier mentality gave rise to a form of 'dependent capitalism' which we see today in the region. Another dimension of exploitation was use of slave labour from Africa in the initial stages and later (post-emancipation) indentured labour from India and China.
2. This was the strong argument of Eric Williams (1964) in *Capitalism and Slavery*. The New World Group as some of the scholars called themselves emerged in 1962. The group started its own quarterly *New World Quarterly* in which they came out with the Theory of Plantation Society. This school identified three stages of capitalist development; (i) mercantilistic capitalism (1648-1760), (ii) industrial capitalism (1760-1879) and (iii) monopoly capitalism (1870 to present). As capitalism in Europe developed, so did colonialism contemporaneously pass through three main stages in the Caribbean; (i) colonial conquest and plundering, (ii) late (or delayed) mercantilism and industrial capitalism, and (iii) financial capitalism, or control of means of production by multinationals. For a reprint series of some nineteen most important contributions to this theory, see Norman Girvan & Owen Jefferson eds. (1973) and Norman Girvan (1973: 1-33). The school's emphasis on historical, structural and institutional factors has contributed substantially to understanding

complexities. For an overview of the various Caribbean schools of thought, see Richard Bernal, Marc Figueroa & Michael Witter (1984).

3. Douglass C. North (1992:3). Not all institutions, notes the author, are socially productive. North's study, it should be pointed out, is concerned as much with explaining the evolution of institutional frameworks that induce economic stagnation and decline as with accounting for the successes.
4. George L. Beckford (1969: 321-347 & 1970).
5. This is not to argue that settler colonies lacked the exploitation dimension. There is no doubt fluidity across these two classifications, from one to another, operating exclusively to reap profits for the powerful groups of elites in control of the system. The difference is that in settler colonies institutions from the mother country is transferred and established in the colony. For a discussion on these classifications see Franklin W. Knight (1990).
6. Selwyn H.H. Carrington (1988: 5-24, 29). Later in 1776, in the wake of American Revolution, the Prohibitory Act was passed in Britain. This Act banned West Indian commerce with the "rebel" mainland colony. Consequently, shortages of food supplies and famine was widespread in the West Indian colonies. In 1922, the Wood Report on the colonial pattern of Caribbean trade noted; "The colonies are bound to export their produce almost entirely to Europe or North America and to import for their requirements from the same sources. There is consequently no volume of intercolonial trade ..." cited by A.N.R. Robinson (1971:31).
7. For a discussion on plantation as a socioeconomic unit of production, see Clive Y. Thomas (1988: 19-28).
8. This, however, does not mean that slaves were totally subservient. Slave resistance has been a major feature of plantation system and occurred in subtler forms through slave generated internal markets, miscegenation and playing -the- fool by slaves. The more open forms of resistance involved violence, rebellion, suicide etc. In this way, contrary to banal knowledge, Caribbean plantation society was a complicated network of not just interdependence, but also of struggles on the part of the slaves. See Michael Craton (1982: 31-35), Edward Brathwaite (1971:248-252).
9. Trevor Burnard (1994: 64-82). He notes that the peculiarities of Jamaican social structure made it impossible for Jamaica to be anything but a very bizarre imitation of British society.
10. For instance, of the 307 wills related to Jamaican estates between 1625 and 1792, 142 of the testators were resident in England when the will was made, while only 133 resided in Jamaica. The wills passed on, in most cases, to relatives residing in England who had absolutely no links with Jamaica, nor were they willing to transfer their residence to the islands. By 1774, one-sixth of the Jamaican proprietors were absentee, but owned most of the land and slaves in the island. See Orlando Patterson (1975: 29-51).
11. Ten out of fifteen members of one of the most important committees of the Society of Planters and Merchants held seats in the English Parliament, and along with slaver traders, they entrenched both the Houses, to defend their plantations and social structure on which they were dependent. See Eric Williams (1964: 96).

12. Naturally, higher returns (and therefore more commission) meant that the slaves had to be coerced to work harder. It is this vested interest to make more commission by exploiting the owner's assets in the form of capital and slaves that ultimately led to depletion of the plantation's capital and maltreatment of slaves.
13. This psychological conditioning, transmitted from one generation to another, and can be internalised. Thus it is not surprising if the present day's upper and middle classes should look down on the lower classes as 'idle'. One can as well argue that slavery has shaped the attitudes and reflect the internal social tensions. Patterson's book is an excellent study of the nature and inner dynamics of slavery and the institutional patterns that supported it in many slaveholding societies in the world. It is a book worth reading in order to understand the social psychology of slavery, something that is so very relevant to the understanding of Caribbean societies.
14. The first introduction of sugar cane in the New World dates back to Columbus' second voyage in 1493. First practiced in Hispaniola, sugar cultivation then spread to Barbados, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Cuba. But owing to scarce capital when much of the resources were spent in Spanish power politics, entrepreneurs were dependent on the state for capital. Thus, as the author notes (page 27), Caribbean sugar industry from its inception was dependent on subsidies and protection from the state. Furthermore, once sugar began yielding profits, the Spaniards neglected local food production, instead they imported food from Castile. This practice of importing foodstuffs was later continued by the British also.
15. For a discussion on this, see Edward Brathwaite (1971); Raymond T. Smith (1988: 11-15, 91-110); Aggrey Brown (1979) and Gad J. Heuman (1981).
16. The share of British West Indies markets gradually declined. In 1821 it accounted for 11% of total British exports, in 1828, 7% and by 1832, for less than 6%. See Eric Williams(1970:285).
17. Steam-run mills were attempted, and at one stage, attempts were made to build railway lines to transport sugar to mills quickly. But all these attempts failed owing to high investments and labour shortage for railway construction offered to divert labour away from plantations. Worse still, no metropolitan investor was willing to invest the large scale capital requirements for a commodity which was losing its position in world markets. For a discussion on the successes and failures of the planters' attempts to introduce labour-saving techniques, see William A.Green (1976), especially chapter 7. See also Douglas Hall (1959: 40-80).
18. Magnus Mörner (1992: 5), for instance, points out to the two Jamaica's that emerged from emancipation. Both confronted each other, incompatible in culture and mentalities; notably, the black peasantry and the remnants of the Plantation society.
19. Between 1838 and 1917 alone, 238,000 Indians were introduced into British Guyana, 145,000 into Trinidad, 21,500 into Jamaica, 1,550 into St.Lucia, 1,800 into St.Vincent, 2,570 into Grenada. This apart from Dutch importation of indentured labour into its colonies in the region.

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