Points of Departure: Shifting Traditionalist Caymanian Understandingsof Jamaica and Jamaicans

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ABSTRACT

Initially focusing on positive Caymanian traditionalist interpretations of Jamaicans and Jamaica throughout the early to mid-20th century, this article thereafter traces the historical junctures at which these interpretations were negatively reworked to the point where Jamaicans in the Cayman Islands, and in general, are now being viewed derogatorily by many Caymanians. As the author attests, any foundational understanding of this reworking is inextricably linked to the historical relationship between the Cayman Islands and Jamaica, where British Jamaica controlled the then-economically struggling Cayman Islands to the former's independence in August 1962. As noted throughout this article, although the well-to-do Caymanian merchant establishment demonstrated an unmistakable animosity toward any proposal that the Cayman Islands join an initially successful independent Jamaica, many working class Caymanians spoke fondly of Jamaica in the years leading up to its independence, demonstrating their gratitude for Jamaican rule; such state of affairs confirms that although toward Jamaica's independence Caymanian views of Jamaicans typically varied according to social class, by the 1970s a general cross section of Caymanians had come to regard Jamaica and Jamaicans to varying degrees of negativity. The author thus argues that the putative alteration of once-positive expressions of Jamaicans was inevitable, given the existence of a stark yet benign Caymanian/Jamaican differentiation in earlier, largely positive Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans, a differentiation bound, in its later inversion, to highlight independent Jamaica's decline into various social, political, and economic hardships, while highlighting the economic rise of the politically-stable Cayman Islands.

Introduction

With a total population of 55,456 people, just under half of this constituting foreign nationals, the Cayman Islands are a prosperous self-financing British Dependency located in the western Caribbean. In order of size and importance, the Cayman Islands – hereafter collectively referred to as Cayman – comprise the islands of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, and Little Cayman. Cayman's total landmass is 100.4 square miles, and lies about 195 miles to the northwest of Jamaica and 180 miles to the south of Cuba (see map below). With over 110 nationalities represented there,[1] Cayman is a truly cosmopolitan and international destination caught irreversibly, *irresistibly*, in the grip of globalization, where globalization stresses a local economy's substantive economic and financial contribution to the integrated global economy. Yet, as we shall see, Caymanians did not always know a life steeped in prosperity, but, from 1655 to the late 1960s, had been developing along a somewhat opposing path.[2]

Although Cayman came under English rule in 1655, Grand Cayman was only permanently settled in 1734, its inhabitants, some of them brigands on the run, more or less left to their own devices, receiving little to no directive from imperial overlord Jamaica, which demonstrated an unmistakable administrative disinterest in an otherwise backwater colony. Although Cayman was not officially recognized as a dependency of British Jamaica until 1863, only receiving its first appointed British commissioner in 1898, Caymanians, generally financially beleaguered, continued to exercise near-complete autonomy over their internal affairs, although many of them regarded Jamaica as *their* metropole toward the latter's independence from Britain on August 6, 1962.

To its independence, Jamaica, once Britain's premier Caribbean island colony, represented a developed and progressive country for many Caymanians who either went there to shop, on business, to school, or else to live. 'There was a load of Caymanian living up there [in Jamaica]', David Foster recollects in 2009, 'cause [in] those days, Jamaica was *everything* to us [sic].'[3] Mr. Foster initially provides a truly pragmatic Caymanian understanding of the importance of Jamaica to Cayman in the latter's lean economic years: 'They were [the metropole]…[and] we were [the] Dependency[.] [T]hey supplied all our medical needs…literally; religious, the monetary side of it, using their currency…Everything, our prisons, our mental health was all supplied by them.'[4] '[Jamaica] was quite different from Cayman', Desmond Watler similarly opined in 1990; Mr. Watler moved to Jamaica in 1929 to attend Calabar College, a premier high school in Kingston: 'The truth is we were a

dependency of Jamaica at that time', he continues, 'and Jamaica was the mother…for us and more developed than we were, and…[I felt] kind of lost [there].'[5] Indeed, it was for reasons of Jamaica's perceived superiority that Glair Hennings and his wife, Amy, also decided to move to Jamaica in the 1940s, and their ideas of Jamaica at this time, as these are being relayed in the couple's 2002 interview, echo comments made by others:

> …there [was] a great deal of differences between Jamaica and Cayman Brac…[o]h, yes [a] tremendous amount. The Cayman Islands, as you are aware, were controlled by Jamaica then…We ate Jamaican food, we spent Jamaican money, we…everything we did was Jamaica. If you wanted a semi-decent education, you had to go to Jamaica. If you wanted employment, you had to go to Jamaica…just about everything we did, we had to go to Jamaica.[6]

These views of Jamaica set the basis for a brand of traditionalist Caymanian thought, or, put another way, a pattern of thinking in the present that continues to be shaped by history and traditions, and the experiences accrued therein.[7] By introducing a traditionalist language based on the fundamental differences between Jamaica and Cayman, any subsequent verbalizations offered by certain older Caymanians, as I have shown elsewhere, have striven to explain the extent of this difference to varying degrees of benignity.[8] Although the Jamaica of the 1940s is being touted as great and grand by these Caymanians, a ubiquitous us/them dichotomy resonates in their recollections of Jamaica. With this in mind, I am mindful of the fact of the inherent dialectical nature of any dichotomy, where dialecticism denotes any sort of conflict that is bound to eventually arise from even the most benign of ideologically differing forces.[9] In this sense, Caymanians will carry their own self-conscious understandings in relation to Jamaica and Jamaicans regardless of the perception in the traditionalist Caymanian imagination that Jamaica was Cayman's economic and political superior throughout the first half of the 20th century.

According to initial traditionalist Caymanian interpretations of Jamaica, the image of the latter island looms large, if in retrospect. In the same way that American popular culture had amassed global hegemonic clout in the years following World War II, many Caymanians were being "culturally affected" by a more developed Jamaica toward the 1960s. When I use *culturally affected*, I am speaking of the ways in which Jamaican ways of doing and being were bound to influence Caymanians. For instance, when the Henningses and Mr. Foster speak about being affected by Jamaican cuisine, shopping, education, and so on, they have demonstrated that they were influenced by a general Jamaican way of life. However, we

return to the idea that although Caymanians might have been culturally affected by Jamaica, Jamaica's status as Caymanians' cultural hegemon need not be interpreted in strictly positive terms of cultural affectation. In other words, where the term cultural hegemony represents '…the binding together of people…around cultural norms and standards that emanate over time and space from seats of power occupied by authoritative actors',[10] Caymanians would have nonetheless still been keen to preserve their singular selves in relationship to Jamaica and Jamaicans. Just because Cayman came under Jamaica's charge in no way translated into the fact that Caymanians were likely to completely assimilate into Jamaican culture. In hindsight, thus, it seems inevitable that such deferent yet profoundly internalized Caymanian understandings of Jamaica, and by extension, Jamaicans, were bound to undergo a negative shift as both jurisdictions developed along diametrically opposing lines, with Cayman transitioning from an economic backwater to a politically-stable, prosperous offshore financial sector, and Jamaica steadily fumbling along political, social, and economic lines since the 1970s.

Elsewhere, I have comprehensively traced the source of the currently tense Caymanian-Jamaican relationship in Cayman back to Cayman's phenomenal economic development beginning in the late 1960s, development which witnessed a substantial influx of foreign-nationals, notably Jamaicans, who at present account for little under a fifth of Cayman's present population.[11] Thus, where Caymanians had developed enduring traditionalist ideas of themselves in relation to Jamaicans before the onset of globalization, not only does the present discourse of the Caymanian's singularity continue to depend on such traditionalist ideas, but is also further reworked by the deafening Caymanian complaint that because of the great number of foreign-nationals in Cayman, *Caymanians* have become the minority in their own country; a complaint, which to be sure, continues to justify Caymanians' xenophobic regard for certain *inundating* foreign-national groups.[12] Keeping in mind that there are more Jamaicans in Cayman than any other foreign nationality, I contend that the historical reasons for such a complaint find their bases in the shifting political relationship between Jamaica and the Cayman Islands towards 1962 and beyond. Consequently, I trace the negative shift in hitherto positive traditionalist Caymanian understandings just before and after Jamaica's independence with the intention of demonstrating the indispensability of economic prosperity and political stability both in Caymanian self-understandings and the Caymanian's eventual othering of the Jamaican.

Tracing Cayman's political evolution in relation to Jamaica and the West Indies Federation

In 1944, Jamaica's government was transformed into a ministerial and representative political entity, a transformation made possible by the introduction of universal adult suffrage that same year. The introduction of what is considered to be one the most inalienable of human rights, first in Jamaica and then gradually throughout the rest of the British West Indies over the next two decades, came, as I explore below, as a direct result of the labor riots that raged throughout the region in the 1930s.

The early to late-1930s was marked by economic degradation as the global financial crisis intensified and the already disenfranchised masses of the British West Indies continued to find themselves jobless, voiceless, undernourished, and all but condemned to filthy living conditions. As a result, many riots broke out across the region as the unemployed and underemployed turned their dissatisfaction both towards the indifferent proprietary class and the government, whose officials and administrators seemed hardly concerned with the plight of the people under their charge; racist intent coursed throughout the mentalities of the largely white upper social crust, which, being of privilege, could not empathize, let alone sympathize, with the miserable conditions of the masses. The ensuing labor riots, which represented a mass strike for every grievance imaginable, from low wages, to unemployment, to the lack of worker protection, were usually suppressed with force, but it is safe to say that the seed of popular frustration had been so profoundly sown that its germination was all but inevitable.

With the notable exceptions of the Bahamas, Cayman, the Turks and Caicos islands, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, and Antigua – colonies curiously free of any rioting, the situation throughout the British West Indies had become so untenable that in early 1938 the British Cabinet agreed to send a royal commission to the region to investigate the causes of its widespread unrest. The commission was led by former Minister of Agriculture and Financial Secretary, and future Colonial Secretary Walter Edward Guinness – Lord Moyne – who landed in the West Indies in November 1838. A little over a year later, Moyne's report was revealed to British officials, its findings so damning against the colonial regimes in the West Indies that they had to be suppressed during the stalemate period of World War II, lest the German's got hold of the report and used it as confirmation of Britain's own hypocrisy where the issue of human rights was concerned. The Moyne Commission, as it would become known, was subsequently published in 1944, and detailed the horrific circumstances of the masses in the West Indies, further calling for the

introduction of basic human amenities and political rights, in addition to easier access to education and greater government accountability to its people.

With the exception of Jamaica, Guyana, and Trinidad, trade unions were illegal throughout the British West Indies by 1932, and even in the jurisdictions where trade union legislation was legal, it 'did not permit peaceful picketing of employers', let alone any adequate protections 'for breach of contract in the event of strikes.'[13] However, by the early 1940s trade unions had become commonplace throughout the British West Indies, their very success made possible by the earlier initiatives prompted throughout the 1930s, and earlier, by the likes of Alexander Bustamante and Norman Manley of Jamaica, Arthur Cipriani and Albert Gomes of Trinidad, Grantley Adams of Barbados, and Antonio Sobreanis Gomez of Belize, among others. Such developments, as outlined above, signaled the initial stages of Jamaica's independence process.

By 1953, Jamaica's political parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and People's National Party (PNP) had amassed considerable local support, marking the earnest beginnings of a Jamaican populism premised on trade unionism. However, it was the JLP that would win the 1953 general elections, and its leader, Alexander Bustamante, who would become Jamaica's first Chief Minister. At the heart of the local Jamaican political imperative rested the desire to achieve full internal self-government, something that could not have been achieved overnight, but which Jamaica's charismatic leaders in the figures of the PNP's Norman Manley and JLP's Bustamante had been long envisioning. In 1959, due in large part to the increasing pressure being placed on Britain by America to free its colonies from the ostensible despotism of colonialism, "complete" internal self-rule was granted and Jamaican affairs were concentrated in the hands of new Chief Minister Norman Manley.[14] Jamaica's Crown Colony status remained, with the Jamaican Cabinet falling under the oversight of a British-appointed governor for whom was reserved the ability to veto any decisions made by the local executive branch of the government.

Yet as I attempt to figure the position of Cayman in Jamaica and indeed the wider political advancement of the British West Indies, Jamaica's grant of full internal self-rule in 1959 did not happen in isolation but within the context of federation. The main objective of the British Caribbean Federation Act of 1956 was to bind its Caribbean members politically and economically: the Caribbean islands of the British West Indies were quite small and thus more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the global economic market. Therefore, any such federation, which had the option of remaining part of the British Commonwealth, would

lessen the economic stress and vulnerability of eventual independence among its members, thereby rendering any such scheme politically and economically more able in its solidarity. The West Indies Federation was formally established in 1958; its members were: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Federation lasted only four years, however, dissolving in 1962, after Jamaica's decision – countenanced by a fracturing national referendum in 1961 – to leave it. Trinidad withdrew not long after, and without the Caribbean's two flagship economies to guide it, the Federation's fate was effectively sealed. Denis Benn has argued that Norman Manley and his supporters only used the Federation to precipitate Jamaica's total independence from Britain on August 6, 1962.[15] Ulf Hannerz gives any ostensible "ulterior motive" of these jurisdictions a firmer historical basis, if in retrospect: '…it seems as if [some] of the British Caribbean territories were moving quickly toward individual independence in the form of the West Indies Federation.'[16]

The Cayman Islands and its inhabitants were, more or less, bystanders in the events surrounding the establishment and dissolution of the West Indies Federation. Yet, as we shall see, despite any earlier positive Caymanian understandings towards Jamaica, the emergence of negative perceptions of Jamaica among the Caymanian merchant elite especially can be compellingly traced throughout federation developments.

In the first instance, although they had been participating in proposed federation talks from as early as 1947, Caymanian legislators Ernest Panton and Willie Farrington had initially 'made it clear that their Assembly would agree to join [any British West Indian union] only if the Cayman Islands had direct representation [in it]…' But given Cayman's lack of political and economic influence, even in relation to the smaller islands of the eastern Caribbean, this hardline ultimatum was rejected by the Standing Closer Committee in 1949, and the Cayman Islands' status in any future Federation was unilaterally confirmed as 'a dependency under the administration of the Governor-General of the Federation.'[17] As such, Cayman never became a full-fledged participating member of the short-lived West Indies Federation. Yet, any such confirmation of Cayman's subordinate position both in relation to the potential West Indies Federation and, later, a Jamaica poised for greater self-rule would, by 1961, not sit well with a structurally anachronistic Caymanian legislature – or vestry – which consisted of 32 elected members largely left to their own whims and fancies, a legislature whose very *raison d'etre* centered largely on promoting the interests of Cayman's well-to-do white and near-white merchant class.[18] According to Dave Martins, so keen was the Cayman elite to

safeguard its position of political privilege, that in 1958 it systematically worked to destroy the first political party in Cayman, the Cayman Vanguard Progressive Party, to ensure the absence of any spirited opposition against its political representatives-cum-actors.[19]

Becoming almost immediately aware of the political insularity and myopia of Cayman's mercantilist-driven upper class upon arriving in Cayman, in addition to sensing a pan-Caribbeanist change in the air, new Commissioner to Cayman in 1952 Andrew Morris Gerrard stressed that Cayman's elite must face the 'new realities' and abandon living according to the principles of a past settler tradition steeped in nepotism, racism, favoritism, and unequal classist economics. Gerrard did not like that the vestry did not apply unequivocal fairness when it came to collecting taxes and customs duties from qualified citizens, for where else would substantial revenue be made in an economy still surviving largely on the remittances of its already struggling overseas seamen?[20] Although Gerrard was of the firm opinion that the Caymanian vestry needed to take a more pro-active, modern approach to ideas and issues of development, the vestry's understanding that any such development be indispensably linked to a Jamaica rapidly becoming less British, it seemed, was destined not only to prove the basis for its displeasure, but the displeasure for the elite class it represented.[21]

In technical terms, Cayman's lack of a constitution meant that Jamaica had the right to make decisions on behalf of Caymanians without consulting them, even though since earliest times the British-led Jamaican political machine had been allowing them to manage their own affairs. Nonetheless, by 1959 the very idea of a Jamaica becoming less and less British did not, for all intents and purposes, sit well with Caymanian merchants especially, many of whom were determined to maintain their connection with Britain. Among these merchants was Ducan Merren. Heir to a substantial fortune, Ducan Merren returned to Cayman just before the onset of World War II, and by 1959 was a long-standing member of Cayman's Federation delegation, demonstrating his displeasure with Jamaica's potentially wide and unequivocal control over Cayman's internal affairs after that island had been granted complete internal self-government.[22] Although he wanted the relationship between Jamaica and Cayman to remain "close", he argued that any such relationship must be tempered by an ultimate 'British connection', and especially in light of the very – by then – clear *Jamaican* intention to achieve greater and greater independence from Britain.

On the other end of Cayman's political spectrum was Ormond Panton's firebrand, populist type of politics. Panton was also a Federation delegate by 1959. With great political ambition,

Panton, unlike Merren, was keen to forego the British connection, in favor of forging an intimate – but not necessarily *dependent* – political relationship with a federated Jamaica. Merren's political desires echoed the merchant establishment's dedication to maintaining the status quo, while Panton was determined to excise Cayman's original imperial overlord, forge links with a Jamaica poised for eventual federated independence, and subsequently ensure Cayman's total independence.[23]

Nonetheless, and despite Cayman's dependency position within the West Indies Federation, the British government was keen to constitutionally modernize Cayman, demonstrating its understanding that internal Caymanian political affairs should fall under a constitution constructed to serve local particularities. A collaborative effort between Jamaican governor Kenneth Blackburne, Cayman Commissioner Jack Rose, and Caymanian politicians, Cayman's first written constitution was implemented on July 4, 1959. The constitution did away with an archaic legislation system, implementing an 18-member legislative assembly. Fifteen of these figures were to be elected by the newly introduced Adult Suffrage Act, enabled at the same time as the constitution, while three were to be appointed official members in the posts of Chief Secretary, Attorney-General, and Financial Secretary. An Executive Council was also introduced, headed by the Administrator along with 'two official, one nominated, and two elected members.' The Executive Council had the powers to implement social policies. The constitution also ensured that Cayman's legislature did not fall under the oversight of Jamaican legislators, although the Jamaican governor headed Cayman's Legislature and had the right to intervene accordingly on behalf of the Crown.[24]

By early 1962 Cayman's status in relation to the West Indies Federation – itself unstable by this time given Jamaica's desire by then to completely free itself of British control – was most precarious, and much to the alarm of Jamaican Governor Kenneth Blackburne, who visited Grand Cayman on January 17, 1962. Given Cayman's status in the Federation, once the likely dissolution of that entity was achieved – a dissolution which would occur just months later in May – Cayman, in theory, could cease to be a British Dependency.[25] In light of this automatic severing, Blackburne, perhaps at the behest of Cayman's political and merchant elite, devised a plan intended to ensure the continuation of Cayman's British connection, in addition to securing a greater degree of self-rule among Caymanians. According to Blackburne's plan, Caymanians would, for a period of five years, be given a chance to control their own affairs. Britain would appoint a Lieutenant Governor whose normal powers under Crown Colony arrangement would be drastically curtailed, as he would

have been immediately answerable to a Caymanian council of ministers. Merren's earlier desire that the Cayman-Britain connection remain in the face of growing Caymanian political autonomy seemed on the cusp of being realized, albeit with a greater degree of autonomy than he could have ever imagined.[26]

Blackburn's plan never materialized, and when Jamaica gained its independence on August 6, 1962, Cayman and the Turks and Caicos Islands (another of Jamaica's dependencies) became direct dependencies of Britain, though British officials were able to convince the Jamaican government to send vital human resources to its erstwhile dependencies, including teachers, nurses, police officers, construction workers, and so on; Cayman even continued to use Jamaican currency up to a decade after Jamaica's independence.[27] Important to note here is that most of the remaining members of the Federation, with the exception of Anguilla, were not assured automatic independence, nullifying any theoretical understanding that Cayman would cease to be a British Dependency once the Federation was dissolved. Conversely, the remaining former member states of the West Indies Federation remained dependencies of Britain for a while, achieving their respective independence throughout the subsequent 30-year span.

As we shall see, however, the Jamaica "threat" had not quite passed immediately following Jamaica's independence, and not only did many Caymanians continue to actively resist the very possibility of becoming a dependency of an independent Jamaica that still wielded considerable influence over Caymanian affairs, but it was this very resistance that worked to crystallize an already-palpable elitist indictment of Jamaica and Jamaicans.

By November 1962 Caymanian politicians had split into two camps: Ormond Panton's National Democratic Party (NDP), formed a year earlier, and Willie Farrington's Christian Democratic Party (CDP), also established in 1961. Issues of self-government were at the forefront of a burgeoning internal political Caymanian awareness, with Panton keen to retain close political ties with Jamaica and Farrington devoted to sustaining Cayman's British connection. Accordingly, when public elections were held in Cayman less than four months after Jamaica had become officially independent, it did not sit well with Cayman's merchant elites – who were CDP supporters – that Panton's party had won seven seats while the CDP had only managed to win five. Nonetheless, and bizarrely so, with the help of British Administrator to Cayman, Jack Rose, and Governor Blackburne (still in Jamaica at the time), together with the support of popular pro-British populists Roy McTaggart and Captain Eldon Kirkonnell, who were actually NDP members, the CDP 'effectively formed…[Cayman's]

government in 1962', blocking any desire whatsoever on Panton's part to bring an independent Jamaica and Cayman closer.[28] The CDP and Administrator Rose had been able to manipulate the election results to their own political end, but there is evidence, as we shall see, that this political strong-arming was supported by many Caymanians who were very dedicated to not becoming a dependency of Jamaica.

Interrogating the effects of altered traditionalist Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans

The relieved sighs of prominent Caymanian merchant Captain Charles Kirkonnell in 2007 that Cayman did not ultimately become a dependency of Jamaica sets the tone for a distinct brand of Caymanian xenophobia towards Jamaica and Jamaicans that developed in earnest upon Jamaica's independence:

Charles Kirkonnell:	So, independence and all that never crossed our mind, or didn't… it was meaningless. Actually Caymanians could have been caught, and this is where Dr. Roy [McTaggart] came in. He saved the day when he got up there and… otherwise Cayman, today, would have been under Jamaica.
Heather McLaughlin:	Yes, yes.
CK:	So that was his redeeming feature
HMc:	Yes.
CK:	And we all owe him a great debt of gratitude for…he saw the…foresight.
HMc:	For seeing what this was going to mean.
CK:	He was very forceful when it came to that, in convincing…and from then on, people became more aware of the consequences.[29]

Just what were the consequences of which Captain Kirkonnell spoke? Although he is speaking about the past, notably Jamaica's political decline upon independence (discussed later), one cannot help but question the likely extent to which the present social condition of Jamaica influences the Captain's intimations. In January 2006 the Caribbean media dubbed Jamaica, and in particularly its capital Kingston, 'the murder capital of the world, after 2005 saw more than 1600 people killed – a tally of at least five murders a day'.[30] Four days into 2006, thirteen people had already been murdered, but this was nothing new for Jamaica, statistically speaking.[31] Between 1995 and 1999, a total of 4,545 people, mostly Jamaicans, were murdered: 780 people were murdered in 1995, 925 in 1996, 1,038 in 1997, 953 in 1998, and 849 in 1999; in contrast, only five people were murdered in the Cayman Islands in the same period. Between 2000 and 2001, an astonishing 2,026 murders were committed in Jamaica, at total that '[exceeded] the total number of murders for the period 1960-1974 [which came to] a total of 1,767 murders.'[32] Trevor Munroe has compellingly associated Jamaica's alarming murder rate with a violently charged culture of dependence on charismatic yet suspect leaders and figureheads, political and economic underdevelopment, together with the Jamaican masses' almost-suicidal deference to prominent politicians of lighter hew.[33]

In economic terms, Jamaica has also struggled. By 2009, that country's public debt stood at 131.7 percent of a gross domestic product of $23.36 billion. In real-growth-rate terms, this meant that Jamaica's economy had contracted by 4 percent that very year.[34] This economic reality, together with a social milieu bedecked with criminality, is likely to prompt a further Caymanian understanding of modern Jamaican existence: where economic opportunities are scarce, people tend to turn to a life of crime, continuing this life even when they are living abroad. As I explore below, this line of logic seems to drive the tenacious belief of successful Caymanian merchant Nolan Foster and his interviewer Heather McLaughlin that too many Jamaicans in Cayman will destroy both Cayman's prosperity and its relatively crime-free, peaceful nature.

Mr. Foster's sense of relief in 1999 that Cayman did not decide to remain a dependency of Jamaica seems, from the outset, also to be substantively informed by the latter's present reality.[35] Signaling his continuity with Captain Kirkonnell's socio-political understanding of Jamaica, Mr. Foster also pays homage to Roy McTaggart – a Caymanian medical doctor and politician in the 1960s and 1970s – and his efforts to secure Cayman's continued connection

with Britain through petition: '…Dr. McTaggart…got credit for swinging [the votes our way]', Mr. Foster begins:

> [and] I could not see [us] remaining with Jamaica. At that time we had a preacher here publishing a little newssheet [sic] called the Cayman Brac Herald or something. I still have it a home somewhere. A little article I wrote in that about choosing between Jamaica and Crown Colony Status. I mean I gave my views. I told them plain and straight. I wanted to be clear, I had nothing against Jamaica, they had been good to us and all the rest of it but I felt that Jamaica would have enough problems of her own without having the burdens of these islands on her at that time.[36]

Over 3,000 Caymanians – more than half of the islands' entire population of nearly 6,000 – signed their name to this petition in late 1962, which called for Cayman to remain with Britain and not become a dependency of an independent Jamaica.[37] Indeed, Caymanians living in Cayman Brac were so convinced that Grand Cayman would imminently become a Jamaican territory that they threatened to secede from Cayman. It was Dr. McTaggart who was quick to assert that Cayman would have been in a precarious position had Caymanians opted to remain a dependency of Jamaica after Jamaica's independence. As a newly independent nation, Jamaica had to concern itself with matters of military security and economic survival, and for Dr. McTaggart, expressed some thirteen years after Jamaica's independence, it was indeed wise that Cayman had decided to remain under a long-established, stable Western nation.[38]

Mr. Foster's reasons for not wanting to remain with Jamaica find echo in Dr. McTaggart's foregoing opinion: '[The Jamaicans] haven't [even] got them [their problems] ironed out yet', he begins, '...and I realize this, too, that where we have plenty Jamaicans here now, if we had gone along with Jamaica it would have been wide open and they could have come in at will.' His interviewer, Mrs. McLaughlin, breaks the interviewer's code of neutrality when she affirms that 'Yes. Yes. And there'd be no control whatsoever.' 'Be no control', Mr. Foster further concurs, '[a]nd we would not have been the prosperous island that we are today.' 'No', Mrs. McLaughlin reiterates.[39] Mr. Foster and his interviewer have emotionally demonstrated their feelings about Jamaicans, in effect tying these emotions to current Jamaican realities so as to achieve an impassioned justification for their anxious desire both to remain with Britain and prevent too many Jamaicans from coming to Cayman. However, what remains to be fully

confirmed is the historical juncture at which Jamaica began to decline socially and economically; as we shall see, this historical juncture coincides, not with the beginning of shifting ideas of Jamaicans, per se, for such ideas existed among the merchant classes before Jamaica's independence and had indeed crystallized by the 1962 general elections in Cayman; rather, it is ahistorical juncture that provides a justification grounded in reality for otherwise negative, reappropriated popular Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans.

To fully clarify and unravel the ideological connection between Caymanian prosperity and Jamaican criminality, in articulatory *Caymanian* terms, is to appreciate, in the first place, the commanding powers of reappropriation, upon which rests the linguistic reshaping of preexisting traditionalist ideas, feelings, and sentiments according to a relatively new logic driven by a present reality, but inextricably influenced by traditionalism in the first place.[40] Mr. Hennings, for instance, begins to give voice to a reappropriated traditionalist interpretation of Jamaica and Jamaicans on ostensibly economic and social grounds. When his interviewer evokes an earlier, more honest time where 'you could go anywhere in Kingston and never think about locking your door or anything', Mr. Hennings's response seems not only to extend an earlier positive Jamaican/Caymanian differentiation, but, more importantly in this instance, potentially portrays present-day Jamaicans in a derogatory manner, as expressed by his hesitancy: 'Oh, yes, you never…when I was a boy in Kingston…I was a little boy in Kingston, there was no people… well, the Jamaica people are still wonderful, I don't mean to imply in any way that there's anything wrong with the people…I mean the average person. There [is] a tremendous amount wrong with some of the people.'[41] Mr. Hennings' hesitation attempts to hide uncomfortable implications about Jamaicans that are, as with Captain Kirkonnell and Mr. Foster's understandings, likely dependent on Jamaica's current political, economic, and criminal conditions. However, as every reappropriated expression has its justificatory, veridical source, its shaping trajectory borne of historical circumstance, it becomes necessary to pinpoint the origins of Jamaica's present condition in order to imbue Mr. Hennings' non-elitist Caymanian understandings a firm and truly transformative historical-ideological foundation.

When Jamaica achieved independence in 1962, for a decade thereafter the nation was politically and economically stable under Bustamante's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) leadership. As testament to Jamaica's potential economic and social success, Singapore sent officials during this time to analyze the island's strengthening economic and political

infrastructures. Regardless of Jamaica's initial successes, Cayman's merchant elites' powerful ideological ties to Britain not only ensured Cayman's continued link with Britain, but underwent a greater degree of popularity among the Caymanian masses, beginning in late 1962 and proceeding apace until 1972, at which time Jamaica's prosperity honeymoon came to a somewhat precipitous end; indeed, Jamaica's fall from grace, if you will, served not only to vindicate an earlier elitist ideological position, promulgated by the likes of Nolan Foster and Captain Kirkonnell, but also coincided with the beginnings of economic success in Cayman, a state of affairs that powerfully juxtaposes Caymanian prosperity with Jamaican criminality.

As a politically-stable Cayman was being discovered by curious tourists and legitimate and not-so-legitimate high profile investors keen to amass as much profit as possible by paying as little taxes as possible, Jamaica had begun its downward political and economic spiral after Michael Manley's PNP came to power in 1972, although Manley is to be credited with introducing free education to the masses as well as providing them jobs. A close friend of Cuba's Fidel Castro, Manley developed the idea that democratic socialism might actually cure Jamaica of its gaping social and economic disparities. Inevitably, Jamaica's newfangled relationship with Cuba met the disapproval of the United States, so much so, it has been argued elsewhere, that the CIA began shipping guns to the JLP in the covert hopes of destabilizing Manley's regime, fearful that Jamaica would become another Cuba.[42] Elsewhere, Anthony Payne has suggested that the triangular relationship between the US, Cuba, and Jamaica was the stimulant behind Jamaica's political and economic downfall: A displeased America had simply used its hegemonic clout as a bargaining chip; either Manley cut ties with Castro or the Jamaican economy, by then absolutely dependent on American and European "free" markets, would be systematically shut out. The American ambassador to Jamaica at the time, Sumner Gerrard, 'pointedly told a group of Kingston businessmen that "allegations of US destabilization [were] scurrilous and false.'[43] Rather, according to some, Jamaica's escalating violence and economic decline represented a number of factors, including the opposition of multinational bauxite companies in Jamaica to the production levy imposed by the PNP government in 1974; the corresponding economic pressures which the United States in turn placed on the Jamaican government for the imposition of such a levy; and Edward Seaga's desire to propel his JLP to power by attacking the socialist economic and "politically debilitating" vision of the PNP, a view that eventually brought both parties into armed conflict in 1976 and the resultant declaration of a state of emergency.[44]

In light of Jamaica's declining social and political situation since the early 1970s, Mr. Hennings's non-elitist, working class Caymanian position that most Jamaicans are still good people despite his implication of Jamaica's perceived current lawless trajectory marks a definite, *justificatory* socio-ideological shift in traditionalist Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicanness, a shift benignly countenanced by Tenson Scott, a non-elitist who lived in Jamaica in the 1950s:

> From what I knew of Jamaica…it was wonderful; really good to be in Jamaica…back in those days…knowing what has happened with their politics…The trouble is with…their politics, the way their people is doing the island. I had found it to be a wonderful place up [t]here, you could get such nice things. We were treated fairly and very good[:] [for instance,] [m]y brother would leave home for hours in the daytime… [and we didn't think] he was dead or nothing…[It would a] different thing [now] if he was missing for so much hours in Jamaica [sic].[45]

Important to note is that there is likely some sort of causality between Mr. Scott's social status as a working class Caymanian and his implication that the starting point of Jamaica's woes began upon that country's political decline. Unlike the Caymanian elites who never entertained the idea of becoming a dependency of Jamaica, Mr. Hennings and Mr. Scott's pronouncements should be contextualized not only in the statistical reality in which much of the Caymanian masses were convinced by these elites in late 1962 that it was not wise for Cayman to become a dependency of Jamaica, but also in accordance with that commencement point at which Jamaican politics were to succumb to unprecedented bipartisan violence. In this instance, the reappropriated expressions of these men are the enlightened byproducts of an earlier anti-Jamaican elitist position. Yet because residually positive traditionalist sentiments of Jamaicans can be detected in these expressions, we may say that the basis of their enlightenment rests not entirely on elitist rhetoric, although there is a definite link between both lines of thought given their converging, univocal conclusion, but more so on the very reality of Jamaica's decline, a reality that both Mr. Hennings and Mr. Scott all but imply when accounting for the starting point of Jamaica's accumulating woes; in this sense, enlightened Caymanians who had previously regarded Jamaica and Jamaicans in intensely positive terms tend to be of the working class variety, Caymanians who were first influenced by elite positions, and thereafter by the very reality that these positions had earlier anticipated. Mr. Scott and Mr. Hennings, among other working class Caymanians, have nonetheless contributed to a Caymanian xenophobia specifically expressed towards

Jamaicans. Where xenophobia can be conceptually understood as an intense indigenous dislike or fear for certain foreign nationals and their incoming, perhaps inundating way of life, reappropriated traditionalist Caymanian understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans, as I attempt to show in the following paragraphs, possess a latent xenophobic component.[46]

In traditionalist terms especially, Caymanian ideas of belonging are necessarily undergirded by participation and emotion: participation in a way of life with its own customs, traditions, and behaviors is ultimately indebted to the accompanying emotions that come with feelings of national belonging.[47] Other older Caymanian respondents used elsewhere, such as Adinah Whittaker – "Miss Tooksie" – and Deal Ebanks, have revealed the emotional timbre of historical situations and circumstances. For instance, for Miss Tooksie the normal act of walking and/or running to school as a child in any kind of weather represented a legitimate social, mundane reality of historical Caymanian society, a reality that, in its very simplicity, corroborates ideas of a traditional-historical Caymanian way of life. Similarly, Mr. Ebanks's recollection of the importance of blowing the conch horn as a way to signal the return of fishermen after a long day's work evokes a historical act of Caymanian seafaring culture. In emotive terms, such mundane acts, as outlined above, constitute historically-bound customs and behaviors, and any emotional attachment to them is directly related to their traditional, *legitimate* Caymanian worth. Thus, traditionalist ideas that exude emotions of national and cultural belonging ultimately speak to the Caymanian ancestor's participation in, and contribution to, the shaping of a way of life.[48]

As simple and mundane as many of the recollections and mediations about the past appear on the surface, they are in the process of social construction where they determine a reality based on perceived ideas and understandings about truth.[49] Whether it is Miss Tooksie's account of aspects of her childhood growing up in Cayman, Mr. Hennings's shifting understanding of Jamaica or Jamaicans in relation to the *preferred* Caymanian way, or Mr. Foster's potential xenophobic understandings of Jamaicans, these relays count for them as truth. Trenton Merricks asserts that '[w]hen a statement is true, there is, *of course*, a state of affairs which makes it true.'[50] If a statement is to be *perceived* to be true, then, equally, it must be guided by an actual state of affairs, itself bound by perception. I agree with Peter van Inwagen that the act of being – or existing – is an activity whose meaning accrues in the cognitive realms, which in turn selectively develops ideas of truth from lies.[51] Any such selectivity in our context therefore speaks to an emotional investment in a national and cultural way of life.

Thus the same emotional investment that drives subjective feelings of national belonging also, in large part, forms the basis for shifting Caymanian ideas of Jamaica and Jamaicanness; put more holistically, reshaped Caymanian understandings of Jamaicans depend as much on historically-bound emotions as emotions that are elicited by current social circumstance. Where historically-bound emotions attempt to capture, detail, and understand the past by relaying veridical recounts of it, nationalist emotions that are shaped by present circumstance, in our context, derive their importance from a more selective information pool in which accumulate ideas and sentiments keen on safeguarding the prosperous present. Yet, despite the clear ideological differences that may appear to underwrite both strains of emotion, historically-bound emotions represent an ideological evolution of present-day nationalist emotions that are also largely determined by Cayman's economic and financial rise, together with the elevated lifestyle of Caymanians. In the context of globalization, any shifting patterns in traditionalist thinking comes as a direct result of the obsessively selective focus on social change; put another way, as Caymanian society was transformed by globalization, traditionalist thought was altered in tandem with this transformation, its altered state keen to juxtapose, to varying degrees of subtlety, a singular indigenous identity with an incoming identity in many ways the former's diametrical opposite, although it is still quite possible for traditionalist thought to remain free of xenophobic intent in the present.[52]

To further contextualize the foregoing, it is true that the traditional culture of Caymanians was never perceived to be at risk in the years leading up to 1962; with a weak economy and political dynamic, foreign nationals were not likely to have wanted to come to Cayman in search of a better life. It was for this reason that widespread Caymanian xenophobic thought was all but nonexistent during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Possessing a decidedly insular and unassuming way of life during this time, working class Caymanians, both at home and abroad, would not have been concerned with "getting the foreigners out", but with their economic survival; as we have seen, only the members of the merchant class and the vestry demonstrated a potentially xenophobic posture, not towards incoming Jamaicans, but towards the possibility of becoming a dependency of independent Jamaica. Yet with the economic miracle of the 1970s, Caymanians were to find themselves surrounded by an unprecedented lavishness of lifestyle, a state of affairs that, by default, ensures the alteration of traditionalist thoughts and ideas once invested in the vaunted appreciation of contentment in the midst of hardship.

As one of the enabling features of this state of affairs underwritten by globalization involves the legitimacy of large numbers of incoming immigrant workers, I have anticipated the properties and functions of Caymanian traditionalism as shaped by the *shaping* present. Reappropriated traditionalist understandings of Jamaicans springs from the fact that Jamaicans at present represent the largest immigrant group in Cayman, and together with their perceived aggressiveness and criminality – based, for my recent respondents, in large part on Jamaica's social and political circumstances – many Caymanians are devoted either to expressing their concern about the preponderance of Jamaicans in their society, or explaining when and why Jamaicans changed for the worst. Although Caymanians like Mr. Scott and Mr. Hennings have striven for political correctness by contrasting the wonderful Jamaica of old with its present, understood to be violent and unstable, their intention is nonetheless compatible with the more potentially xenophobic and one-sided expressions of Nolan Foster and his interviewer. When, for instance, Mr. Foster affirms that too many of "them" would have been able to enter Cayman at will had Cayman decided to remain with Jamaica, his affirmation resonates with Mr. Henning's uncomfortable expression that Jamaica's current plight is directly relatable to the actions of "some" of its people. Similarly, when Mr. Foster's interviewer asserts that there would have been no control had Jamaicans been allowed to freely enter Cayman, her words find easy association with Mr. Scott's own reappropriated thoughts of Jamaica as a currently dangerous place, which in turn is directly relatable to *some* Jamaicans being dangerous and lacking in social control. Not only do such profoundly subtle correlative understandings of Jamaicans in Cayman resonate with many Caymanians, but they can also set the mood for a distinct brand of xenophobia more fiery and unabashed in its vocality. It therefore becomes important to assess the evolution of traditionalist Caymanian thought precisely for the shaping context of its evolution, together with the likelihood that any understandings to be unearthed in assessing traditionalist thought works to imbue anecdote with objectivity.

In the final analysis, rational people who tend to say or implicate how they feel on a given issue usually have a historical precedent in mind. By therefore probing the historical determinants of a present-day Caymanian discourse regarding a specific foreign-national group in Cayman has allowed us not only to answer *why* this discourse came to be, as well as to understand the properties of its evolutionary making, but has also encouraged us to look to the shaping powers of both the immediate past and the present if we are to have any true

appreciation of just *how* and *why* xenophobia especially continues to play out in an intensely multicultural society replete with its various national and cultural factions and allegiances.

Conclusion

Jamaica might have been relatively stable by its independence, but some Caymanians in the present are breathing a sigh of relief that Ormond Panton's countenance of post-independence Jamaican politics did not lead Cayman to ultimately sever ties with Great Britain. The words of my respondents suggest that had Cayman remained with Jamaica, the former would have been in the same social, political, and economic state. Beyond this, the expressions of, for instance, Mr. Foster work to evoke a new reappropriated us/them differentiation of an essentially derogatory nature: the fact that "they" would be allowed to come in to Cayman freely had Cayman remained with Jamaica introduces a vibrant, evolved internalized Caymanian sense of self. For all intents and purposes, this self is not what the Jamaican self has become, that is, economically backward, murderous, and politically corrupt, to employ the crudest terminology; when Mr. Foster exclaims that the Jamaicans have not been able to sort out their problems since independence, he is, in my opinion, implying these very properties of the Jamaican self, while further implying that the Caymanian community, in light of its prosperity and internal political stability, is without such "problems". A differentiation of this nature speaks to more than just issues of social, political, and economic differences between Jamaicans and Caymanians, but illuminates the past-present continuum of this Caymanian sense of judgment. Such a sense is ideologically assured, on one side, by "sacrosanct" Caymanian interpretations of its unassuming yet singular past; and on the other, by the bold, subtle, and/or hesitant responses that, while extensions of traditionalist thought, are also in large part shaped by Caymanians' interactions and experiences with external identities and forces.[53] As a corollary to the foregoing, the respondents used throughout the second half of this article especially have begun to demonstrate, to varying degrees of subtlety, that this evolved Caymanian sense needs a lesser "other" if it is to continue to accumulate essences of legitimacy, superiority, and/or singularity.

Notes

[1]At present, approximately 23,000 foreign nationals are on work permit in Cayman; see the Economics and Statistics Office (ESO), *The Cayman Islands' 2010 Census of Population and Housing Report*, at http://www.eso.ky/UserFiles/File/The%202010%20Cayman%20Islands%20Census%20Report.pdf

[2]For a particularly useful introductory understanding of globalization, see Manfred Steger, *Globalization: A very short introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[3] CINA, Interview with David Wade Foster, February 24, 2009, p.5.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] CINA, Interview with Desmond Watler, November 27, 1990 p.4.

[6] CINA, Interview with Amy & Glair Hennings, April 15, 2002, p.35

[7]Christopher A. Williams, 'Perpetuation, imagination, and subjectivity: Investigating the effects of expressed traditionalist Caymanian memories', in The Journal of Memory Studies,

[8]See Williams, Caymanianness, History, Culture, Tradition, and Globalisation: Assessing the Dynamic Interplay Between Modern and Traditional(ist) Thought in the Cayman Islands, University of Warwick, Unpublished PhD thesis, 2010.

[9] Alan Norrie, *Dialectic and Difference: Dialectical Critical Realism and the Grounds of Justice* (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), part 1. For more pioneering ideas on dialectism, see Max Horkheimer *et al.*, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002 1st edition); Georg W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by J.B. Baillie (www.digireads.com: Digireads.com Publishing, 2009 reprint).

[10] John Agnew, *The New Shape of Global Power* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), p.2.

[11]See footnote 8.

[12]*Ibid.*

[13]Richard Hart, *Labour Rebellion of the 1930s in the British Caribbean Region Colonies* (Kingston: Caribbean Labour Solidarity and the Socialist History Society, 2002), p.4.

[14] See, in its entirety, Trevor Munroe, *The Politics of Constitutional Decolonization: Jamaica, 1944-62* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1972, 1st edition); Michael Kaufman, *Jamaica under Manley: Dilemmas of Socialism and Democracy* (London: Zed Books, 1985), chapter 3; Anthony Payne, *Politics in Jamaica* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), introduction.

[15] Kaufman, *Politics in Jamaica*, introduction.

[16] Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Island Society* (Stockholm: Department of Social Anthropology, University of Stockholm, 1974), p. 125.

[17] Quoted in Craton, *Founded*, p. 307.

[18] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p.132.

[19] See Dave Martins, *A Special Son: The Biography of Ormond Panton* (Staffordshire: Pansons Ltd., 1994).

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p.133.

[22] Craton, *Founded*, p.307.

[23] See Martins, *A Special Son*, chapters 1 and 2.

[24] Craton, *Founded*, p.321.

[25] *Ibid*., p.314.

[26] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, p.138.

[27] See Brief for British Representatives in the Turks and Caicos and the Cayman Islands, October, 1962, PRO, CO 1031/3387, ff. 7-11.

[28] Craton, *Founded*, p.316.

[29] Interview with Captain Kirkonnell, p.15.

[30] BBC Caribbean, 'Jamaica "murder capital of the world"', http://www.bbc.co.uk/caribbean/news/story/2006/01/060103_murderlist.shtml, January 3, 2006; May 15, 2009.

[31] See Caribbean Net News, 'Jamaica is murder capital of the world', *Caribbean Net News*, http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/2006/01/09/capital.shtml, January 9, 2006; May 15, 2009.

[32] See Anthony Woodburn, 'Jamaica becoming a lawless country', *Jamaica Gleaner*, http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20020210/focus/focus1.html, February 10, 2002; May 15, 2009.

[33] Trevor Munroe, *Renewing Democracy into the Millennium: The Jamaican Experience in Perspective* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1999).

[34] See CIA World Factbook: Jamaica, at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jm.html, 2010; March 22, 2010.

[35] CINA, Interview with Nolan Foster, April 2, 1999, p.7.

[36] *Ibid*., p.8.

[37]Information gathered from

[38] Doren Miller, *Upon the Seas*, 1975.

[39] Interview with Nolan Foster, p.10.

[40] This thought is indebted to Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[41] Interview with Amy and Glair Hennings, p.23.

[42]See, for instance, Michael Kaufman, *Jamaica under Manley: dilemmas of socialism and democracy* (New York, Between the Lines, 1985).

[43] Payne, *Politics in Jamaica*, p.50.

[44] Carl Stone, *The Political Opinion of the Jamaican People, 1976-1981* (Kingston: Blackett Publishers, 1982), chapter 1.

[45] Interview with Tenson Scott, p.7.

[46] For comprehensive understandings of xenophobia, see, for instance, Francis Nyamnjoh, *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2006); Rosana Barbosa, *Immigration and Xenophobia: Portuguese Immigrants in Early 19th Century Rio de Janeiro* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2009).

[47] Cf. Ray Taras, *Europe Old and New: Transnationalism, Belonging, Xenophobia* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), introduction.

[48]Christopher A. Williams, 'Perpetuation, imagination, and subjectivity: Investigating the effects of expressed traditionalist Caymanian memories', in The Journal of Memory Studies,

[49] Ruth E. Ray, *Beyond Nostalgia: Ageing and Life-Story Writing* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2000), p.26.

[50] Trenton Merricks, *Truth and Ontology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), chapter 1.

[51] Peter van Inwagen, *Ontology, Identity, and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 1st edition), p.14.

[52] See Williams, 'Caymanianness, History, and Culture, Section

[53] See Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), chapter 4.