JAMAICAN ACCULTURATION: THE PROFILE OF A DOMINANT CULTURE

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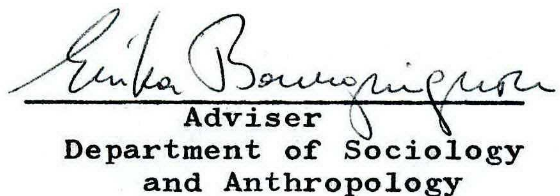

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I. INTRODUCTION

The problem of social or cultural change has long been of interest to anthropologists. Both Tylor and Morgan were concerned with methods for determining the course and nature of change. However, with the rejection of all grand schemes of social evolution by American anthropologists, particularly through the influence of Boas, new approaches were developed for dealing with change. Acculturation research became one of these approaches.

Herskovits (1938) has described the earliest uses of the term "acculturation," the failure to develop a standard definition for it, and the variety of situations to which it was applied. He noted certain deficiencies in the definition he offered with Redfield and Linton in a 1936 Memorandum. Among these were the exact meaning of the phrase "continuous first-hand contact" between two distinct groups and the degree to which culture can be treated as an entity distinct from its carriers. Despite these problems of definition, however, Herskovits (1937:261) claimed that acculturation studies effectively combined methods of the diachronic and synchronic approaches since they provided the anthropologist with "the conditions of control afforded by recorded history" as well as indicating "the

interrelationship between the elements of a given culture."

A seminar on acculturation sponsored by the Social Science Research Council reemphasized the importance of acculturation research since it "offer(s) some of our best opportunities for understanding cultural dynamics" (1954: 973) but noted an unfortunate lag between theoretical formulations on acculturation and accumulating acculturation studies. This discontinuity between theory and research was attributed to an emphasis on structure with corresponding neglect of process and to the orientation of research toward "receptor" or subordinate cultures rather than "donor" or dominant cultures.

The contributions of donor to subordinate cultures, while widely acknowledged as important, have been given relatively little attention by anthropologists. Both the Memorandum and the Social Science Research Council seminar referred to "traits presented by the donor group" (1936: 151) and "the recognition that acculturation is very much a matter of range of presentation" (1954:983), but "in spite of these and other statements, field anthropologists appear to have thought largely of acculturation situations in terms of total cultural systems in contact, and of the changes that occur in the recipient culture" (Foster 1960:8). To overcome this bias of the field worker, Foster devised a model "to facilitate conceptualization of the nature of a dominant donor culture and its mode of presentation to a

subordinate recipient culture" (1960:10). This model is called "conquest culture," the profile or face a donor culture presents to a recipient culture. The transmission of culture via conquest culture is a double screening process whereby the dominant culture presents selected elements to the recipient culture and, within a range of choice prescribed by the dominant culture, the recipient culture further selects and rejects cultural elements. "Two complete cultural systems never come into full contact" (Foster 1960:10), but parts of each culture do meet in the contact situation.

> Through this process a choice is made from the totality of forms found in a dominant, conquering donor culture and to these forms are added ideas and items called into being or developed as a result of the contact situation itself. This process results in a new "culture," with a distinctive profile which becomes the acculturative force on the recipient people (Foster 1960:11).

The conquest culture is also a "standardized" or "simplified" version of the larger culture it represents. By this Foster does not mean that single elements of the profile, agricultural techniques, for instance, are made simple to understand. Rather, the variety of such techniques that characterize the home culture do not characterize the conquest culture. This is well illustrated in the acceptance and then persistence of particular sugar manufacturing methods in Jamaica. The sugar grower's rejection of technological innovations which were accepted on other islands put the Jamaican sugar industry at a competitive

disadvantage.

The conquest culture should not be confused with the colonial culture which it usually produces. Although the connection between the two is certainly intimate, the conquest culture is a hybrid product because it is subject to screening processes from two sources, its origin in the home culture and its contact with subordinate peoples. A conquest culture is not a monolithic entity overpowering a subordinate people but a mixture created in the contact situation.

The creation of a conquest culture operates on a "formal" and an "informal" level. Formally, decisions and choices are intentionally made by members of the dominant group early in the contact period. How are plantations to be organized? What provisions will be made for slaves? How are slaves to be treated? How shall local political and police authority be delegated? Informally, social processes are in operation of which the members of the dominant culture may not be aware. Demographic patterns become a consequence of economic decisions. A peasantry appears because of early land use and marketing patterns.

The standardized profile of the conquest culture "crystallizes" soon after it successfully functions in the new environment. Members of the donor culture arriving after this "crystallization" do not find the fluid situation

of the early acculturation period but an established culture to which they must adjust. This new culture varies from the parent culture because of the selection of some elements and exclusion of others from the profile, a process more important before the new culture crystallizes than after. The possibility of significant cultural innovation or modification on the part of individuals exists largely during the earliest stages of acculturation. Later, the new culture is "less receptive to change and less prone to accept new elements from the parent culture" (Foster 1960:233).

Although Foster's model of conquest culture forms the basis of this study, there are some important differences between his Culture and Conquest and this paper. Foster spent over a year in Spain collecting material in the field and in archives. The organization of his study reflects the fact that he "found no easy solution to the problem of relating these data to Spanish America" (1960: vii). Each chapter opens with a brief description of a particular Spanish American pattern, followed by extensive description of the Spanish pattern, and a short concluding section on comparisons between the two. The bulk of the study deals with Spain. Foster recognizes, of course, that the Spain of today is not that of the sixteenth century but argues that "Spanish society is conservative: old social forms, customs, techniques, and ideas have survived,

particularly in rural areas" and "judicious use of contemporary data, tied to historical accounts, [which] is basic anthropological methodology," can make possible valid generalizations about the Spanish conquest in the New World (1960:20).

For the present study, field work in England was impossible. It might not have been relevant. "A study of modern France will tell us very little of the cultural processes at work in the French colonization of the New World; a study of modern England, even less" (Foster 1960: 20). England was so transformed by the industrial revolution that modern English society would reflect very little of the English culture of the seventeenth century. The point of interest of this study is therefore different from that of Foster's, for here the conquest culture in the immediate contact situation is the center of attention, not the British donor culture. More consideration has been given the recipient culture and the colonial culture because our interest is not simply the diffusion of traits from England and West Africa to the Caribbean but an understanding of these traits as dynamic processes over a long historical period. Only after these traits became embedded in the colonial culture did their consequences become apparent.

The model of conquest culture is essentially a model of social and historical change under particular

circumstances. The orientation of the model and research, therefore, must be in historical terms. This would seem obvious yet there are those who would insist on reconstructing historical patterns largely on the basis of synchronic, structural analysis. Their approach may prove increasingly important for Murdock (1955:361,366) has indicated his belief that the study of social structure is emerging from a classifying and typologizing phase to "a common concern with dynamics or process," a "dynamic orientation which focuses attention on the processes by which systems come into being and succeed one another over time." Not rejecting structural analysis, Herskovits (1960) has defended the overall importance of the historical approach, particularly in Afroamerican research. He has argued that statistical and synchronic analysis tell us what a culture consists of at a given time but not why that culture takes on a particular configuration. The fetish of structural "scientism" aimed at the discovery of historical "laws" cannot possibly succeed, at least not as long as documented historical events and processes are ignored.

Herskovits' contention raises the problem of history and, more important, of historical reconstruction. If, in the orthodox sense, history is conceived of as the narrative statement of what has happened in the past, we are led to the view that "the subject matter of history consists of occurrences which are unusual and out of the

common, of events which for one reason or another compel the attention of men, and which are held worthy of being kept in remembrance" (Teggart 1960:18). History in this sense is more than the retelling of the past; it is the construction of a story, a drama, an art form, which may be turned to any number of esthetic or propagandistic purposes. In writing this kind of history, historians have rightly claimed that they are not involved in a science but an art, no matter how scientific may be their research techniques in terms of validating documents and events.

Some historians, however, have claimed to be creating a science. They purport to be demonstrating historical laws, rhythms, and sequences which relentlessly carry men along to some inevitable climax, be it the withering away of the state, the establishment of the kingdom of God, or the decline of Western civilization. Some, imbued with a notion of progress, seek out transitions from simpler to more complex states of the social organism. Their statements about history seem plausible because they have cast their materials in terms of the narrative approach and through reifying an abstraction--the state, the church, a particular country--they tell a "story" about that abstraction.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the frequent application of traditional historiography to the

Jamaican and British Caribbean historical experience has failed to explain, let alone adequately describe, the process of historical change as it occurred. Depending as they do on the reification of social entities, usually economic, and the description of key personalities, usually political, these histories ignore massive areas of the social-historical experience of a people. Where they do treat that experience, it is in short paragraphs wedged in between the narrative for "background" purposes. The effect of this historical approach is to divert attention from underlying processes and conditions to superficial and incomplete descriptions of the events themselves, events only symptomatic of social conditions but which exist for the historian in vivid, autonomous glory. The result is a dramatic art form which weaves together historical events, opinion, and judgment into an esthetically and intellectually pleasing whole. From this dependence upon the narrative method of historical reconstruction, it is possible to see why historians have failed to produce a scientifically grounded theory of history, a task which has fallen by default and by historical circumstance to social scientists.[1]

Anthropologists have long been accustomed to dealing with materials which lacked the records and documentation available to the historian.

Yet "the anthropologists, it should be noted, have

> gone one step further than the historians; they have sought to make their studies not only accurate but scientific, to formulate a clear and coherent system of empirical generalizations. . . . For this reason, a future science of history must at first rely heavily on anthropology both for concepts and methods" (Bagby 1963:19-20).

Anthropologists have been less tempted to make generalizations about historical "laws" because they have been sensitive to the diversity of their subject matter. With few exceptions they have recognized that history is pluralistic, and no single system of explanation, regardless of its inner coherence and completeness, can account for the histories of all peoples. Anthropologists have sought to define conditions rather than situations; their interest has been in institutions, customs, and idea systems rather than individuals, personal motivations, or great battles (Teggart 1960:80). "It will be obvious, therefore, that if we are to arrive at the desideratum of a science of man, it will be necessary to bring into one focus the historical study of events and the scientific study of processes operative in time" (Teggart 1960:155). Our concern cannot be with finding historical "laws" but with describing social processes. The model of conquest culture is a device for ordering data in such a way that conditions rather than situations, processes rather than events, will be revealed. Greater insight into both historical events and conditions can be achieved through the application of anthropological techniques such as the conquest culture model than through the reworking of old facts into a new narrative.

II. THE BRITISH BACKGROUND

The culture which was to dominate important areas of the Caribbean beginning with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was itself the result of social and economic shifts which permanently altered its appearance and which prepared it for a large role in the exploitation of the New World. From the beginning of the English Tudor period in 1485, the idea developed that attempts at foreign expansion and the promotion of commerce could be carried out through diplomacy and that the role of government in such a program was essential to its success. A nascent mercantilist policy was outlined by Henry VII in the Navigation Acts approved by Parliament in 1485 and 1489, allowing stipulated commodities to be imported only in British ships manned by British crews. At the same time, trade and tariff regulations were outlined and attempts made at their enforcement. The English navy was expanded beyond its policing role in Continental waters and new ships designed for distant exploration and trade. A new concept of nationalism, defined in terms of trade and international competition was taking shape.

> The mercantile policy, as understood in Tudor times, meant that the government applied itself deliberately

> and consciously to the fostering of sea-power, to the favouring of the interests of its own subjects by depressing those of foreigners, to the accumulation of the precious metals, and to the encouragement, by artificial means if necessary, of industries conducive to the national wealth. Henry pursued this policy consistently; his successors with occasional lapses due to political considerations; and the mercantilist system as a whole flourished with full vigor until the closing years of the eighteenth century (Williamson 1955:40).

The encouragement of trade was part of an important shift of economic power within England. The old gentry class was being displaced by a rising commercial class, and new economic principles based on land, speculation, and the dealings of merchants appeared. Tenants began occupying former estates, merchants pandered to new tastes for exotic goods, and a yeoman class appeared (Traill and Mann 1902: 86).

The exploration of a New World and competition for stakes in previously unknown regions claimed popular and financial attention. The Cabots had made voyages to North America as early as 1497 and 1509, and "the earliest records now extant show that a regular trade with Africa began in 1551. In that year, a partnership of London merchants sent out a ship named the Lion of 150 tons under the command of Thomas Wyndham" (Williamson 1955:82). Wyndham traded in Morocco and the Canary Islands for sugar, dates, almonds and molasses. Over the vigorous protests of Portugal, other merchants made voyages to Africa in 1555-58 and forced their way into the Spanish-Portuguese trade monopolies.

John Hawkins shipped Spanish manufactured goods to Brazil and the Caribbean and became the first Englishman to undertake slave supplying. Buying his slaves from Portuguese traders on the West African coast, usually at Sierra Leone, he carried his human cargo to Spanish ports in the Caribbean. Investors in his 1564 expedition included not only London merchants but, apparently, the Queen and her prime minister.

During this period the results of domestic social and economic readjustments in England were becoming apparent. In the first half of the sixteenth century, pauperism, begging, anti-foreign sentiment, and modern sounding complaints of urban decay characterized some areas of English life. Growing capitalist industry drew rural people into an unsettled urban environment. Prices rose rapidly but wages changed little. Unemployment and population increases added to the unrest, not only in urban but rural areas. The enclosure of land and its conversion from tillage to pasturage not only broke the old medieval agrarian relationships but helped create a poor, rural laboring class, a class long dependent on poor relief.

The British culture of the late sixteenth century formed the cultural base line for British dominance in a number of Caribbean colonies. The confiscations of Church property, changes in social classes and in land-use practices, price fluctuations, unemployment, and population growth

created a distress which "before it subsided, gave rise among men of original mind to an ambition to found 'plantations'--true and living offshoots of the English race--in the fair and vacant lands across the Atlantic. By so doing, they contended, they would turn criminals into honest men and provide a relief for the population of England which, as it seemed to them, was becoming excessive" (Williamson 1955:125-6).

With the accession of the Stuarts (1603), not only was the creation of colonies by private investment encouraged, but the government began taking a definite attitude toward such colonies and the "old colonial system" evolved. The establishment of a government department to supervise the colonies and experimental programs in central administration received legislative sanction. The concept of balance of trade was implemented by Navigation Acts and government support of private trade monopolies. Trading in Russia, the eastern Mediterranean, and in Africa, the monopolies were the risky but potentially highly profitable concerns of large-scale investors in English financial centers.

It is significant that "when dealing with pauperism, the Government [of James I] looked for remedies not to the poor law alone, but to the enforcement of numerous statutes regulating trade and industry, wages and prices" (Traill and Mann 1902:196) so that the concepts of

mercantilism and the relief of domestic problems through colonization neatly dovetailed. The earliest English colonization in the Caribbean was on St. Christopher in 1624, Barbados in 1627 and Montserrat and Antigua in 1632. The British were also active in Honduras and the Bahamas and these holdings prompted inquiry from Parliament as to "how they may be best managed and made useful for this Commonwealth; how the commodities thereof may be so multiplied and improved, as those Plantations alone may supply the Commonwealth with what it necessarily wants" (Williamson 1955:240). As these sentiments accumulated, the price rises, the commercial and harvest failures, and the "immigration of paupers from the rural districts" (Traill and Mann 1902:201) prompted attempts at forced emigration to the colonies in the hope that the socially unfit could somehow be turned into economic assets for the home country simply through being transplanted.

In the latter half of the 1600's, however, such faith in the transformation of human nature in the colonies had dried up. The returns on English labor in the tropics had been modest except for the tobacco supplied to the protected home market. The government ceased to encourage emigration and investors sought a new labor supply for their industries in the colonies. "It followed from these considerations that the policy of the time concerned itself primarily with developing colonies of the slave-holding,

plantation type, located in or near the tropics, and producing merchandise which would supplement rather than compete with that of the mother-country" (Williamson 1955: 261). It was realized that the colonies themselves were a potential market for English goods, a role nearly as important as that of suppliers of raw materials. The idea that the empire could be a self-contained trading unit was to last until replaced by the Industrial Revolution in England.

In the newly developing colonial system with its mercantilist basis, merchants in the colonies frequently acted as unofficial agents of the home government. Through them, the state sought control of economic activity for the purpose of national power, control of trade, and protection of monopolies. Following the Restoration, interest in settlement was high, and mercantilists in the Court and Parliament "pressed the doctrine of Trade Ascendancy in a narrower spirit than the statesmen of the day; in the course of the following century, it was this spirit which dominated national policy" (Woodward 1902:133).

Economics, however, were not the only interest of the British colonizers in the seventeenth century. There was always the distrust of Spain and concern for English safety on the seas. Settlement was viewed as a counterpoise to Spain and a reduction of English dependence on the Continent for trade goods. Oddly juxtaposed with the

removal of England's least desirable persons to the colonies was the sending of religious personnel into the New World, not to aid Englishmen but to eliminate heathenism, preferably before it was done by Spanish priests. The fear of Spain as a political, economic and religious contender was never allowed to fade. Out of motives of national interest and personal gain, the real expansion of the English colonies began.

III. THE DOMINANT CULTURE

The first colonization of Jamaica was a meager Spanish effort begun in 1509 on the northern coast of the island. St. Jago de la Vega, or Spanish Town, still an important urban center near Kingston, was founded around 1520. A search began for gold and natives, both for the enrichment of the colonizers and for Spain. Conversion of the Indians to Spanish Catholicism proceded as planned but little or no gold was found. Estates were then set up and the Indians forced into agriculture for the support of Spanish expeditions on the mainland. The Indians suffered and died so rapidly, however, that on June 5, 1513, the Spanish Admiral of the Indies authorized the importation of three negro slaves to Jamaica, providing they were Christians (Wright 1921). Indians from the mainland were also sought to replenish the labor supply as were occasional negroes. Although Jamaica was never popular as a place of settlement, the Spanish regarded it as a valuable supply base for their Caribbean activities. The forests were exploited for ship building and livestock raised for export and sale to ship's crews. Intrusion by the English began in 1597

with the plundering of Spanish Town and in 1635 with the occupation of Port Royal.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the Spanish had exterminated the Indians who had originally inhabited the island, largely through the forced labor on the estates and in the unproductive mining schemes, and through the spread of European diseases. Enough African slaves had been imported as an alternate labor supply that when the English take-over began in 1655, the population of Jamaica was estimated at 1500 negro slaves and 1500 poorly defended Spaniards (Lucas 1890).

A badly trained, insufficiently armed, and uncoordinated English force set out to take Hispaniola as the initial step in Cromwell's "Western Design" to pressure the Spanish in the Caribbean and to assert English shipping rights. Repulsed at that well fortified island and not willing to return home with nothing to show, the English force turned to Jamaica and blundered its way to final victory in 1660. In the fighting, the Africans, who stood with the Spanish, were described by one of the English commanders as "bold and bloody: a people that know not what the laws and customs of civil nations mean" and an enemy with whom he could neither "capitulate or discourse" (Wright 1930:120). In 1660, however, large numbers of negroes defected to the English and a settlement between England and Spain was made. Spain lost an

undeveloped but strategic island in its New World empire, and England gained what was to become one of its most prosperous and notorious colonial possessions.

The British objective in Jamaica was "to pacify the country and to bring its natives into recognition of the English State and Church" (Wright 1930:121). This objective was to be achieved through attracting immigrants from other English settlements for the exploitation of the island's resources, mineral and human. The negroes refused, however, to return to their old status as subjugated laborers on the estates and many went into hiding in the mountain areas of the island's interior. The English military force left in Jamaica was poor settlement material and, lacking sufficient labor, never did succeed in establishing a vigorous agriculture colony. Piracy and buccaneering disrupted regular commerce with the home country and with other settlements. It also attracted many from the English conquering force who then stationed themselves on the northern and western shores of the island. So "despite government propaganda, despite low taxation and the promise of virgin land, there was no such wave of migration toward Jamaica as there had been towards Barbados and the Leewards in the 'thirties'" (Parry and Sherlock 1957:61).

Prior to active colonization in the West Indies, with descriptions and stories of the New World widely

circulated in England, "planting" a colony meant social reform at home through the elimination of undesirable persons. Gold and silver mining, the sale of manufactured goods to the aborigines, and the discovery of a westward route to Asia were honorable reasons for removing a part of the population to remote areas of the world. But none of these mercantilist expectations were met, as increasing experience in the colonies demonstrated, and social reform through emigration could hardly be expected to come about. Gold and silver were not available in significant quantities nor was there labor to retrieve it. The number of American Indians was seriously exaggerated, aside from the naive assumption that they were a ready made market for English businessmen. And, of course, no short cut to Asia was found.

Most early English outposts were intended as trading and supply stations for English ships, but the possibility of raising exotic crops with good profit was almost immediately recognized. Some of the earliest planters were men who sought their wealth in as short a time as possible, enabling them to return to England. But few succeeded, and small planters intent on staying in the Caribbean began to occupy some of the islands. By 1630, "the regular planting of tropical produce was now recognized as the prime incentive of the future" (Williamson 1926:10). Although negro slaves made their

appearance early in the English colonies, 1619 in Virginia, the labor for running the first small plantations was indentured and white.

> The first non-Hispanic European settlements in the Antilles were not slave plantations; they were communities of free-born farmers, or of indentured servants who eventually earned their freedom and became yeomen. The conversion of such communities into great slave plantations was accomplished with remarkable rapidity, once the slave trade expanded, the European markets for plantation staples was secured, and the capital to establish plantation enterprises was forthcoming (Mintz 1964:xvi).

Colonization began on St. Christopher in 1624 and by 1629 Barbados had a planter population of 1600. Intense rivalries often existed between the island colonies and isolated incidents of violence were common.

These earliest planters, operating on a modest scale, felt the influence of the home government primarily through trade and duty regulation. Tobacco was a major crop and trade restrictions encouraged its cultivation. When the market became glutted, however, the home government ineffectually tried to get planters to diversify their crops, mainly in Virginia and Barbados. Ruinous tobacco prices finally forced the search for substitutes and sugar was introduced in Barbados from Brazil early in the 1640's (Guerra y Sanchez 1964:12). Unlike tobacco, the profitable production of sugar required large land holdings, gangs of laborers, draft animals, expensive machinery and large capital backing. London and especially Dutch merchants who were sensitive to

these demands provided those things which made large scale sugar production possible.

Life in the tropics for the small English planter was hard. Indentured labor was necessary and the profits were not great. Low prices in the tobacco market made the situation worse. Sugar production through large scale enterprises finally forced the small planters out.[2] Large estates replaced the many small farms of the original planters; enslaved negro labor, that of indentured whites. With the free land gone and the replacement of small scale farming nearly complete, "a pitiful emigration of dispossessed small-holders left Barbados" for England, North America, Surinam and Jamaica.

An accurate description of the population in the Caribbean at this time would necessarily be based on little evidence.

> There is no systematic record of the number of negro slaves introduced into the Caribees at this early period. At Barbados, it is thought to have been inconsiderable before 1640, the planters relying principally on white labor. At St. Christopher, on the other hand, the negroes were already an important element in the population of the French quarter. . . . Where statistics are lacking it is unsafe to dogmatize but there is perhaps a connection between the employment of negroes by the French and their own shortage of white immigrants; the English, having plenty of immigrants [found] it unnecessary to recruit black labor" (Williamson 1926:149).

One interesting description of the early Caribbean is found in a journal dating from 1655. The author, who had seen Barbados at a time of rapid change, wrote:

"This Illand is the Dunghill wharone England doth cast forth its rubidg: Rodgs and hors and such like peopel are those which are generally Broght heare" (Pitman 1917: 6). That these sentiments faithfully report conditions in Barbados seems likely considering then current proposals in England concerning the relief of overpopulation. That the description applies to Jamaica as well is suggested by the fact that Jamaica had an unsavory reputation among the colonists because the buccaneers headquartered there, the Spanish had never developed it, the earliest colonizing effort by the English was a failure, many runaway negroes lived in the mountains, and the climate was believed unhealthy since so many of Cromwell's military force had died of yellow fever, dysentary, and other diseases.

> This prevented colonists of good quality being recruited in Barbados or St. Christopher, the most evidentally suitable places from which to obtain immigrants. Only a few thousand settlers who were the offscourings of the colonies could be persuaded to migrate, and they were so unsatisfactory that they added greatly to the disorder and distress in the new settlements (Newton 1933: 220).

It has also been claimed by some writers that reprieved prisoners and vagrants "were shipped over by contractors among the London merchants, who were granted large areas of land in return" (Newton 1933:220). Such is entirely possible but the dramatic nature of this kind of information

is also subject to exaggeration. Many forced-settlement proposals were made, with the most diverse motives and aims, but few were actually carried out. It seems fair to say that whatever the criminal element in the settlement population, to build a description of the British profile in the Caribbean around them would be to overstate their importance as a class.

Success in the colonies depended on a knowledge of agriculture techniques suitable to the environment, a market in the home country for the planter's products, land available for exploitation, emigrants willing to endure colonial life, and financiers interested in foreign investment. "Land, capital, and labour, these were the three elements . . . necessary for successful colonization" (Williamson 1926:215). In Jamaica all these requirements were met. Systematic settlement began there in 1664, the Dutch supplying the English much of the machinery, capital, and negro labor.

> Emigrants from Barbados formed a substantial proportion of the settlers, sugar was the main crop, and estates were large almost from the very beginning, some over 5000 acres and very few under 150. In 1673 the population was 7,700 white and 9,500 black. The white population remained almost constant for fifty years, but the number of negro slaves in the same period rose to 74,000 (Parry and Sherlock 1957:69).

The organization and effective operation of the sugar plantations soon made Jamaica a major center of commerce in the Caribbean. Through Jamaica, manufactured

goods and slaves were sold to the Spanish, whose payment in gold and silver enriched England. The Assiento, "that device by which the Spanish colonies were stocked with negro slaves" (Nettels 1931:1), brought Jamaica the major share of Spanish slave sales. The planters, however, were not happy with the prosperity of the slave dealers at the docks and complained that the Spanish market had raised the price of slaves, that the better slaves were sold to Spanish rather than English planters, and that English ships protecting the slave convoys were ignoring the pirates. The Royal African Company which supplied the slaves did prefer dealing with the Spanish and not until the company's monopoly was abolished in 1697 and legal recognition given the interlopers (Nettles 1931:11) did the Jamaican planters feel that they were getting the labor supply they needed.

At this point we see, first, the emergence of the more obvious elements of the British profile in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica, and, second, the problem of using the data within the orthodox narrative-history framework. One student of the area has claimed that "the West Indian planters . . . represented the capitalist class, were often connected with the landed gentry, were Anglicans, and championed the social and political conceptions held by the rural aristocracy of England" (Pitman 1917:1). To the extent that this statement indicates

the general background of the planter class, it is probably correct. However, it deals with only a segment of the European population in Jamaica (admittedly a powerful one) and, more importantly, fails to consider the differential importance of each one of these planter characteristics. Nor is the mechanism whereby these elements impose themselves upon the developing culture examined. It is at this point that traditional historians as well as traditional anthropologists lose their grip on some of the most important aspects of the culture-change process. The historians are little interested in European culture in a colonial setting except as it interacts politically, economically and militarily with the affairs of the European continent. The anthropologist is too concerned with the receptivity of non-European peoples to European culture to consider the social changes experienced by the Europeans. The Anglican background of the planter class means precisely nothing in the acculturation situation until we understand how that background modifies the contact situation. Nor do references to a capitalistic economic orientation "explain" the plantation system until we see how that background is used to exploit a new physical environment under labor conditions drastically different from those in England. To state the elements in the profile as a kind of trait list is never enough. The acculturation situation is a dynamic one and the

elements in it become processes. When they are treated as processes, we will begin to see what social and historical change is all about. The conditions under which slavery and the plantations developed, and the problems, some unrecognized by the planters, in their production system reveal how the British profile was developing in Jamaica.

The slave trade was part of a shipping triangle; the successful completion of the triangle was necessary for the realization of any considerable profit. Ships left England for West Africa carrying manufactured goods to be sold there. Slaves were bought at the trading company's "factories" or stations on the West African coast and put on ships for the infamous "middle passage" to the Caribbean. In the Caribbean, the slaves were sold and sugar loaded aboard for sale in England. The completion of this triangle could take from six months to a year or more, depending on the supply of slaves available, the demand for them in the Caribbean, competition from other European powers, trade wars, health conditions on shipboard, the weather, and any number of unexpected contingencies. The treatment of the slaves during the middle passage, grim in its details, gradually improved since it was more profitable to supply healthy merchandise. The slave ships were well armed and carried large crews. If treatment of Africans was brutal, as it often

was, it was because "employment in slavers was not only exacting, it was obviously unpleasant, and often dangerous and nerve-racking. Apart from the ever-present danger of insurrection, ships lay off-shore for weeks on end in hot and unhealthy estuaries. An outbreak of infectuous disease, in the packed conditions of the middle passage, could carry off the greater part of company and cargo" (Parry and Sherlock 1957:107). Discipline among the crews was rigid; the officers were trained to keep a well-ordered ship. The slaves, packed like logs of wood on specially built decks, required at least minimal care to be kept alive during the passage. The mortality rate among them was high, often so high that the trip was a financial failure. Suicide, murder, suffocation and disease killed so many that a Privy Council committee investigating these conditions "found the average death-rate on the Middle Passage for the years 1680 to 1688 to be 23½ per cent" and by 1734 to be down to 10 per cent (Davies 1957:292). Further, "it is significant that the death rate among the crews was usually about the same as that among the slaves themselves" (Parry and Sherlock 1957:107). Seamen seem not to have been particularly well paid on the slavers and usually preferred fishing vessels or those not trading in slaves. Nor were individuals in the slave trade subject to any particular stigma in England, contrary to the

arguments of the abolitionists and their portrayal of slavers as demonic individuals. This type of trade was difficult and exacting and "the outrage to morality which the Middle Passage must always be should not obscure the fact that it was also an outrage to sound economics" (Davies 1957:294).

Between 1673 and 1711 as many as 90,000 African slaves were brought into the English Caribbean of which nearly 35,000 went to Jamaica (Davies 1957:363). The source of these slaves was largely the Kramanti or "Coromantyn," the Ibo of the Niger delta, and "the Mandigo, from the region between the Niger and the Gambia, [who] also were brought to Jamaica in fairly large numbers" (Curtin 1955:24). Prior to this period, slave importation had not been a major shipping concern, but the demand for labor in Jamaica by the sugar plantations brought as many as 610,000 Africans to British ports between 1700 and 1786 (MacInnes 1934). Not all of these stayed in British colonies but were sold to the Spanish. Pitman (1917:391-2) lists the number of slave ships, slaves imported, and slaves exported from Jamaica for the 73 year period 1702 to 1775. For 14 of those years the number of slaves imported exceeded 10,000 per year and for one year, 1774, was 18,448. The number of slaves exported from Jamaica never exceeded 5,000 per year except for the years 1730 to 1733. Balancing slave imports and

exports for this 73 year span, we find over 360,000 negroes left in Jamaica. Broom (1954:116), however, indicates a total population for Jamaica in 1775 at only 209,000. If these figures are even approximately accurate, they become dramatic evidence of the failure of the slave population to reproduce itself. This would support one of the contentions of this paper that Jamaican slave-based sugar production was neither economical nor self-sustaining, as many planters came to see late in the eighteenth century, their protestations to the contrary.

It has been argued that slavery was not a racial but an economic phenomenon. The use of people in forced labor--West Indian aborigines, poor indentured whites, African negroes--depended on their economic availability rather than racial factors (Williams 1944). This is true, especially for the early period of slavery before the Afro-Euro-Jamaican culture had really "crystallized." But economic determinism will not explain the rationalizations of the planters for slave labor following the economic ruin of the plantations. Complaints were heard early that the "English race" was unsuited to tropical agriculture, and that the peoples native to such a climate must be sought to make it successful. Although it was not until a relatively coherent and widespread racial ideology developed (the myth of the "white man's burden") that the role of ideas was obviously significant,

ideological as well as economic determinants of behavior were important. In the early stages of crystallization, however, slave economics rather than racial doctrines were the focus of the developing colony.

Economically, the combination of two factors, "planters and merchants, coupled with colonial agents in England, constituted the powerful West India interest of the eighteenth century" (Williams 1944:92). In a description of the plantation set-up, we see the British profile taking shape:

> The character and habits of the European community, no less than those of the negroes, were modified and shaped by the growth of plantation slavery. The planters, or at least the more successful among them, soon came to form a small close-grained oligarchy in the islands. Living as they did, surrounded by men of another colour, concentrated on getting rich quick in strange surroundings and in a trying climate, they naturally appear acquisitive, quarrelsome, often ruthless; but they must have been men of enterprise and courage. They, together with a handful of lawyers, doctors and merchants, ran the politics of the islands. Below them in the social and economic scale were the various grades of plantation employees--overseers, 'bookkeepers' or foremen, and the skilled tradesmen, carpenters, masons, smiths and the like, who, with the help of slaves, maintained the buildings and estates. Farther down the scale came the considerable but dwindling body of poor whites. The poor white labourers on the estates in the seventeenth century worked alongside the slaves, lived in similar circumstances, and interbred with them (Parry and Sherlock 1957:72).

One significant but over-emphasized aspect of the plantation system was its operation through absentee ownership, particularly in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The actual owners of a plantation usually

resided in England and left management to attorneys who "were the real rulers of island society" (Parry and Sherlock 1957:155). These attorneys filled public offices, controlled the movement of people and goods on the island, and bickered among themselves. The absentee owner was willing to leave his property in the hands of a manager so long as it showed a yearly profit. The rationale for absenteeism was the "unhealthy" climate in Jamaica, a lack of sophisticated society and entertainment, the better education facilities available in England, and probably a distaste for living in the middle of a slave population (Parry and Sherlock 1957:154). It has also been pointed out that "the initial [sugar price] rise, shortly before 1750, inaugerated a general exodus of members of the plantation circle for England, where their ample incomes enabled them to indulge freely in conspicuous consumption" (Ragatz 1931:9).

There can be no question that the plantation system provided prosperity for some men, despite the uneconomical nature of the system. The balance of trade between Jamaica and England was usually in Jamaica's favor (Pitman 1917:264), and many plantation related businesses flourished in Jamaica all through the eighteenth century. The "materialism" of the island was often commented upon in travelers' books. The failure of the plantation economy, a failure which set in before

Emancipation, even before the abolition of the slave trade, can be seen in the problems of the daily operation of the plantations themselves.

The collapse of the sugar industry in the nineteenth century is usually blamed on absenteeism, the developing sugar industry in Cuba and Brazil, the abolition of the slave traffic, the loss of the protected home sugar market, malpractice on the estates, the drastic drop in sugar prices, free trade, and, ultimately, the commercial crisis in the United Kingdom in the middle of the century which forced the closure of most Caribbean banks. But the economic failure of the sugar estates preceded all this. Using Grenada as indicative of the British West Indian economy about 1770, Hall (1961:340) argues that although the plantations were large scale capitalistic enterprises, "they could indulge in little rational capital accounting. Consequently, they lacked the basic permissives of calculability of success or failure in their business. They seldom had any realistic idea of how the enterprise stood financially, or what its prospects were." (In the nineteenth century the surviving plantations were more rationally operated because of emancipation, currency reform, corporate finance, new production techniques, and the laissez-faire Pax Britannica, elements providing a basis for greater predictability and planning.) The protected

sugar market raised prices to consumers and, argued some planters, restricted sales even within the home market. Shipping conditions surrounding the slave traffic, the inefficiency of local government, the risks of war, riots and hurricanes, violently fluctuating prices, fear of slave risings and raids from runaway slaves living in the mountains (the Maroons), and the fact that estate property carried charges on expected but unearned profits kept rational planning to a minimum. Mintz (1959) notes that each sugar colony ruined its soil and that the exhaustion of soil required heavier capital investment to get a profit. This was followed by overspeculation, high interest rates, competition from other sugar producers, bankruptcy and abandonment of the estates. In 1775, Jamaica had 775 plantations of which twenty-three per hundred sold for debt, twelve per hundred were held by receivers and seven per hundred were abandoned. "Land, lack of capital and new economic forces ruined them. . . . Emancipation in 1838 did little more than confirm and reinforce the ruin of the planter class" (Mintz 1959: 275-6). It can be argued that the English were not attempting to set up a capitalistic[3] system in the West Indies but this cannot change the fact that the type of economic orientation they did seek to develop was a failure and that the planters survived only until they could no longer ride the crest of uncertainties in

planning and mistakes in management. When the doctrines of mercantilism were replaced by free trade, British planters were not prepared to meet their competition through the modification of production techniques because, as we shall see, they were not willing to alter their perception of a color-based organization of society.

Government in the Caribbean was one of the areas in which the planter class failed to act effectively and decisively to prevent their own economic ruin.

> The preservation of old variety was most evident, as might be expected, in the field of local government. . . . The people who went out from England in the early years to settle and plant . . . transferred to these lands the pattern of local government to which they were accustomed. . . . In Jamaica and in the Cayman Islands also the parish vestry began to function at an early date (Parry and Sherlock 1957:205).

The vestry taxed free-holders to maintain roads, the parson, the poor, and to provide a number of other services, none of them ever performed very effectively. The government for Jamaica was made up of the elected Assembly, an appointed Council, and a Governor appointed in England, a system which operated to obstruct the Governor and to insure minimal governmental interference in the affairs of the planters. "Certainly the sugar revolution did nothing to weaken the attachment of the British West Indians [the English] to the representative institutions and the legal guarantees of personal liberty which they had brought with them from England" (Parry and

Sherlock 1957:74). That liberty was expressed in the hostility of the Assembly and the free-holders toward centralized authority. Legal battles over regulation of slaves and estates absorbed most of the energy of local government. "England's tradition of representative government meant that, like as not, slave laws would be made by slave owners, and so they were" (Mintz 1959:583). The most clearly operating element of the British profile and the one with the most direct background in the English experience was this legal and governmental structure. It had the effect of "stripping off" the larger African institutions of the slaves (Herskovits and Herskovits 1947:7) and of leaving the more intimate details of African life which were of little concern to the planter. English law applied only to the white planters; Jamaican law, a legal system of its own in the sense that it dealt with new problems, was based upon the English pattern and designed to protect and preserve the English legal heritage only for the white class. That the motivation behind the Jamaican legal structure was racially rather than economically based is seen in the denial of English legal and social privileges to even the wealthiest members of the free colored and free black classes.

The structure of the Jamaican population helps explain this racial concern. In 1673 the Europeans

composed 45 per cent of the population of Jamaica, Africans 55 per cent. By 1793 the percentages were 10 and 90, respectively. By 1844 the European group was down to 4 per cent of the total population, and in 1943 it was only 1 per cent (Broom 1954:116). Reacting to this trend, the planter's Assembly imposed restrictions on travel, selling and assembly by negroes and passed "deficiency laws" to control the negro-to-white population ratio. Manumission was regulated more carefully, and slave-held property was not protected by law. The principles of natural and civil rights as found in English common law did not operate for negroes, whether they were slaves or not. The apparent motives underlying slave laws were fear of rebellion, "ever the nightmare of the English," the preservation of subordinate-superior social relations between Africans and Europeans, and a sense of minimum treatment for slaves to insure their continued economic productivity (Smith 1945). Coupled with this racialistic legalism was the exclusiveness of English Christianity, the verbal but ineffectual concern for teaching the African the moral precepts of European civilization, and the absence of negroes from the political, religious, social, and intellectual (such as it was) life of the small white ruling group. The sanctions which maintained social distance between whites and blacks crossed class lines (except in matters of sex and family organization) and

even the meanest white could assert "certain inalienable rights" over the wealthiest free negro who himself may have been a planter. There can be little economic basis for this aversion among whites to social intercourse with negroes. An ideology of race is as implicit in the laws as it is in cross-racial sexual contacts, and it is that ideology which contributed substantially to the perpetuation of slave-sugar economics even after the enterprise had proved financially fatal.

What, then, are the features of the English profile which appear decisive once the economic problems of the Jamaican plantation system are recognized even by the planters themselves? The decisive features are a leadership vacuum and an intellectual failure which at the critical termination period of slavery early in the nineteenth century entangled the British in a negative rather than positive reaction to their situation. Neither of these failures were inevitable, social existence being characterized more as a series of intentional and unintentional choices rather than large, impersonal, uncontrollable processes.[4] The problems could have been anticipated had the planters viewed their situation more objectively, as a few of them actually did.

The Abolition Act of 1808 put England outside the slave trade at a time when half of all slave traffic to the New World depended on English ships. In 1811 Parliament declared slaving a felony and in 1827 a piracy,

punishable by death. Although the trade continued, particularly to Cuba and Brazil, economists were joining reformers in pointing out its wastefulness. In 1833, the Emancipation Act gave legal freedom to all slaves in English colonies. A period of "apprenticeship" intended to ease the transition from slave to free labor production was terminated prematurely in 1838 because the former slaves refused to continue their old tasks under a new name and because the planters made it impossible for the negroes to function as a free labor group. "All too often the attitude of the white planters--those of the colored planters were basically similar--had not undergone change since slavery" (Knox 1963:7). Former slaves were served eviction notices and many were deprived not only of their homes but of the attention to clothing, tools, and medical needs they had come to expect of the plantation owners. A landlord-tenant relationship was substituted for a master-slave relationship, the negroes still subject to white power but in a new relationship lacking social precedent. Driven off their home sites and denied their small provision grounds and garden plots, the negroes moved to independent village settlements in the interior and no amount of indentured labor, East Indian or Chinese, could replace them. Attempts by the Jamaican government to induce immigration and to restrict occupation of waste land by negroes generally failed. The

planters, blaming their failure on lack of labor, developed a "belief in the essential disequilibrium between Jamaican land and labor [which] became the central point in the economic creed of the planting class: it was used to explain their failure in much the same way as it was used to predict that failure" (Curtin 1955:133). This rationalization became a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy which the planters reinforced by their own obstructionist behavior.

The intellectual failure of the planters has been well documented and may be considered one of the most important of the unintentional elements in the British profile at the time of Emancipation. The "crucial problem is to find what determinants led the Jamaicans to British sources for some solutions, and to their own background for others" (Curtin 1955:205). The sources for handling their old problems in Jamaica--rebellion, organization of the estates, importation of labor, feeding, clothing, and caring for the slaves--came from their own experience. But when confronted with Emancipation and new labor and organization problems, the planters fell back on their English heritage--capitalistic labor organization, landlord-tenant relationships--and applied principles which would not work in the new situation. "For the European Jamaican, the intellectual problem in its broadest setting was to find a viable set of

ideas to explain the proper working of a free-labor tropical society. . . . Thus Jamaicans of the ruling class had only two readily available sources of ideas, neither of which really fit the situation in which they found themselves" (Curtin 1955:102-3). One source was England, a free-labor society and "a temperate country entering a period of political democracy, economic growth, urbanization and industrialization," and the other was Jamaica where "in the reconstruction of a new tropical society [the problem] was to build on the model of the old with the single omission of slavery" (Curtin 1955:103). The planters were "utterly frustrated" in their efforts "to bring order into their ideas, attitudes and behavior," for in economics where "the planters used the term 'slave-labour' it is quite clear that they were thinking in terms of capital rather than labour" (Hall 1962:314,307). They attempted to deal with a population forcefully removed from the status of slavery as though it were still in slavery and ought to be available to man the means of production in a free-labor society.

The basis of this failure, largely economic in its consequences, must be found in the planter's perception of the African as a distinct and inferior variety of Homo sapiens. The racism of the planters is seen in their confusion as to whether the negro was a man or an item of livestock. An Act of the Jamaican legislature in

1807 declared that "for payment of debts and legacies, all slaves shall be deemed and taken as all other goods and chattels" (Hall 1962:306). Slaves had high value, higher than machinery, and "this perhaps helps to explain the generally slow and unwilling introduction of agricultural implements, such as the plough and the harrow, during slavery. Any sensible man with capital would probably have preferred to buy slaves rather than ploughs" (Hall 1962:308-9). The slaves lived almost entirely in an economic relationship to the whites, and when that relationship was broken the assumption that negroes were inferior beings persisted. It made no difference that their racist ideology should be expressed in economic terms, as indeed it was following Emancipation. "British ideas and British attitudes helped reinforce the materialism of the Jamaican ruling class. . . . [and] Jamaicans not only emphasized economic thought, but also cast non-economic thought in economic forms" (Curtin 1955:104-5).

The white's racial orientation helps account for the persistence of an economic form which had ceased to operate economically. As early as 1761, a Jamaican law sought to restrict the transfer of white owned property to negroes because it "tends to destroy the distinctions requisite and absolutely necessary to be kept up in this island between white persons and Negroes" (Wesley 1934:

143). The importance of racial distinctions became so developed that when the economic basis of these distinctions was undermined a racist ideology prevented accompanying alterations in social relationships. The plantations were losing money, and competitive sugar producers on other islands using technologically advanced production methods were allowed to enter Jamaica's formerly protected sugar market. The Jamaican planters lacked capital for investment in new machinery and had no labor force to operate it anyway. Slavery itself had been an economic fiasco because the slave population was not reproducing itself and, although it was cheaper to replace slaves than to keep them alive, the uncertainties of business planning based on slave labor undermined the financial stability of the estates. Why, then, did the planters insist on the continuation of slave sugar manufacturing as the best possible means of production[5] when the economic facts of the system were contrary to its success? The answer seems to be in the social structure, based upon racist ideology, both the structure and the ideology outliving the economic forces which shaped them. Social structure, not the political maneuverings of legislatures and parliaments nor the mechanics of economic "laws" such as supply and demand, must explain the persistence of features of a slave society after slavery had been abolished. Those features of the British

profile in Jamaica which demonstrate this process are those seen in the intellectual failure and the leadership vacuum of the ruling class. At a crucial period in their history, the planters attempted to assert their social dominance while admitting their economic defeat. The phrasing of dominance in economic terms was their sincere rationalization for the color-based social structure that they would not abandon. The fact that they could not modify that structure is testimony of their adherence to it and of their failure to appreciate its basis in other than economic institutions.

IV. THE EFFECTS OF THE DOMINANT CULTURE

The historical situation in Jamaica as it has been described varied slightly from

> the classic pattern of plantation growth . . . original settlement by yeoman colonists; destruction of the yeoman community by massive African slave importations and of yeoman agriculture by plantation growth; market crisis as new competitors appeared (sometimes followed by the collapse of local plantation enterprise); and finally, slave emancipation or revolution (Mintz 1964:xvii).

Through a consideration of the importance of particular ideas in the planter's interpretations, correct and incorrect, of the social pressures to which they were subjected and the way in which these ideas obstructed creative reactions to those pressures, we have anticipated discussion of the immediate features of the dominant British profile, those events which occured, in the terms of the acculturation Memorandum, during "continuous first-hand contact" (Redfield _et_. _al_. 1936).

Most relevant at this point is clarification of the meaning of the term "slavery" in the contact situation. The tendency to reify the institution of slavery, thereby precluding any recognition that slavery exists in numerous forms, has been noted by Smith (1954)

in a cross-cultural study of slavery in two distinct social and historical circumstances. Rather than slavery <u>qua</u> slavery, slavery "involves in every historical instance a way of life, a conception of the human condition, an ideology of society, and a set of economic arrangements, in short, a cultural apparatus, by which slaves and masters are related" (Mintz 1961:579). "The outcome is very different according to the structure and ethos of the recruiting group" (Smith 1954:244). The English tradition of slavery (nine per cent of the English population is recorded as slave in the Domesday Book) did not transfer in any significant way to the New World, and "slavery of the particular British West Indian . . . sort probably had no precedent, legal or otherwise, anywhere in modern times" (Mintz 1961:583). The appearance of slavery was more dependent on ecological, economic, and political factors and particularly on the power of the ruling class in the colony itself. In the British Caribbean where slavery and the plantation system was defined in terms of a capitalistic industry, "human beings, their labor, their lives--that is their production and reproduction--[were] transformed into things" (Mintz 1961:580), which meant that "the association of masters and slaves was normally restricted to the processes of sugar production, domestic work, and assymetrical concubinage, the relation being normally

specific, limited, and expressing marked social distance and cleavages of interest" (Smith 1954:248-9). This, then, is a definition of slavery for the sugar producing British Caribbean in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. It is this concept of slavery operating "as a formative principle of social structure" (Smith 1954:287) which guided the behavior of the ruling planters and their attorneys as well as the behavior of the slaves themselves.

The plantation system was without precedent in European history. More than an innovation in agricultural production, it was partly a consequence of large scale markets in European cities and of growing preferences for exotic crops (Mintz 1964:xiv). "The slave plantation, producing some basic commodity for the mother country, was a special, emergent capitalistic form of industrial organization" (Mintz 1961:584). Because it was situated in an area where free land was usually available and where the population was relatively sparse, it was forced to rely on slave rather than free labor.[6] The work of the estates was organized through a hierarchy of powers: the overseer or attorney at the top, followed by the white bookkeepers (foremen), the slave gang drivers, and finally the field negroes. Among the slaves themselves divisions into domestic, field, gang driver, and craftsman tasks produced considerable concern

for status and a basis for strong interpersonal tension. Hostility between creole and African-born slaves was common, the creole slaves usually accepting their slave status more easily. These hostilities were frequently expressed through Obeah men, individuals who themselves seem to have had difficulty adjusting and who flourished on the plantations because of the negro's fear of white reprisals and of Obeah counter-magic. Slaves had a strong sense of participation in the rounds of plantation life, which helps explain the devastating impact, psychologically and socially, of their eviction from the plantations following Emancipation. Although slave-based sugar production was nearly financially impossible for the owners, the system had been "economically rewarding to the slave labourers" (Smith 1953:76), and in the master-slave relationship slaves had come to expect and masters to give numerous small, personal favors as incentives to labor peace. Significantly, "it seems clear that considerations of status rather than economic forces maintained the social structure at this period," an observation supported by the fact that the rational readjustment of economic patterns never came from within the island community but always from without (Smith 1953:78).

From the plantation system developed two of the most significant features of Jamaican culture, features

which still exist on the island. The population and labor policies of the British created a female oriented family structure distinct from the family forms of West Africa and Europe. The economics and ecology of the plantations gave rise to conditions favorable to a peasant class which expanded and occupied most of the island's rural areas following Emancipation.

On the earliest plantations late in the seventeenth century, planters eager to insure a continuous labor supply bought male and female slaves in about equal numbers on the assumption that reproduction would keep the labor force high. Under the harsh plantation regime, however, where the life of a slave laborer was seven or eight years, the population failed to reproduce itself and early in the 1700's slave buyers began prefering males. At this point, the planter's commitment to the slave trade was complete. Slaves were cheap and the planters were little concerned with the unordered mating which resulted from the demographic imbalance they were creating. Late in the eighteenth century, however, when sugar prices were down and slave prices up, fertility was encouraged. Tax reliefs were given to slave holders keeping children, and slave mothers were given reduced work loads and small presents during pregnancy. Little hospitals called "hot houses" were set up and financed by the plantation owners. These attempts

to reduce slave mortality did not change the funda-mental slave-master relationship since financial rewards for keeping slave children on the estates did not go to the parents but the slave owner. No encouragement of marriage existed since fertility was not considered a necessary aspect of a permanent family, and there was no legal prohibition against selling and trading slaves as individuals rather than family units. Also, the prerogatives of parentage went to females rather than males, "the responsibility for reproduction, it seems, was firmly and exclusively fixed upon the females" (Roberts 1957:217). The weakness of the slave family appeared as a consequence of these population control measures.

Yet population control by itself does not explain the appearance of the female oriented family. That control was exerted on a population having its own family structure background. As M. J. and F. S. Herskovits (1947) have pointed out, the role of the women was most important in those areas which were least affected by the dominant British profile in Jamaica. West African polygyny in which each wife and her children had their own hut within a compound and where the wife had little voice in the affairs of the larger family group estab-lished a condition which survived slavery, a condition where "the father, as in Africa, remains on the periphery

of the nucleus constituting the household, whose center is the mother, a grandmother, an aunt" (Herskovits and Herskovits 1947:299). We are not justified, then, in considering the Jamaican "matrifocal" family as simply the logical, functional outcome of slavery. This family form is widespread among modern Jamaican peasants because it also has a historical basis in their West African cultural background. The rural peasant family, analyzed by Cohen from the angle of interpersonal relations (1955) and as the product of antecedent historical circumstances (1956), must be viewed as the result of a total historical experience and not simply as a "survival" or as a "functioning unit" within a synchronic system.

One of the impositions of the English on their slaves was the denial of religious and legal sanctions covering marriage. Not even baptism altered a slave's status. Slave parentage was traced by the owner to the mother only and no concept of negro illegitimacy existed as far as the whites were concerned. The shifting nature of sexual contacts meant that one slave woman had a number of children who were half-siblings and lacked any sense of a common lineage. No lineage or kin group existed to back up a man in marriage or to exchange property with the wife's kin as part of the marriage contract. Lacking this traditional marriage-validating arrangement and recognizing that a marriage contract would

not be allowed to interfere with the owner's rights over his slaves, the African male had no recognizable basis for marriage. Living arrangements and sexual contacts between couples were necessarily transitory, with the offspring credited to and left with the mother (Smith 1953). "The statistical dominance of mother-centered families in the West Indies in general and in Jamaica in particular indicates the extreme degree to which the mother's centrality in the family is entrenched in the culture" (Cohen 1956:667).

The consequences of the mating patterns which developed under slavery are seen in the structure of Jamaican peasant society today. Sexual gratification prior to marriage and involving a series of partners is expected. If offspring result from these contacts, they remain with the female who returns to her own mother. (Illegitimacy in the West Indies has been variously estimated at between fifty and seventy-five per cent.) Families made up of several generations of females and their children are common. The incest taboo applies only to members of this living unit. Wealth and property are held individually and reflect the highly individualistic relations which exist not only between members of the family but of the "community." (The term "community" can only be applied loosely since practically no sense of community or community organization and

leadership exists.) Husband and wife often express regret over their marriage, are not happy together, and even pilfer from each other's carefully guarded purse. Generosity is rare and gossip common, especially when it is feared a mate or neighbor may have a slight advantage in money, land, or a particularly good crop. Slavery began with the central, dependable figure of the mother so that at the present time "the theme of sociological rejection of males continues to be manifest . . . and there are strong forces militating against the establishment of solidary ties" (Cohen 1956:681,683).

It would be an error to assume the vitality of the traditional English, Christian family in the same contact situation which so obviously modified the African family. The model of conquest culture postulates changes not only in the subordinate but dominant group and the changes which took place in the English family had important implications for a growing class of negroes in Jamaica. The white class was a heterogeneous group containing what Smith (1953:56) has called "principal" and "secondary" elements characterized by a "marked excess of males." This class contained planters, plantation employees, professionals and merchants born on the island, immigrants, and settlers "retired" on small estates. Among "principal" whites the keeping of a white wife plus a "colored" (mixed African and European) concubine was

apparently the preferred pattern of mating. The offspring of the white and his concubine were as much a part of the family as the children of his wife. A man frequently sent both his white and colored children to England for their education. A white wife was expected to honor her husband's relationship to his concubine and sometimes even act as godmother to his colored children. Among "secondary" whites, however, white wives, families, and the legal sanction of marriage were rare. These individuals, sometimes referred to as "white negroes" because of their close business contacts with the slaves, even "seem to have been inhibited from marrying by fear of loss of employment" (Smith 1953:57). These men, unable to manumit their children or black wives, contributed to a growing class of colored slaves, just as the "principal" whites contributed to a growing class of free colored individuals.

Colored slaves rarely worked in the fields but had high status plantation jobs. Free colored planters, known for their harshness toward their black slaves, were usually well educated. Among both groups of colored individuals "acculturation by adoption of white behavior and institutions was a necessary aspect of preoccupation with improvement of status for coloured males, and contributed to the great emphasis which they laid on differentiation of themselves as a group from

black people, whether slave or free" (Smith 1953:61). Because shades of color were so important to this class, the only available mates were darker females and the cast off concubines of whites. The free colored females, "a class for whom it might almost be said that marriage was taboo" (Smith 1953:64), were almost exclusively concubines to the whites.

The existence of this kind of mating arrangement substantiates two points concerning the profile of the dominant culture. It illustrates the underlying role of a racist ideology, with almost finicky emphasis being placed on shades of color, which buttressed the social structure long after the economic supports were gone. (The free colored negroes, who aspired to be more like the whites than the whites themselves, and who demonstrated far more interest in European dress, manners, contemporary literature and art, were also more concerned with shades of color than most whites, implicitly accepting the racial basis of the social structure.) It also illustrates the incomplete transference of the monogamous-Christian family structure to the colonial situation, not only among the ruling group but among subordinate whites. At this point a "stripped down" or "standardized" form from the home base of the dominant culture did not appear. To the black slaves, this varient family structure at the top made little difference. To

the colored negroes aspiring to imitate the whites, it was of considerable importance since, in depriving them of a model of the ideal European marriage pattern, it also deprived them of a source of mates comparable in status to themselves. Through modifying their European family background and taking for themselves the free colored females, the "principal" whites created one of the informal and unplanned mechanisms whereby social distance between whites and men of any color was maintained. Where their governmental and legal order kept all negroes subordinate, the white's mating habits forced free negro males to accept females of lesser status, thereby subtly emphasizing the differential range of social prerogatives available to free white and free colored males.

Considering the second major social consequence of the plantation system in Jamaica, the plantations themselves must be examined. The ecological setting of the sugar industry in the Caribbean was a major determinant in the creation of a peasant class. The destructive nature of plantation agriculture in which the land was treated as expendable resulted in the exhaustion of the soil in almost every sugar colony. The early yeoman cultivators had been forced out by the expanding plantations, probably because "the plantation was in its nature inimical to the peasantry, [the] peasantries

were tolerated only on sufferance by the plantations, and . . . [the] general impact of the plantation on the peasantry was destructive, not accomodative" (Mintz 1961: 32). Yet in Jamaica, the economic organization of the plantations plus the topography of the land combined to foster a peasant class and conditions necessary for a peasant way of life long before Emancipation made the extensive settlement of remote rural areas possible. The estates were required to feed their slaves and the only sources of food were either importation and the attendant risks of trade interruption due to wars and piracy, or the production of food on the estate in areas unsuitable for growing sugar cane. On the flatter Caribbean islands such as Barbados and St. Christopher, almost the entire usable land was supporting cane. Jamaica, however, supported both cane and garden plot agriculture because of its mountainous interior and the limiting of sugar cane production to the mountain valleys and the flat, narrow coastal strip. From the beginning, "estate supervised production of provisions never seems to have been undertaken without pressure from the island legislature" (Mintz and Hall 1960:12) and "there was no generally accepted policy for supplying the slaves with food. Where an estate had land not wanted for cane, the slaves were usually allowed to cultivate provisions on it in their own spare time" (Mintz and Hall 1960:4).

The planters seem not to have interferred with the small gardens called "polinks" on the steep mountain slopes, partly because they were usually located at some distance from the estate and because they recognized that the slave's interest in the polinks relieved the estate of part of the cost of slave maintenance. On Barbados and St. Christopher, where the slaves were allowed house plots but where there was no room for distant gardens as those worked by Jamaican slaves, a peasantry never developed. But in Jamaica "it is upon the polinks that the foundations of the free peasantry were established" since "only in Jamaica have food production and sugar production managed to survive together" (Mintz and Hall 1960:9,11).

Mintz (1961) has devised a general classification of peasantries in the Caribbean. There were the yeomen cultivators who settled first and opened up many of the islands for small scale agriculture. There were those peasant groups who were both a result of plantation slavery and who actively opposed it, the Bush Negroes in the Guianas and the Maroons in Jamaica. Finally there was a "proto-peasantry" which appeared under "circumstances which permitted or compelled the slaves to grow much of their own food, to produce many of their own necessities and, very importantly, to sell their surpluses and dispose more or less freely of their profits.

Jamaica is perhaps the best example" (Mintz 1961:34).

The disposal of surplus food through a series of internal markets must have appeared early, although there is little evidence of its origin. The West African antecedents for internal marketing did exist and these have been described by Herskovits (1952). As in West Africa, the role of women (the Jamaican "higgler") as middlemen was the center of the whole process. Whether or not West African systems were transferred to Jamaica, "it would seem that the Negro slave preserved those parts of his ancestral culture which he was <u>permitted</u> to retain, and that this in turn depended primarily on the needs of the plantation system, and on the power of the planter to exact conformance" (Mintz 1955:96). By the late 1700's the slaves had been permitted to become the major suppliers of household foods and utilities. Long before Emancipation, the Jamaican internal economy was dependent on slave-produced food surpluses, and these surpluses and the system of distributing them became a vital feature of the full scale peasantry which was to appear at Emancipation.

A third and final aspect of the British dominance in Jamaica, one less directly related to the plantation economy, was the role of European religion. Compared to other colonies, Jamaica had a rather large number of clergymen representing the official church, but their

effect upon the slaves was minimal. "The Christian instruction of the slaves in the British islands was left largely to sectarian missionaries, who achieved their biggest eighteenth century successes in Jamaica" (Parry and Sherlock 1957:152). The religious interests of the white class were very limited and, as would be expected, the free colored class aspiring to European values as a means of status achievement was more active in the formal religious life of Jamaica than creole or immigrant Englishmen. It does not seem that the ruling whites were so much intent on withholding their religious forms from the negroes as they were unconcerned with the spread of Christianity to the heathen population. Smith (1954:261-2) has argued that Christianity was incompatible with a "rationalistic" laissez-faire doctrine of economic exploitation so that "in Protestant slave-colonies, care was taken to insulate the slaves against the incompatible influences of Christianity, and the morality of _laissez-faire_ was for long unchallenged." Whether or not the planters actually did fear the power of Christian doctrine circulating among the slaves, the laxness of the ruling class in practicing religion among themselves suggests a noncommittal attitude toward the official church and its dogmas in the contact situation. Perhaps this perfunctory appreciation of religion was itself sufficient to squelch the spread of potentially

subversive doctrines.

Religious interests were not lacking among the slaves, however. M. J. and F. S. Herskovits have shown how the major "focus" of the Congo and Guinea Coast Africans is "in the realm of supernatural sanctions" and how African peasant culture on Trinidad "corroborates the finding in New World Negro cultures everywhere that Africanisms have persisted more in the religious life of the people than in any other aspect, save only folklore and music, which were favored by the indifference of the slave-owner to their continuing expression" (1947:303). Where formal African institutions were stripped away, African tribal deities and cult heads were resurrected in European churches, largely in the rural areas. Divining and magic, concerned with personal affairs, persisted outside the churches. Herskovits' point is substantiated by recent research in Jamaica where "literacy is highest and the practice of sorcery least frequent in the communities nearest the church, while the reverse is true the farther away from the church one moves" (Cohen 1956:667). Those cults which currently show the greatest incidence of African traits, the Kumina and Convince, are those which originated in the central mountains farthest from white contact (Hogg 1960).

Christianity was most directly felt by those negroes who became involved in the Free Village system

following Emancipation. Two vocal Baptist missionaries bought up old estates and converted them to church communities. These communities may have contained as many as 100,000 people and one of the founders claimed as many as forty-three villages in one parish in 1845. These villages developed a number of characteristics distinct from those of the Maroons and the emancipated peasantry. A study of one of these towns (Mintz 1958) revealed a social unit geographically definable, unusual for Jamaica; stable, monogamous and highly literate families; strong church control through geographical isolation of the community; and intrafaith, village endogamy. Although the free communities touched a minority of the Jamaican peasants, this aspect of the British profile which developed outside the established power structure reveals how European religion circumvented the planter class and made inroads among some of the former slaves at a time of major social disruption. Isolated missionaries, Baptists, Methodists, Moravians, had been active among the slaves for some time but the free villages were the only institutional results of their efforts. United with the slaves against the planters, the missionaries were unable to persuade the slaves to accept monogamy and abandon polytheism and, following Emancipation, the slave-missionary alliance broke. Aside from the free villages, Christianity

succeeded only among the urban free colored class and did not penetrate the scattered rural peasantry. The features of the Jamaican peasantry for which there are African precedents, religion and marketing, indicate blank spots in the British profile.

The problem here has been "the determination of the manner in which elements of European, African and, to a lesser degree American Indian cultures had exerted mutual influences on one another and, in the case of New World societies, had been merged to produce their present-day ways of life" (Herskovits 1951:144-5). Had we been restricted to simply enumerating parallel traits between geographically distant areas with a known historical connection, little about the acculturation experience of the two societies would have been discovered. The profiles of British and African culture in Jamaica have been shown to be considerably modified forms of the background cultures. The forces which modified them, plantation economics, topography, population structure, developed in the acculturation situation. From these forces evolved the Afro-Euro-Jamaican culture, the product of Herskovits' "mutual influences." These influences flowed from the profiles of the two cultures, particularly that of the dominant culture. The Jamaican experience demonstrates, however, that the dominant culture is not secure or stable simply because of its

dominance. The British initiated ecological, demographic and social changes with little awareness of the consequences of those changes. They then exploited the situation in a manner congruent with their English background, applying economic expediency as a means of social adaptation. That they were undermined by the exhaustion of their physical and human resources was a consequence of their failure to define their social situation accurately. This was a conceptual and intellectual failure which originated in the means of production established in an unfamiliar physical environment, but which shifted to a racial and social structural basis as soon as the means of production were accepted as logical, desirable, and inevitable. The social and economic orders reinforced each other until the economic resources gave out and the means of production became largely a rationalization for the social structure. That the planter class accepted that rationalization is evidence of their lack of awareness of what, as a class, they came from and where they were going. If not incapable, they were uninterested in accurately assessing and defining the human situation. In such ignorance is nurtured the collapse of human social enterprise.

V. CONCLUSION

The dominant English profile in the Caribbean was the expression of a mercantilist trade policy aimed at the development of national interest through the colonies, first as suppliers of raw materials and later as a market for British goods. In Jamaica the more apparent features of the dominant profile were the slave collecting enterprises, the large scale sugar production, the organization of the plantations, the local government and the European religion. Slaving made large scale sugar production possible, land and capital were easily acquired, and the plantations became self-regulating units. Government was generally ineffectual except in times of imminent slave revolt or Maroon raiding from the mountains. English Christianity withered among the ruling whites and had little effect on most of the slaves. As the economic situation of the plantations, once highly prosperous, became dark, obstructionist policies and actions by the planters hurried their decline bringing the abandonment of slave sugar production closer.

In the features of the British profile we see

how that decline was brought about. Population policies resulting in severe demographic dislocation and the English conception of slave parentage combined with the slave's polygynous West African background to favor the female-centered family. The structure of the white family with the concubine of the "principal" white and the mate of the "secondary" white created a small but important colored class, some free and some slave. The topography of Jamaica and the economics of slave maintenance permitted conditions sufficient for supporting a large peasantry. Where African traits survived among the peasantry--religion, magic, myth, the essential role of the female--the influence of the dominant profile was hardly felt.

The conquest culture in Jamaica, a hybrid Afro-European culture, was built around the economics of slave sugar production. When the economic supports fell away, the culture had already solidified or "crystallized" into the social structure associated with slave production. When slave labor came under attack, it was vigorously defended as the best means of production given the circumstances. With the Jamaican sugar industry finally near collapse, the defense of the social order of slavery was cast in economic terms. However, the multi-class social system containing sharp cleavages of power and privilege was the reflection of a racial

bias, a bias which finally became manifest when economic arguments were obviously useless. This bias developed out of the economic organization of slave society and evolved into a widely accepted rationalization[7] only after the economic and then the social structure underwent profound change in the nineteenth century. The attempts by the planters to preserve slavery after its economic utility had ceased were attempts to maintain a social order based upon a racial myth. Smith (1954:282) correctly notes that "preservation of the structure of the plural society under conditions of imminant change thus becomes a dominant value in itself as we have shown was the case in Jamaica 1800-38 and thereafter, simply because the stability of these units has such a narrow and precarious base." Early crystallization accounts for the permanence of the social structure and especially its supporting racial ideology.

This research into the Jamaican historical-cultural experience does not favor the contention of some thinkers that economic and technological processes undergird all social experience. We may note Marx's belief that "the mode of production and material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life," that the means

of production are "the real foundation, on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond" (Gardiner 1959:131). Originally, during the early period of crystallization and while the plantations were on the ascendancy in terms of size, production, and profits, Marx's condition most likely prevailed. But we have already seen how the determinants of behavior became social and ideological, indeed, in spite of the mode of production. Slavery, the plantations, and the social structure of ruling and ruled groups cannot possibly be explained by economic forces alone. The idea of a profile directs our attention to many factors, including the economic which, in this case, did not always operate as the single vital element.

The "conquest culture" model appears to be a useful tool in the analysis of acculturation and of contact situations. Nothing here has been "proven" in the sense that causative agents have been isolated and their efficacy demonstrated. Such has not been the purpose of this paper. Through the use of the model, essential features of the acculturation situation, their operation and consequences, and the reactions to them have been outlined. The model works as a device for directing attention and for ordering data which might otherwise be overlooked or cast into a historical

narrative. Foster's model is useful and the concepts of "standardization" and "crystallization" are sufficiently open ended that they can be tested in a number of situations. Repeated testing may reveal a series of regular events occurring during acculturation, or perhaps a number of limited and predictable types of acculturation experience. When acculturation becomes defined in that way, a significant achievement toward the systematic ordering of social theory will have been made.

NOTES

1. "It has often been said that history is of no practical value for the study of contemporary social problems, that it consists of no more than names and dates together with vague and debatable moralizing. We do not deny that this is true of so-called history which treats only of heroes and battles. But there is another kind of history that, although less luminous, spectacular, and exciting, is dedicated to elucidating the factors that have determined and still determine the development of communities and peoples. This history explains certain facts of economics that previously seemed due to chance or to the mysterious play of hidden forces beyond man's control. It furnishes man with information which enables him to intervene by choice, with knowledge and foresight, in the course of events that may reshape societies and alter their destinies" (Guerra y Sanchez 1964:4-5).

2. On the replacement of the small farmer by cheap slave labor, Guerra y Sanchez (1964:15-16) remarks: "Its cause was purely social and economic: the destruction of the small holding by the sugar latifundium and the consequent emigration of an active, enterprising social class which left voluntarily in order to escape the hunger and the lower standard of living brought about by lack of work. Actually, it was not the Antillean climate that drove out the whites, but the capitalist sugar industry which, in its search for unlimited profits, did away with the small holding and changed young, robust, self-sustaining communities into mere workshops, where low-priced labor was exploited for the exclusive benefit of distant commercial and banking centers."

3. In referring to the Dutch and English, Max Weber (1927) notes that "the capitalistic colonies regularly developed into plantations" (299). Capitalism depends on mass market demand, the rational organization of labor, and production techniques which operate at a minimum cost to the capitalist. However, "in the last resort the factor which produced capitalism is the rational permanent enterprise, rational accounting,

rational technology and rational law, but again not these alone. Necessary complementary factors were the rational spirit, the rationalization of the conduct of life in general, and a rationalistic economic ethic" (354).

4. Foster's (1960:11) use of the word "choice" in describing the conquest culture--"through this process a choice is made from the totality of forms found in a dominant, conquering donor culture"--is significant. Although we refer to conquest culture as an entity, this by no means confers upon it a power or dynamis of its own. Conquest culture is carried by individuals who make choices and thereby bring it into being. It is an abstraction in their heads and, for analytical purposes, in ours.

5. As late as 1846 the Governor of Jamaica noted that the slave production system rested "on the hypothesis, expressed or understood, that the system of husbandry established during slavery was alone suited to tropical cultivation" (Williams 1951:147). Note the inclusion of slaves in the term "husbandry." The slave was clearly not a full human being but a unit of expendable energy.

6. Nieboer (1910:385) refers to a condition of "open" and "closed" resources: "only among people with open resources can slavery and serfdom exist, whereas free laborers dependent on wages are only found among peoples with closed resources." He makes it a general rule that "slavery, as an industrial system, is not likely to exist where subsistence depends upon material resources which are present in limited quantity" (384).

7. Writing of his travels in the West Indies late in the nineteenth century, Froude (1892) notes the kindness of the early British planter who had cared "at least as much [for his slaves] as he cared for his cows and his horses" (80). "Under the rule of England in these islands the two million of these poor [negro] brothers-in-law of ours are the most perfectly contented specimens of the human race to be found upon the planet (79). . . . under the beneficent despotism of the English Government, which knows no difference of colour and permits no oppression, they can sleep, lounge, and laugh away their lives as they please,

fearing no danger" (80). Slavery in some of its aspects was certainly cruel "yet nevertheless, when we consider what the lot of common humanity has been and is, we shall be dishonest if we deny that the balance has been more than redressed; and the negroes who were taken away out of Africa, as compared with those who were left at home, were as the 'elect to salvation,' who after a brief purgatory are secured an eternity of blessedness. The one condition is the maintenance of the authority of the English crown" (81). The myth of the "white man's burden" and of Anglo-Saxon superiority could hardly be more baldly put.

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