

**POWER ON THE PLANTATION COMPLEX: BIOPOLITICS AND  
THANATOPOLITICS**

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines how planters in Barbados, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, exercised three modes of power (sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality) in the management of those enslaved. The first part of this dissertation examines how the capture, incarceration, transportation, and sale of enslaved Africans and those subjugated under regimes of unfree labour, were carried out by Imperial agents, slave-traders, and planters, through the geo-economic/political ordering of sovereign power. In the second part of this study, I demonstrate how practices of surveillance, slave-labour, punishment, and resistance realized a shift in the dominant mode of power being exercised on the plantation from sovereignty to discipline. The third, and final part of this dissertation, reveals how planters initiated pro-natalist policies through the deployment of an incentive structure, and how physicians and slave managers coordinated this governmental strategy. Throughout this work I explore how the slave vessel, colonial marketplace, and institutions of confinement, connect the economic, juridical, and political dimensions of plantation slavery as a *dispositif* of capitalist exploitation. These zones of exchange exhibit how the organizational synergy of Barbadian plantations shaped them into a complex biopolitical and thanatopolitical regime of racism, punishment, and managerialism.

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## INTRODUCTION

A genealogical analysis of the plantation complex in Barbados reveals how strategies of bondage, trafficking, surveillance, punishment, labour exploitation, and gendered violence, were shaped by a polyvalent deployment of power, a concept that is explicated in Michel Foucault's philosophical corpus.<sup>1</sup> I argue that the exercise of sovereign, disciplinary, and governmental modes of modern power extend beyond the historico-empirical paradigm of Foucault's analysis of Europe and can be observed on the Caribbean plantation complex through the class-based alienation of indentured white Europeans and the racialized subjugation and enslavement of black Africans. Through an analysis of its economic, historical, philosophical, and political registers, this dissertation situates the Barbadian plantation complex between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries as a critical site for the analysis of modernity and the development of capitalism. During this period, the Barbadian plantocracy employed these three modes of modern power (sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality) to exploit indentured and enslaved labourers in ways that would ultimately facilitate conditions for the development of capitalism, industrialization, and management in the Atlantic market economy.<sup>2</sup> This dissertation explores how a Foucauldian analysis of plantocratic power on the Barbadian

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<sup>1</sup> In *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject*, Michael Mahon illustrates how Foucault's genealogical approach is "effective history" that does not seek a metaphysical origin, but instead explores how objects of inquiry and the truth associated with experiences, can be critically examined through their multiplicity. The present study examines how unfree labour functioned through various sites of contact (slave vessel, marketplace, and plantation), and how circumstances of class-based and racialized subjectivity exercised in these spaces were shaped by strategies of planter sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality. Michael Mahon, *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 8.

<sup>2</sup> Richard B. Sheridan argues that Barbados was "an island of firsts" in the Caribbean. Areas of transformation he identifies include the extensive migration of white settlement to the island; the large-scale development of mono-cultural sugar production; the proliferation of a slave-based plantation economy; and the rise of an elite planter class. Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Aylesbury, England: Ginn and Company, 1974), 124.

plantation complex was carried out as a dispositif of thanatopolitical and biopolitical government. I argue that the economic, juridical, and political procedures of plantocratic power that delineated slave government, and the circumstances of resistance carried out by enslaved blacks and white indentured labourers to these institutional structures, offer a new perspective into how the emergence of capitalism in the Atlantic ultimately situates the historiographical treatment of labour exploitation as transmodern.<sup>3</sup>

This study, therefore, challenges Giorgio Agamben's (1995) claim that the distinction between biopolitics and thanatopolitics is a *sui generis* phenomenon of the "modern state"<sup>4</sup> and that the camp is modernity's original paradigmatic structure of the *nomos*. In *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben argues that "the camp – as the pure, absolute, and impassable biopolitical space (insofar as it is founded solely on the state of exception) – will appear as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity."<sup>5</sup> The planter's initiative to galvanize this tripartite application of power through the management of the enslaved – the emergence of disciplinary and governmental

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<sup>3</sup> This dissertation is informed by Foucault's description of capitalism as "an economic-institutional history." He argues that capitalism as a field of inquiry has produced "a whole series of studies of economic history, of juridical-economic history, which were very important in a theoretical debate, but also, and this is what I want to come to, from a political point of view, because it is quite clear that the problem and stake of this theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism, and of the role played by the juridical institution, was of course political." Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 164. My analysis of the plantation, while examining the economic and juridical dimensions of racialized slavery, is more focused on the political action of the Barbadian planters, their associations of lobbying interest in England, the broader English government, and the practices of resistance to these institutions.

<sup>4</sup> Giorgio Agamben argues that "[i]f there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones. This line is now in motion and gradually moving into areas other than that of political life, areas in which the sovereign is entering into an ever more intimate symbiosis not only with the jurist but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert, and the priest." Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 122-23. For further analysis into how biopolitics and bare life continue to shape sites of racial subjectivity through the legacy of plantation slavery, see Gwen Bergner's (2019) *The Plantation, the Postplantation, and the Afterlives of Slavery*, in *American Literature* 91 (3): 447–57. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00029831-7722078>.

<sup>5</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 123.



force onto an existing cacotopic<sup>6</sup> milieu of sovereignty by the eighteenth-century – suggests a much earlier historical timeline for an observable fissure between biopolitics and thanatopolitics than the “camp” of the twentieth century, and one that extends beyond the margin of modernity. For the purposes of this study I define thanatopolitics (government by death and fear of death) as an exercise of plantocratic sovereignty (trafficking, detainment, and exploitation), which carried out the institution of racialized slavery through attempted strategies of natal alienation, cultural genocide, and intergenerational bondage.<sup>7</sup> This distinction is crucial to determine not only how practices of plantocratic power were employed to enslave blacks, but how the conditions of class-based oppression and racialized slavery that came to structure capitalism vis-à-vis sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality in the Atlantic world can serve to re-examine the relationship between biopolitics and thanatopolitics.

Paul Gilroy’s theorizations of postcoloniality and transmodernity make clear that contemporary political movements of “biopower, ultranationalism, [and] ethnic absolutism” are nourished by ideologies of race-thinking that promote the marginalization and erasure of colonial violence.<sup>8</sup> Gilroy argues that while the relationship between colonial subjectivity and sovereignty is absent from Agamben’s work on bare life, his analysis of Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault uncovers a theoretical framework to

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<sup>6</sup> “Cacotopia” is a term derived from ancient Greek to describe conditions of inner evil, malice, or wickedness, and is a synonym of dystopia first employed by Jeremy Bentham to illustrate the worst imagined form of government. Jeremy Bentham, *Plan of Parliamentary Reform* (London: R. Hunter, 1817), xcii cited in V.M. Budakov, “Cacotopia: An Eighteenth-Century Appearance in *News from the Dead* (1715),” *Notes & Queries*, 58.3 (2011): 391.

<sup>7</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 135–39.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 31, 48. For further analysis into the socio-political considerations of power and government in postcolonial state formation see Percy Hintzen’s (2009) *Costs of Regime Survival*, Cambridge, GBR: Cambridge University Press.

explore how the desacralization of the body and institutional application of racism can be employed to diverse zones of violence. Following Gilroy, this study investigates how the discursive and historical mapping of black inhuman racialization and the strategic deployments of power on the plantation complex challenge the marginalization of colonial subjectivity and violence to inform a history of the present. I argue that understanding the plantation complex as a mobile, *autopoietic*, and transmodern assemblage nourishes the analysis of colonial history and its connection to contemporary sites of racism, poverty, and violence through movements of resistance.

Building upon Foucault's work on biopolitical power, Gilroy argues that beyond the targeted management of population, there were diverse systems of governmental force that linked together "the workings of institutional complexes like the army and medical practice, as well as the professional thinking of colonial administrators, planners, and managers."<sup>9</sup> As such, this dissertation takes a transmodern analysis of the plantation complex in order to re-approach the critical epistemological and historical relationship between race-thinking with empire, capitalism, and slave-labour through a lens of endurance and survival. Understanding the plantation through a transmodern grid of intelligibility encourages an inquiry into how practices of racial subjectivity on the plantations complex shaped broader institutional practices of colonial, imperial, and Eurocentric rule.<sup>10</sup> Gilroy's work provides the analytical tools to evidence how the relationship between bare life and power on the plantation complex comes to employ devices of racial subjectivity as the *modus operandi* for capitalist exploitation in the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 45, 48.

Atlantic, and how this ethic of rule shapes an art of transmodern government.<sup>11</sup> This study investigates how modes of power and authoritative knowledge combined to procure capital growth through the institution of slavery: sovereignty (capture, incarceration, transportation, and commodification); discipline (labour exploitation, surveillance, punishment, architecture, and industrial technologies); governmentality (pro-natalism, slave accounting, and medical intervention).<sup>12</sup>

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000) argue that bio-power is a form of modern sovereignty that traces how forces of production and reproduction are contained within the larger disciplinary practices of capitalism, but their analysis concerning the ‘colony’s’ relationship to modernity as a generic institutional site, is problematic. Their assertion in *Empire* that “[t]he colony stands in dialectical opposition to European modernity, as its necessary double and irrepressible antagonist,” fails to acknowledge the replicating force of plantocratic power and the critical role of the planter class’ republican ideology played in the development of capitalism and empire building throughout the Atlantic.<sup>13</sup> There are numerous avenues of study crucial to exploring systems of unfree labour, but Foucault’s analysis of power provides a useful conceptual framework to analyze how Barbadian planters coordinated class-based servitude and racialized slavery as forms of capitalist exploitation that reach into the institutional structure of modernity, and one that nourished

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>12</sup> Marie-Christine Leps states that for Foucault “sovereignty, discipline and governmentality, the three modern modes of power, are always inextricably linked, with one becoming dominant at different epochs.” Marie-Christine Leps, “Thought of the outside: Foucault contra Agamben,” *Radical Philosophy* 175 (September/October 2012): 27.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 115, 364-65.

sites of resistance.<sup>14</sup> In "Thought of the outside: Foucault contra Agamben", Marie-Christine Leps states that

‘biopolitics’ serves to interconnect two distinct modes of power exerted on the body: discipline and governmentality. Discipline targets individual bodies, in a fine-grained relation geared to produce adequate behaviours according to norms. Whether exercised in the military quadrangle, in the classroom or on the factory floor, disciplinary techniques strive to increase the body’s strengths and to mould it to the requirements of production [...] Governmentality emerges with the concept of the population and its need for management. Fostering every aspect of the life of the one and the many, multifarious security measures are deployed to ensure health, education, employment, leisure, happiness.<sup>15</sup>

Through Leps’s analysis of biopolitics in Foucault’s œuvre we can interrogate how the planter class implemented techniques of discipline in an effort to shape productive enslaved labourers, and through governmental force, attempted to secure a homegrown intergenerational labour force through pro-natalist policies aimed at the preservation of black bondage. Disciplinary techniques of regimented labour and strategies of surveillance and punishment were implemented to shape “docile, self-invigilating bodies,” but a

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<sup>14</sup> Foucault argues that: “The old power of death that symbolized sovereign power was now carefully supplanted by the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life. During the classical period, there was a rapid development of various disciplines – universities, secondary schools, barracks, workshops; there was also the emergence, in the field of political practices and economic observation, of the problems of birth rate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration. Hence there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of “bio-power.” The two directions taken by its development still appeared to be clearly separate in the eighteenth-century.” Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, (New York: Random House Inc., 1985): 139-40. What I argue in the third part of this dissertation is that the racialized subjugation of the individual enslaved body within the system of plantation labour transitioned to a focus on managing the aggregate slave population toward the end of the eighteenth century.

<sup>15</sup> Leps, “Thought of the outside: Foucault contra Agamben,” 27.

governmental incentive apparatus to encourage childbirth produced “not just regulations but freedoms and sites of resistance, not just identities but ambitions and desires.”<sup>16</sup> Alongside these strategies of biopolitical power, a necropolitical terrain of torture, punishment, and death was employed by the planter class.<sup>17</sup> This study also investigates how power-knowledge<sup>18</sup> relations configured the plantation into a regime of biopolitical and thanatopolitical force: how did the plantation complex facilitate a system of capitalist exploitation vital to the rise of European supremacy through sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality, and how was this colonial edifice influenced by an assemblage of elite families, political institutions, and commercial establishments engaged in profiting from enslaved labour?

Agamben situates the spatial materialization of *bare life* in the camp, where the political determination of the life of *homo sacer* (the sacred man who may be killed but not sacrificed) takes place. He does so by positioning the discourse of politics as the organizing principle of Western metaphysical thought, a task achieved through the marriage of *logos* and *being*.<sup>19</sup> As Leps argues, his “universalizing perspective” “adopts transhistorical, metaphysical forms of thought” in which “slaves, women, working classes, racialized and ethnic minorities disappear” from his “metaphysics of power.”<sup>20</sup> Working as a “specific intellectual,” Foucault works instead “to expose the fragility, contingency, and aleatory

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> The sovereign power of the planter was ultimately exercised as “the right to *take* life or *let* live.” Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 136.

<sup>18</sup> This study situates colonial ‘power-knowledge’ relations and regimes of truth as the authoritative and normative descriptions of bourgeoisie understanding carried out by the planter class related to family, law, morality, science, sexuality, and political life, with an eye toward exploring how these productions of discourse and material performance constitute the manifold ethic of disciplinary and governmental force in the slave colony in order to legitimate and reinforce white supremacy.

<sup>19</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Leps, “Thought of the outside: Foucault contra Agamben,” 26, 29.

nature of historical power-knowledge matrices” in his historical analyses.<sup>21</sup> A Foucauldian analysis of the plantation complex traces how the microphysics of plantocratic power organized a replicating site of capitalist exploitation, both “mobile and non-localizable.”<sup>22</sup> In this context my analysis of plantocratic power surveys the specific historical circumstances of class-based and racialized subjectivity and not just the broader economic, legal, and political considerations of exploitation. As such, this dissertation examines how resistance to sovereign, disciplinary, and governmental forces of plantocratic power by white indentured servants and enslaved blacks shaped the colonial space into an arena of both instability and isolation, as well as collaboration and possibility, as a theoretical framework that extends to diverse sites of exploitation and resistance.

My work is interdisciplinary and is comprised of primary source materials and secondary source analyses that examine indentured labour and slavery. My analysis of the plantation complex draws from the cultural, historical, philosophical, political, and sociological contributions of theorists who study the institution of slavery and colonialism in the Atlantic world, and from the broader analytical treatments of modernity in the West. This dissertation offers an original contribution as it undertakes a Foucauldian analysis of how the planter class utilized power-knowledge relations of force to carry out strategies of exploitation within the broader systemic rationalities of modernity (capitalism, industrialization, and managerialism.) The entrenchment of human trafficking, physical confinement, legal subjugation, and labour exploitation in Barbados, make understanding its plantation system vital for an analysis of both modernity and contemporary forms of abuse and slavery faced by vulnerable populations.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 62.

This study also investigates how strategies of slave resistance shifted the dominant mode of power being exercised by the planter class from sovereignty to discipline and governmentality (biopolitics).<sup>23</sup> What will be of interest are how relations of force can have unpredictable, diffuse, and even unknown effects.<sup>24</sup> For example, I will outline how an intensified disciplinary apparatus of surveillance, gang-labour, and punishment carried out by the plantation hierarchy to mitigate rebellion and increase labour production also failed to disrupt efforts of resistance despite some successes of containment; how the parasitic and capitalistic exploitation of vulnerable populations, which cut along lines of class, gender, and race, such as the range from sexual trafficking of enslaved women to their practices of huckstering in urban spaces, sometimes increased the economic and social mobility of those in bondage, which included the possibility of manumission; and ultimately, how the governmental practices of medical intervention and accounting<sup>25</sup> created spaces of freedom despite their intention to secure a future labour force, increase production, and enhance wealth through pro-natalist interventions.

Others would question my focus on slave resistance, however.<sup>26</sup> In *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery*, Jennifer Morgan

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<sup>23</sup> Foucault's theorization that economics is not the analysis of an historical process but an examination into a *dispositif* of individual rationality also provides an understanding into the undergirding republican ideology of the Barbadian planter class and their unique transition to principles of biopolitical management in the eighteenth century. What makes the Barbadian planter class' transition to biopolitical management unique was their rapid response to the metropolitan policies to abolish the slave-trade through the adoption of pro-natalism. Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 223.

<sup>24</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 62.

<sup>25</sup> Medical intervention and accounting practice offer a critical perspective into how the modalities of governmentality (life, security, and population) became measurable practices for the evaluation of planter management in Barbados.

<sup>26</sup> Justin Roberts argues that resistance does not need to be the central focus of analysis regarding plantation slavery if it considers power relations beyond the bifurcated master/slave relationship. My work, however, interrogates the complex field of sovereign, disciplinary, and governmental power in order to explore how practices of organizational force were exercised between the slaveocracy and those enslaved in ways that challenge a Marxist and World-systems theory treatment of oppression. Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750–1807* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 242.

argues that the current privilege afforded to narratives of resistance, by focusing on personhood, amounts to a denial of the “de-humanizing legacy of enslavement.”<sup>27</sup> While Morgan is right to challenge scholarship that situates resistance as the categorical focal point of the economic, political, and social analysis of slavery, her ideological position marginalizes the complex dynamic of resistance that undermined the planter class. Morgan’s approach can represent an historical closure and is problematic given its tendency to over-emphasize resistance, shrink the complex circumstances of negotiation and concession, privilege narratives of economic and political analysis, and to under-state the profound exchanges of slavery. This can be even more salient when partnerships of resistance among white indentured labourers and enslaved blacks altered the social topography of Barbados.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot illustrates how the historical treatment of the Haitian Revolution can provide a blueprint to challenge historical approaches that deny the legacies of slave resistance. His *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* theorizes that slave resistance has been subjected to two types of erasure: the first strategy is a form of silence that erases the history of resistance and revolution to deny colonization, and the second approach is a more calculated ideological strategy carried out by “experts” who assault the authenticity and efficacy of slave resistance by undermining the “event” itself.<sup>28</sup> Following Trouillot’s historiographical approach, Jenny Shaw argues that to engage the minor discourses or subjectivities of indentured servants and those enslaved it is crucial to

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<sup>27</sup> Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 96.



engage with the “presences of absences” in colonial sources.<sup>29</sup> Holding in common this interest, my study explores how acts of resistance by indentured labourers and those enslaved (absconding, armed rebellion, literacy, sabotage, theft, and murder) carved out spaces of autonomy and undermined the sovereign authority of the planter, but also intensified disciplinary and governmental pressure. My treatment of the plantation complex is informed by Gilroy’s theorization that the colonial past continues to be overlooked and devalued in mainstream historical discourse, despite its enduring service toward configuring contemporary political machinations.<sup>30</sup> This study is also substantiated by Hilary Beckles’ opposition to Richard Dunn’s tendency to over-emphasize planter hegemony in seventeenth-century Barbados. In “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” Beckles argues that it was the mobilization of resistance pursued by both black slaves and white servants that shaped the disciplinary strategies of colonial force.<sup>31</sup>

Locating personhood and autonomy are also crucial for understanding how slave resistance intersected with the thanatopolitical dimensions of plantation life, and how plantocratic power was not determined by the naked docility of those in bondage, nor the unmitigated sovereignty of the planter class. In “Necropolitics,” Achille Mbembe characterizes plantation slavery as follows:

In many respects, the very structure of the plantation system and its aftermath manifests the emblematic and paradoxical figure of the state of exception. This

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<sup>29</sup> Jenny Shaw, *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference*, (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 2013), 7-8.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 2.

<sup>31</sup> Hilary Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” *Journal of Caribbean History*, 18.2 (1983): 1.

figure is paradoxical here for two reasons. First, in the context of the plantation, the humanity of the slave appears as the perfect figure of a shadow. Indeed, the slave condition results from a triple loss: loss of a “home,” loss of rights over his or her body, and loss of political status. This triple loss is identical with absolute domination, natal alienation, and social death (expulsion from humanity altogether).<sup>32</sup>

Mbembe’s analysis of plantation slavery is problematic, in that he constructs an image of plantation life that is confined to absolute domination, in a way that echoes Orlando Patterson (whose work is considered in the first chapter of this study). This diminishes the strategies of defiance, negotiation, and compromise that the enslaved pursued to configure their own cultural, social, political, and legal identities. Moreover, to propose that inhuman status is analogous to social death is to re-construct the plantation as an empty political structure, one where the role of slave subjectivity was effectively absent from determining the discursive, juridical, political, and bio-social despotism of the broader colonial apparatus. Mbembe fails to acknowledge how a “zone of nonbeing,” in the Fanonian sense, and the biopolitical ordering of the slave, does not surface from the “expulsion from humanity” per se, but from the application of ideological practices that diagram *bare life*.<sup>33</sup> Mbembe’s theorization that the exercise of sovereignty in the colony was “outside the law (*ab legibus solutes*)” overlooks how exemplary forms of punishment existed within both the written legal framework of colonial law, as well as the implicit conventional practices of punishment exercised by the planter class. Disciplinary and

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<sup>32</sup> Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 21.

<sup>33</sup> Fanon makes a call for resistance and liberation when he states that “the black man is not a man”, “[t]here is a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinary sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born.” Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, (London: Pluto Press, 1986), 8.

governmental force emerged as responses to coordinated acts of slave resistance that undermined planter sovereignty and to the pressures for abolition that emerged in the metropole.<sup>34</sup>

Colonial slave laws in Barbados were drafted by the Imperial Crown, domestic colonial courts, and local magistrates, many of whom were planters.<sup>35</sup> The overarching charter of law, the *Barbadian Slave Code* (1661), entrenched the inhuman status of blackness with the institution of slavery and put into question the legitimate freedom of those who had been manumitted. This constitutional act was also a declaration of the planter class to leverage political power, which was undergirded by the epistemological wellspring of English common-law. A critical evaluation into how colonial law intersects with theories of natural law, legal positivism, and legal realism, however, are beyond the scope of this study; critical legal studies and critical race theory, while offering valuable theoretical frameworks to examine concepts of race-thinking, enlightenment rationality, and oppression, privilege an analysis of hegemonic power, which relegates the enslaved to a position of subalternity under the domination of the planter.<sup>36</sup>

Foucault underscores the unconditional heterogeneity of *homo oeconomicus*, *homo juridicus*, and *homo legalis* in the eighteenth century. I argue, however, that these configurations comprise the manifold experience of the slave subject under the broader

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<sup>34</sup> Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 23.

<sup>35</sup> Edward Rugemar argues that legal responses offer insight into how both indentured whites and enslaved blacks in Barbados resisted the sociopolitical oppression of plantation society. Edward B. Rugemar, *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2018. ProQuest Ebook Central, accessed at <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/lib/west/reader.action?docID=5529759>, 24.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Kevin Hylton, "Talk the talk, walk the walk: defining Critical Race Theory in research," *Race Ethnicity Education*, 15.1, (2012): 23-41; Kamau Rashid, "'To break asunder along the lesions of race.' The Critical Race Theory of W.E.B. Du Bois," *Race Ethnicity Education*, 14.5, (2011): 585-602; Howard Winant, "Race and Race Theory," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, (2000): 169-185.

rationality of biopolitical slave management before Foucault's focus on the eighteenth century.<sup>37</sup> It is critical to explore how the physical expenditure of the enslaved on the plantation complex congealed the commoditization of blackness, how the juridical architecture of colonial courts reinforced subjugation, and in turn, created conditions of subjectivity to protect plantocratic rule. Under the conditions of sovereign power, the enslaved occupied the position of *homo sacer*, whose life, through the ever-present possibility of death brought on by plantation oppression – hard labour, psychological trauma, sexual abuse, malnutrition, torture, and murder – characterized the *modi operandi* of plantation life through the legalization of black inhumanity.

A Marxist reading of power-knowledge relations on the plantation complex would suggest that planter sovereignty functioned as a model of subjugation that centralized power within the plantocracy. Under these conditions the planter would be viewed more as a colonial architect who utilized sovereignty as an art of slave government to maximize output and obviate the threat of indentured and slave resistance. This framework for understanding how power functioned on the plantation has been generally accepted given that the plantocracy, through their positions of influence as scholars, politicians, businessmen, and lawmen, both in the colony and *in absentia*, wielded the authority to take life without any significant repercussions. This dissertation, however, offers a more nuanced reading of power-knowledge relations on the plantation complex that responds to the critique of resistance expressed by Morgan (2004) and Roberts (2013), by stating that opposition from servants and those enslaved, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in particular, challenged planter sovereignty in ways that would prompt a more

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<sup>37</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 276.

complex dissemination of biopolitical force (discipline and governmentality). Furthermore, these conditions of managerial performance ultimately enhanced capitalistic exploitation. The unpredictable, diffuse, and unknown circumstances of servant and slave resistance consistently belied any static administrative, organizational, or political strategy carried out by the planter class. While this study explores how the transition to disciplinary and governmental force, through its applications of surveillance, punishment, and reward, were used as a means to extract labour and encourage the “natural increase” of the slave population, its focus is more on how strategies of resistance worked to destabilize planter sovereignty.<sup>38</sup>

The shift from sovereignty to disciplinary and governmental power was prompted by the desire of the plantocracy to extract labour and profit from enslaved workers, as well as resistance to the mortal wasting, sacrifice, and expenditure of the body through physical labour and sexual exploitation. This study is interested in exploring how acts of resistance related to labour impacted the transition of the plantation complex from a primitive agrarian structure to its more developed industrial form as an economic concern within the paradigm of capitalism. For Foucault, the economic analysis of labour in its relationship to capital, production, wage, or technology, must be inflected with the workers’ relations to their work.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, an examination of plantation labour must include the microphysics that shaped slave subjectivity through work, and how these circumstances of exploitation relate

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<sup>38</sup> Whereas Michael Tadman argues that the combination of sugar plantation work, slavery, and trafficking, reduced enslaved populations in North America and the Caribbean, this study focuses on how a “natural increase” surfaced in Barbados through biopolitical interventions. Michael Tadman, “The Demographic Cost of Sugar: Debates on Slave Societies and Natural Increase in the Americas”, *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 5 (2000): 1536, 1538.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 223.

to capitalism. In this context, Hardt and Negri provide us with a decisive analysis of capitalism:

The point here is not simply to denounce the irrationality of the bourgeoisie, but to understand how slavery and servitude can be perfectly compatible with capitalist production, as mechanisms that limit the mobility of the labour force and block its movements. Slavery, servitude, and all the other guises of the coercive organization of labour – from coolieism in the Pacific and peonage in Latin America to apartheid in South Africa – are all essential elements internal to the processes of capitalist development. In this period slavery and wage labour engaged each other as dance partners in the coordinated steps of capitalist development.<sup>40</sup>

While Dale Tomich identifies the shortcomings of Marxism, World-systems theory, and economic determinism, the present study asks what a genealogical analysis of sovereign, disciplinary, and governmental power reveals about the strategic political contestations between Barbados and the metropole. Specifically, planter republicanism and wealth and how biopolitical force shaped unique systems of labour production, surveillance, punishment, and security measures into a regime of corporate knowledge. By analyzing how plantation power was exercised through a decentralized web of diverse, yet interrelated institutional forces of legal and political authority, we can witness how the ‘colonial imagination’ as an epistemological anchor point within modernity combined elements of administration, capitalism, industrialization, and militarism, to determine typologies of sexuality, gender, race and class in Barbados.

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<sup>40</sup> Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 122.

This study also considers the role plantation technologies played in modulating the relationship between production and the strategies of power exercised by the planter class. Tomich's observation that nineteenth-century Cuba experienced a unique acceleration of global commercial flow, an increased demand for slave and indentured labour, and technological advancement offers interesting avenues of analysis for the study of Barbados.<sup>41</sup> It reveals how Barbados followed a similar trajectory from *terra nullius* to a zone of industrialized technoscientific maturity, but much earlier, beginning in the seventeenth century. A vital means to unravelling how the collision between plantocratic power and servant and slave resistance transformed the colony into a techno-industrial dystopia is the framework of biopolitics and its relationship with capitalist development in Barbados, in what Tomich would refer to as an "early plantation zone."<sup>42</sup> Building on Tomich's analysis, this dissertation broadens the conceptual field of economic exchange and human life to include: the necro-economic exchanges of human life as a commodity; the punitive disciplinary force exercised on the indentured servant and those enslaved during labour production; the loss of life and injury caused by chemicals, plantation machinery, and livestock; the specific bio-social transformations engendered by a programmatic governmental approach to secure intergenerational slave-labour; and the medicalization and care for the enslaved as a strategy to protect production and

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<sup>41</sup> Dale Tomich argues that the Cuban plantation occupied the apogee of techno-scientific development and economic production in the nineteenth century. My dissertation explores how Barbados underwent a similar transformation from an agrarian based economy in the seventeenth century to one where technologies of industry were being employed by the eighteenth century through interventions of biopolitical power. Dale Tomich, "World Slavery and Caribbean Capitalism: The Cuban Sugar Industry, 1760-1868" *Theory and Society, Special Issue on Slavery in the New World*, 20.3 (Jun., 1991): 307.

<sup>42</sup> In "The Denial of Slavery in Management Studies," Bill Cooke argues that the plantation was not only capitalistic, but that practices of scientific and classical management were crucial to industrial discipline. Bill Cooke, "The Denial of Slavery in Management Studies," *Journal of Management Studies*, 40.8 (Dec., 2003): 1901.

reproduction. How biopolitics shaped the role of enslaved labour and technology as a critical driving force for the configuration of the plantation as a transmodern apparatus that continues to inform practices of labour exploitation is essentially what this study explores.

In Barbados, plantation power shifted from an initial exercise of aristocratic hegemony under the English proprietors and landed planter elite, to a diffuse planter class whose spheres of influence and privilege were organized through commercial association, bureaucratic and administrative expertise, the appropriation of technology, and juridical authority through biopolitical force.<sup>43</sup> The plantation was a replicating biopolitical structure where the technology of social war was manifest through class-based alienation, patriarchy, and racism, to justify forms of bondage and exploitation.<sup>44</sup> This project illustrates how a microphysical analysis of exemplary punishment, plantation technology, worker hierarchy, the gendered division of labour, typologies of class-based, ethnic, and racial identification, and governmental policing and surveillance, resists reading of indentureship and slavery as pre-modern. These tactics of exploitation that aimed to maximize profit through increasing competitive efficiency, organizational capacity, and industrial advancement are elements that position the plantation complex within the historical minutiae of modernity.

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<sup>43</sup> Christa Dierksheide argues that “[t]he British Empire was a diffuse federal system wherein state power was vested in agents, or planters, in far-flung jurisdictions.” Christa Dierksheide, *Amelioration and Empire: Progress and Slavery in the Plantation Americas*, (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 203.

<sup>44</sup> Stoler argues that “[f]or Foucault, racism is more than ad hoc response to crisis; it is a manifestation of preserved possibilities, the expression of an underlying discourse of permanent social war, nurtured by the biopolitical technologies of “incessant purification.” Racism does not merely arise in moments of crisis, in sporadic cleansings. It is internal to the biopolitical state, woven into the web of the social body, threaded through its fabric.” Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 69.



The tendency in mainstream scholarship to position the plantation as pre-modern ignores how colonialism and biopolitics coalesced to germinate possibilities of exploitation through class-based alienation, gender violence, and racial subjugation. This creates distance between the legacy of plantation slavery and the ideologies of European supremacy that form an integral part of its development and maintenance, as well as the contemporary circumstances of political disenfranchisement, economic marginality, religious persecution, and sexual trafficking nourished by these practices of inhumanity. As a contribution to anti-colonial and anti-capitalist scholarship, this study reveals the *autopoietic* historical logistics of class-based oppression, racism, and gendered violence as inextricably linked to the physical, psychological, and sexual abuse suffered by contemporary victims forced into the global sex trade, bonded labour, forced marriage, and warfare, as outlined in The United Nations' *Global Report on Trafficking Persons*.<sup>45</sup>

Beckles and Shepherd argue that the legacy of the European sponsored transatlantic trade in Africans and the institution of slavery continue to impact the contemporary experiences of racialized persons of African descent.<sup>46</sup> These legacies of xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and discrimination do not effectuate their presence *in abstracto*, but are felt

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<sup>45</sup> Antonio Maria Costa Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime states that sexual exploitation and slave labour account for the majority of trafficking, with women constituting the larger part of the victims. Costa states that “[w]e should be, but we are not, able to segment today’s slave markets into their components (demand, supply, trafficking, and related prices). We must, but cannot, catalogue (for lack of data) the different types of slavery: exploitation through child-begging in Europe is different from what goes on in a brothel, or on a street corner in Australia. Preventive measures must also be adapted to take into account that an Asian father sells his under-age daughter under circumstances different from what forces an African teenager into a rag-tag army of killers, or what pushes an illegal immigrant into a sweat shop in the Americas.” “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons February 2009,” United Nations Office on Drugs, [http://www.unodc.org/documents/Global\\_Report\\_on\\_TIP.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf), accessed February 11, 2020.

<sup>46</sup> Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd state that “ideologies of race and colour that the slave system spawned in the sixteenth century that featured colonial societies built around notions of white supremacy and black inferiority continue to haunt human relations more than a century after abolition and emancipation.” Hilary McD. Beckles and Verene A. Shepherd, *Trading Souls: Europe’s Transatlantic Trade in Africans*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2007), xvi.

in the institutional and discursive practices of racism that perpetuate discrimination in the workplace, exposure to violence, and higher levels of poverty. This study also analyzes how the legacy of *bare life* on the plantation can be read onto contemporary sites of oppression where conditions of labour exploitation, sexual trafficking, and poverty germinate, irrespective of race, gender, and geographic origin.<sup>47</sup> In closing, colonial ideologies of Eurocentric civilization, industrial progress, and bureaucratic organization, which in large measure symbolized the strategic bedrock of plantocratic bio-power, were achieved through an essentialist and hierarchical understanding of identity.<sup>48</sup> Foucault's examination of biopolitics uncovers how the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the mapping out of a hierarchical domain of classifications, relations, and processes, which could order knowledge of humanity.<sup>49</sup> This conceptual approach is vital to unraveling how the plantocracy advanced the discursive morphology of class-based alienation, racial subjugation, and gendered difference to unlock and secure opportunities of exploitation, and how those oppressed generated familial and communal identities for survival and benefit. The intention of this study is not to substantiate an underlying teleology between race-thinking, technology, and capitalism, as observable proof for a homogeneous plantation archetype, but to sketch out how practices of plantocratic power

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<sup>47</sup> Cooper and Stoler argue that during slavery "the construction of colonial categories has much more contemporary salience than simply enhancing our understanding of colonial situations. For if we are to treat colonial studies as a history of the present, then we need a richer understanding of the colonial situation itself. The very ease with which we often use the term "colonial legacy" carries the suggestion that we already know very well what the oppressive coordinates of that legacy are and that this legacy constituted a recognizable, if not unchanging, bundle throughout the decades of postcolonial history." Cooper, Frederick and Ann Laura Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997): 33.

<sup>48</sup> Cooper and Stoler observe that "[i]n pursuing a "civilizing mission" designed to make colonized populations into disciplined agriculturalists or workers and obedient subjects of a bureaucratic state, colonial states opened up a discourse on the question of just how much "civilizing" would promote their projects and what sorts of political consequences "too much civilizing" would have in store." Ibid., 7.

<sup>49</sup> Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *Chomsky vs. Foucault: A Debate on Human Nature*. (New York: New Press, 2006), 6-7.

established a site of *bare life* in Barbados and how this bulwark of oppression was challenged by those who were oppressed.<sup>50</sup>

A final word is about the principal primary sources of information used in this study. Such sources are taken from the Barbados Department of Archives and the Shilstone Library at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. Plantation accounting registers, bills of purchase and sale, colonial will documents, government source documents, and newspaper advertisements were analyzed in these repositories. Online archival records – government correspondence, legal texts, records of manumission, diaries, and newspaper advertisements also constitute the primary source information for this study.

Divided into three parts, the first part of this work explores how European sovereign power shaped typologies of racism, bondage, transportation, and commercial activity through the European sponsored transatlantic trade in Africans. The rise of technology, race-thinking, and slave-trading in the areas in the Caribbean colonized by the British, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, shaped the perceptions, institutions, bureaucracies, and wider socio-political functionality of European colonialism. European colonizers exercised sovereign power to initiate the extraction of natural resources and trafficking and enslavement of Africans. These practices of colonization would witness the development of a capitalist imperium through England's transportation of "undesirable" whites and trade in enslaved Africans. While the transportation of the English, Irish, and Scottish was

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<sup>50</sup> Benítez-Rojo observes that "[t]he complexity that the multiplication of the Plantation – each case a different one – brought to the Caribbean was such that the Caribbean peoples themselves, in referring to the ethnological processes that derived from the extraordinary collision of races and cultures thus produced, speak of syncretism, acculturation, transculturation, assimilation, deculturation, indigenization, creolization, cultural *mesitaje*, cultural *cimarronaje*, cultural miscegenation, cultural resistance, etc. which illustrates not just that these processes occurred again and again, but also, and above all, that there are different positions or readings from which they may be examined." Antonio Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 37.

predicated on perceived notions of moral degeneracy, criminality, and idleness, the crusade against a wide array of African peoples was legitimated by a biocultural ontology that exoticized, primitivized, and dehumanized all Africans as an “inferior race” for the purpose of transportation, bondage, and labour on plantations. This study explores the cultural, religious, and scientific rationalizations used to identify and exploit these two populations, and how Africans were labeled the “inferior race” par excellence by the planter class.

The second part of this study examines how the nature of exploitative labour and punishment was shaped by discipline, specifically the panoptic architecture of plantation life. A microphysical examination of the plantation in Barbados illustrates how power-knowledge relations of plantocratic force, and the resistance of indentured servants and enslaved persons, shaped practices of disciplinary punishment through architecture, labour, production, and technology. This approach challenges the orthodox historical analyses of Craton (1982); Curtin (1990); Davis (2006); Drescher (2002); and Morgan (2007), which isolate the architectural and technological instruments of plantation production from the *bios* of the enslaved. Instead, we can observe how Foucault’s claim that “the worker’s skill really is a machine, but a machine which cannot be separated from the worker himself, which does not exactly mean, as economic, sociological, or psychological criticism said traditionally, that capitalism transforms the worker into a machine and alienates him as a result.”<sup>51</sup>

This study analyzes how strategies of labour expropriation and technology, such as gang-labour, industrial innovation, and artisanal craftsmanship, shaped conditions of oppression and possibility on the plantation. What is missing from the orthodox literature

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<sup>51</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 224.

is a focus on how plantation slavery was intimately defined by “living dangerously.”<sup>52</sup> Negri and Hardt’s inference that the plantation symbolized a transitional setting in the advancement of capitalism that foreshadowed the anatomy of nineteenth-century European industrial plants is valuable for exploring the institutional configurations of slavery and industrialization as panoptic, but fails to account for the conversion from sovereignty to disciplinary power.<sup>53</sup> I argue that the transition from sovereignty to discipline and governmentality on the Barbadian plantation complex in the eighteenth century was an integral part of the development of capitalism and industrialization in the Atlantic, as the previous emergence of plantation complexes in the Caribbean did not reach the levels of commercial maturity and racial subjugation.

The third section of this study examines how slave accounting and medical intervention shaped and were shaped by strategies of pro-natalism in Barbados during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The drive to attain a natural increase among the slave population represents a governmental mode of power that focused its lens on the subjugation of the enslaved female body. Pro-natalism was undertaken as a means to secure an intergenerational slave-labour force and would become a prominent factor in assuaging the pressures engendered by the suspension of the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans by the British and the mortality rates suffered on the plantation. Enslaved women were offered financial rewards, commodities, and intermittent relief from the hardships of field labour for producing children. The Age of Amelioration beginning in the late eighteenth century

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<sup>52</sup> Foucault’s shibboleth for liberalism, to “live dangerously,” is germane to the conditions of plantation life for the enslaved as the circumstance whereby an individual’s life is regulated by the constant exposure to risk, also describes the relationship the indentured and enslaved confronted through their exposure to injury and mortality. Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 66.

<sup>53</sup> Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 122.

evidences unique perspectives into the calculus of plantation management, Eurocentric ideals of marriage and family, as well as the survival techniques expressed by enslaved women to resist patriarchal power.<sup>54</sup>

Biopolitical slave management championed ideas of black female identity (labourers, caretakers, procreators) in order to attain increased reproduction, secure intergenerational slavery, and prevent future rebellion. This system of female exploitation commodified enslaved women's "fertility, sexuality and maternity," and germinated a desire for resistance to obtain the possibilities of opportunity and choice.<sup>55</sup> This work explores how a corporate planter agenda situated childbearing, motherhood, sexuality, inter-racial relationships, and labour through colonial governmentality. The final part of this dissertation analyzes how procedures of biopolitical administration (plantation bookkeeping and medical intervention) were an ameliorative strategy of slave-government to safeguard labour and facilitate efficiencies. Biopolitical technologies transitioned the necro-economic ethos of violence to a new field of economic knowledge that delivered different practices of violence through strategies of "care."

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<sup>54</sup> Beckles describes the Age of Amelioration as a political and socio-economic strategy to secure a more financially viable slave force: "West Indian societies entered, after the 1770's, a phase of social reform that has been described as the 'age of amelioration.' In economic terms, amelioration was no more than a policy which suggested that marginal benefits could be derived from investing the money that would have been spent on buying new slaves in a maintenance programme for existing slaves. An objective of amelioration was to create for women a pro-natalist environment in order to stimulate procreation. It entailed less work and better nutrition for pregnant and lactating women, as well as the availability of childcare facilities." Hilary Beckles, *Centering Woman: Gender Relations in Caribbean Slave Society*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1999), 159.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 137.

**PART I: SOVEREIGNTY: RACISM AND THE TRANS-ATLANTIC TRADE IN ENSLAVED  
AFRICANS**

Labor abuse at sea can be so severe that the boys and men who are its victims might as well be captives from a bygone era. In interviews, those who fled recounted horrific violence: the sick cast overboard, the defiant beheaded, the insubordinate sealed for days below deck in a dark fetid fishing hold.<sup>56</sup>

The first part of this study considers how planter sovereignty in Barbados, which I define as the seizure, transportation, and exchange of indentured white servants and enslaved Africans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was shaped by an ideological apparatus of subjugation that combined elements of class-based alienation and antagonism, cultural and ethnic discrimination, political persecution, religious xenophobia, and anti-black racism. In the first half of the seventeenth century the Barbadian plantocracy created a cacatopic socioeconomic environment by exploiting the cheap labour of Great Britain's "undesirable" class on plantations throughout the island. Indentureship of British citizens (English, Irish, and Scottish) and enslavement of Africans and their descendants<sup>57</sup> were initially concurrent systems of labour exploitation that included practices of kidnapping, trafficking, and abuse, before the system of racialized enslavement overtook white indentureship. White indentureship incorporated ethnic and class-based discrimination, whereas the enslavement of blacks was shaped by an economic, political, and social ontology of racism that included practices of mortal punishment, was grounded on intergenerational bondage, and endured for centuries.

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<sup>56</sup> As noted in the introduction, this dissertation provides a "history of the present" that examines how the historical European sponsored trade in Africans and the realities of *bare life* on the plantation can offer perspective into how contemporary sites of racial, class-based, and sexual exploitation have been, and continue to be, nourished by capitalism. Ian Urbina, Ian. "'Sea-Slaves': The human misery that feeds pets and livestock." *New York Times*, July 27, 2015. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/27/world/outlaw-ocean-thailand-fishing-sea-slaves-pets.html>

<sup>57</sup> Beckles states that "most blacks brought to Barbados during the seventeenth century were from the Ga, Ibo, Ashanti, Ewe, Edo, Fanti, Adangme, Dahomey and Yoruba peoples. During the eighteenth century, these groups rapidly intermixed, and ethnic divisions quickly became muted. By 1817, only 7 per cent black Barbadians were African-born; the vast majority were creoles, most of whom had lost any claim to ethnic exclusiveness." Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 33.



A Foucauldian analysis of the plantation paradigm reveals how planter sovereignty aided the development of European colonialism and capitalism as both a class-based enterprise for the subjectivity of white indentured servants and system of enslavement for Africans and their descendants. I argue that the concurrent subjugation and exploitation of whites and blacks in the plantation colony, while not analogous given the profound divergences of mortal punishment, intergenerational bondage, and commoditization, can be understood as a biopolitical project to shape a productive labourer through a capitalistic *nomos*.<sup>58</sup> The purpose of this first chapter is to demonstrate how the Barbadian planter class exercised sovereignty on the plantation complex through the exploitation of white indentured labour; and how this epistemology of subjugation was a precursor to the development of the capitalist market economy and biopolitical environment of discipline and governmentality within the Atlantic world through the institution of African slavery.

Ann Laura Stoler (1995) argues that colonialism was outside the analytic purview of Foucault's examination of state racism; he was, however, interested in "how state institutions foster and draw on new independent disciplines of knowledge and in turn harness these micro-fields of power as they permeate the body politic at large."<sup>59</sup> According to Stoler, Foucault's writings illustrate that "the genealogy of racism is sui generis to Europe: colonial genocide is subsumed, dependent, accounted for, and explained *in absentia* [emphasis in original]."<sup>60</sup> Following this theoretical approach, the first chapter

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<sup>58</sup> In outlining his understanding of the term 'race', Gilroy states that the term "race" "refers primarily to an impersonal, discursive arrangement, the brutal result of the raciological ordering of the world, not its cause. Tracking the term directs attention toward the manifold structures of a racial *nomos* – a legal, governmental, and spatial order." This definition of race speaks to Foucault's discursive analysis of subjectivity and the institutional parameters of biopower. Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 39.

<sup>59</sup> Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, 28.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

of my dissertation focuses on Great Britain's marginalization, confinement, transportation, punishment, and labour exploitation of their white "surplus" population, and how this oppressive model of servitude was grounded on liberal ideologies of economic rationality. I argue that this dimension of colonial violence was carried out as a political strategy of empire building to increase the financial prosperity of an emerging elite planter class. This was carried out through a system of ethnic and class-based discrimination that targeted perceived moral degeneracy related to criminal behavior, forms of idleness and reliance on state welfare, as well as political dissent. The first chapter of this study also evidences how practices of xenophobic, exploitative, and punitive subjectivity visited upon Great Britain's "undesirables" were critical to the contemporaneous development of the European sponsored transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, racialized slavery, and rise of capitalism in the Atlantic world.

In order to illustrate the co-extensive nature of the plantation paradigm and its relationship to the rise of capitalism and Western modernity, the first chapter also explores how the plantocracy employed sovereignty as a "grid of intelligibility" to entrench an epistemological framework of Eurocentric racism.<sup>61</sup> I trace the machinations of power carried out by the planter elite in the Iberian history of white settlement in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in the Atlantic and Hispaniola, the English colonization of seventeenth- and eighteenth century Barbados, and the Barbadian connections of settlement in South Carolina. My analysis suggests that Barbados had the potential to become the quintessential

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<sup>61</sup> Foucault uses the term "grid of intelligibility" to describe how a regime of truth becomes an institutional apparatus through rules, procedures, and practices. My approach here follows Stoler's Foucauldian analysis of European racism: "If race already makes up a part of that 'grid of intelligibility' through which the bourgeoisie came to define themselves, then we need to locate its coordinates in a grid carved through the geographic distributions of 'unfreedoms' that imperial labour systems enforced. These were colonial regimes prior to and coterminous with Europe's liberal bourgeois order." Ibid., 11.

colony of exploitation given the elite planter class's exploitation of white indentured labour, its emergent republicanism and quest for self-government from the metropole, and its campaign to pursue the private slave-trading of Africans outside the Crown monopoly as an invocation of their rights to liberty as English citizens. I argue that it was not only the conditions of the Atlantic market economy that helped to reinforce anti-black racism and its concretization through the institution of slavery, but also the demands of freedom expressed by the Barbadian plantocracy to trade privately in Africans as a declaration of defiance against the metropolitan order. My argument is inspired by Orlando Patterson's thesis that throughout the history of the West, freedom only exists alongside the institution of slavery.<sup>62</sup> I argue that the transition from white indentured labour to African slavery in Barbados during the middle of the seventeenth century came at a time when the Barbadian plantocracy's declarations for political sovereignty and free trade were being waged against the metropole. This movement away from white indentured labour was precipitated by a number of factors, most notably, how the poor treatment of whites in Barbados eroded the socio-political currency of British identity and citizenship rights. The commoditization of enslaved blacks became concretized through stabilized networks of African procurement and the inertia of white indentured labour supply. What is clear, however, is that the Barbadian planter class perceived the trade in Africans as a private commercial right in an

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<sup>62</sup> In his book *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (1991), Patterson argues that freedom has always been anchored in milieus where slavery existed, and that before ancient Greece there was no notion of personal freedom until the non-slave became cognizant of the threat of enslavement – being violently removed from family, property, community, and culture, to serve another or face death. Patterson's theorization of "social death" in this context intersects the conditions of "bare life" through juridical and political exposure. For further analysis into the connection between biopolitics and the Caribbean plantation in the context of being "made to live as socially dead" and "bare labour", see Elizabeth Maddock Dillon's (2019) "Zombie Biopolitics", *American Quarterly* 71 (3): 625–52. <https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2019.0047>.

emerging capitalistic environment, one that extended from the freedom and liberty derived from English citizenship and the devaluation of others.

This model of settler colonialism reveals how the English planter class used strategies of ethnic and class-based discrimination to marginalize English, Scottish, and Irish indentured labourers. The English planter class in Barbados cultivated ethnic difference to groom a poor white labour force, particularly in the case of the Irish. Despite some poor whites having endured conditions of forced transportation, hard labour, and physical punishment, the integration of some into the plantation hierarchy and colonial policing apparatus to discipline enslaved blacks beginning in the seventeenth century (though many were marginalized to subsistence farming and dependency on state welfare programs), entrenched a racial division that was operative in the juridico-political framework. The English plantocracy's cooptation of the white indentured population as plantation henchmen, militiamen, and slave-traders, cultivated a socio-racial war against enslaved blacks in the colony once the demands for security for whites among a majority black population had emerged in Barbados. While these positions were inferior to the prominent roles available to wealthy and influential Englishmen, the inclusion of this white underclass reveals a social currency of race that belies the argument that ethnic discrimination visited upon the Scottish and Irish was an example of the racialization of class, but one where degrees of whiteness were visible.<sup>63</sup> Even when the Irish joined forces

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<sup>63</sup> Stoler (1995) argues that for Foucault, racism is "an underlying discourse of permanent social war, nurtured by biopolitical technologies of 'incessant purification,'" which on the Barbadian plantation included disciplinary forms of surveillance and punishment, as well as governmental practices of population control (Ibid., 69). While indentured white labourers suffered forms of discrimination and exclusion, the social currency of whiteness was evident in forms of legal and political protection unavailable to enslaved blacks, such as rights related to changing masters, basic provision grounds, and housing. Free blacks in the colony, while able being able to hold positions of employment and retain property, faced realities of political disenfranchisement, racial hierarchy in the marketplace, and anti-miscegenation laws.

with enslaved blacks and rebelled against the English planters, the sovereign right to kill whites and the intergenerational system of bondage were never retained by the state of individual planters as an essential strategy of control.

The second chapter in the first part of my study traces how the erosion of the Crown's sovereign power, despite their investment and interest in trade, was facilitated by private merchants and slave-traders. This section investigates how the private sector impacted the development of the European-sponsored transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and growth of the capitalist market economy, and how this shift led to strategic contestations of power between the Barbadian plantocracy and the metropole. I continue my analysis into how technology, racism, and capitalism shaped the perceptions, institutions, bureaucracies, and wider socio-political functionality of European colonialism in Barbados as an apparatus for the growth of the modern market economy. This colonial crusade was legitimated by a biocultural ontology that exoticized, primitivized, and dehumanized Africans *in toto* as an "inferior race" to secure plantation production. The shift in Barbados from a proto-settler agrarian plantation colony (with smaller farms, fewer enslaved labourers, and lower production values) to an emerging industrial zone of large-scale sugar production during the end of the seventeenth century, was prompted by an increased demand for sugar. This economic growth increased the importation of African labour and the sovereign right over life, which would ultimately organize biopolitical practices of slave management in the latter seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Enslaved blacks occupied the position of *homo sacer* in the capitalistic theatre of Western modernity through mechanisms of sovereign expenditure, institutional correction, and labour exploitation.

Three factors are central to my analysis of the means through which sovereignty shaped English colonization in Barbados: the fortification of the state through the accumulation of wealth, continual competition with foreign rivals, and population growth.<sup>64</sup> The geo-economic rise of industrialization and technological manufacture was supported by the coordination, institutionalization, corporation, and regulation of the European sponsored transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and plantation production. The questions to be asked are how power-knowledge relations of sovereign power, which were carried out in the acquisition, trafficking, torture, and exchange of African bodies, organized systems of disciplinary and governmental power on the plantation complex that assisted the growth of agro-industry and industrial production? The second part of this study examines the relationship between plantation slavery and industrialization in the context of disciplinary labour exploitation.

Contemporary scholars reveal how epistemologies of European cultural hegemony shaped colonial identities of race and ethnicity in the slave colony through taxonomies of difference, such as geographic origin, skin colour, gender, and sexuality.<sup>65</sup> The plantation paradigm reveals how Eurocentric ideologies of classification, which hinged on the belief that distinct races existed and that there was a natural racial hierarchy, were used by the plantocracy to invoke authority, establish networks of labour subjectivity, justify abuse, and ultimately exercise the sovereign right over life. The plantocracy leveraged their economic, legal, and political force by institutionalizing normative values of European

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<sup>64</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 5.

<sup>65</sup> For an engagement with the theorization of racial identity and difference within the philosophical, historical, legal and political domains of the colony, see, for example, Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, New York: (Routledge, 1994); Elsa Goveia, *West Indian Slave Laws of the 18th Century*, Kingston: (Caribbean Universities Press, 1970); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery*, Philadelphia: (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, London: (Routledge, 1995).

culture, history, and racial belonging into the fabric of the colonial space. These beliefs, ideas, images, and values, which were subject to contestations of cultural difference in the colonial space, assembled an epistemological framework for understanding the concept of race, and are observed in dynamics of racial subjectivity that governed slave life. I argue that the purpose of interrogating and mapping the discursive field of colonial identity is to establish how racism was used as a diagrammatic force to determine the economic, legal, and political realities faced by inhuman subjects, and how these populations under the yoke of planter tyranny challenged this bulwark of oppression.<sup>66</sup> I argue that racial hierarchy on the plantation became the *raison d'état* of both the slave colony and the modern capitalist economy in the Caribbean. The trade in Africans and exploitation of black labour became the primary political centerpiece of the Barbadian elite's demands for autonomous government.<sup>67</sup> The planter class exploited categories of cultural, ethnic, geographic, racial, and religious difference to order an ontology of hierarchical classification that extended to poor whites, Indigenous peoples, Africans, and any who were outside the socio-cultural sphere of their privileged group. These expressions of racism culminated in two genocides, one that witnessed the annihilation of fifteen million Indigenous peoples and another where at least thirteen million Africans were transported

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<sup>66</sup> Gilroy argues that the task is to re-examine the political philosophies that came to order an epistemology of race and imperial statecraft through the economic relationship between the colony and metropole. He identifies the sub- or inhuman as the enslaved black in the colonial world and the contemporary non-citizens in the European Union and United States, as well as the battlefield detainees and the enemy combatants of the war on terror being held in Guantanamo Bay. He examines how governmental power atomizes, mechanizes, and suspends the inhuman in a zone of violent subjugation. Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

<sup>67</sup> In their analysis of the colonial space, Cooper and Stoler state that their research, which includes the Caribbean, United States, and other colonial zones, is to examine "the most basic tension of empire," which is how categories of difference were constantly being invoked in colonial spaces despite resistance to this white supremacy. Cooper and Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," 3-4.

to the Americas for enslavement.<sup>68</sup> The indentureship of Europeans was a system of class subjection that divaricated from the essentialist racialization of non-European peoples at the level of mortal sacrifice. At its very core, the expropriation of natural resource and genocidal machinations of the European colonizer in the West were carried out through an exercise of power over life itself: to take life or let live.

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<sup>68</sup> Enrique Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor and the Philosophy of Liberation*, (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1996), 50.



## CHAPTER ONE: THE REPLICATING PLANTATION PARADIGM, THE BARBADIAN PLANTOCRACY, AND WHITE INDENTURED SERVITUDE

### 1.1 THE PLANTATION PARADIGM: A BRIEF HISTORY

Michael Craton (1984) and David Eltis (1993), among others, argue that early experiments of plantation agriculture did not initially exploit African labour, and that chattel slavery was never “*sine qua non*” to the institution before or after abolition.<sup>69</sup> These observations carry significant historical importance to the relationship between racism and plantation labour, and how human exploitation was anchored within the plantation paradigm *in toto*. Further analysis into how sovereign power structured the relationship between similar/differing practices of abusive labour and the conditions of mortal wasting engendered by racism are required to account for the circumstances of white indentured servants and enslaved Africans, and how these typologies of exploitation relate to each other in regard to the dynamics of plantation production, capitalism, and modernity.<sup>70</sup>

It is also crucial to consider the reified economic, geographic, and political trajectories of the plantation complex as a site for labour exploitation within the broader historical record to reveal how Barbados emerged as an ideal slave plantation colony in the Atlantic. Craton argues that the origin of the plantation was not solely European, pointing to its “Moslem and Jewish, Asiatic and African” influences, and that its true site for development was not the Atlantic, but the Mediterranean; he further argues that there was

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<sup>69</sup> David Eltis, “Labour and coercion in the English Atlantic world from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 14.1 (1993): 221-22; Michael Craton, “The historical roots of the Plantation Model,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 5.3 (1984): 191.

<sup>70</sup> Simon Newman states that while the historical machinations of slave plantation labour are critical to understanding modernity in the British Atlantic, there has been a limited treatment of indentured white labour. Simon P. Newman, *A New World of Labour: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 7.

no “critical or revolutionary watershed” in the history of the plantation provoked by the relationship between “bourgeois capitalism and negro slavery.”<sup>71</sup> To suggest that there was no paradigmatic shift regarding the relationship between racialized black slavery and the rise of capitalism in the Atlantic world, however, demands further treatment given the significant trafficking of Africans to labour on the plantation, the increased networks of trade developed through the expansion of commerce, and the transcultural exchanges between Europeans and Africans.

Craton’s ideas require further treatment as he states that “slavery was an accidental concomitant during the middle phases of plantation intensification, with negro slaves coming to predominate largely through geographical accident,” given the cultural, ethnic, religious, and scientific dimensions of anti-black racism rooted in European history, which put into focus a system of disenfranchisement and alienation in contrast to the treatment of indentured white labourers; the wider networks of European colonization in the Americas, and exploitation of resources; and the emerging protocols of exploitation developing in the modern market economy. Craton’s observation nevertheless demands consideration into how the maturation of capitalistic production, industrialization, and technology on the plantation was shaped by alternative forms of labour exploitation, such as white indentureship.<sup>72</sup> While an analysis of European feudalism, Indian indentureship, and Chinese “coolieism” both within Europe and the Caribbean are beyond the scope of this study, I argue that the conditions of labour under white indentureship and black slavery in Barbados played a crucial role in establishing the plantation model as an institution of capitalistic exploitation. Conditions of labour exploitation have been able to transcend time

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<sup>71</sup> Craton, “The historical roots of the Plantation Model,” 216-17.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

and space, not just through a neocolonial strategy that restricted the economic development of ex-slave colonies as argued by Craton,<sup>73</sup> but also because they were informed by subjectivities of class, ethnicity, and race developed on the plantation complex.

Craton argues that the Mediterranean was the original space of colonial plantation activity, which predated the Atlantic paradigm by at least three hundred and fifty years, and was conceived outside the European feudal order.<sup>74</sup> While the protracted origins of plantation settlement, commerce, technologies and production are outside the purview of this study, I argue that Venetian and Genoese planters, under the imperial authority of Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth century,<sup>75</sup> replicated both white indentureship and race-based chattel slavery practices (at a much smaller scale and without the systems of biopolitical rule) that were previously undertaken by the Crusaders and Islamic peoples on the sugar plantations of Crete, Cyprus, Malta, Rhodes, and Sicily: the seeds of racial subjugation as the institution's modus operandi did not fully come into fruition until mid-seventeenth-century Barbados.<sup>76</sup> Early Mediterranean plantation zones reveal the

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 189. Craton states that plantation history can be traced back a millennium, and that it was created "from a commingling of the traditions, structures, energies and actual peoples of Rome, Byzantium and Islam, the Jewish diaspora, medieval Christian Europe, the Italian city-states of Genoa, Pisa and Venice, and the vast pagan hinterlands of Asia and Africa." Ibid., 190.

<sup>75</sup> By the latter half of the fifteenth century the Portuguese were the first to undertake large-scale human trafficking, in this case, African and Indigenous Canarians to the Atlantic island of Madeira; this colony would quickly surpass the Mediterranean as the premier sugar producer for all of Europe, having over eighty plantations in operation by 1493. Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 84; Herbert S. Klein and Ben Vinson III, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 15.

<sup>76</sup> Philip Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 10; David B. Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 81-82; Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 28-32. Russell Menard argues "that [while] one can find some antecedents of the Barbadian plantation complex in the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic islands, the key institutions, the integrated plantation and the gang system, appeared first in Barbados as planters struggled to improve productivity in the face of falling prices." Russell R. Menard, *Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery, and Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados*, (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 91-2. Furthermore, Menard suggests "that the Barbados plantation complex can be understood as a subset of Curtin's mature plantation complex [and that it be considered] a general theme on which the several plantation colonies played their own variation." Ibid, 104-5.

geopolitical emergence of Iberian sovereign power and the critical role European settlement and African slave-labour would play in the future course of European empire building throughout the Atlantic.

European settlers from various vocations, such as merchants, professionals, and landowners, were encouraged by Spain's nobility to migrate to the Atlantic islands of São Tomé, the Canaries, Cape Verdes, and Madeira, and enslaved Africans were initially imported to labour on emerging sugar plantations. The exercise of Iberian sovereign power in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries can be observed in the annexation of these Atlantic territories for plantation production in a pioneering model for settlement. I argue that while these early plantation zones never reached the technological maturity and agricultural output of the Caribbean colonies, they included both European and African labour, obtained advanced economies of scale, employed agricultural technologies, and for these reasons should be considered a vanguard of the plantation paradigm. The success of labour exploitation on the sugar islands in the Atlantic would ultimately situate the Caribbean as a central site for European competition and the development of the modern market economy given their amenable climate for cultivation, natural resource, and proximity to the European marketplace. While the disparate commercial, governmental, and monarchical interests of Europe would engage in a protracted competition for territorial control and market share in the Caribbean, they all followed a pattern of settlement that included the introduction of white colonists and labourers before transitioning to African slave-labour. None of these regions, however, reached the socio-racial conditions that would encourage planters, as was the case in Barbados, to deploy biopolitical strategies of surveillance, punishment, policing, and incentivization, as there were limited approaches

toward the forced extraction of labour on a large-scale to establish an intergenerational slave force.

The Atlantic sugar islands proved to be environmentally viable regions for growing sugar, and similar to the Mediterranean, were colonized by wealthy planters and white labourers before the importation of enslaved African labour. These plantation zones were aided by the rising Iberian bourgeoisie's financing of sugar production and the application and distribution of technologies such as the three-roller mill to accelerate the processes of cutting, grinding, and extracting sugar juices.<sup>77</sup> The blueprint for successful Barbadian plantation sugar production, the colonization by a ruling planter class, the integration of manufacturing technologies, the introduction of white labour, and the subsequent transition to African slave-labour, can in part, be traced back to Iberian experimentations of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century plantation slavery. The knowledge produced by the Spanish and Portuguese would assemble an archive of "best practices" for English planters in Barbados to establish a nascent plantation environment but did not provide any substantial guidance on how to mitigate large-scale resistance movements given the smaller population zones. Strategies of biopolitical management would be required in Barbados for the planter class to reach the apogee of social, political, and economic supremacy in the Caribbean.

Marxist historian Victor Kiernan's (1995) declaration that Iberian colonial power "wore a religious cloak," whereas "bourgeois Holland and England represented a new society that took naked class division for granted, without holy water or feudal camouflage," does not provide an adequate assessment of how sovereign power structured the historical relationship between the ethnic and class-based discrimination of white

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<sup>77</sup> Curtin, *Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*.

indentures and the racism suffered by enslaved Africans.<sup>78</sup> In large part, the discourse of racial contamination and inferiority, and its subsequent justifications for slave-labour, were entrenched by the pontifications of the Catholic Church through a strategy of theocratic sovereignty in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: this particular religious persecution was grounded on an ideology of Eurocentric white superiority that carried out a regime of natal alienation against Africans.<sup>79</sup> This distinction is important for understanding the attempted erasure of personhood experienced by enslaved Africans. This could include forms of cultural alienation and historical deletion by being dislocated from their families and communities and by being discouraged from maintaining their own belief systems and also partaking in Christian religious practices.

While the Roman Catholic Church's religious persecution, physical abuse, and sexual exploitation of Indigenous peoples is well documented, records also indicate that there were efforts to limit forced labour. Pope Eugene IV in his *Sicut Dudum* of 1435, declared his opposition to the enslavement of Natives in the Canary Islands, the location from where Columbus would first introduce sugarcane to Hispaniola in 1493. Pope Eugene IV was made aware by Ferdinand, bishop and representative of the Canary Islands, that the Native Canarians had been deprived of property and sold into slavery at the hands of Europeans. This particular papal bull called for a restoration of the Native Canarians liberty, under the precondition of religious assimilation. The directive called for a stop to further financial hardship within fifteen days, and that any who "capture, sell, or subject to slavery, baptized residents of the Canary Islands or those seeking baptism," would be

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<sup>78</sup> Kiernan, *Imperialism*, 1995, 101.

<sup>79</sup> Stoler maintains that the Portuguese and Spanish perceptions of "contaminated races" and "purity of blood" were crucial to national identity and colonial empire building. Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, 51.

excommunicated.<sup>80</sup> This papal bull was a strategy of religious assimilation and advancement of colonial power. A mere twenty years later in 1455, Pope Nicholas V would issue the *Romanus Pontifex*, granting Portugal the right to invade, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and other enemies of Christ, to annex and conquer their kingdoms and to reduce their inhabitants to perpetual slavery.<sup>81</sup> This reversal in policy was undertaken to secure dominion and profit along the West African coast. European sovereign power was achieved through prohibitions, statutes, the imposition of tributes, and the right to dispose of occupied lands.<sup>82</sup> The *Romanus Pontifex* not only promoted the endeavours of the Iberian colonial bulwark and the converging interests of the nobility and European bourgeois class, but also absolved the colonizer from any spiritual culpability for condemning African peoples to slavery. With the issue of this papal bull and the rising demand for plantation production, Portuguese maritime aspirations, which had previously focused on the extraction of gold and silver through the *mit'a* and encomienda labour systems and the trade of spices and ivory, began to include the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans.

Similar to Barbados, and other plantation colonies in the Caribbean, the island of São Tomé was originally settled by wealthy colonists before the importation of enslaved Africans. Craton states that São Tomé was colonized by the Portuguese in 1470 with elite white planters from Madeira before they turned to Portuguese convicts for labour and the importation of two thousand Jewish children whose parents evacuated Portugal because of

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<sup>80</sup> Pope Eugene IV, “Sicut Dudum January 13, 1435,” Against the Enslaving of Black Natives from the Canary Islands. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Eugene04/eugene04sicut.htm>

<sup>81</sup> Pope Nicholas V, “Romanus Pontifex January 8, 1455,” Granting the Portuguese a perpetual monopoly in trade with Africa. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/indig-romanus-pontifex.html>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

persecution. Enslaved Congolese were imported as well to develop sugar cultivation on the island.<sup>83</sup> The persecution of Jewish people evidences the Portuguese obsession with pure blood and the broader campaign of conquest that would include the Catholic Church's consent to conquer, kidnap, and enslave Africans. While the critical role the Catholic Church played in the enslavement of Africans is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a brief analysis of papal sovereignty in the Caribbean is necessary to establish the fundamental difference between white indentureship and black enslavement, which included attempts at cultural genocide, a lifetime of servitude, intergenerational bondage, and the exposure to death. This study, however, challenges Patterson's analysis that the racial rule of enslaved Africans can be reduced to natal alienation and social death.<sup>84</sup>

I argue that Papal sovereignty was realized through theonomic prohibition, the doctrine of salvation and civilization, the declarations of righteousness, and the political ideology of dominion theology to sanctify European conquest. The papacy represented one of the many epistemological nodal points (religious, scientific, and economic) in the broader network of European trade in enslaved Africans as a specific racial enterprise that would encourage intergenerational bondage where white indentureship had failed to secure a planter colony, as will be discussed more fully below. Papal bulls in the fifteenth century indicate how the categorical associations of black skin with evil and the perception of African peoples as savage infidel combatants whose souls were imperiled, were among the

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<sup>83</sup> Michael Craton, "The historical roots of the Plantation Model," 211.

<sup>84</sup> Throughout his corpus, Orlando Patterson describes slavery as a process of deracination, natal alienation, and social death, which was achieved through violent subjugation, socio-cultural alienation, political disenfranchisement, legal non-existence, dishonor, excommunication, intergenerational bondage, and death. See, *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development, and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica*, (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1967); *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*, Cambridge, MA: (Harvard University Press, 1982); *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture*, (New York: Basic Books, 1991); *Rituals of Blood: Consequences of Slavery in Two American Centuries*, (Washington DC: Civitas/Counterpoint, 1998).



justifications for enslavement by Europeans.<sup>85</sup> The status of African peoples as inhuman, their expendability, subjugation, and commodification was a protracted machination sanctified by the Roman Catholic Church, whose partnership with nobility, as well as the bourgeoisie and merchant classes of Christendom, asserted dominion over all foreign territories and peoples.<sup>86</sup> For these reasons, the enslavement of Africans by the Iberian monarchy and Catholic Church must be acknowledged as a critical phase in the advancement of the Caribbean plantation paradigm even though many English planters did not rely upon religious justifications for enslavement. While this dissertation does not undertake an examination of religion in colonial Barbados, the Codrington plantation exemplifies the direct financial and institutional control of the Anglican Church of England in the transatlantic trade in Africans and plantation slavery and a continuation of black inferiorization through paternalistic systems of rule. Christopher Codrington who was Barbadian by birth and would become the Governor of Antigua in 1689, willed that his two slave plantations and properties in Barbados be given to the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Church of England). Under the auspices of the church the Codrington plantation would exploit African labour throughout the eighteenth century, up until abolition in 1838.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Pope Nicholas V, "Romanus Pontifex January 8, 1455," Granting the Portuguese a perpetual monopoly in trade with Africa. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at <https://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/indig-romanus-pontifex.html>

<sup>86</sup> Curtin reveals how Cyprus became the primary sugar producer for Europe from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries through the introduction of slavery in the Mediterranean and that the ownership of plantations and the capitalistic development of commercial sugar production was controlled by bourgeois families of Catalonian, French, and Venetian origin as well as the Catholic Church. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, 1990, 6-8.

<sup>87</sup> For further analysis into the Anglican Church's role and culpability for slavery on the Codrington plantation, see, Hilary McD. Beckles, *Britain's Black Debt: Reparations for Caribbean Slavery and Native Genocide*, (Mona: University of the West Indies Press, 2013).

The Spanish Crown and the European feudal order, the emerging class of financiers, merchants, and entrepreneurs, the juridical, political, and martial comportments of admirals, commodores, and field marshals, demonstrate the depth of colonial bureaucratization and the proliferation of violence disseminated by sovereign power in the Caribbean. Although an exhaustive account of the Iberian undertaking in the Atlantic islands is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a brief analysis of this early stage of sugar production uncovers the legacy of plantation technology, labour, and racism, and more importantly, the crucial phases of elite planter colonization, Christian church involvement, white indentured labour, and African enslavement.

A fundamental strategy of sovereignty exercised by the Iberian slavocracy during the early half of the sixteenth century was the trafficking of captive African peoples for the purpose of agricultural labour. Enslaved peoples from Gambia, Benin, and Congo were transported to the Atlantic islands in the sixteenth century, with estimates suggesting that in 1507 two thousand enslaved Africans were labouring on sugar plantations in São Tomé, and by 1520 the island was receiving two thousand annually; by the 1550s there were sixty mills producing sugar with five-to-six-thousand slaves ready for transport to emerging plantation zones throughout the Americas.<sup>88</sup> The European transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans was facilitated by a racial ontology that equated blackness with evil, primitiveness, and savagery, that would alongside increased private trade nourish the establishment of large-scale plantation slavery. These Eurocentric perceptions of alienation

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<sup>88</sup> Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, 42-43; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 85-86; Klein and Vinson III, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 15. Michael Guasco states that “as early as the 1550s, the Africans that Englishmen encountered throughout the Atlantic world had been regarded and treated as slaves, ex-slaves, or runaway slaves. The English usually called them “negros,” but there was no confusion about how Africans could and should be used once they moved beyond African shores.” Michael Guasco, *Slaves and Englishmen: Human Bondage in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, The Early Modern Americas Series, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 199.

and inferiority expressed by religious institutions such as the Catholic Church were predicated on the belief that blacks were infidel pagans, and as such, their exposure to Christianity and European supremacy, even if this meant being subjected to slave-labour, was considered and justified as a pathway to civilization.<sup>89</sup>

The discourse of salvation was considered not only a step toward liberating African peoples from their alleged state of bestial savagery, cannibalism, taboo sexual relations, and primitive forms of demonic worship, but an early articulation of how a mission to conquer and civilize would also translate into racial subjugation.<sup>90</sup> This study does not probe the complex etymological origins and transcultural terrain that connected blackness with slavery during the early Atlantic plantation period, but what can be ascertained, is that European perceptions of Africans as slaves cannot be attributed to diaphanous transcultural associations, such as Davis' inference that the Arabic word for slave, "abd," became a designate synonymous for anyone with dark skin regardless of their economic or social status, and an influence on Europeans.<sup>91</sup> There are religious, scientific, and economic references that point to the very complex etymological underpinnings of supposed African inferiority and their suitability to the rigours of hard plantation labour.

The importation of enslaved Africans into Portugal intensified during the fifteenth century as Christian interpretations of the biblical "Curse of Ham" came to be associated with persons of African descent and the obsession with impure blood as a physical

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<sup>89</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 81.

<sup>90</sup> The European movements to conquer, civilize, and subjugate Africans and Indigenous peoples in the Caribbean and throughout the Americas were diverse. They included outright attempts at conquest and enslavement, as was the case in the Native peoples of Barbados and enslaved black captives imported from Africa, to the strategies of settler colonialism and civilization of Native Americans under the constitutional and institutional practices of the Indian Act, reservation system, and residential schooling system of Canada.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 51, 62-63.

contamination of the body and spirit circulated throughout Iberian society.<sup>92</sup> Two centuries later these same religious narratives of the Curse of Ham expressed by the Roman Catholic Church informed the English gentry that there was a bio-genetic and spiritual connection between black skin and sin. Sir Thomas Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Enquiries into very many received Tenets and Commonly presumed Truths* (1646), stated that there were two reasons for black skin: one, the darkening caused by the effects of the sun, and two, the curse of God upon "Cham," that would be passed onto his offspring for having seen his father Noah naked.<sup>93</sup> There is also evidence that more general associations between blackness and primitiveness were being disseminated amongst Britain's adventurer class, who described Africans as "'beastly savage people," "Wilde men," and "brutish blacke people.'" <sup>94</sup>

It is critical to investigate how typologies of racial difference concerning Indigenous and African peoples were ordered through perceptions of geographic origin as they related to culture, ethnicity, and religion. It is equally important to discern how ideas of racial classification, which justified invasion, expropriation, and subjugation, were also informed by how the colonizer viewed the natural environment of areas deemed terra nullius, and how native inhabitants seemingly failed to utilize the economic benefits afforded by these lands. Correspondence between the Spanish Crown and Columbus illustrates how Royal Assent was granted to seize any precious stones, gold, silver, and spices, with the right to retain one tenth of their value and to pass onto the sovereigns the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 50, 79.

<sup>93</sup> Eric Williams, *Documents of West Indian History Vol. I, 1492-1655: From the Spanish Discovery to the British Conquest of Jamaica*, (Trinidad: PNM Publishing Company, 1963), 292-93. The Old Testament states that Noah cursed his youngest son Ham for seeing him naked while he lay asleep intoxicated. As punishment, Noah condemned his son and future offspring to servitude. Historical interpretations employed this religious narrative as justification for African slavery despite there being no reference to black skin.

<sup>94</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 52.

remaining wealth.<sup>95</sup> Columbus' journal entries from his voyages in 1492-1493 contain many superstitious, chimerical, and xenophobic musings of his exploration into the Caribbean. These include the averments of his Admiral, who on their first voyage speaks of an island harbouring only women, the sighting of three mermaids, and the desire to kidnap a few of the "Caribs" whom he refers to as "flesh eaters."<sup>96</sup> Most telling was the Spanish colonizers' ravenous desire to absorb the natural environment and its resources; herbs were prized for their potential to become dyes and medicine, and evocations of a Caribbean littered in gold projected the naked avariciousness of the European colonial imagination.<sup>97</sup> Columbus himself declared his desire to obtain precious stones, pearls, spices, large quantities of cotton, as well as encourage the discovery of mines where large quantities of gold could be transported to Europe.<sup>98</sup> He also prayed that the Lord Almighty would lead him to islands composed of more gold than earth, and to the rumoured island whose terrain was made entirely of gold.<sup>99</sup>

Benítez-Rojo (1996) characterizes Columbus' collision with Hispaniola as a medieval vacuum cleaner that siphoned the natural wealth of minerals, plants, and animal species from the Caribbean for deposit into Spain.<sup>100</sup> Spain's expropriation of natural resources in the Caribbean and Americas was carried out through a systematic military engagement and entrenchment of labour exploitation that underscored the relationship between sovereignty and Eurocentrism.<sup>101</sup> Indigenous peoples in the Caribbean suffered

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<sup>95</sup> Eric Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 1.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 14-15.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>100</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island*, 5-6.

<sup>101</sup> Although the history of Indigenous oppression, forced relocation, and enslavement through the *encomienda* and *mit'a*, which were systems of tribute that demanded labour and money to the Spanish Crown, are outside the purview of this study, the preference by colonizers to employ this system of labour

from slave-capturing expeditions, starvation, European diseases such as tuberculosis, influenza, scarlet fever, plague, smallpox and measles; the transmission of these diseases intensified in the suffocating work environment of the mines and on the *engenhos/ingenios*, which are the Portuguese and Spanish terms used to describe sugar plantations.<sup>102</sup> As a result of Spanish colonization, Hispaniola's Indigenous population was reduced from approximately half a million persons in 1492 to five hundred in the 1540s.<sup>103</sup> Enslaved Africans were recruited to offset this labour shortfall and for their knowledge concerning agriculture and ironwork.<sup>104</sup> The Spanish colonial endeavour not only identifies how sovereignty was manifest through violent conquest and territoriality, but how and why this mode of power would be repeated by the English through their colonization of the Caribbean at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the case of Barbados, this would include the initial colonization by an elite group of planters, the attempt at securing a white settlement through the forced transportation and labour exploitation of "undesirable" whites, and finally the trafficking, commodification, and legal subjectivity of Africans to the institution of slavery. What must be made clear is that sovereign power, the right to seize, command, and dispose of life, becomes the undergirding legitimating force of coloniality as a grid of intelligibility and art of government.

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exploitation to control Indigenous peoples working in the mines instead of outright slave-labour warrants further examination. The island of Hispaniola would become transformed by the introduction of sugarcane and the importation of enslaved Africans who, under the whip of the planter, would embark on an intense phase of deforestation to clear land for livestock and large-scale sugar production. Bartolomé de Las Casas noted that the Spanish would forcibly take what little food Indigenous people had. Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, trans. Nigel Griffin, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2004), 14.

<sup>102</sup> Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4-5, 20.

<sup>103</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island*, 1992, 55-56

<sup>104</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island*, 1992, 55-56; Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 98-99; Klein and Vinson III, *African Slavery*, 46; Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 25-26. Aimé Césaire argues that "between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labour, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance." Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 42.

This study eschews both a neo-Marxist and World-systems theory analyses of colonization, labour exploitation, and the plantation complex. I argue that these theoretical approaches are in agreement concerning the bifurcated dynamic of global power (core/periphery), and therefore aggregate practices of human trafficking, labour exploitation, and punishment within a unitary system of material oppression and a hegemonic ontology. In "Race and Racism in Marx's Camera Obscura," Paul Paolucci's observation that "[t]he British enslaved the Irish for a time and both Irish and British peasants were viewed as 'lesser breeds'" is crucial to my argument concerning the ethnic and class-based dimensions of servitude in Barbados, but goes too far in conflating servitude with slavery given the absence of natal alienation, which along with efforts to institutionalize intergenerational bondage, must be taken as critical divergences.<sup>105</sup> Paolucci's argument that the Irish were enslaved based on an ideology of racism is problematic given that the Irish indentured servant did not endure servitude for life, their offspring being condemned to bondage, and wholesale risk of death through transportation, hard-labour, and punishment.

His argument that "racial ideology under capitalism came into being *after* [emphasis in original] these structural determinations resulted in slavery," is also inaccurate given the history of cultural, ethnic, religious, and biological racism of the West as evidenced in the biblical narratives of blackness and sin referenced earlier in this chapter.<sup>106</sup> A similar perspective can be observed in Beckles' analysis of Eric Williams's (1944) argument that stated "the rise of black slavery was not the triumph of climatic or

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<sup>105</sup> Paul Paolucci, "Race and Racism in Marx's Camera Obscura," *Critical Sociology*, 32.4 (2006), 624.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 644.

geographical conditions, but of market forces.”<sup>107</sup> Notwithstanding the evidence outlined by Beckles, that the price of white indentured servants surpassed enslaved blacks during the latter half of the seventeenth century and that technologies for transporting captive Africans made them an economically viable alternative, the connection between European racism against Africans and the legacy of their enslavement can be traced at least back to the papal bulls issued by the Catholic Church.<sup>108</sup> What this suggests is that the movement of theocratic sovereignty carried out by the Catholic Church, its sanctification of European powers to conquer and enslave Africans, reinforced economic incentives to increase the exploitation of black labour.

More importantly, Paolucci’s examination of what he defines as slavery presents a deeply ethnocentric perspective, which is customary of some scholars working within a neo-Marxist and World-systems theoretical approach:

In North America, the indigenous peoples were spread out and had a relatively simple culture and so enslavement was difficult [...] In sparse populations within a complex culture, such as in central Mexico, local elites had some power and thus Europeans had to negotiate with them, bringing them into a ruling coalition. In dense areas with more complex culture, such as in London or Dublin, attempts at enslaving the working population were eventually abandoned because of people’s ability to resist and revolt in multiple ways. Wage labor was the degree of exploitation that could be achieved. Finally, a more dense population and a relatively simple culture made West Africans more easily enslaved. So they were.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 28.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 28-30.

<sup>109</sup> Paolucci, “Race and Racism in Marx’s Camera Obscura,” 643-44.



Paolucci's analysis into how culture and demography configure labour exploitation galvanizes a Eurocentric methodology. His characterization of African cultures as "relatively simple" emphasizes how an ethnocentric methodology can marshal a facile correlation between population distribution and cultural development, and how this can in turn be taken as a panacea for identifying how the conditions of colonization, slavery, and exploitation configured a global milieu of conquest. Paolucci fails to observe how the contemporaneous categorization, transportation, oppression, and punishment of white indentured labourers and enslaved Africans, was rationalized by a bifurcated socio-political ontology, one that identified class-based estrangement, ethnic discrimination, and political oppression for purposes of white indentured exploitation, and another that manifested attempts at the sociocultural erasure of enslaved Africans through racism, life-long servitude, and intergenerational bondage. This particular dynamic of labour exploitation in the British Caribbean can be traced back to seventeenth-century Barbados.

English colonists landed in Barbados on May 14<sup>th</sup> 1625 under the command of Captain John Powell on the ship *Peter*, and within two years his younger brother Henry would import the island's first enslaved peoples, ten Africans and thirty-two Indigenous people; the latter were extracted from a Dutch settlement in Surinam for the purpose of exploiting their knowledge of planting.<sup>110</sup> For the first half of the seventeenth century, however, Barbadian planters would rely primarily on white indentured labour to establish a plutocratic society that was dominated by a minority of English colonists. Two London merchants, Sir Peter and Sir William Courteen established Holetown in Barbados, and Charles I granted James Hay I, Earl of Carlisle, the patent for Barbados and other Caribbean

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<sup>110</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 7-8, 18; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 61-62, 71.

islands, appointing him the Lord Proprietor responsible for political administration, defense, legal institutions, and trade.<sup>111</sup> This grant to James Hay I on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1627, included the islands of St. Christopher's, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Barbados, Mittalanea, Dominico, Marigalante, Desdea, Todosantes, Guadeloupe, Antigua, Montserrat, Radendo, Barbuda, Nevis, Statia, St. Bartholomew, St. Martin, Anguilla, Sembrera, Enegada, et al., for an annual rent and the responsibility of providing a white horse to the King or his heirs should they visit.<sup>112</sup>

While the documentary record is severely limited concerning the history of Amerindian populations that inhabited Barbados, it is clear that Spanish slave-trading parties in the sixteenth century had a catastrophic impact on their number within the Atlantic, with inferences that many were taken captive to labour on plantations in Hispaniola and that others escaped to nearby islands that could provide better coverage to mount a defense.<sup>113</sup> While historical analysis predating England's formal declaration of settlement in 1627 is beyond the scope of this study, Portuguese and Spanish colonists visited the island on several occasions but never maintained a long-term permanent settlement.<sup>114</sup> In "Indian Slaves from Guiana in Seventeenth-Century Barbados" Carolyn Arena argues that the sugar plantation industry in Barbados was made possible through the exploitation of Indian slave labour secured from Guiana.<sup>115</sup> Arena states that English colonists utilized the strategic positionality of Barbados, as an uncontested political

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<sup>111</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 49-50.

<sup>112</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 279-80.

<sup>113</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 6.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>115</sup> Carolyn Arena, "Indian Slaves from Guiana in Seventeenth-Century Barbados", *Ethnohistory* 64, no. 1 (1, 2017): 65. doi:10.1215/00141801-3688375.

territory and uninhabited space (*terra nullius*), to coordinate and safeguard trade within the Atlantic and to traffick and enslave Indigenous peoples from Guiana.<sup>116</sup>

After the Earl of Carlisle managed to supplant William Courteen under the King's authority, he moved forward with a colonizing policy that concentrated the future wealth of Barbadian society in the hands of an elite planter class.<sup>117</sup> According to Dunn, the Earl of Carlisle's settling policy was fraught with corruption and inequality. For example, forty thousand acres of land were distributed unequally among two hundred and fifty planters from 1628 and 1630; by 1638, eighty-five thousand acres were apportioned to over seven hundred and sixty-four planters. This unequal distribution of land would play a fundamental role in the future marginalization of small farmers and indentured white servants, and ultimately become a catalyst for class-based antagonism amongst the poor white population, the transition toward the importation of black slave-labourers, and the development of a hierarchical and capitalistic plantation colony. What must be explored is how settler colonization and race-relations shaped Barbados. I argue that the ethnic and class-based discrimination of the Irish population in Barbados was a critical dimension of settler colonialism that connected xenophobia and exploitative labour through a hierarchical system of production. These conditions helped shape a milieu of conflict and racism between the black and poor white populations of the colony during the seventeenth-century, which would ultimately precipitate the transition to disciplinary and governmental strategies of control by the planter class.

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p.76, 83.

<sup>117</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 51.

## 1.2 EARLY PLAYERS: THE PLANTOCRACY, WHITE INDENTURED LABOURERS, AND THE METROPOLE

The development of large-scale plantation production during the first half of the seventeenth century was made possible by Dutch assistance in planting and the importation of indentured white servants. Early Barbadian planters were indebted to the Dutch for their knowledge of planting and trade expertise, and without this support, would have been unable to settle the island.<sup>118</sup> Beckles states that the Dutch had an interest in financing Barbadian sugar planters as they expected to be the primary supplier of African slaves for the plantations as the English had not yet established themselves in the West African slave network.<sup>119</sup> These conditions engendered a geo-economic realignment that witnessed Barbadian sugar competing with Portuguese production in Brazil.<sup>120</sup> The Barbadian planter class grew at a rapid pace between the late 1620s and early 1640s, as a one hundred-acre plantation with indentured white servants could be purchased for roughly two hundred pounds.<sup>121</sup> According to a GDP inflator calculation (which determines the historical value of money) two hundred pounds would have been equivalent to £38,200.00 in 1620 and

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<sup>118</sup> According to Curtin the success of English colonization in the Caribbean can be largely attributed to the appropriation of Dutch expertise in the planting of sugarcane, the deployment and operation of the sugar mill, and the rapid expansion of the Atlantic slave-trade. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, 81.

<sup>119</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 21.

<sup>120</sup> "A declaration set forth by the lord lieutenant generall the gentlemen of the councell & assembly occasioned from the view of a printed paper, Entitled [sic] An act prohibiting trade with the Barbados, Virginea, Bermudes and Antegoe," Printed by Samuel Broun English bookseller, 1651, Early English Books Online copied from the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A82258.0001.001?c=eebo;c=eebo2;g=eebogroup;rgn=main;view=fulltext;xc=1;q1=a+declaration+set+forth>

<sup>121</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 22.

even less in 1640 at £32,730.00 based on 2016 levels, and would constitute an affordable business venture for a wealthy Englishman.<sup>122</sup>

Correspondence from Charles I to Governor John West of Virginia in 1636 confirms that a strategy of crop diversification was implemented to mitigate a shortfall of revenue. The overproduction of tobacco in Barbados, Nevis, and St. Christopher's had reduced planter profits, but by harvesting more cotton they were able to increase their profits fourfold per pound.<sup>123</sup> In 1637, Charles I dispatched a letter to the Earl of Carlisle's trustees, as he had perished in 1636, condemning trade with "strangers," fearing Dutch penetration into the Barbadian market would undermine English interest in the region. Metropolitan interference had encouraged the overproduction of tobacco and subsequent disregard for cotton, wools, and grains.<sup>124</sup> While Charles I was quick to condemn foreign trade with the Dutch and to categorize them as enemies of the Crown, Barbadian planters continued to benefit financially from the planting knowledge gained from this relationship and refused to follow the directives of the metropole. This trade dispute would lay the foundation for a Barbadian planter identity, whose hostility toward the metropole would culminate in increased demands for economic and political sovereignty to pursue the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, among other things, when the labour contributions of white indentures could no longer satisfy the rapid development of plantation commerce.

The sovereign power of the metropole would be challenged by the plantocracy's growing command of agronomic development, manufacture, and labour appropriation. As

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<sup>122</sup> Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a UK Pound Amount, 1270 to Present," *Measuring Worth*, 2018. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/](http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/)

<sup>123</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 283.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

Spanish and French interests were concentrated farther west in the Caribbean, English planters were able to establish a settlement in Barbados with a population of white peasant farmers and indentured servants. By the 1640s Barbadian planters turned to the Dutch for assistance in developing a more advanced sugar industry when market prices for tobacco and cotton diminished considerably between 1635 and 1641.<sup>125</sup> In 1639 the Barbadian parliament appointed eleven councillors and twenty-two burgesses comprised of large planters, officers in the militia, and wealthy landowners; this elite group of planters seized the majority of the island's fertile land and divided the colony into eleven parishes with an eye toward large-scale plantation production.<sup>126</sup> By the 1640s the planter class in Barbados had coalesced into a relatively unified political force, laying the groundwork for becoming the economic epicenter of the Caribbean.<sup>127</sup> The rapid development of the elite planter class and their political control of the colony's governmental apparatus (legislative, judicial, executive, and martial) would create a climate of dissension with the metropole concerning issues of economic policy and a profound animosity among smaller white planters and poor whites (many of them labouring as indentured servants) who were excluded. Richard Ligon reported that upon his arrival to Barbados in 1647, while sugar production was still in its infancy, the early planters went through an arduous period of experimentation when only

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<sup>125</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 14-15; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 18-19, 66. Beckles argues that Barbados' pre-sugar plantation environment was sustained primarily by thousands of white indentured servants, some of whom were kidnapped from Great Britain as they were considered surplus population comprised of political prisoners, vagabonds, and the poor. Hilary McD. Beckles and Andrew Downes, "The Economics of Transition to the Black Labor System in Barbados, 1630-1680," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18.2. (Autumn, 1987): 227.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-13, 18-19; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 58. Beckles states that in Barbados burgesses and other esteemed political positions were only attainable by wealthy white property owners, and that indentured servants and all coloured peoples could not hold office. Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 10-11.

<sup>127</sup> Beckles, "Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados," 8.

a poor quality muscavado sugar was produced.<sup>128</sup> As the demand for sugar increased and quality improved, Beckles states that in the 1640s the population of enslaved blacks in Barbados increased to 6,000 from a few hundred, and that within a decade the colony had emerged as the most populated island in the Caribbean for both blacks and whites.<sup>129</sup>

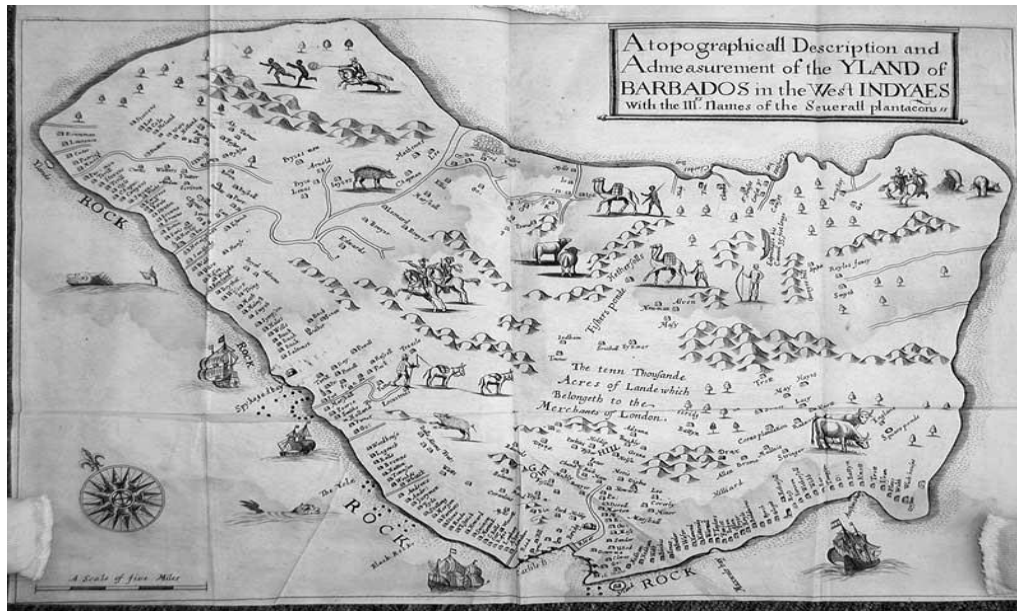


Figure 1. Richard Ligon's Map of Barbados (1647-50). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at UNESCO, African Passages, <http://unescoafrikanpassages.cofc.edu/page1.htm?id=barbados>

<sup>128</sup> Richard Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, London, 1673, p.85-6. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=V66423](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=V66423). Muscovado sugar, which is also referred to as Barbados sugar, is a low quality unrefined brown sugar that has a high molasses content and was much cheaper in market value.

<sup>129</sup> Beckles, "Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados," 6.

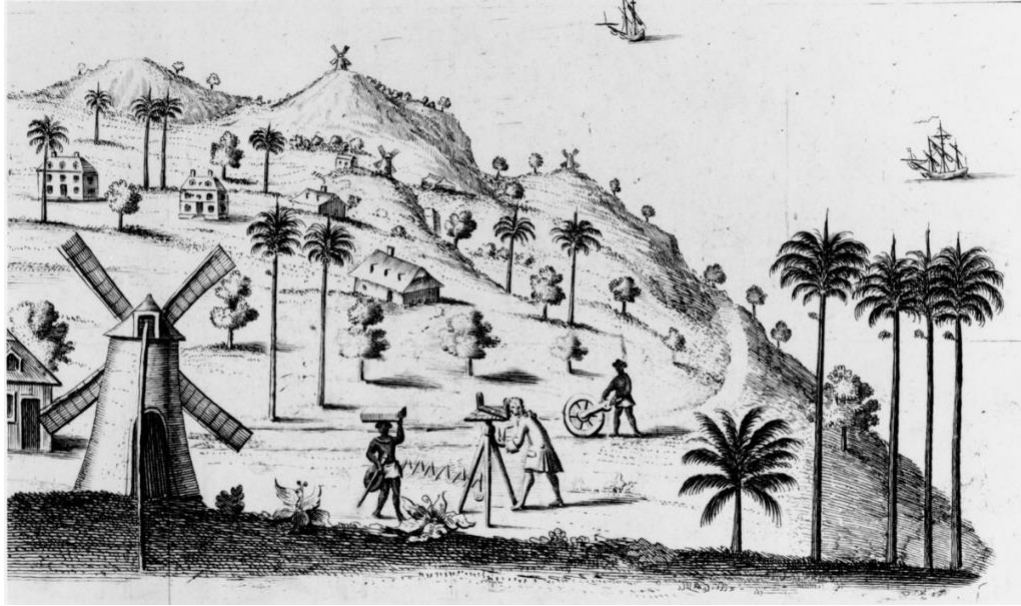


Figure 2. “William Mayo, A New and Exact Map of . . . Barbadoes . . . according to an actual . . . survey made in the Years 1717 to 1721 (London, 1722).” (Copy in the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University). Accessed on February 11, 2020 at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

Prior to the establishment of their plantations in the Caribbean during the seventeenth century, England was importing approximately four hundred thousand pounds of sugarcane annually from Brazil, which was Portugal’s largest sugar colony.<sup>130</sup> While the Portuguese implemented high rates of custom taxation on their sugar in an attempt to prevent other European nations from trading in Brazil, they “gave the English encouragement to adventure upon planting.”<sup>131</sup> In 1677 with assistance from the Portuguese in cultivation on Barbados and the importation of sugar from Brazil, England was able to meet its domestic market’s annual demand for four hundred thousand pounds, as well as a surplus of refined sugar to sell to foreign markets and thereby stake their claim

<sup>130</sup> “The case of His Majesties Sugar Plantations, London 1677,” Anon. Early English Books Online, Reproduction of original in British Library, Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581443023\\_25651&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581443023_25651&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.



in the Caribbean. At this time, England's primary competitor in the Caribbean was France, which was producing sugar on the islands of "Martinico, Guadeloupe, Marigalant, Grenados, St. Christophers, Kayan, and part of Hispaniola."<sup>132</sup> What must be explored is how England managed to obtain such a large increase in sugar productivity before the full-scale importation of black slave-labour in Barbados during the 1680s, as this island was the primary producer of sugar in the British Caribbean.

A crucial strategy of power employed by Barbadian planters during the first half of the seventeenth century was the indenture contract. Although Foucault's analysis of "contract theory" applies to European sovereignty during the seventeenth century, his philosophy offers insight into the historical legacy of subjectivity in colonial Barbados. In his essay "Governmentality," which was presented in his course "Security, Territory, and Population" during the 1977-78 academic session, Foucault states that "contract theory enables the founding contract, the mutual pledge of ruler and subjects, to function as a sort of theoretical matrix for deriving the general principles of an art of government."<sup>133</sup> I argue that the white indenture contract exercised sovereign power through labour exploitation, juridical control, and disciplinary punishment as a fundamental art of colonial government. Unlike slave-labourers who were not afforded the basic right to declare assent, the historical record reveals that white indentured labourers typically exercised a modicum of freedom in their decision to enter a contract, however poorly informed or desperate their circumstances may have been, unless they were convicts, political prisoners, or enemies of the state. Sovereign power over the indentured labourer included strategies of containment,

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power*, ed. James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley, (New York: The New York Press, 2000), 214; Walton Look Lai, *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 52.

exploitation, and punishment, but did not extend to a lifetime of servitude, intergenerational bondage, or right to take life beyond the conventional legal framework of English jurisprudence. What must be asked is how white indentured labour differed from black slavery in relation to the concept of freedom, specifically, the practices of forcible confinement and labour exploitation of Europe's "undesirables"?

In "Genealogy and the Problem of Affirmation in Nietzsche, Foucault, and Bakhtin," Fred Evans argues that Foucault's understanding of freedom is

that free subjects (individual or collective) are those 'faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments may be realized'. On this level, power and 'government' in Foucault's special sense of the term refer to the way in which certain actions modify other actions, present or future, that is, affect the other's field of possible actions, as opposed to actions that act directly on persons, that is, commit violence against them.<sup>134</sup>

Evans' analysis of freedom in Foucault's œuvre requires further exploration to understand the role sovereign power played in subjugating the African slave-labourer in ways that the white indentured servant never experienced. The circumstances of injury and neglect of enslaved Africans, as evidenced in plantation records featured in the third part of this study, reveal how racial privilege, ethnic affiliation, and citizenship afforded levels of protection to white labourers, and how conditions of cultural alienation were intensified by those who were racialized.<sup>135</sup> I argue that the white indenture system in Barbados assembled diffuse

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<sup>134</sup> Fred Evans, "Genealogy and the Problem of Affirmation in Nietzsche, Foucault, and Bakhtin," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 27:3. (2001): 51.

<sup>135</sup> Eltis' analysis of the difference between indentured labour and slave labour underscores Evans' treatment of freedom. Eltis argues that "there may be little difference between 'fear of the lash' and the 'fear

institutional discourses and disciplinary practices for the purpose of normalizing the suspension of liberty, self-determination, and mobility, but that these forces of coercion did not extend to the sovereign right to take life, and should therefore not be taken within the same context as slavery when considering the intergenerational protocols of the institution. This perspective challenges revisionist historical accounts, such as John Martin's (2008) "The Irish Slave Trade - The Forgotten "White" Slaves - the Slaves that Time Forgot," which claims that Irish indentured labourers in the Caribbean were in fact slaves, and that this reality has been subject to historical erasure.<sup>136</sup>

It is clear that racial solidarity and shared cultural values between white Europeans, despite their differences in class, ethnicity, and political status, mitigated the conditions of alienation visited upon white indentured labourer. This can be gleaned from the occupational status, food, and medical care on the plantation available to whites, which is discussed later in this study. The exploitation of Britain's "surplus" population, however, still carries profound implications for understanding how ethnic discrimination and class-based oppression in the plantation paradigm shaped systems of labour exploitation and how the social currency of whiteness can be observed in the plantation colony. Planters believed that the growth of sugar production in Barbados by the middle of the seventeenth century

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of hunger" but that the enslaved "could rarely change masters, and his or her ability to avoid tasks assigned was generally less than for free labour. For non-slaves, whether they were vagrants, indentured servants or starving wage labourers, there were simply more alternatives, either present or future." Eltis, "Labour and coercion in the English Atlantic world from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century," 211.

<sup>136</sup> John Martin, "The Irish Slave Trade - The Forgotten "White" Slaves - the Slaves that Time Forgot", Global Research, Published: 14th April 2008. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-irish-slave-trade-the-forgotten-white-slaves/31076>. For further analysis on the recent popularity of discussions pertaining to "Irish slavery" and its connection to white supremacy and nationalism, see, Liam Hogan's "Two years of the 'Irish slaves' myth: racism, reductionism and the tradition of diminishing the transatlantic slave trade," accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/two-years-of-irish-slaves-myth-racism-reductionism-and-tradition-of-diminis/>

could not be satisfied by Britain's "undesirables." Further, efforts to recruit white labour ultimately failed when the realities of life in the colony, (conditions of abuse and exploitation, lack of socio-economic mobility, and poor prospects for family life), became known to prospective migrants. When Barbadian planters turned almost exclusively to black labour by the end of the seventeenth century, the socio-economic currency of whiteness was visible in the positions of colonial security occupied by poor whites on plantations and in their ability to receive state assistance. In this respect Barbados can be viewed as an early capitalistic settler colony given the entrenchment of a white master class and an underclass servile labour force, the introduction of industrial technologies for sugar production, and the stabilization of labour. This economic maturation can in large part be attributed to how enslaved blacks and indentured whites became governed by conditions of rule.

In general, white indentured workers *in toto* (convicts, exiles, the poor), but in varying degrees depending on the master, retained the right to negotiate labour contracts and working conditions, and they were generally protected from the heinous punishments often exacted on enslaved blacks. The common conditions of white indentured labour, as gleaned by archival sources, included a limited term of service, wages, and partial protection against abuse. Indentured labourers in Barbados could sometimes also expect to receive inheritances from their employers as gifts. For example, plantation owner John Cooper bequeathed to his servant Robert Shepurd a plantation and thirty acres of land in 1656; Sergeant Major John Read in 1648 imparted to each of his English servants one hundred pounds of tobacco; John Stretch left his white servant John Burch, clothes, a musket, an enslaved boy, barber instruments, and a silver sword in 1683; Samuel Pasfield

in 1699 willed that his four white servants, Charles Belch, Michael Haws, Edward King and Tim Vergin, be paid three pounds sterling when their contract expired.<sup>137</sup>

The archival record reveals that it was rare for enslaved blacks to be willed their freedom and even property, especially when compared to white servants, as the preservation of the institution of slavery as a racial enterprise of intergenerational bondage depended on restricting rights to property ownership, freedom of person, legal and political status, and the accumulation and transference of wealth. Archival records also indicate that when slave owners died, most of the enslaved were transferred into the custody of family or friends, and that these terms usually made specific reference to the intergenerational nature of black bondage through the future increase of the enslaved population vis-à-vis the procreative potential of enslaved women.

The institution of primogeniture exercised by the planter class, which included passing on the plantation, land, enslaved, and other sources of financial wealth to the eldest son was critical to preserving plantocratic power and its concomitant practices of economic hegemony, phallocratic subjectivity, and racial subjugation. While this dissertation undertakes an analysis of gendered and racialized violence on the plantation complex in subsequent chapters, my immediate concern is exploring how the legal, political, and social assemblages of English society shaped a culture of economic disparity and class-based estrangement that would permeate into Barbados through the institution of white indentureship.

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<sup>137</sup> Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Read, John, 11/12 August 1648; Cooper, John, 19 July 1656, RB6/13; Stretch, John, 4 January 1683, RB6/12; Pasfield, Samuel, 7 December 1699, RB6/43

In “To Save Them from Themselves: Proposals to Enslave the British Poor, 1698-1755,” M.J. Rozbicki reveals that England has a long history of preserving the economic, legal, and political authority of the master class by subjugating the lower class through a series of poor laws. These included the Statute of Labourers (1350-51); Vagrancy Act (1547); Statute of Artificers (1562-63); and the decision after 1572 to force the children of beggars into service.<sup>138</sup> Rozbicki argues that Bridewell Prison and Hospital in London reveals the relationship between discipline and capitalism through the “punishment, reformation, and setting the inmates to work,” which ultimately “created a cultural language of punishment, work, and moral reformation as goals of charity.”<sup>139</sup> Records indicate that the institution transported some of its captives to Barbados during the beginning of the seventeenth century to work as indentured labourers and that there was often limited capacity to exercise influence over their contractual terms.<sup>140</sup> The foundational principles of poor-relief – class subjectivity, labour exploitation, political repression, institutional correction, disciplinary punishment, and panoptic surveillance – in the workhouse, prison, and other institutions that operated under the auspices of state welfare, were critical to techniques of territoriality and exploitation of white indentureship on the plantation.

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<sup>138</sup> M.J. Rozbicki, “To Save Them from Themselves: Proposals to Enslave the British Poor, 1698-1755,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 22.2, (2001): 39-40, 43. Eltis explains that the Statute of Labourers (1350-51) “forced all persons not in a recognized occupation to serve in husbandry, and the only change before its repeal in the nineteenth century was the addition of a lower age limit of 12 in the Elizabethan Statute of Artificers.” Between 1547 and 1549 servitude was the penalty for those identified as idlers, who were identified as persons who refused “to work for reasonable wages.” In the 1650s and 1660s idlers were to be forced into servitude with the threat of whipping and imprisonment if they did not submit. David Eltis, “Labour and coercion in the English Atlantic world from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century,” 208-9.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 42-45.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

In 1641, parliamentarian H. Robinson's *England's Safety in Trades Encrease*, advised the English government to transport rascals, vagrants, and delinquents to the plantations of Barbados in an effort to expunge "undesirables" who were said to be contaminating society with their begging, laziness, and criminal activity.<sup>141</sup> A petition by Thomas Devenish, the Keeper of Winchester House Prison in Southwark, addressed to the House of Lords in 1645, asserted his intention to provide transportation to convicts charged with petty misdemeanours to work on the plantations of Barbados.<sup>142</sup> The trafficking of "undesirable" whites to Barbados was grounded on class-based estrangement from wealthy and emerging planters, economic exploitation, and political persecution, which often targeted those who were deemed guilty of treason and rebellion. In the seventeenth century the transportation of England's "surplus" population to the colony of Barbados was realized through a protracted campaign to combat what many had come to believe were genuine threats to the English Empire – idleness, political dissent, and criminal activity.

In *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject*, Michael Mahon treats the techniques of forced labour and confinement in seventeenth-century Britain, which sought to ameliorate conditions of idleness, as a pre-industrial phenomenon.<sup>143</sup> I argue that the seventeenth century transportation of white labourers to Barbados was not only a draconian response to a chimerical socio-economic reality concocted by classical liberal political theorists and parliamentarians, but a formidable policy endeavour to achieve overseas Empire building by suspending the liberties of those deemed expendable, or at the very least, exercising a zone of possibility to broaden the

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<sup>141</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 288.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Mahon, *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject*, 32.

threshold of exploitation for financial gain. In this context, British labour policy could be viewed as a state of exception to the bastion of liberty entrenched in the state's legal framework, but the realities of political persecution clearly indicate that legal protection was not a uniform right.<sup>144</sup> What challenges Mahon's argument that the strategies to reform Britain's "undesirables" were pre-industrial, are the organizational configuration of labour exploitation in both the workhouse and plantation. For the purposes of this study, I argue that controlling the spatial environment, introducing disciplinary techniques, and unlocking efficiencies for increased production are features of industrial scale that are illustrated in the mechanisms of disciplinary power on the workhouse and plantation complex.

### 1.3 LEGAL MANEUVERS ALONG AND ACROSS RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND GENDER LINES

In "Liberty, slavery, and the transformation of British identity in the eighteenth-century West Indies," Jack P. Greene examines political literature produced in Barbados and Jamaica from the 1680s to the 1770s to evidence how important English law was to the identities of colonists who believed they were "entitled to 'the same *fundamental Rights, Privileges, and Liberties*' as the 'People of England [emphasis in original]'" given their citizenship and cultural membership.<sup>145</sup> It is a testament to the culture of entitlement,

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<sup>144</sup> Jack P. Greene overstates the extent of juries and parliament as neutral institutions by arguing that they were the "two grand Pillars of *English Liberty*" [emphasis in original] and "the Birth-right of Englishmen." He argues that England's parliament protected liberty not just through the "Magna Charta, but the Petition of Right under Charles I, the Habeas Corpus Act under Charles II, the Bill of Rights during the Glorious Revolution, and the Act of Settlement." Jack P. Greene, "Liberty, slavery, and the transformation of British identity in the eighteenth-century West Indies," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 21.1, (2000): 3.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.



hierarchy, and punishment, which shaped the class-based personality of English society, that the captivity, transportation, and labour exploitation of some indentured white servants was carried out while elite planters themselves lobbied metropolitan lawmakers to live up to their fiduciary responsibility, legal obligations, and promise of liberty. This divergence of power between the planter class and the indentured servant illustrates the significant weight class-based estrangement had in shaping identities in the colonial space, and the controlling interest of wealth as the operative mechanism to determine social status, political influence, economic opportunity, and legal authority.

Stoler's analysis of Foucault's writings on racism also offers a framework which demonstrates how the ethnic and class-based discrimination observed in the oppression of "undesirable" whites in Barbados can be read as a wider campaign of social alienation. She argues that for Foucault, "racism is more than an ad hoc to crisis," but "an underlying discourse of permanent social war, nurtured by the biopolitical technologies of "incessant purification.""<sup>146</sup> It is clear that the origins of white indentureship in Barbados had less to do with discrimination against "undesirable" persons as a response to an actual economic crisis in Britain and more to do with the perception that annulling the legal and political rights of the indentured offered several economic benefits, such as the preservation and accumulation of wealth among the colonial elite and their metropolitan associates who stood to profit from increased agricultural produce for the domestic economy (sugar, cotton, etc.), financial allowances (taxation, insurance, and securities), and manufacturing (shipping, plantation tools, and textiles). I argue that the purpose of class-based exploitation in Barbados was to reduce Great Britain's trade deficit with other European powers, as

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<sup>146</sup> Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, 69.

previously mentioned, to mitigate social welfare costs by boosting employment, and to increase international market share and competition through empire building as evidenced in the archival record revealed in the first part of this study. Class-based exploitation was the primary ideological component that structured the institution of indentureship and its possible contribution to the national interest.

An ordinance from the Two Houses of Parliament in 1646 declared the need for white servants to work on the plantations of Barbados to satisfy the growing commodity demand of England. This law granted permission to anyone who was fit and able to contribute to the advancement of plantation trade, passage to Barbados under the following restrictions: that all persons register in the custom-house; that no force be used to secure servants; that no young children be transported for work unless they had the express consent of their parents; that labour certificates be returned from the Governor or planter within one year; and that there be no fraudulent transportation of servants to other regions.<sup>147</sup> The British House of Lords and Commons, recognizing the capital benefits of navigation and trade being generated from the plantations in Barbados, encouraged this enterprise by suspending for three years all customs, subsidies, taxation, imposition, and duty, from all merchandise and goods exported from England for the purpose of plantation trade.<sup>148</sup> These measures, however, did little to protect some “undesirables” from being

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<sup>147</sup> ""Die Sabbathi 23 Ianuarii 1646 Whereas the severall plantations in Virginia, Bermudas, Barbados and other places of America have been much beneficiall to this Kingdome," London: Printed for John Wright, 1646, Early English Books Online copied from the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99872159&FILE=../session/1581445054\\_16323&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99872159&FILE=../session/1581445054_16323&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

kidnapped, forcibly transported, and abused by planters, and would also fail to quell the plantocracy's growing discord toward the metropole.

James Hay II, Earl of Carlisle and inheritor of Barbados, in 1647, observed that many of the white servants who travelled to Barbados had suffered hard labour generating profits for the planter elite in hopes of one day operating their own plantations. The lack of free land in Barbados had increased prices to such an extent that this servant class was unable to purchase property, prompting the Earl to grant land to any freeman desiring to colonize the islands of Antigua, Nevis, and other Caribbean regions under English control as a form of compensation.<sup>149</sup> In this way Barbados also became a feeder colony for settlers migrating to other British territories in the Caribbean. The English economy benefitted from plantation production through the exportation of manufacturing technologies and tools related to plantation production, employment for tradesmen and labourers in the production of staples, and the availability of agricultural produce. A petition submitted to the House of Lords in 1647 stated unequivocally that the Barbadian sugar plantations were beneficial to the advancement of navigation and trade for England by employing thousands of people.<sup>150</sup> According to Ligon, by the middle of the seventeenth century approximately

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<sup>149</sup> "A Declaration by James Earl of Carlisle, Lord of the Caribee Islands, or Province of Carlola. Manifesting His care of, and affection to, the good and welfare of the Inhabitants of the Island of Barbadoes, and of all other People under his Government," London: Nov. 22, 1647, Early English Books Online, copied from Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99859732&FILE=../session/1581469973\\_11046&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=162766&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT\\_KEYWORD=](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99859732&FILE=../session/1581469973_11046&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=162766&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=). While analysis of the colonial plantation in these regions is beyond the scope of this study, the broader commercial relationships for the success of Barbadian sugar were connected to the Caribbean and South American slave colonies. For example, the cultivation of sugar advanced as planters obtained Brazilian plant species and appropriated the agricultural skills to grow, harvest, cure, boil, and press sugar. Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 285. Many of the employment opportunities stemming from overseas trade offered mediocre wages and came with significant risks. Sometimes up to two-thirds of the men leaving English ports would never return due to mortality and desertion. Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, 1788. Accessed on July 11, 2020, at <http://galeapps.gale.com/apps/auth/lond95336?cause=http%3A%2F%2Ffind.gale.com%2Fecco%2Finfoma>

one hundred vessels were visiting Barbados annually to export the island's sugar, indigo, cotton, tobacco, and ginger.<sup>151</sup> English vessels supplied Barbados with equipment for sugar manufacturing, tools for tradesmen, and white servants.<sup>152</sup> It is worth pointing out that by the middle of the seventeenth century Barbados had established a population of tens of thousands of free whites working on plantations or owning small farms within a growing slave society.<sup>153</sup>

The poor laws of the seventeenth century invested disciplinary authority into the creation of institutions that would transform the poorhouse into a workhouse, in a manner similar to the system of enslaved gang-labour organization marshaled on the plantation, as it was designed to increase the industriousness of its labourers in a controlled disciplinary environment under a hierarchical power structure. There were significant differences between the workhouse and plantation, however, regarding the nature of work performed, the opportunity for personal freedom and development, as well as the methods undertaken for discipline. Classical liberal theorists such as John Locke, however, believed that the transportation of the “surplus” population would not only be economically feasible for plantation labour in both the Caribbean and Southern United States by discouraging idleness, but also constitute a humanitarian alternative to the execution of criminals.<sup>154</sup>

Before the Barbadian planters switched over almost exclusively to African slave-labour in the 1660s, Irish and Scottish revolutionaries, convicts, prostitutes, vagrants, and

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6finalAuth%3Dtrue

<sup>151</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 40.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 203-04.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 46, 65-6.

poor children, whose numbers were estimated to be two thousand a year in the 1640s, diminishing to one thousand per year by 1652, were “barbadosed,” an expression used to describe the forced conscription or kidnapping of “undesirables.”<sup>155</sup> They were indentured out to planters (who reserved the legal right to enforce contracts and physically punish those who resisted).<sup>156</sup> While trafficking, detainment, and exploitation are forms of subjugation, they do not constitute conditions of enslavement germane to the circumstances of Barbados as they did not include attempts at racial alienation, cultural genocide, intergenerational bondage, and other forms of thanatopolitical power often visited upon Africans. Terms of indentureship, while physically demanding and oftentimes abusive, expired after a few years. While it is impossible to know exactly how many poor whites travelled to the Caribbean during the seventeenth century of their own accord, the ingrained culture of servitude in Great Britain and the slight possibility of escaping the tentacles of low-wage bondage would be considered by some a risk worth taking. This is substantiated by the fact that the poor laws of the seventeenth century encouraged that children born of the subordinate class be removed from their parents and put under the custody of a master, or sent to work at textile mills or as chimney sweeps until the age of twenty-four for men, and twenty-one for women; the elderly were also confined to labour in the workhouse until they were deemed unfit to work.<sup>157</sup>

As early as the seventeenth century, the English gentry looked down upon the Barbadian planter class as the island was perceived to nurture moral degeneracy given its

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<sup>155</sup> Newman argues that tens of thousands of Irish prisoners were sent to British colonies and that Barbados received the lion’s share of their number. Simon P. Newman, *A New World of Labour: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 82.

<sup>156</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 29; Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment*, 13; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 53, 69-72; Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 42; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 52.

<sup>157</sup> Eltis, “Labour and coercion in the English Atlantic world from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century,” 209.

history as a site for the transportation of “undesirables” and the poor reputation of sugar planters as unscrupulous and sexually deviant.<sup>158</sup> The movement to attract young white women to Barbados, however, was an effort to discourage interracial relationships given the realities of sexual exploitation suffered by enslaved black women at the hands of white planters and their overseers and to establish a permanent white master-class. While the role of white women in colonial Barbados cannot be examined at length in this study, notwithstanding a consideration of their role in the culture of planter primogeniture examined in the second part of this dissertation, they occupied diverse roles in the colony from indentured labourers to independent wealthy slave owners. In “White ‘ladies’, coloured ‘favourites’ and black ‘wenches’; some considerations on sex, race and class factors in social relations in white Creole Society in the British Caribbean,” Barbara Bush’s examination of the experiences of white women reveals how an intersectional analysis of “sex, class and race” shaped the broader relations of power in the slave colony.<sup>159</sup> Bush states that some “pioneer wives were recruited from the brothels of London and Edinburgh or released from notorious prisons” to labour in both Barbados and Jamaica.<sup>160</sup>

As early as the seventeenth century white men and women in the Caribbean, which traversed both class and gender lines, were openly cohabitating with enslaved and free blacks without legal interference, a reality that prompted anti-miscegenation legislation to be entrenched in 1644 by Antigua’s Assembly in order to preserve the institution of slavery as a system of racial visibility and control. The punishment for crossing the racial divide

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<sup>158</sup> Barbara Bush, “White ‘ladies’, coloured ‘favourites’ and black ‘wenches’; some considerations on sex, race and class factors in social relations in white Creole Society in the British Caribbean,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 2.3 (1981): 253.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 245-46.

<sup>160</sup> Bush, “White ‘ladies’, coloured ‘favourites’ and black ‘wenches,’” 247.

focused on the white community and called for free-whites to be fined and for indentured white males and females to have the period of their contracts extended, to be whipped, and branded.<sup>161</sup> White female servants would also have their service time doubled if they wed a white man without the permission of their master or mistress or became pregnant as this could disrupt the control of indentures.<sup>162</sup> The documentary record reveals a tension in how Barbados was portrayed, both as a cesspool where England disposed of its rogues and prostitutes, and where any attractive low-classed woman with a “demure comportment” could become the wife of a rich planter (amongst the upper class in Britain), and another where it was a site of opportunity by those looking to escape the rigid controls of classism.<sup>163</sup>

Bush argues that even though Foucault’s analysis of power relations is anchored primarily in “post-seventeenth century western European society,” his theorizations on the nexus of sexuality and power offer considerable insight into the subjugation of black bodies through practices of “punishment, torture and control of their physical environment.”<sup>164</sup> Bush’s analysis of sexuality and power in Foucault’s philosophy exposes the complexities of gender, race, and class, between white and black peoples in the Caribbean, in order to reveal the manifold inter-sexual registers of moral, socio-economic, and political performance that regulated concubinage, rape, manumission, marriage, domestic labour, and illicit sexual contact.<sup>165</sup> The following chapter in this study analyzes the strategies of physical punishment and control exercised during the Middle Passage, while

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 290.

<sup>164</sup> Bush, 1981, 246.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 253

considerations of the physical disciplining and the governmental strategies of pro-natalism upon enslaved women are taken up in the second and third parts of this dissertation respectively.

Although the importation of enslaved Africans was still relatively limited before the 1660s, the growing presence of slave-labour in the colony put pressure on poor whites engaged in subsistence farming and trades. Craton argues that “socio-racial” unrest was most intense in the slave colony of Barbados where enslaved blacks replaced poor whites, and that this created a hostile environment where indentured servants began to carry the pejorative labels of “redlegs” and “ecky-becky.”<sup>166</sup> The term “redlegs” referred to the poor whites’ burned legs from labouring in the sun, which was a visible sign of their poverty given their need to perform the same work as enslaved blacks on the island. Jeffrey Williams traces the origin of “Ecky-Becky” to the history of forced transportation of “undesirables,” indentured servants, and political exiles, as well as colonists choosing to pursue their fortune as settlers and planters.<sup>167</sup> The etymology of racial terms disparaging some whites in the Caribbean, particularly those of Irish and Scottish origin, reveals the broader trans-cultural and geographic realities of conflict. The term “Ecky-Becky” refers to a Caribbean Francophone term “béké,” which was a class-based expression similar to

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<sup>166</sup> Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 45. Earlier theorizations of the origins of the “redlegs” include the following account by Edward T. Price: “Indentured servants came in number; if they survived the merciless treatment, they might receive a few acres for their own at the expiration of the contract. Sometimes the recruiting was forceful: men were shanghaied or, in the language specific to the day and place, “barbado[s]ed.” Political prisoners were sent to Barbados, especially during the Civil War and after the Bloody Assizes of 1685. Prisoners from Scotland and Ireland were sent to Barbados as late as the Battle of Culloden in 1746.” Edward T. Price, “The Redlegs of Barbados,” *Yearbook, Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, 19, (1957): 35. Article reprinted in *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, 29: 47-52, 1962.

<sup>167</sup> Jeffrey Williams, “Ecky-Becky: Evidence of Scots Echo Word Morphology in Barbadian English,” *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 19:1. (2004): 164.



*petit blanc* that was attributed to poor white populations on Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Barts, Les Saintes and La Désirade; “Ecky-Becky” became a label applied to poor whites in north eastern Barbados.<sup>168</sup> Beckles states that poor whites on the island had difficulty finding well-paid permanent employment, and as a result, were resigned to subsistence farming on low-grade lands or seeking relief from state institutions, or if they were fortunate, working on plantations policing slaves, tracking down runaways, or combating rebellions as militiamen.<sup>169</sup>

Socially constructed categorizations of ethnic identity among the white population of Barbados would translate into class-based antagonism as Irish and Scottish servants struggled for political rights and economic opportunity in the face of English exclusions. According to Beckles, the Barbadian plantocracy exploited these divisions by encouraging conflict between “anti-planter” Irish servants and the “pro-planter” Scottish servants, though there is dubious credibility to this perceived difference, in an effort to cultivate a unified elite class and pacify white resistance.<sup>170</sup> Beckles states that the 1643 rebellion by Irish indentured servants that resulted in the execution of twenty-four of their number illustrates how ethnic discord translated into acts of resistance.<sup>171</sup> During the middle part of the seventeenth century, Richard Ligon noted that two elite Barbadian planters suffered losses of no less than ten thousand pound sterling each as a result of arson attacks committed by their white servants, suspected of being Irish.<sup>172</sup> This was a period of profound political unrest, as anti-planter whites who were primarily made up of Irish

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 164-65, 168-69.

<sup>169</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 47.

<sup>170</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 6-8.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 45.

servants, engaged in acts of resistance that challenged the plantocracy's quest for dominance.

An appeal to the Court of Parliament in 1659, presented by Marcellus Rivers and the Oxenbridge Foyle Gentlemen, reveals how English citizens were incarcerated and sent to work on the island of Barbados under abusive planters. These men were taken prisoner in 1654 in both Exceter and Ilchester under false charges, were never tried or examined by the courts, removed from their cells on the command of the Sheriff and forcibly escorted to Plymouth, and then deposited on the vessel *John* of London; the captives were guarded and locked under the deck with horses for fourteen days without any knowledge that they were being transported to Barbados to work on the plantations.<sup>173</sup> The prisoners were forced to lie on wooden boards with vermin, and when they arrived in Barbados on May 7, 1656, they were sold for a weight of sugar to labour in the plantation fields, grind sugar, and operate furnaces.<sup>174</sup> The prisoners were forced into hard labour, fed potato roots and water, sold from one planter to the other, whipped to enforce discipline, and forced to sleep in pigsties.<sup>175</sup> While a specific date range is not provided, sources indicate that “[o]f the 637 rebels sent to the West Indies, 339 were shipped to Barbados on five vessels: the *Betty*,

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<sup>173</sup> “England’s slavery, or Barbados merchandize; represented in a petition to the high court of Parliament, by Marcellus Rivers and Oxenbridge Foyle Gentlemen, on behalf of themselves and three-score and ten more free-born Englishmen sold (uncondemned) into slavery: together with letters written to some honourable members of Parliament,” Rivers, Marcellus. London: printed in the eleventh year of England’s liberty., 1659, Early English Books Online copied from the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99868677&FILE=../session/1581470703\\_18505&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99868677&FILE=../session/1581470703_18505&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

*Rebecca, John, Happy Return, and Jamaica Merchant,*” with “mortality rates ranging from five to seventeen percent.”<sup>176</sup>

According to Ligon, the treatment of white servants during the middle part of the seventeenth century was largely dependent on the demeanor of their master. Ordinarily, under the supervision of an overseer, servants would work twelve-hour days; during the two meal breaks at eleven and one o’clock, as well as supper after the completion of the workday, servants would be provided with low-cost provisions such as porridge and potatoes.<sup>177</sup> Under a cruel master, however, servants would be subjected to abuse and forced to work even if a plea was made due to illness.<sup>178</sup> On plantations that were managed by less abusive planters, white servants could be provided with meat a few times a week and an adequate wardrobe of clothing to prevent any illness contracted from dampness and cold.<sup>179</sup> The variable conditions reported by white servants labouring on Barbadian plantations are a testament to the influence exercised by individual planters as their capacity to censor grievance and evade governmental oversight into standards of labour and care were common. Beckles states that although the rights of servants were often dismissed given that their masters were members of the government and judiciary, they did receive an established standard of care and could launch a complaint if extreme punishment had been exercised.<sup>180</sup> An indentured contract could consist of a right to negotiate with the planter a specific period of service, the conditions of labour, and an understanding into how discipline would be undertaken. White indentures transported under conditions of political

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<sup>176</sup> Mark S. Quintanilla, “Late Seventeenth-Century Indentured Servants in Barbados,” *Journal of Caribbean History*, 27.2 (1993): 115.

<sup>177</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 44.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 44-45.

<sup>180</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 17-8.

persecution, however, could expect harsh treatment and little to no legal recourse to escape conditions of abuse, trafficking, and longer terms of service.<sup>181</sup>

Beckles argues that prior to 1660 white indentured labour was more attractive to sugar planters than the importation of African slaves as it cost less.<sup>182</sup> The demand for enslaved black labour in Barbados intensified when the price of servants increased due to diminished supply caused by knowledge of the poor conditions experienced by white indentures and with the growing efficiency of the European sponsored trade in Africans through networks of procurement and better shipping technologies.<sup>183</sup> Morgan, also claims that prospective servants signed indentures for shorter periods of time as rumours of the poor working conditions on Barbadian sugar plantations filtered back to England, but that the conversion from white servitude to black slavery was not the consequence of depreciating slave prices (as they increased from £16.5 per slave in 1640 to £27.7 in 1650), but rather the labour demand required to carry out large-scale sugar plantation production.<sup>184</sup>

By the middle of the seventeenth century lawmakers in England were acknowledging the vital role of plantation slavery in Barbados above the contributions of white indentured labour. This was affirmed by George Downing, an English Baron and Treasury Secretary in 1645, when he declared that the colony's thousands of slaves were "the life of this place."<sup>185</sup> This observation speaks to the rise of African slave-labour in the colony and the governmental dimensions of biopolitical life in Barbados, which are

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 28-9.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 28-9.

<sup>184</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and British Empire*, 27.

<sup>185</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 292.

examined in the third part of this dissertation. Observing the planter class' increased position of power, in 1646 the British Parliament restricted planters from allowing any of their goods to be transported by foreign vessels from the island's ports in an effort to consolidate domestic trade, stating that any attempt to do so would result in the imposition of duty waived by the ordinance.<sup>186</sup> By 1650, an act was put forward by the Barbadian government calling on citizens to stand up for their liberties by pledging to defend against metropolitan encroachment. This legislation, which would ultimately be of no force given the metropole's continued control, called upon all freemen of the island to seek out the Justice in their respective parish and sign the "Engagement." The Barbadian planters' declaration to defend their sovereignty against the metropole by force could be read as an attempt to secure increased trading rights as it threatened to brand anyone who failed to subscribe to the said act an enemy of Barbados and to be charged by a jury of twelve men.<sup>187</sup> During the 1650s, and well into the nineteenth century, the metropole jockeyed for control over their colonial centres in the Caribbean; metropolitan intrusions engendered conflict with elite settlers who demanded their English rights under the law, and motivated them to pursue other opportunities.<sup>188</sup> The latter part of this chapter explores how this

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<sup>186</sup> "Die Sabbathi 23 Ianuarii 1646 whereas the severall plantations in Virginia, Bermudas, Barbados and other places of America have been much beneficiall to this kingdom," London: Printed for John Wright, 1646, Early English Books Online copied from the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at

[http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99872159&FILE=../session/1581445054\\_16323&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99872159&FILE=../session/1581445054_16323&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>187</sup> "An Act for Defence of the Government Liberties and Freedomes of this Island," Early English Books Online copied from the British Library, Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581474370\\_26825&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=165972&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=FIT&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT\\_KEYWORD=](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581474370_26825&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=165972&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=FIT&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=)

<sup>188</sup> Jack P. Greene, "Liberty, slavery, and the transformation of British identity in the eighteenth-century West Indies," 4.

discord prompted the Barbadian colonization of South Carolina, and the concomitant strategy of elite settlement, white labour exploitation, and importation of African slaves.

On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1651, an article of agreement between England and Lord Willoughby, who was appointed Governor of Barbados in 1650 by Charles II, was drafted to mollify the growing conflict between the Barbadian planters and English parliamentarians. This accord granted Barbadians the following liberties: religious freedoms; mobility rights concerning person and property; protection from tax impositions; legal rights preventing imprisonment and arbitrary seizure of property, goods, and slaves; free-trade throughout the Commonwealth and with friendly nations necessary for plantation commerce; political asylum for political prisoners and the restoration of their horses, cattle, servants, and slaves; and the reinstatement of former Barbadian Governor's (Lord Willoughby) lands and possessions in England, which had been confiscated by the English government.<sup>189</sup> The settlement forced Willoughby and the Barbadian planters to disband the island's militia forces, surrender all forts and arms to Governor George Ayscue by January 12<sup>th</sup>, and agree to enact a law penalizing anyone guilty of espousing divisive, uncivil, or seditious language.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> "An Act for Defence of the Government Liberties and Freedomes of this Island," Early English Books Online copied from the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581474370\\_26825&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=165972&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=FIT&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT\\_KEYWORD=](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581474370_26825&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=165972&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=FIT&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=)

<sup>190</sup> "Articles of agreements Made and concluded the 11th day of January, 1651. By and between the Commissioners of the Right Honourable, the Lord Willoughby of Parrham, on the one Part: And the Commissioners in the behalfe of the Common-Wealth of England, on the other Part. Being in order to the Rendition of the Island of Barbadoes." London: Printed for Francis Coles, 1652. Early English Books Online copied from the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11824596&FILE=../session/1581474667\\_107&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11824596&FILE=../session/1581474667_107&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

By Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> of 1650, Lord Willoughby and the Legislature of Barbados put forth a ‘Declaration of Independence’ against the British Parliament. This declaration outlined four general disputes the planters had with Britain’s colonial policies concerning the island. First, there was the question of why the planters should be bound to the regulations of a Parliament where they had no representation to voice their concerns; second, Barbadian governance was not to be considered a usurpation of power, but an expansion of the English Empire; third, the act prohibiting foreign trade was unprincipled given the debt Barbadian planters owed to the Dutch concerning their assistance with commerce and technologies; fourth, their freedom and liberty would be extinguished by imposing a licensing system that enforced an English trading monopoly over commodities and slaves, which appears to have been the fundamental issue at stake given the economic well-being of the colony.<sup>191</sup> This political jockeying brought into question the limitations of English sovereignty in the British Caribbean, the practices of colonial expansion, political representation, international trade, and liberty.

The Barbadian elite, emboldened by their increased prosperity, desired increased autonomy to exploit the domestic and international opportunities of their plantation commerce. In 1652 Colonel Thomas Modyford, a Barbadian planter who would later become the Governor of Jamaica, called for political representation. He declared that planters had fought for liberty and desired to have the same form of government as England and that two Barbadian representatives should be chosen on the island to vote in England’s

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<sup>191</sup> “A declaration set forth by the lord lieutenant generall the gentlemen of the councell & assembly occasioned from the view of a printed paper, Entitled An act prohibiting trade with the Barbados, Virginea, Bermudes and Antegoe,” Printed by Samuel Broun English bookseller, 1651, Early English Books Online copied from the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581476013\\_15272&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99865236&FILE=../session/1581476013_15272&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

parliament.<sup>192</sup> The Barbadian plantocracy turned toward obtaining political representation in the English parliament in an effort to obtain further power, arguing that planter interest was aligned with principles of British Empire building. The plantocracy conceded to the rule of English parliament through the Charter of Barbados (1652), which was perceived to provide constitutional entrenchment for self-government and free-trade, even though as Beckles notes, the metropole had no intention of allowing Barbadian planters to trade with the Dutch.<sup>193</sup> The Barbadian plantocracy's commercial trade with the Dutch violated England's foreign trade policy and was perceived by the British to threaten their sovereign power over the Atlantic slave-trade and plantation production.

The plantocracy had taken root by the 1660s, with knighthoods and baronetcies being granted to wealthy planters, who also held positions on the Council, Assembly, Judiciary, the colony's militia, and in the Anglican Church.<sup>194</sup> It is estimated that by the 1660s, the population of Barbados stood at forty-six thousand people, with over half of those being enslaved blacks.<sup>195</sup> Whereas Spanish Roman Catholics, including Jesuits, Dominicans, and Franciscans converted non-Christian slaves in colonies controlled by Spain and France, English planters in Barbados during the seventeenth century refused to baptize the enslaved as this required teaching them the English language, which was

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<sup>192</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 303-04. Thomas Modyford, along with Peter Colleton, had been instrumental in the early colonizing efforts of the Lords Proprietors in South Carolina, who empowered them the authority to grant one thousand acres of land "in consideration of the good service which Captain Anthony Long, Captain William Hilton, and Mr. Peter Fabian have done in making so clear a Discovery on that Coast." Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, and Langdon Cheves. *The Shaftesbury Papers*. Charleston, (S.C.: Home House Press in association with the South Carolina Historical Society), 2010, 29.

<sup>193</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 26, 46.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 27, 46. Elite planters shaped social policy by dominating the legal, political, and religious life of the colony's inhabitants. Beckles states that there was no effective legal recourse or threat to the property rights of the planter class as they were the ones who occupied positions on "the Council, Assembly and judiciary." Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>195</sup> Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 199.



thought to encourage rebellion as those in bondage would share a language.<sup>196</sup> The religious conversion of the enslaved black population threatened to support claims for freedom, further blur the coloured division between whites and blacks, increase demand for African importation, and thereby place additional security concerns. Baptism was viewed as inconsistent with English jurisprudence, which held that the slave was the private property of the planter as both chattel (could be relinquished for debt) and real property (inheritance and real estate), a formal distinction not practiced in Spanish slave law.<sup>197</sup> Under Spanish law, *Siete Partidas*, the enslaved had the right to baptism, legal counsel, ability to switch to a new master with proof of abuse, and the opportunity to buy their freedom.<sup>198</sup>

Richard Ligon's *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes* (1657), detailed his failed efforts to have a slave named Sambo Christened by the slave's master.<sup>199</sup> The slave owner explained to Ligon that according to English law a Christian could not be made a slave, and thereby, if a slave were to be converted he/she would no longer be subject to slavery.<sup>200</sup> Sambo's master also argued that fellow planters on the island would refuse any attempt to convert the enslaved to Christianity.<sup>201</sup> In "The Ultimate Sin: Christianising

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<sup>196</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*

<sup>197</sup> Elsa Goveia, *West Indian Slave Laws of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, (Kingston: Caribbean Universities Press, 1970), 21; Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, (Chapel Hill, 1944), 42.

<sup>198</sup> "Anti-slavery Society (Great Britain). View of the law and practice in the Spanish colonies respecting the manumission of slaves." London, 1830. *Slavery and Anti-Slavery*. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://archive.org/details/ASPC0001994300/mode/2up>

<sup>199</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*

<sup>200</sup> Ibid. Edward Rugemar states that in seventeenth-century Barbados the exercise of power manifest by the "technology of race" preceded an "ideology of race", which often meant "[t]he usage of "Christian" rather than "white" to denote people of European descent. Rugemar, *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*, 33.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid. Ligon objected to the Barbadian planters' refusal to allow the enslaved to receive religious instruction and conversion, stating: "My contemplation being only this, that since those men dwelling in that place professing the names of Christians, and denying to preach to those poor ignorant harmless souls the Negroes, the doctrine of Christ Crucified, which might convert many of them to his worship, he himself

Slaves in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century," Katharine Gerbner argues that in Barbados slave conversion created a hostile climate in which elite Anglican planters, blaming Quakers for proselytizing, enacted the 1661 Act for the Ordering and Governing of Negroes and its supplement in 1676 that included specific provisions to address slave rebellion, and a ticket system to police slaves. In 1680 the 'Gentlemen of Barbados' refused an overture from the Lords of Trade and Plantation in England to consider the conversion of slaves on the rationale that religious enfranchisement would be a stepping stone to demanding freedom, and would therefore encourage rebellion and compromise plantation commerce.<sup>202</sup> What we see toward the end of the seventeenth century is the transition to a more disciplinary colonial society as the planter class invoked restrictions on conversions to control the now majority black population. This transition is also captured in the development of a more complex administrative and uniform legal framework of domestic discipline that was designed to discourage resistance.

By the 1670s Barbados had witnessed a substantial demographic shift with the proportional and absolute white population declining and being replaced in artisanal occupations such as sugar boilers, masons, and carpenters, by a growing enslaved black population that was skilled.<sup>203</sup> Beckles argues that during this decade the plantocracy continued their campaign to secure dominion over the island's population "through their ability to co-opt a significant section of the black population to act as informers and

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has set up his own Cross, to reproach these men, who rather than they will lose the hold they have of them as slaves, will deny them the benefit and blessing of being Christians." Ibid., 82.

<sup>202</sup> Katharine Gerbner, "The Ultimate Sin: Christianising Slaves in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 31.1 (2010): 57-58, 66, 69-70.

<sup>203</sup> Beckles and Downes, "The Economics of Transition to the Black Labor System in Barbados, 1630-1680," 227. Beckles explains that "[t]he white population fell from 23,000 in 1655 to 21,309 in 1673, while the black population rose from 20,000 to 33,184 in the same period" in large part due to poor whites leaving the island. Beckles, "Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados," 13.

destabilizers” and by integrating “indentured servants and other poor white free men into their military ranks, especially as slave hunters and police.”<sup>204</sup> By 1680 the one hundred and seventy-five largest planters owned fifty-four percent of the island’s property and sixty percent of the slaves.<sup>205</sup> These were at the apex of a planter society that included over one thousand small planters, two thousand three hundred white servants, and forty-thousand black slaves.<sup>206</sup>

The population of whites included political prisoners who were shipped to Barbados and subject to a ten-year indentureship. Political exiles included the “Monmouth men” (English and Scottish Protestants who supported James Scott, the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Monmouth’s rebellion against the Catholic James II) who were subject to execution or transportation to the Caribbean when the rebellion failed in 1686. If prisoners attempted an escape they would receive “thirty-nine lashes in the nearest market place, one hour in the pillory, and branding on the forehead with the letters F.T. (Fugitive Traitor).”<sup>207</sup>

Some also advocated the forced exile of the poor and unfit. Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, who had fought against James II in the Monmouth rebellion, was a member of the Scottish Parliament, political theorist, and a campaigner for colonization and the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, argued that the nation’s workhouses were failing to solve issues of poverty and poor manufacturing levels, and that the solution was to be found in the existing system of British race-based enslavement overseas.<sup>208</sup> Rozbicki states

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>205</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 96-97.

<sup>206</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 115.

<sup>207</sup> Mark S. Quintanilla, “Late Seventeenth-Century Indentured Servants in Barbados,” *Journal of Caribbean History*, 27.2 (1993): 115.

<sup>208</sup> M.J. Rozbicki, “To Save Them from Themselves: Proposals to Enslave the British Poor, 1698-1755,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 22.2, (2001): 30. Rozbicki explains how Fletcher’s solution to ameliorate idleness and the hemorrhaging of tax dollars to support the welfare of undesirables would be to relinquish those designated for enslavement to a landowner who could exploit

that in 1698 Saltoun declaimed to the Scottish parliament that “[t]here are at this day in Scotland ... two hundred thousand people’ [...] ‘begging from door to door. These are not only no way advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country.’”<sup>209</sup> He also added that “[t]hese ‘vagabonds’ live ‘without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and nature.’ They are ‘perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together.’”<sup>210</sup> Thus, metropolitan understandings of poor-relief were being re-shaped by the colonial model and its presumed economic and disciplinary benefits: under conditions of servitude, the poor, idle, and morally degenerate in Britain would no longer be a burden.<sup>211</sup>

In 1686 under the Governorship of Edwyn Stede, Barbadian planters uncovered a united slave and Irish insurrection, which resulted in the execution of twenty enslaved blacks and the temporary arrest of eighteen Irish servants who were set free due to a lack of evidence (an example of white privilege.) Whereas black testimony in the courts was of no force and required the substantiation of a white witness, whose credibility was tethered to class, it is of no surprise that the weight of punishment fell upon the enslaved. Another conspiracy in 1692 revealed an elaborate plot between the enslaved and the Irish to free jailed slaves and set Bridgetown and its waterfront ablaze to prevent the planters from

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their labour and train any of their offspring in a “mechanical art” so as to cover the expense of their custody, make a profit for their master, and ultimately relieve the burden of others reliant on public assistance. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-46. Jenny Shaw notes that “Barbados planters certainly hoped that “ille wicked and dissolute” Irish and Scots fell into the category of the improvable.” Moreover, she argues that her archival research reveals that “while English officials in the Caribbean believed the Scots to be capable of improvement, they were not as confident about the malleability of Irish laborers.” She suggests that perceptions of Irish “inferiority” and their presence as a “fifth column” in the English colonies was due to their “willing[ness] to side with Spain or France at any given moment.” Jenny Shaw, *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference*, 2013, 55-57.

organizing an effective resistance.<sup>212</sup> These circumstances of inter-racial collaboration underscore how marginalized whites and racialized blacks found spaces of unity under the growing network of disciplinary force. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Barbadian government had effectively stymied any further attempts at insurrection by procuring thousands of full-time white “military tenants” whose sole function was to preserve the commercial interest of the plantocracy.<sup>213</sup> Armed with a servile police force to patrol the colony, elite Barbadian planters had started to institute disciplinary measures to combat resistance. Racial lines continued to harden in Barbados and the black and Irish alliance diminished with the expansion of the white militia.

During the latter few decades of the seventeenth century, elite planters in Barbados held esteemed positions in the colony, such as Councilor, Assemblyman, Judge, and Field Officer; smaller planters were resigned to less prominent roles such as a Churchwarden, Coroner, Lieutenant, or Juror.<sup>214</sup> The rise of an elite planter class to the most prominent legal, political, and martial positions, and the integration of what could be termed the middle-class planter into the framework of Barbadian society, was a watershed moment for the establishment of a settler colony that was defined by registers of social hierarchy determined by class, ethnicity, and race. This reality was made possible by an integrated financial network of elite planters who lobbied the English Parliament and Court with the

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid. Ligon attributed the island’s 1686 plot to murder and overthrow the planters to the terrible abuses and hard labour suffered by the slaves and servants, who were willing to risk death in order to ameliorate their condition. The planned insurrection was discovered by Justice Hethersall, who acted immediately by sending out correspondence to fellow planters until the principal organizers of the scheme were exposed. Richard Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 45-6.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 98-99. It is important to note that approximately twenty to twenty-five percent of the small planter population in Barbados, which were property owning yeoman farmers, typically occupied inferior plots of land, and could still obtain the right to vote if they owned at least ten-acres of land. Ibid., 92-93.

political advances they had won during the previous decade.<sup>215</sup> By gaining legal and political legitimacy, the plantocracy was ultimately able to influence the English parliament to support the expansion of the European transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans through vigorous lobbying efforts, which would result in the demand for a low-wage subordinate class of whites to police the enslaved. The shift toward large-scale sugar production and African gang-labour would ultimately squeeze small planters out of the business and into desperate economic conditions, but through the development of a more intense disciplinary hierarchy, provide employment opportunity to poor whites, and through the success of this model inspire the government to take a slice of this financial success to expand the bureaucracy. Thus, the Barbadian plantation complex became a site *par excellence* for the development of the modern Atlantic market and the Western capitalist empire.

#### **1.4 GOOD TO GO: THE REPLICATING PLANTATION PARADIGM**

A significant taxation reform initiated in 1663 by Lord Francis Willoughby of Parham, the Captain-General and Chief Governor of Barbados, provoked elite planters to seek out new fortunes in South Carolina.<sup>216</sup> Under the previous administration of the Earl of Carlisle, who had been granted a patent by Lord Charles I for the Island of Barbados, a

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<sup>215</sup> Hilary Beckles, "Capitalism, Slavery and Caribbean Modernity," *Callaloo* – 20.4 (1997): 777-89.

<sup>216</sup> "Colonial acts for granting four-and-Half per cent duties of customs, in the island of Barbadoes and in the West Indies," House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons Papers; Accounts and Papers, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1820, (20). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=53536e13-535d-4eaa-a07d-f0f2a78b812d>

forty-pound cotton tax had been demanded from each planter.<sup>217</sup> As an alternative, Lord Willoughby cancelled this forty-pound cotton levy and called upon each planter to pay one ear of Indian corn at the annual feast of St. Michael, as well as a duty of four and a half percent on all Barbadian commodities.<sup>218</sup> Lord Willoughby justified this taxation by declaring that public revenue was required to repair forts, for the construction of a prison and government institutions, the general security of the island, and to preserve the “honour and dignity of his Majesty’s authority.”<sup>219</sup> This taxation policy encouraged a disciplinary transformation in the maturation of Barbados as the entrenchment of carceral institutions to preserve the security of the colony centralized power relations away from the individual planter and cleared the path for large-scale production. These revenue controls were a metropolitan check, which by ensconcing mechanisms of discipline and bureaucracy, were a declaration that planter sovereignty could be substituted for an alternative integrative governmental approach.

It was clear that once John Colleton of Barbados had secured a Charter to colonize South Carolina and investment had been procured from England, the wealthy planter elite saw an opportunity to try to replicate the conditions of plantation slavery they had previously established in the British Caribbean.<sup>220</sup> The development of South Carolina as a plantation colony was not carried out by Sir John Colleton, who was made one of the eight Lords Proprietor for supporting Charles II’s father during the English Civil War (1642-1651), but by his three sons, Peter, Thomas, and James, who were granted a shared

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Jeffrey Young, *Domesticating Slavery*, 18. “On August 14, 1663, eighty-five gentlemen of Barbados signed a document expressing interest in the settlement of Carolina; eight Lords Proprietors obtained charters for Carolina in 1663 and 1665.” Kinloch Bull, “Barbadian Settlers in Early Carolina: Historiographical Notes,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 96.4. (Oct., 1995): 329.

tenancy of lands in Carolina.<sup>221</sup> Henry A.M. Smith states that “Sir John Colleton, the original Proprietor, died before the grant of the Signiory was issued and was succeeded by his eldest son, Sir Peter Colleton.”<sup>222</sup> Sir John Colleton’s eldest son Peter resided in Barbados, but was also granted extensive properties beyond the tenancy he shared with Thomas and James, such as a twelve thousand acre Barony on the Cooper River, the 4,423 acre *Fair-Lawn* Barony, property in Charlestown, as well as other lands.<sup>223</sup> In 1694, Peter died in Barbados where he resided with his wife Elizabeth Leslie, leaving behind a large estate that would be held by his descendants for generations.<sup>224</sup> By the time of Peter Colleton’s death in 1694, the *Fair-Lawn* estate had been converted into a fully functioning rice plantation utilizing slave labour.<sup>225</sup> Thomas, Sir John Colleton’s second born, was also a wealthy Barbadian planter, and although harbouring significant business interest and property in South Carolina, also resided in Barbados; his estate was passed on to his son Peter Colleton.<sup>226</sup> Unlike his elder two brothers Peter and Thomas, James Colleton, the

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<sup>221</sup> Henry A.M. Smith, “The Colleton Family in South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 1.4. (Oct., 1900): 327. Sir John Colleton’s second born son Thomas, who played a formative role in the establishment of South Carolina, was appointed Landgrave and granted twelve-thousand acres of land in 1683 on the Cooper River called the “Cypress Barony.” Henry A.M. Smith, “The Baronies of South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 12.1. (Jan., 1911): 5.

<sup>222</sup> Henry A.M. Smith, “The Baronies of South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 11.4. (Oct., 1910): 193.

<sup>223</sup> Henry A.M. Smith, “The Colleton Family in South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 1.4. (Oct., 1900): 333-34. Henry A.M. Smith states that “the Fundamental Constitutions as originally adopted by the Lords Proprietors, a signiory and a barony consisted each of twelve thousand acres. A “signiory” was the estate of a Proprietor, and each of the eight Proprietors was entitled to a signiory in each county. A “barony” was the estate of a Landgrave or a Cassique. Each Landgrave (and there was to be one for each county) was to have four baronies, and each Cassique (and there were to be two for each county) was to have two. The term barony was thus in strictness applicable only to the estate of twelve thousand acres granted to either a Landgrave or a Cassique as an estate attached to his title and dignity.” Henry A.M. Smith, “The Baronies of South Carolina” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 11.2. (Apr., 1910): 75.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> Henry A.M. Smith, “The Baronies of South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 11.4. (Oct., 1910): 195.

<sup>226</sup> Henry A.M. Smith, “The Colleton Family in South Carolina,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 1.4. (Oct., 1900): 328.



youngest son of Sir John Colleton, was more active in South Carolina: appointed Governor of the Province in 1686, he eventually became the sole owner of the joint tenancy he shared with his brothers when they passed away.<sup>227</sup> James also left Carolina to reside in Barbados, and died in 1706, leaving behind two sons who owned slave plantations in South Carolina.<sup>228</sup>

Barbadian planters who migrated to South Carolina replicated their financial success and cohesive elitism through their involvement in political life, exploiting “undesirable” whites, and importing enslaved Africans; Barbadian planters such as John Yeamans would transport gangs of enslaved labourers to South Carolina in 1671.<sup>229</sup> In “Barbadian Settlers in Early Carolina: Historiographical Notes”, Kinloch Bull states:

A group of Barbadians under the leadership of Sir John Yeamans attempted a settlement at Cape Fear (now in North Carolina) in 1665, but the settlement did not prosper. A few of these Cape Fear settlers, including Sir John Yeamans, were among the early settlers in and around Charlestown.<sup>230</sup>

Scholars note that in the 1670s and 1680s several Barbadian planters went to Goose Creek, located just a few miles outside of Charleston, South Carolina, with servants and

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 330.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 331-33.

<sup>229</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 115-6. Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus argue that while studies that examine slavery in the eighteenth century often compare Barbados with Jamaica, it is more appropriate to compare the former with South Carolina or Virginia given the size and white settlement population. Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica*, Series: The Early Modern Americas, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 9.

<sup>230</sup> Kinloch Bull, “Barbadian Settlers in Early Carolina: Historiographical Notes,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 96.4. (Oct., 1995): 329. Yeamans arrived in the colony of Carolina on the 20th of May, 1671, becoming the territory’s first Governor. Ibid., 331. Furthermore, “Peter Campbell relates the history of the Berringer family in Barbados and a dark story of perjury and murder emerges, of a man (Sir John Yeamans) who fell in love with the wife of another man (Colonel Berringer). Mrs. Berringer and Sir John Yeamans murdered her husband, probably by poison. Berringer’s will left everything to his family in England was suppressed and a nun cupative (oral) will leaving everything to Mrs. Berringer and her children was substituted, sworn to by suspect and unreliable witnesses.” Ibid., 331, 334.

slaves. These planters would play a vital role in shaping this new plantation colony as seven of the first twenty-three Governors of South Carolina between 1669 and 1737 were from Barbados, with four of those being from affluent planter and slave trading families: Sir John Yeamans (1672-1674)<sup>231</sup>, James Colleton (1686-1690), Robert Gibbes (1710-1712), and Arthur Middleton (1725-1730).<sup>232</sup> According to Jack P. Greene, over half of the 1,343 white colonists who arrived in South Carolina between 1670 and 1690 were from Barbados; by the last decade of the seventeenth century these planters had discovered that rice would be the best crop for South Carolina.<sup>233</sup>

Although the “Goose Creek men” were drawn from other English islands in the Caribbean, the majority emigrated from Barbados in 1663 when planter Sir John Colleton received a Royal Charter from Charles II.<sup>234</sup> The Charter declared that all those who

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<sup>231</sup> Yeamans would become the owner of the St. Nicholas Abbey Plantation after Berringer’s death. The restored plantation house and grounds of St. Nicholas Abbey Plantation in St. Peter’s Parish which retain some of the original stone structures, are home to a few local plantation records indicating the appraised value of slaves by name, as well as an owner’s tree that illustrates John Yeaman’s possession of the plantation where during his tenancy it was known as ‘Yeaman’s Plantation.’

<sup>232</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 111-14. Another prominent planter was Landgrave Thomas Smith, whose vast wealth is in part captured by his 1734 advertisement to sell or lease his property in South Carolina before going to Cape Fear to “settle his lands there”: his 18,869 acre plantation ten miles from Charlestown, which included a large brick home and other buildings, 1,400 acres of rice land thirty miles from Charlestown at Wasamsaw, and several tracts of land in close proximity to Charlestown, with one alone totaling ten thousand acres of land on the Winyaw River two miles from Georgetown. *South Carolina Gazette*, March 30, 1734. Robert Gibbes was a Proprietor’s Deputy in Carolina, Chief Justice, and Governor for two years, “when he was succeeded in the office of Governor by Charles Craven, who was succeeded by Robert Daniel and Robert Johnson, the last of the Proprietary Governors in South Carolina.” Henry S. Holmes, “Robert Gibbes, Governor of South Carolina, and Some of His Descendants,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 12.2. (Apr., 1911): 79-81.

<sup>233</sup> Jack P. Greene, “Colonial South Carolina and the Caribbean Connection,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 88.4. (Oct., 1987): 197-99.

<sup>234</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 112. The Lords Proprietors made John Yeamans a Knight Barronet, a reward for having supported the King and for their faith in his capacity to settle the Province of Carolina as a thriving plantation colony in the interest of England. Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, and Langdon Cheves. *The Shaftesbury Papers*. Charleston, (S.C.: Home House Press in association with the South Carolina Historical Society), 2010, 50-51. According to Michael Johnson, patriarchal “authority and legitimacy” nourished planter power in South Carolina as a dynastic legacy through the institution of slavery. Michael P. Johnson, “Planters and Patriarchy: Charleston, 1800-1860.” *The Journal of Southern History* 46, no. 1 (1980): 48-49.

endeavoured to pursue commercial agriculture in Carolina, should also propagate Christianity to the “Barbarous & Ignorant Indians” and work towards the expansion of empire, dominion, and wealth of the colonists.<sup>235</sup> Correspondence from Anthony Ashley Cooper (Lord Ashley) to Sir John Yeamans on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1671, illustrates that only wealthy planters from Barbados, for their perceived competency in developing a successful plantation economy, were welcomed in the earlier phase of Carolinian colonization, not the marginal white colonists Lord Ashley characterized as ‘parasites’.<sup>236</sup> On Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, Lord Ashley also advised Joseph West that it would be necessary for England to supply clothes, tools, and commodities for “industrious people” in South Carolina at reasonable prices, but that they would not suffer being taken advantage of by whites who were “Lazy or debauched who will never be good for themselves or the Plantation shall run farther in our Debts to the increase of our charge and disparagement of our Settlement.”<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, and Langdon Cheves. *The Shaftesbury Papers*. Charleston, (S.C.: Home House Press in association with the South Carolina Historical Society), 2010, 13.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 366.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE TRANS-ATLANTIC TRADE IN AFRICANS: SEIZURE, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMODIFICATION

The second chapter of this dissertation considers how the capture, transportation, and exchange of enslaved Africans, was carried out by the slavocracy as an exercise of sovereign power. It also examines how the strategic political insurgencies of the elite Barbadian planter class to undermine the Crown's monopolistic control of the slave-trade at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century played a critical role in the development of the Atlantic market economy and the transformation of the plantation complex into a biopolitical enterprise. Foucault argues that sovereign power is "a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it."<sup>1</sup> The seizure, confinement, transportation, and disposal of captive Africans was similarly carried out as a right over life. This chapter explores the relationship between sovereign power and the practices of confinement (restraints, slave ships, slave castles, and zones for human trafficking and protocols of sale), and how these instruments for detainment and commoditization shaped a model of racial subjectivity that would facilitate the growth of capitalism.

My analysis into how sovereign power configured these systems of natal alienation, is in part, influenced by Hardt and Negri's (2000) inquiry into the relationship between colonial territorialisation and capitalism:

The claim that regimes of slavery and servitude are internal to capitalist production and development points toward the intimate relationship between the labouring

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 136.

subjects' desire to flee the relationship of command and capital's attempts to block the population within fixed territorial boundaries.<sup>2</sup>

Hardt and Negri's *Empire* shows how life becomes ordered, commoditized, and disposed of within the market economy and how this power of command was exercised by the slavocracy. I argue that a Barbadian republican identity amongst the elite planter class beginning in the seventeenth century was critical to shaping practices of racial subjectivity. The financial benefits, territorial expansion, international trade relationships, and labour command realized by the European-sponsored transatlantic trade in Africans provided the Barbadian elite with the economic and political capital to launch demands for greater self-government. The plantocracy in Barbados argued that their claim to liberty was not only an inalienable right as English citizens, but consistent with the *raison d'état* for empire building: expansion of English territorial sovereignty, the development of plantation commerce, and the preservation of monarchical interest. First and foremost, the Barbadian elite argued that their prosperity and the security of the empire hinged on access to an unfettered free-market. The enslaved black body was the contested site *par excellence* where the reinforcement of the Crown's sovereign power was challenged through the Barbadian plantocracy's invocations of free trade, and ultimately, a critical catalyst for the development of the modern capitalist economy in the Atlantic arena.

The explosion in the trading of Africans by the British, particularly in the eighteenth century, fundamentally realigned metropolitan-colonial relations. The intensity of commodity circulation, demand for slave-labour, and the development of commercial, manufacturing, and shipping technologies were all essential to the growth of the Atlantic

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<sup>2</sup> Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 123.

market economy. The Barbadian plantocracy's desire for self-government, open market trade, and political recognition in England, were all informed by the trade in enslaved Africans. Estimates reveal that Britain's formidable foray into the trade in captive Africans began in the middle of the seventeenth century and lasted until the 1807 Slave Trade Act, notwithstanding the continued practices of illicit trade.<sup>3</sup> The right over life exercised in the trade in Africans would foreshadow the conditions of internment, trafficking, commoditization, and abuse carried out by planters in their quest to groom a disciplined labour force, and the subsequent biopolitical controls employed to surveil, punish, and exploit.

## **2.1 THE SLAVE-TRADE AND THE ATLANTIC MARKET ECONOMY**

The two premier English slave-trading companies were the South Sea Company and Royal African Company, formerly known as the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa (a Charter established by King Charles II in 1663 for the trafficking of peoples from Africa to England's colonies).<sup>4</sup> The Royal African Company was established in 1672 by Charles II and included among its membership aldermen, dukes, earls, lords, a countess, and knights, as well as the support of the House of Lords and Lower House, whose desire to control the transatlantic trade in Africans and plantation sugar production in Barbados was made possible by enacting monopolistic trade laws.<sup>5</sup> The Royal Charter of 1672, which affirmed legal entitlement and commercial monopolization of the African

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<sup>3</sup> *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces>

<sup>4</sup> "Charter granted to the Company of Royal Adventurers of England Relating to Trade in Africa, 1663" British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/charter-granted-to-the-company-of-royal-adventurers-of-england-relating-to-trade-in-africa-1663>

<sup>5</sup> Hilary McD. Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 26; Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 56-57; Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 48, 94.

slave trade to the Royal African Company, was an exercise of political hegemony over colonial trade and exploration. These mercantilist policies attempted to mitigate foreign competition and quash the private slave-trading aspirations of elite planters operating in a free-trade market.<sup>6</sup>

By the seventeenth century four hundred ships and eight thousand British seamen were transporting clothing, tools, and other commodities annually to the plantations. The metropole argued that this commercial activity was vital both to the financial security of working-class families in England (as it provided employment and commodities), and to the preservation of their Empire.<sup>7</sup> Bankers, insurance brokers, slave-traders, refiners, shippers, dock workers, tradesmen, and others involved in the direct or indirect institution of slavery and plantation production all had vested interests in the political conflicts that would emerge between Caribbean planters and the Crown.<sup>8</sup> While metropolitan control

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<sup>6</sup> “Charter granted to the company of Royal Adventurers of England relating to trade in Africa, 1672,” British Library 1672 MSS Sloane 205. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://explore.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX251000000009672&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX251000000009672&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dsent=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl\(2084770704UI0\)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local\\_tab&dum=true&vl\(freeText0\)=charter%20granted%20to%20the%20company%20of%20royal%20adventurers&dsmp=1581562131664](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX251000000009672&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX251000000009672&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dsent=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl(2084770704UI0)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local_tab&dum=true&vl(freeText0)=charter%20granted%20to%20the%20company%20of%20royal%20adventurers&dsmp=1581562131664)

<sup>7</sup> “The case of His Majesties sugar plantations, London 1677,” Anon. Early English Books Online, Reproduction of original in British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581562400\\_23869&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581562400_23869&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>8</sup> In reference to the positive economic impact Barbadian sugar plantations had on English commerce and trade both domestically and internationally, it was argued that “[t]he greatest part of the produce of these commodities sold here and abroad, is returned to the sugar-plantation in our woollen and other manufactures, wearing apparel, household-goods, and plantation-utensils, readymade and wrought up in this kingdom. They contribute also to the great consumption of British manufactures and malt-spirits, which are sent to Guinea to purchase negroes for the use of the plantations. In the course of this trade, multitudes of British seamen are maintained, and a great number of ships British built are employed; the profit of which centers all in Great Britain.” “The case of the British sugar-colonies,” Anon. London 1731, Early English Books Online, Reproduction of original in the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99894179&FILE=../session/1581562781\\_28098&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99894179&FILE=../session/1581562781_28098&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

over the Atlantic slave-trade generated wealth for Britain's domestic economy, swelled the Crown's coffers, and provided a marketplace for commodities produced on plantations, the Barbadian planter class argued that Britain's protectionist economic controls threatened their livelihood. Barbadian planters believed that Britain's Navigation Acts in particular, which were a series of regulatory mercantilist policies during the 1660s and 1670s that restricted free-trade with England's foreign competitors (Netherlands, France, and Spain), violated their citizenship rights to liberty specific to trade, impeded the financial growth of plantation commerce, and risked the overall strategic position of the empire in the Caribbean.<sup>9</sup>

The Navigation Acts were strategic mercantilist trade regulations that attempted, but ultimately failed, to secure English control over the sugar trade in the Caribbean by smothering the commercial relationships between planters and foreign competitors. Protectionist economic policies of the Crown were a strategy to compete with rival nations and were considered tantamount with preserving English benefits derived from plantation commerce in the Caribbean. Foucault identified three principal means used to fortify sovereign power: the accumulation of wealth, continual competition with foreign rivals, and population growth.<sup>10</sup> The Barbadian plantocracy, after having initially supported metropolitan leadership, launched a campaign to secure commercial freedom for private slave-trading by asserting the very legal, philosophical and political rationalities that underpinned English empire building in the Caribbean. In 1674 the Crown commissioned Governor Atkins of Barbados, who would rule until 1681, to temper the planters'

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<sup>9</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 84-87.

<sup>10</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 5.



vociferous objections to Britain's Navigation Acts, duties on commodities, the Royal African Company's monopoly, and the exorbitant fees charged by merchants.<sup>11</sup>

The growth of the modern Atlantic economy was in part stimulated by the Barbadian class's efforts, among others, to undermine the mercantilist and monopolistic features of the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans. While issues concerning price controls, taxation, and navigation were consistent areas of conflict amongst the planter elites throughout the English Caribbean, the escalation of private slave-trading inspired a critical economic and political cleavage between England's monarchical interest and elite Barbadian planters through the slave-trade. Private slave-trading throughout the region would deal a considerable blow to crown control and encourage the rise of capitalism. The Barbadian planter elite's accumulation of wealth and movement for political independence illustrate the connection between the systems of labour expropriation and the erosion of crown sovereignty in the British Caribbean. The severe response to Barbadian declarations of economic and political self-determination between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries reveal not only the perceived philosophical and governmental legitimacy of these declarations, outlined earlier, as they intersected English values of liberty and empire building, but the extent to which the planter elite's influence as agents of international commercial exchange and the domestic benefit had on re-aligning geopolitical control. I argue that the growth of the private slave-trade in Africans and its impact on the development of the capitalist market economy in the Atlantic was imperative to England's economic maturation as it encouraged independent commercial activity in technologies, shipping, and textiles.

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<sup>11</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 84-87.

By the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, Barbadian trading, along with other private traders, challenged the regulatory control, market share, and territorial reach of Great Britain's monarchical claim within the Atlantic. These conditions breathed life into a more diffuse arrangement of local administration, commercial development, and slave-trading practices in the colonies. The broader features of this economic transition are crucial to understanding the shift from mercantilism to capitalism in the Atlantic economy. The rising bourgeois planter class in Barbados succeeded in transforming the distribution of English power relations in the Atlantic economy from a dominating metropole commanding the peripheries to a more diffuse and varied set of relations emanating from multiple sites.<sup>12</sup> The "rationalist" insurgency and political maneuverings of the Barbadian plantocracy, as noted in the 1650 "Act for Defence of the Government Liberties and Freedomes of this Island," among others, were strategies of realpolitik that educed legitimacy based on collective English values of liberty, freedom, and civilization. These maneuverings put pressure on the Royal African Company's monopoly and helped set the stage for the rise of capitalism in the Atlantic arena. In this regard, a genealogical analysis evidences how the destabilization of the metropole reconfigured the balance of power and situated "the colonies as more than sites of exploitation but as 'laboratories of modernity'" and its racial nomos.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Deleuze, *Foucault*, 62. The realignment of the British colonial project can be understood as a series of insurgent forces to diminish the centralization of metropolitan power. Deleuze states that for Foucault, power "is diagrammatic: it mobilizes non-stratified matter and functions, and unfolds with a very flexible segmentarity. In fact, it passes not so much through forms as through particular points which on each occasion mark the application of a force, the action or reaction of a force in relation to others, that is to say an affect like 'a state of power that is always local and unstable.'" Ibid., 61-62.

<sup>13</sup> Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, 15.

The Barbadian plantocracy (among others) undermined the African Company's monopoly in part by employing fraternal language grounded in the belief systems of Britain's elite (references to nation and class), and foregrounding the values of personal liberty, global supremacy, self-government, and civilization. Foucault's theorizations on subjectivity and its relationship to discourse and power offer perspective into the political jockeying that unfolded between the Barbadian planter class and the metropole during this period of contestation. Bevir's analysis of Foucault's writings leads him to argue that diverse conditions of subjectivity are historically constituted by regimes of power/knowledge, and that these discursive constructs determine the legitimacy of who can speak with authority.<sup>14</sup> He also states that it is society itself that defines subjectivity through norms and values established by these specific regimes of power/knowledge.<sup>15</sup> The common ideals of British subjectivity that shaped the identity of the Barbadian planter class, and their discursive authority to advance legal and political recognition for what they deemed were rights inalienable to them as English citizens, reveals not only their sense of privilege and position of power within plantation colony, but also their fidelity to English exceptionalism, which I would define as an ideological vision of cultural superiority, economic development, and global dominion. The area of contestation between the Barbadian plantocracy and the metropole, however, had to do with an emerging movement closely connected to these principles, namely republicanism, which manifested itself

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<sup>14</sup> Mark Bevir, "Foucault and Critique: Deploying Agency against Autonomy" *Political Theory*, 27.1. (Feb., 1999): 66.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Edward Baptist argues that the epistemes of power-knowledge "emerged in the ways that the state categorized and counted people, in the way that sex became a problem to be regulated and that psychological and other discourses named the abnormal." Edward E. Baptist "Toward a Political Economy of Slave Labor Hands, Whipping- Machines, and Modern Power", in Beckert, Sven and Seth Rockman, eds. *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*, Early American Studies. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.9783/9780812293098>, 37.

through increased self-determination. The English empire's mercantilist policy was irreparably damaged by the free-trade market apparatus developed by the plantocracy in concert with shippers, traders, and agents to advance its commercial ambitions. The sovereign, monopolistic metropole was eventually displaced and supportive of a market operating "as a 'multiplicity of force relations' that are 'immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization.'" <sup>16</sup>

Where I diverge from Bevir is in his assertion that "Foucault sometimes appears to put too much emphasis on the body at the expense of things such as the law." <sup>17</sup> A reading of the spatial distribution, physical abuse, and subjugation of the body to the conventions, practices, and legal procedures of the trans-Atlantic trade exposes the legal inhuman status of the enslaved and the strategies of resistance they developed to challenge these protocols. The legal disputes waged between the metropole and the colony concerning the slave-trade denied and erased the humanity of the enslaved through the sovereign right over life, as gleaned by the economic calculations related to human trafficking, which included insurance, shipping tonnage, price controls, and territorial rights.

In 1677, two decades after the 1650 "Act for Defence of the Government Liberties and Freedomes of this Island," elite Barbadian planters declared that an imperial tax on sugar, which had only previously been demanded of foreign rivals, would not only encourage the growth of Dutch and French plantation trade by diminishing the price of sugar as this would be required to maintain a competitive price-point, but would also put thousands of Englishmen at risk should a foreign power overtake the colony. <sup>18</sup> The

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Mark Bevir, "Foucault and Critique: Deploying Agency against Autonomy," 66.

<sup>18</sup> "The case of His Majesties sugar plantations, London 1677," Anon. Early English Books Online, Reproduction of original in British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at

Barbadian elite prophesized ominous developments concerning the imposition of an imperial tax to bolster their position, and their campaign was unyielding. Barbadian planters also argued that the Navigation Acts threatened the viability of plantation commerce as all sugar produced in Barbados would be required to be transported to England and subjected to customs before any sale to foreign markets. The planters also claimed that by placing onerous conditions of trade on the British colonies the Navigation Acts would advance Dutch supremacy and French expansion in the Caribbean.<sup>19</sup> The planter lobby suggested that these impositions would destroy Barbadian plantation production, harm the English economy, diminish the King's revenue, and threaten England's naval supremacy.<sup>20</sup> The Barbadian plantocracy's enthusiastic campaign for increased governmental autonomy in the 1650s, which is outlined in the first chapter of this study, was palliated by regimes sympathetic to metropolitan interest in the 1670s and 80s. In the last few decades of the seventeenth century the Barbadian planter class was ruled by a partisan government (Governor Atkins, 1674-79), corrupt leaders, and an economic agenda that endeavoured to combat private slave trading.

Governor Atkin's successor Sir Richard Dutton also challenged the plantocracy during his Governorship from 1680 to 1685 through intimidation, bribery, and political reform; moreover, payoffs from the Assembly which increased his salary to eighteen thousand pounds eventually led him back to Britain in shame.<sup>21</sup> Dutton's successor, Edwin Stede, who held the Governorship from 1685-1690 and was a metropolitan plant given that

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[http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581562400\\_23869&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=45504389&FILE=../session/1581562400_23869&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 100-1.

he was the island's official Royal African Company agent, was also reviled by the Barbadian plantocracy as he prosecuted slave-traders who circumvented the Royal African Company's monopoly.<sup>22</sup> During the 1680s many Barbadian planters retired to England as absentee owners and created the "Committee of Gentleman Planters," a lobbyist group whose mandate was to advance the interests of the planter elite throughout the Caribbean as the sugar boom started to exhibit signs of decline due to soil exhaustion, diminished production, lower sugar prices, and the added pressures of James II's sugar tax.<sup>23</sup>

Efforts to secure the King's sovereign power in Barbados through governmental appointment, foreign trade regulation, taxation, and monopoly over the slave-trade were compromised by the overthrow of King James II. The Glorious Revolution of 1688, which resulted in William III and Mary II gaining control, extinguished adversities the Barbadian plantocracy had endured under the Governorships of both Dutton and Stede by having James II's sugar tax rescinded in 1693 and the Royal African Company's monopoly shattered.<sup>24</sup> After the abolition of the Royal African Company's monopoly, the importation of slaves into Antigua, Barbados, and Jamaica from 1698 to 1708 increased fourfold.<sup>25</sup> The diminished presence of the Royal African Company in the Caribbean spurred the private slave-trade of Africans and helped assuage the economic stagnation that the plantocracy

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 44; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 101-2.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> "An account of the number of negroes delivered in to the islands of Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Antego, from the year 1698 to 1708," London, 1709. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://explore.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX3360000000319534&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX3360000000319534&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dscnt=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl\(2084770704UI0\)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local\\_tab&dum=true&vl\(freeText0\)=An%20account%20of%20the%20number%20of%20negroes%20delivered%20in%20to%20the%20islands%20of%20Barbadoes%2C%20Jamaica%2C%20and%20Antego&dstmp=1581564109681](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX3360000000319534&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX3360000000319534&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dscnt=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl(2084770704UI0)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local_tab&dum=true&vl(freeText0)=An%20account%20of%20the%20number%20of%20negroes%20delivered%20in%20to%20the%20islands%20of%20Barbadoes%2C%20Jamaica%2C%20and%20Antego&dstmp=1581564109681)

suggested would materialize through a labour shortage. While this study cannot consider how the complex transformations of constitutional, monarchical, and religious interests impacted Britain's imperial statecraft both domestically and internationally, it is clear that the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the subsequent loss of the Royal African Company's monopoly would effectively transform monarchical power and influence over colonial slave-trading interests, though the former would continue to trade in commodities such as gold and ivory. The Barbadian plantocracy exploited the power vacuum left in the wake of the dissolved Royal African Company to advocate for further reforms to the regulation of plantation trade.

In an effort to lobby for increased power, the planters argued that Barbados' booming economy and militia force of eight thousand men had been severely diminished by James II's sugar tax, which imposed one farthing on a pound of brown sugar and three on refined white.<sup>26</sup> A letter written to the British Parliament stated that this tax, which had been rescinded in 1693, along with poor soil conditions that had depreciated sugar yields by over fifty percent in the preceding twenty years, severely diminished profits.<sup>27</sup> There was also residual animosity toward parliament, which had stated on previous occasions that any further duties would be passed on to the consumer and not the planter, an

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<sup>26</sup> "The present case of a Barbados planter, and reasons against laying a further duty on sugar," Anon, London: 1695, Early English Books Online, Reproduction of original in the British Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99885989&FILE=../session/1581564558\\_19538&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99885989&FILE=../session/1581564558_19538&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR). In the case of Barbadian sugar production, due to trade restrictions only partial refining was permitted in the Caribbean, the final stages of processing occurred after the produce was shipped to English refineries. Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 108.

<sup>27</sup> "A letter to S C.M. a member of Parliament from an inhabitant of the island of Barbadoes," Anon, 1700, Reproduction of original in the John Carter Brown Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99897398&FILE=../session/1581564864\\_23103&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99897398&FILE=../session/1581564864_23103&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

observation not shared by Barbadian planters who had witnessed market prices in England remain static as merchants and grocers refused to absorb any increased costs.<sup>28</sup> The English parliament was betting on placating domestic strife rather than concerning themselves with satisfying the demands of the planters. In an effort to bolster the legitimacy of their campaign, the planters utilized hyperbolic rhetoric to argue that previous duties had depopulated the island, resulted in the closure of over forty sugar plantations, forced small farmers to relocate to the northern colonies, halved the militia to four thousand men, and reduced the slave-labour force to under forty-five thousand.<sup>29</sup> The planters were unwilling, however, to take responsibility for having exhausted the soil's nutritional integrity through overworking, condemning small planters to subsistence farming, persecuting non-English servants, and abusing the enslaved.

By 1695 the island had a total population of ninety thousand, including enslaved and indentured labourers, whom were both described by the planters as being well clothed, fed, and supplied with manufactures and working tools mostly from England.<sup>30</sup> In just one year over four hundred vessels exported sugar, cotton, ginger, rum, and molasses to England.<sup>31</sup> Given the economic circumstances characterized by the Barbadian planters, who calculated that the large investment of capital required to establish a sugar plantation (mills, boiling houses, coppers, still, tools, white servants, slaves, animals, stock, etc.), would only yield a two percent profit, some were clearly set on exploring other commercial opportunities.<sup>32</sup> The 1695 report condemning the imperial duty on sugar stated that the

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<sup>28</sup> "The present case of a Barbados planter, and reasons against laying a further duty on sugar"

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.



planters would refuse to “stay in that scorching climate to starve, or at the most that can be said, to make one per cent of their money” as a result of any further duties placed on sugar.<sup>33</sup> The planters maintained that these circumstances would surely lead to another wave of emigration to the northern colonies, a further advantage to foreign competitors such as Denmark, Holland, and France (who did not levy taxes on their sugar), and a collapse of English interest in the Caribbean.<sup>34</sup>

The Royal African Company had a wide net of financial support from all sectors of English society, including government officials, investors, and clergymen. Even the philosopher John Locke, who wrote about liberty and just government, was a shareholder in the Royal African Company.<sup>35</sup> By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Royal African Company was launching a successful case for the English public to bail them out of a growing financial crisis. The African Company’s financial predicament stemmed from the high costs of maintaining forts and factories in West Africa, the failure to recover monies that were owed from Caribbean plantation owners in Barbados, Jamaica, and the Leeward islands who were in arrears £170,000, with cumulative debts at interest of £301,195, as well as the additional losses of £300,000 from foreign shipping privateers as a result of the War of Spanish Succession between 1702-1713.<sup>36</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Royal African Company was reorganized and its name changed to the Company of Merchants Trading in Africa, and although it had lost its monopoly, the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor Versus Slavery in British Emancipation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11; Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 57-58.

taxpayers were financially responsible for maintaining forts and factories in Africa to support private slave-traders.<sup>37</sup>

At the beginning of the eighteenth century planters petitioned England for a free trade environment to extract Africans along the twelve hundred mile coast from Accra to Angola, with the rationale that the Royal African Company had not secured a legitimate right to exclusive trade as they had ceased slave-trading operations in their forts, castles, and factories in the region.<sup>38</sup> The plantocracy argued that the Royal African Company's monopoly had created an uncompetitive market that significantly increased the price of slaves and that these circumstances would result in labour shortages, plantation closures, the demise of England's trade and navigation industry, and a reduction of revenue to the Crown.<sup>39</sup> At this time the increase in private slave-trading and European demand for plantation produce further emboldened the Barbadian planter class.<sup>40</sup> From April 1698 to April 1708, 88,108 African slaves were imported to Antigua, Barbados, and Jamaica; 35,409 of these were imported to Barbados.<sup>41</sup> Of this total of 88,108, the Royal African

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>38</sup> "Some considerations humbly offered to demonstrate how prejudicial it would be to the English plantations, revenues of the Crown, the navigation and general good of this Kingdom, that the sole trade for Negroes should be granted to a company with a joynt-stock exclusive to all others," London: 1700, Early English Books Online. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99830285&FILE=../session/1581565068\\_25461&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99830285&FILE=../session/1581565068_25461&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> The average profit for investing in slave-trading voyages in the eighteenth-century ranged from eight to ten percent. Ibid., 35, 81.

<sup>41</sup> "An account of the number of negroes delivered in to the islands of Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Antego, from the year 1698 to 1708," London, 1709. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://explore.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX33600000000319534&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX33600000000319534&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dscnt=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl\(2084770704UI0\)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local\\_tab&du m=true&vl\(freeText0\)=An%20account%20of%20the%20number%20of%20negroes%20delivered%20in%20to%20the%20islands%20of%20Barbadoes%2C%20Jamaica%2C%20and%20Antego&dstmp=1581564109681](http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSFX3360000000319534&indx=1&recIds=BLLSFX33600000000319534&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&frbg=&&dscnt=0&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&vl(2084770704UI0)=any&tb=t&vid=BLVU1&mode=Basic&srt=rank&tab=local_tab&du m=true&vl(freeText0)=An%20account%20of%20the%20number%20of%20negroes%20delivered%20in%20to%20the%20islands%20of%20Barbadoes%2C%20Jamaica%2C%20and%20Antego&dstmp=1581564109681). Jerome S. Handler and Frederick W. Lange provide a detailed breakdown of slave imports to Barbados from 1651-1830, and argue that the total number imported during this period was 353,069.

Company transported 17,760, leaving a disparity of 70,348 captives who were imported by private traders, including those of foreign powers.<sup>42</sup> It appears that the lobbying efforts of planters to increase private slave-trading shifted greater influence to the planter class in the Atlantic market.<sup>43</sup> The prevailing sentiment among the plantocracy was that their enterprise was dependent on slave-labour, and that even if a planter had ten thousand acres of land he would still be poor if enslaved Africans could not be imported for plantation labour.<sup>44</sup> The Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations in 1708 also warned that if the price of slaves on the plantations doubled in colonies such as Barbados, the impact would be catastrophic to England as other nations would begin to rely on getting their sugars from the East Indies.<sup>45</sup>

The intensification of private slave-trading that emerged from the reorganization of England's sovereign control was an integral factor in the development of plantation production and the rise of a capitalist free-enterprise system given its multiplying economic impact and commercial synergy. The private transnational manufacture and transportation of technologies related to plantation industry depended on wealth generated from the capture, confinement, transportation, and exchange of the enslaved as measurable "units of trade", profit, and reserve within the Atlantic economy. Increased agricultural production

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Jerome S. Handler and Frederick W. Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados: An Archaeological and Historical Investigation*, (Harvard University Press and Iuniverse, 2000), 22.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> For further analysis into the documentary record concerning the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans, see, *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces>

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> "Some observations on extracts taken out of the report from the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations," Board of Trade, 1708. Early English Books Online. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99882412&FILE=../session/1581565516\\_944&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99882412&FILE=../session/1581565516_944&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR). The Royal African Company believed that African traders were taking advantage of an open slave-trade system, causing the price of a slave to rise from three pounds to ten by inducing a competitive economic climate that diminished the value of European currency and commodities. Ibid.

in the Caribbean expanded the balance of geo-economic/political power from a monarchical interest that focused on overseas empire building to a more diffuse cadre of wealthy elites who were focused on the preservation of profit generation. The underlying modus operandi of sovereign force (extraction, detainment, and expenditure) under both systems of thanatopolitical command (monarchical and capitalistic) remained the same, but a critical divarication in the logistics of security and trade developed. The responsibilities for safeguarding the national slave-trading interest became a domain of fiduciary accountability for the government, as was the case with maintaining forts across the Western African coast, while private-slave traders, commercial institutions, and the Church of England, benefitted from this free-ridership and profiteering. While Great Britain's contemporary accountability for the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans and the quest for reparation is beyond the purview of this dissertation, Great Britain's declaration at the 2001 United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance, in Durban, South Africa, that the genocide of indigenous peoples, the trafficking of Africans, and the institution of slavery carried out in the Caribbean were not crimes against humanity when they were practiced. This has inspired rejection of that conclusion, outrage, and further attention to the legitimacy of reparation movements across the English Caribbean.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Despite the overwhelming historical evidence presented by Caribbean delegates at Durban, Great Britain refused to accept responsibility for these historical injustices and the subsequent post-emancipation white supremacy movement that continues to nourish the geopolitical isolation, material impoverishment, and racial inferiorization of indigenous and African peoples in the Caribbean. For analysis of the Caribbean reparations movement against Britain in the wake of the historical erasure, discursive closure and political opposition marshaled at Durban, see Beckles' (2013) *Britain's Black Debt: Reparations for Slavery and Native Genocide*. Jamaica: University of West Indies Press. For further information concerning the CARICOM Reparations Committee and ongoing efforts for reparation, see, <https://caricomreparations.org>.

The Company of Royal Adventurers of England trading into Africa also stated that the survival of plantation commerce depended on the acquisition and exploitation of slave-labour.<sup>47</sup> A House committee charged with reviewing Caribbean trade and plantation slavery in 1734 advised that England undertake every effort to preserve the benefits of slave plantation production in the Caribbean given the pressures of international trade, the prohibitive cost of foregoing the large duties afforded by their commerce, and the catastrophic financial shortfall and time required to recover the industry should it be lost.<sup>48</sup> Sugar plantations were considered advantageous to England's balance of trade concerning their manufacturing exports, their importation of foreign commodities and bullion, and for the advancement of navigation.<sup>49</sup>

The geo-economic interest of England was also increasingly threatened by their exclusion from free-trading practices between British North America and Caribbean slave

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<sup>47</sup> "An answer of the Company of Royal Adventurers of England trading into Africa to the petition and paper of certain heads and particulars thereunto relating and annexed exhibited to the Honourable House of Commons by Sir Paul Painter, Ferdinando Gorges, Henry Batson, Benjamin Skutt, and Thomas Knights on the behalf of themselves and others concerned in His Majesties plantations in America," London, 1667, Early English Books Online. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11925560&FILE=../session/1581566050\\_6987&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11925560&FILE=../session/1581566050_6987&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

<sup>48</sup> "The House was moved that the select committee appointed the 7th instant to consider of the representation of the commissioners for trade and plantations relating to the laws made manufactures set up and trade carried on in any of His Majesty's colonies and plantations in America which may have affected the trade, navigation and manufactures of this kingdom be impowered [sic] to enquire of the proper methods for the encouragement and security of all trade and manufactures in the said plantations which no way interfere with the trade of Great Britain or which may be of use to the trade of Great Britain and for the better security of the plantations themselves," Private and Local Bills and Acts, Harper Collection of Private Bills 1695-1814, February 1732 to 27 March 1735, *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/ppqdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=248f8262-691a-4c18-aa86-caaa3ec8a047>

<sup>49</sup> "The case of the planters and traders belonging to the English sugar plantations," Anon. London, 1690, Early English Books Online, Reproduction of the original in the Lincoln's Inn Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=52211965&FILE=../session/1581566687\\_14300&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgthumbs.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=52211965&FILE=../session/1581566687_14300&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR)

colonies in the eighteenth century. The first part of what has generally been termed “triangular trade,” which was in fact a far more diffuse and complex network of exchange, consisted of vessels departing from Bristol, Liverpool, and London, as well as the minor ports of Whitehaven and Lancaster, carrying goods to be traded for African slaves. With the procurement and transportation of slaves taking upwards of three months, the stock of stores and merchandize on English vessels would require re-supply in the Atlantic or Caribbean.<sup>50</sup> During the first leg of the voyage the Island of St. Thomas provided English slave vessels the opportunity to re-supply water, wood, Indian corn, rice, fruit, and other commodities, as well as to send ill slaves ashore in hopes of reclaiming their health to be viable for sale before continuing their journey to the colonies.<sup>51</sup> The second phase of triangular trade would witness the trafficking of enslaved Africans through the Middle Passage to the plantations, and the final phase of triangular trade vessels would be filled with sugar, tobacco, rice, cotton, and indigo in the Caribbean and mainland America for departure to Europe.<sup>52</sup>

Sidney Mintz theorizes that there was a second triangular trade that challenged mercantilist principles and inevitably situated the economic interests of the New England colonies against Britain where the latter was excluded from trade in a *de facto* way, as was

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<sup>50</sup>Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, 1788

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> “An Account of the Quantities of Sugar, Rum, Cotton, Coffee, Cocoa, Indigo, Ginger, Aloes, and other Goods, imported into the several Ports of Great Britain, from the British Sugar Colonies, from Christmas 1786 to Christmas 1787 inclusive; with Duties of Customs payable on each Article,” House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century 1715-1800, Slave Trade 1788-1790, June 1788- 17 March 1790. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=9d408e95-5fb5-4817-8e7c-37b62f78c177&rsId=16FA245110D>. An accounting of goods received into British ports from the Caribbean sugar colonies from Christmas 1786 to Christmas 1787, include medicines such as aloes epatica, caffia lignea, radix serpentaria, sarsaparilla, dyes and woods such as ebony, indigo, logwood, mahogany, cocoa, coffee, ginger, pimento, brown sugar, turmeric, ox and cow hides, tortoiseshell, spirits and rum, tobacco, wool, and cotton. Ibid.

the case when Caribbean rum was being exported from New England to Africa.<sup>53</sup> For example, an exclusive trade relationship between the American colonies and Barbados is evidenced in John Winthrop's (Governor of Massachusetts) journal, *History of New England 1630-1649*. He stated that "trade with Barbados had proved to be beneficial, as cattle and provisions were exchanged for sugar, cotton, tobacco, and indigo, without the participation of England."<sup>54</sup> Historian Jack P. Greene offers further evidence of this bilateral trade by stating that up until the 1750s Barbados was the primary exporter of sugar, molasses, and rum to South Carolina, who in turn exported naval stores, foodstuffs, and leather to Barbados.<sup>55</sup> The transformation of the mercantile Atlantic economy into a more capitalistic trade environment by at least the beginning of the eighteenth century was shaped by diffuse networks of global commodity exchange, manufacture investment, and the exploitation of African labour.

## **2.2 NECRO-ECONOMICS: THE TECHNOLOGY OF CONFINEMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND EXPLOITATION**

Technological innovations and commercial practices employed for the abduction, incarceration, transportation, and sale of Africans increased capital growth in both the metropole and colony and reinforced the belief that the institution of slavery facilitated English advancement. Power-knowledge strategies of sovereign force are illustrated by the procedures of violence initiated for human trafficking, the devices of restraint used to

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<sup>53</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 43.

<sup>54</sup> Williams, *Documents of West Indian History*, 286.

<sup>55</sup> Jack P. Greene, "Colonial South Carolina and the Caribbean Connection," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 88.4. (Oct., 1987): 200.

immobilize captured bodies, and the institutional sites employed to secure the slavocracy's resource. Shackles, collars, masks, and other instruments of torture were used to ensure physical restraint and diminish the threat of rebellion and escape during incarceration and transportation. By coordinating an environment of confinement, deprivation, and surveillance, such methods subjected the enslaved to the disciplinary realities that would also unfold through plantation labour. Slave forts provided a practical system for centralizing the slave-trade and asserting England's military presence along the West African coast. Following in the path of previous European slave-traders, the Royal African Company constructed heavily fortified castles along the Gold Coast and Gambia region to protect their reserves of gold and slaves, who were primarily drawn from the Bights of Benin and Biafra, as well as Angola.<sup>56</sup> In the latter part of the seventeenth century the English, through the Royal African Company, engaged in the transportation of diverse ethnic groups to Barbados, such as Adangme, Ashanti, Dahomey, Edo, Ewe, Fanti, Ga, Ibo, and Yoruba.<sup>57</sup>

The fortifications along the Gold Coast and Gambia region, which functioned as zones of security for English slave-traders, were internment sites to secure captives, repositories for ammunition and arms, and territorial garrisons to leverage influence in the region for trade. By the eighteenth century the most prominent slave forts located in Gambia, Sierra Leon, Guinea, and the Gold Coast, functioned as depots for supplies,

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<sup>56</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 60-61.

<sup>57</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 32-33; Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, 1788. In 1482 the Portuguese had infiltrated the networks of Islamic slave-traders and erected a fortress at São Jorge da Mina (Elmina) in present-day Ghana that was at first intended to protect stores of gold from other European powers; after the Dutch gained control of the citadel it would house slaves along with other forts such as Cape Coast Castle and Accra. Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 89; Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 54.



trading commodities, and weaponry.<sup>58</sup> English slave-traders believed that these strongholds were imperative to maintain trade with African rulers and to challenge competing European interests in the region.<sup>59</sup> These carceral garrisons were also necessary to resist attacks from both the captives and local Africans.

The documentary record clearly indicates that English slave-traders considered the cultural, governmental, and religious customs of Africans as inferior, and as such, insisted on European leadership when undertaking trade relations. The English considered slave forts symbols of their authority in the region and believed them to be decisive in assuaging quarrels with “diverse petty kings” and “illiterate people” who were not governed by “any religion, laws or courts of justice, or any civilized rules of discipline.”<sup>60</sup> English slave-traders also reasoned that the “Native’s friendship, justice, humanity, and honesty” could be assured by the “protection” offered by the settlements and slave forts along the African Coast.<sup>61</sup> Far from being just institutions of confinement for enslaved Africans, these slave castles also functioned as casernes within the wider geographical web of human trafficking to pervade into the African interior. Slave castles advanced a culture of intrusion through safeguarding the coast as a fragile, but protected militarized zone that was accessible to arms resource. Colonial encampment played a fundamental role for not just procurement and trade, but in coordinating the spatial dimensions of human trafficking into Africa as a strategy for commoditization.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> “Some observations on extracts taken out of the report from the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations”

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> “Some observations on extracts taken out of the report from the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations”

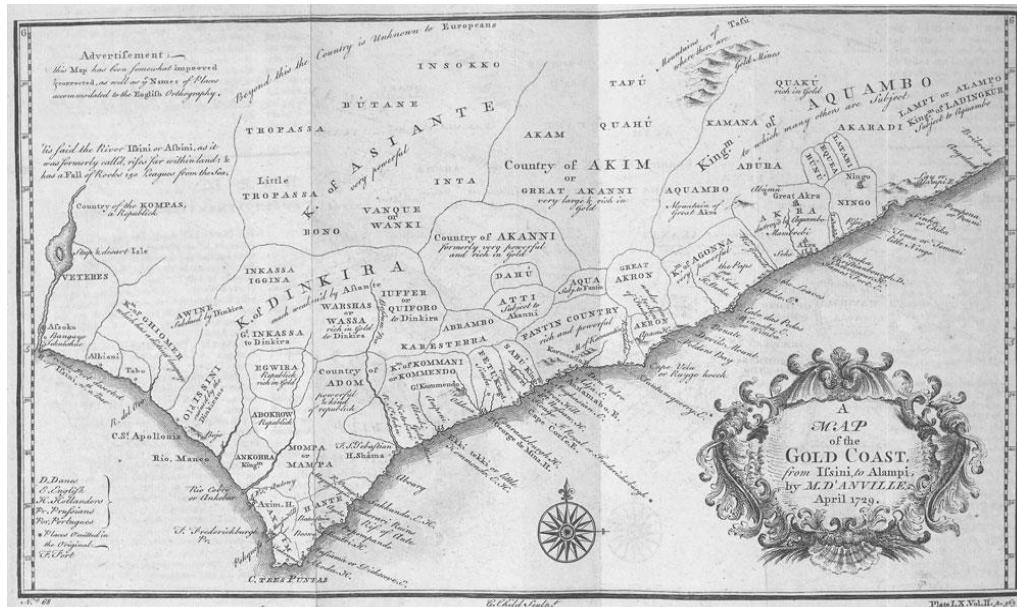


Figure 3. “A Map of the Gold Coast from Isini to Alampi, by M. D'Anville. April 1729.” Thomas Astley (ed.), *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1745-47), vol. 2, plate 60, between pp. 564 and 565 (Special Collections, University of Virginia Library). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

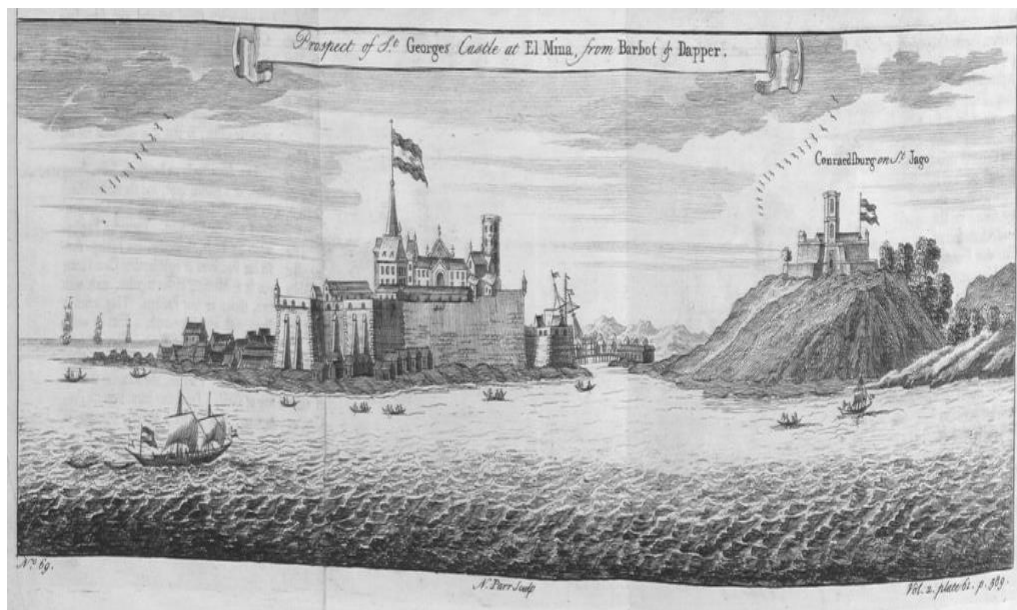


Figure 4. St. Georges Castle at Elmina and St. Jago, Gold Coast, late 17<sup>th</sup> cent. Based on Jean Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea* and D. O. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique* . . . Traduite du Flamand (Amsterdam, 1686; 1st ed., 1668), in Thomas Astley (ed.), *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1745-47), vol. 2, plate 61, facing p. 589. (Copy in Special Collections, University of Virginia Library). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

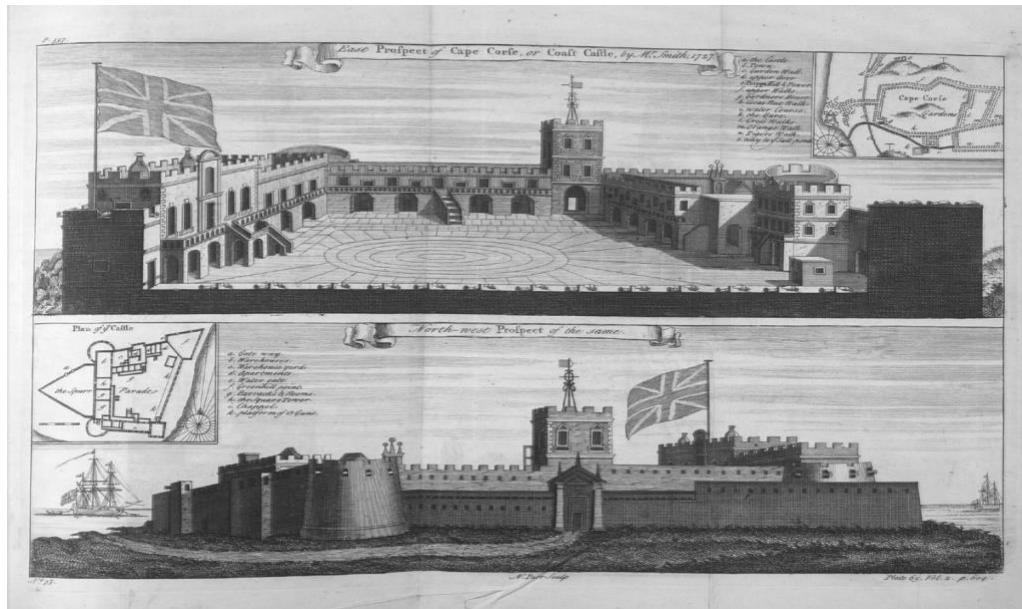


Figure 5. Cape Coast Castle, Gold Coast, 1727. Based on William Smith, *A New Voyage to Guinea* (1744) in Thomas Astley (ed.), *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1745-47), vol. 2, plate 65, facing p. 605. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”



Figure 6. “Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, 1999. Interior courtyard, where captive Africans were assembled for detainment. (Photographed by Michael Tuite in Ghana; Aug. 1999). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”



Figure 7. Cape Coast Castle, Ghana, 1990s. Kwesi J. Anquandah, *Castles & Forts of Ghana* (Ghana Museums & Monuments Board, 1999), p. 47. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

In one version of events in the Bonny River English slave ships would lie off the coast in groups, and slave-traders would present local African Kings with gifts of food to announce their desire to negotiate terms of engagement; if reciprocated, a hollow elephant’s tooth was blown.<sup>62</sup> Gifts of cotton, silk, brandy, and wine were offered by the English for permission to trade.<sup>63</sup> Local rulers would in turn receive a commission for every captive sold by African traders, which was collected by representatives they had stationed on board slave vessels.<sup>64</sup> African rulers believed they could benefit economically, politically, and socially from transporting criminals and political rivals to labour in the Caribbean and the wider Americas. One method of entrapment included outright seizure through a strategy referred to as “boating.” Vessels would navigate river systems snatching

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<sup>62</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.



villagers who resided by the shore and ambushing locals while they engaged in travel or work.<sup>65</sup> Other forms of entrapment included African slave-traders kidnapping neighbours whom they had invited over for food and drink or by drawing victims close to the vicinity of slave vessels where they would be easy prey.<sup>66</sup>

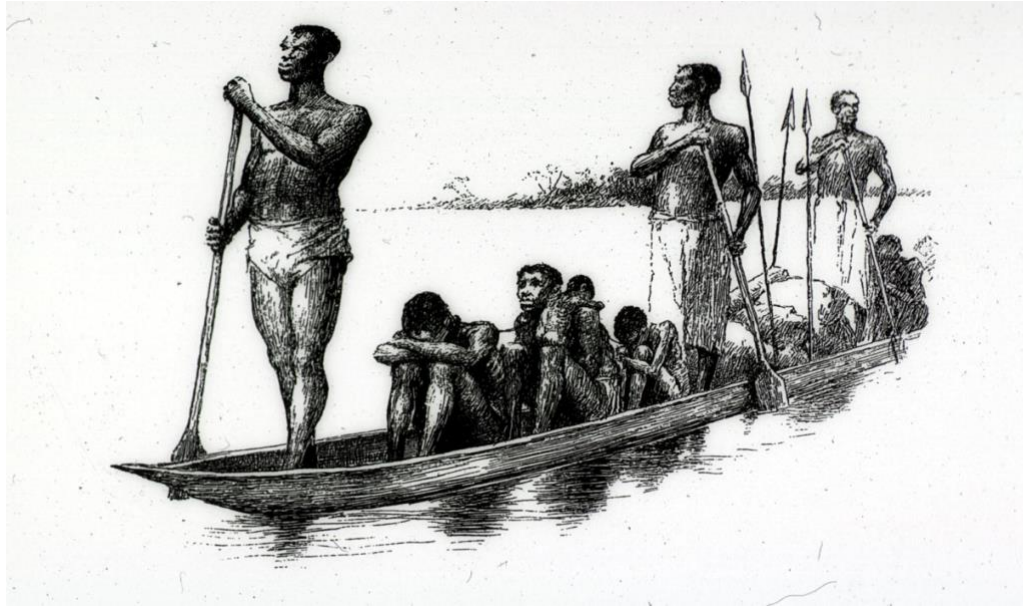


Figure 8. Source: E.J. Glave, *The Slave-Trade in the Congo Basin*. By one of Stanley's pioneer officers. Illustrated after sketches from life by the author (*The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, 1889-1890), vol. 39, pp. 824-838. "The following excerpt describes the illustration (captioned 'A Slaver's Canoe') shown here, on a tributary of the Congo River: "I met dozens of canoes . . . whose owners had come up and bought slaves, and were returning with their purchases. When traveling from place to place on the river the slaves are, for convenience, relieved of the weight of the heavy shackles. The traders always carry, hanging from the sheathes of their knives, light handcuffs, formed of cord and cane. The slave when purchased is packed on the floor of the canoe in a crouching posture with his hands bound in front of him by means of these handcuffs. During the voyage he is carefully guarded by the crew of standing paddlers; and when the canoe is tied to the bank at night the further precaution is taken of changing the position in which the hands are bound and pinioning them behind his back, to prevent him from endeavoring to free himself by gnawing through the strands." (Glave, pp. 832-33). (Katherine Prior brought Glave's account to our attention.) Also published in Thomas W. Knox, *The Boy Travellers on the Congo* (New York, 1887). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

European slave-traders, however, tried to stay a step ahead of African resistance by exploiting ethnic divisions, employing their knowledge of previous Islamic and Iberian slave trading practices, attending meetings with proper currency for trade, and above all, whenever possible, maintaining amicable relations with the African middlemen and local rulers.<sup>67</sup> In "Gold Coast Merchant Families, Pawning, and the Eighteenth-Century British Slave Trade", Randy Sparks argues that elite African families were also responsible for the enslavement of millions through their leadership and coordinating efforts with English traders, and carried a similar belief that captives were exploitable.<sup>68</sup> According to John Thornton, Africans during the seventeenth and eighteenth century believed that Europeans played a minor role in the practice of enslavement, and that captivity and exploitation was an expected outgrowth of conflict, which also encompassed "death, injury, rapine, the destruction of property, and famine."<sup>69</sup> Although English slave-traders respected the authority of African leaders, as their consent and collaboration were vital, belief in European superiority informed their understanding of native culture, politics, and religion. A power-knowledge relationship structured the commercial relationship between English slave-traders and African leaders. Local practices of entrapment reveal the complexities of the economic, political, and social dimensions of the trade in Africans, and the concomitant financial opportunities, political rewards, and public benefits believed to derive from the condemnation of "undesirables." African rulers reaped an immediate marginal return and

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<sup>67</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 88; Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 69-70, 154-56; Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 72.

<sup>68</sup> Sparks, Randy J. "Gold Coast Merchant Families, Pawning, and the Eighteenth-Century British Slave Trade." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2013): 340. Accessed June 13, 2021. doi:10.5309/willmaryquar.70.2.0317.

<sup>69</sup> John Thornton, "Cannibals, Witches, and Slave Traders in the Atlantic World", *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2003): 277. Thornton argues that Africans viewed the slave-trade and practice of slavery as but two modes of exploitation, and that malevolent African rulers, as well as white plantation owners and slave-traders, had succumbed to "witchcraft" and evil doing. p.282.

political benefit from removing rivals, criminals, and those deemed “undesirable,” but English slave-traders set into motion a model of acquisition that had a multiplying long-term financial benefit: the direct and subsequent transaction of captives, the financial profit generated through labour production, and the possible intergenerational revenue produced by any offspring – a feature of governmental power that is analyzed in the third part of this dissertation regarding pro-natalism. I argue that these conditions of expropriation are a form of necro-economics that demonstrate how thanatopolitics structured the plantation paradigm into a capitalist apparatus. I propose that necro-economics is the right over life as a calculated commercial enterprise that utilizes receptacles of confinement, such as the slave fortress, vessel, and plantation, to preserve, transport, and exploit the labour of the enslaved.<sup>70</sup>

While the English slave-trade was met with resistance from many segments of African society, including those who had previously escaped the tentacles of bondage, historians Robin Law and Kristin Mann (1999) underscore how critical cooperation from locals was to sustaining trafficking. Following Gilroy’s theorizations that the socio-cultural and economic viability of trafficking along the Slave Coast was dependent on elite African agency and leadership, their argument also supports a transcultural conceptualization of

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<sup>70</sup> A few contemporary sites of necro-economic exploitation would be the for-profit private prison system in the United States, North Korea’s prison camps, the salt islands of South Korea, and the mega-complex industrial sites in China. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/north-koreas-prisons-are-as-bad-as-nazi-camps-says-judge-who-survived-auschwitz/2017/12/11/7e79beea-ddc4-11e7-b2e9-8c636f076c76\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/north-koreas-prisons-are-as-bad-as-nazi-camps-says-judge-who-survived-auschwitz/2017/12/11/7e79beea-ddc4-11e7-b2e9-8c636f076c76_story.html); <https://nypost.com/2015/11/13/victims-claim-south-korean-officials-knew-about-slave-islands/>; <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/this-dissident-leaked-explosive-documents-depicting-chinas-brutal-treatment-of-ughurs>.

the Atlantic community.<sup>71</sup> This perspective underscores the inertia of cultural fluidity and rupture that unfolds in spaces of racist exploitation and violent expenditure.

Forms of resistance, however, included attacks on slave trader crews and vessels, rebellions, the appropriation of cargo and the kidnapping of Captains. In the seventeenth century Richard Ligon stated that an English slave-trader, who had failed to shackle his captives, detonated the ship after the enslaved had managed to obtain weapons and overcome the crew.<sup>72</sup> The entire ship and all on board were destroyed before they had even sailed out of the Gambia River.<sup>73</sup> Ligon's cautionary tale warned of imminent rebellion should a shipmaster fail to restrain captives, and that feelings of mercy and trust would only result in ruin.<sup>74</sup> In 1788 Alexander Falconbridge, an English surgeon employed on slave-vessels transporting Africans to the Caribbean, reported an unsuccessful slave rebellion. He stated that a vessel carrying slaves from Cape Coast Castle was overtaken by a rebellion early into the voyage and while at sea the captives murdered the Captain of the vessel and many of the crew, but were ultimately rounded up and sold to an English Governor when they returned to shore.<sup>75</sup> Falconbridge also recounted the desperation of captives who were willing to risk their lives to escape seizure. He stated that some would jump overboard into the Bonny River in hopes of evading their oppressors even though the waters were infested with sharks.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Robin Law and Kristin Mann. "West Africa in the Atlantic Community: The Case of the Slave Coast." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (1999): 308-10. Accessed June 12, 2021. doi:10.2307/2674121.

<sup>72</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 56-7.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>75</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*, London 1788. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991030800249705163&context=L&vid=01OCUL\\_UWO:UWO\\_DEFAULT&lang=en&search\\_scope=MyInst\\_and\\_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,alexander%20falconbridge&offset=0](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991030800249705163&context=L&vid=01OCUL_UWO:UWO_DEFAULT&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,alexander%20falconbridge&offset=0)

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.



According to the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, which contains the most comprehensive and updated numeric analysis of the slave-trade, of the total number of 12,521,337 captive Africans transported to the Americas between the sixteenth and nineteenth century, Great Britain was responsible for shipping 3,259,441.<sup>77</sup> Morgan contends that during the Middle Passage, almost a million and a half of those shipped by the English perished, with forty percent of this total number of captives being extracted from West Central Africa, twenty-two percent from the Bight of Benin, fifteen percent from the Bight of Biafra, twelve percent from the Gold Coast, ten percent from Senegambia, with Madagascar and Mozambique comprising the remaining share of the aggregate total transported by European traders.<sup>78</sup> Eltis states that the number of African persons transported to the Caribbean and mainland America by the British during the eighteenth century was approximately five and a half million, and that this figure would be nine percent larger had there not been acts of resistance.<sup>79</sup> While an archival analysis of slave mortality and medical treatment on slave ships is beyond the scope of this study, the documentary record reveals circumstances of deprivation and spectacular forms of punishment during transportation. Wide disparities concerning mortality rates among slaves being transported on English vessels to the Caribbean are a consequence of unique circumstances related to navigation, violence, food scarcity, and disease. A brief survey of English slave vessel records, however, provides insight into how conditions of neglect, abuse, and loss of life constitute a form of necro-economics.

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<sup>77</sup> *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, <https://www.slavevoyages.org/assessment/estimates>. These totals are adjusted as more data becomes available. Accessed on January 11, 2020.

<sup>78</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 56-57.

<sup>79</sup> David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 160.

English technology in shipping construction and navigation created a diffuse commercial apparatus, which included metropolitan refineries, ports, financiers, merchants, and tradesmen. The trade in Africans spurred innovation and provided employment for tradesmen and professionals. In the sixteenth century the Portuguese *caravel* vessel, which held approximately one hundred and fifty slaves and their three-masted *navio* that averaged four hundred, could expect the Middle Passage voyage to last two to three months, but the British ships of the eighteenth century which were smaller in design, helped to shorten the trans-Atlantic journey to one month.<sup>80</sup> English slave ships were densely packed with kidnapped victims chained to one another in a spoon like formation with manacles, neck rings, padlocks, and other devices to restrict their movements. These conditions would endure despite parliamentary legislation in 1792 demanding that in every slave ship

the upper as well as the lower cabin, and the space between decks, shall be allotted and properly prepared for the reception of such slaves; and that after any such ship or vessel shall have taken two third parts of her complement of slaves on board, in the proportions herein before limited, no Goods, wares, or merchandize shall ever be stowed or put in any such cabin or place, in which any such slaves shall be.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 93.

<sup>81</sup> "A Bill, Intituled An Act to continue, for a limited Time, several Acts of Parliament for regulating the shipping and carrying Slaves in British Vessels from the Coast of Africa," House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, House of Lords Sessional Papers 1714-1805, 31 January 1792 to 15 June 1792. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=b6fdaae2-15c5-4bd4-9cb0-8ba04f50f3f5&rsId=16FA25B9364>

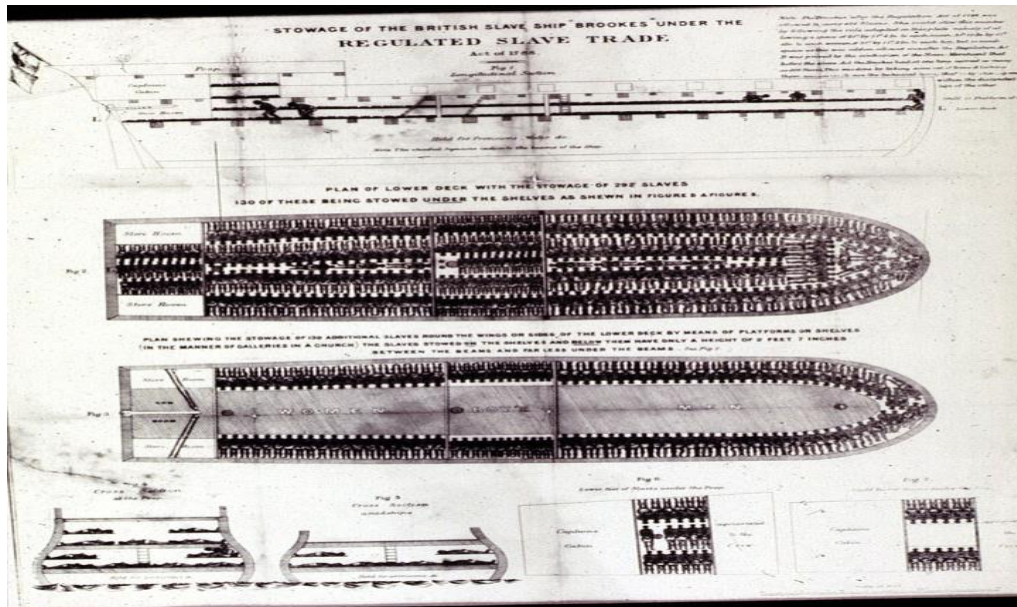


Figure 9. Broadside collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (Portfolio 282-43 [Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-44000]; also, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

The failure of parliament to enforce regulations of financial penalty for the transportation of enslaved Africans underscores perceptions of their commoditization and the prioritization of capturing profit. On the Middle Passage the enslaved were chained together and hand-cuffed by the wrists in pairs with iron rivets placed upon their legs, divided into compartments below the deck according to sex and age, and forced to lie on their sides as the height between the decks would not permit standing upright.<sup>82</sup> Falconbridge explained how the enslaved would be allotted half a pint of water with their meal, which was obtained by dipping a pannikin into a communal bucket, and that slave-traders would place food into tubs where, in groups of ten, the enslaved would consume their meals.<sup>83</sup> These conditions would be repeated on plantations in Barbados through a managerial philosophy that encouraged scarcity of resource. A typical diet during the

<sup>82</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Middle Passage consisted of horse-beans, yams, corn, rice, and sporadic servings of meat in the event that there were provisions leftover by the sailors, which was an unlikely scenario given that the voyage was often longer than anticipated and demanded the vessel's crew to be put on short allowance.<sup>84</sup> Refusal of food such as horse-beans as a strategy of resistance, which would be discarded by throwing the ration overboard, would result in brutal punishments such as having burning hot embers placed close to the lips or having molten lead poured onto flesh.<sup>85</sup>

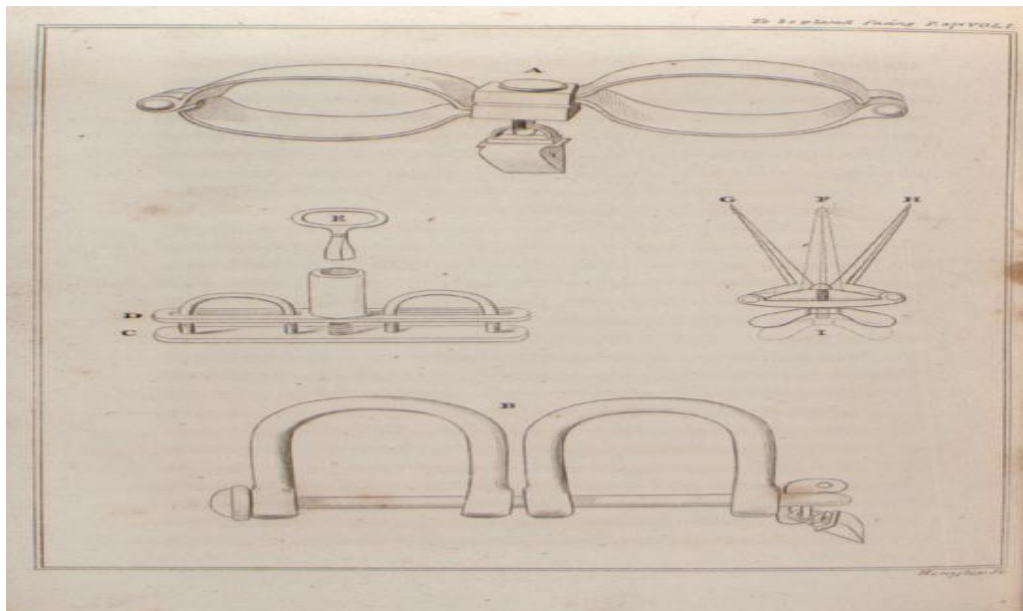


Figure 10. Irons and Shackles Used on Slave Ships, late 18th cent. Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British parliament* (London, 1808), vol. 1, between pp. 374-75. (Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.



Figure 11. Published in Anthony Tibbles (ed.), *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity* (London: HMSO, 1994), p. 154, fig. 140. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

A comparison to the weekly diet of English seamen travelling on slave-trading vessels during this same period reveals how inadequate the food allowance of the enslaved would be toward sustaining the most basic nutritional needs. The standardized 1792 article of agreement between English slave-traders transporting slaves from the Coast of Africa to the Caribbean, Americas, Great Britain and other ports throughout Europe, apportioned the following food allowance to crew members: Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, one pound of pork and a half pint of peas; Tuesday and Friday, one pint of oatmeal, two ounces of butter, four ounces of cheese, or, one pound of stock fish, with one-eighth of a pint of oil, a quarter of a pint of vinegar, in lieu of butter and cheese; Sunday and Thursday, one pound and a half of beef, and a pint of flour.<sup>86</sup> A clear disparity between the ration allotted

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<sup>86</sup> “A Bill, Intituled An Act to continue, for a limited Time, several Acts of Parliament for regulating the shipping and carrying Slaves in British Vessels from the Coast of Africa”

to captives and the portions allotted to slave-traders is revealed by the fact that vessels transporting the enslaved made a point to limit their cargo of food (to make room for more captives) and were prone to exhausting supplies should the voyage take longer than expected. What cannot be lost is how greed and shipping advancements not only accelerated the timing and efficiency of transportation across the Middle Passage, but how the welfare of those enslaved on the plantation became inextricably linked to this mode of conveyance as an economic imperative within the Atlantic market.

On the English slave ship *Elizabeth*, which transported slaves from Africa from March 11<sup>th</sup> 1718 to July 7<sup>th</sup> 1719, thirty of the one hundred and ninety slaves perished from causes including apoplexy, convulsions, malignant fever, consumption, lethargy, flux, and epilepsy.<sup>87</sup> Records kept by Dr. Joseph Hinchcliffe, the surgeon on the slave ship *Lively* in the year 1788 between September 7<sup>th</sup> and November 23<sup>rd</sup>, reveal that thirteen slaves perished from various “disorders” that included quinsy (a condition related to peritonsillar abscess), palsy, bowel pain, measles, dysentery, and even insanity.<sup>88</sup> A journal kept by surgeon James Watts of the ship *Mary* in 1788, outlined vague causes of death such as mortification of the leg, hydrocele of the scrotum, and swelling of the knee.<sup>89</sup> Joseph Buckham, surgeon of the slave ship *James*, travelling from November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1788 to February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1789, lists the death of ten males and five females who had suffered from inflammation

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<sup>87</sup> “Account of the slaves who died on the Elizabeth, 1725.” Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <http://www.empire.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/Account%20of%20the%20slaves%20who%20died%20on%20the%20Elizabeth%201725>

<sup>88</sup> “Extracts of such Journals of the Surgeons employed in Ships trading to the Coast of Africa, since the 1st of August 1788, as have been transmitted to the Custom House in London, and which relate to the State of the Slaves during the Time they were on Board the Ships,” House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century, Slave Trade 1788-1790, 12 June 1788 to 17 March 1790. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=5825b922-b24c-4b0a-9ddd-512a44f95342&rsId=16FA26D1E6A>

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

of the liver, dysentery, lethargy, and “sulkiness.”<sup>90</sup> The latter two diagnoses, lethargy and sulkiness, question how medical classification could have been used to identify physically or psychologically depleted, and resistant captives as “tainted.” Taking into consideration how the enslaved were thrown overboard unreservedly when resources were scarce, it was not uncommon for slave-traders to dispose of captives they deemed “worthless.”<sup>91</sup>

In 1788 Alexander Falconbridge, an English surgeon employed on slave-vessels transporting Africans to the Caribbean, stated that anywhere from forty to two hundred slaves were purchased at a time from traders, with ages ranging anywhere from a few weeks to over sixty years.<sup>92</sup> Slaves transported on the ship *Ned* in 1788 under surgeon Thomas Maxwell reveal that twenty-five slaves perished due to dysentery, but three nursing mothers managed to survive.<sup>93</sup> The *Madam Pookata* in 1788, which also trafficked Africans to the Caribbean, reported that seven captives perished due to issues related to inflammatory fever, neurological impairment, bilious fever, and the flux, but the eight nursing mothers on board survived.<sup>94</sup> Although these records do not indicate that captive women with children received increased provisions or medical treatment, pregnancy would demonstrate “fertility,” and therefore increase market value given their potential to produce offspring. According to Falconbridge, it was not unusual for pregnant women to be taken as slaves from Old and New Calabar, as well as Bonny, both of which were in the Bight of

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid. The documentary record concerning slave health during transportation reveals not only the limited resources and attention reserved for minimizing disease and mortality, but the belief that the enslaved African was a subhuman species conformable to animalistic treatment. The failure to survive the traumatic psychological impact of being kidnapped, physically abused, and sexually exploited, were diagnosed as sensitivity disorders such as sulkiness, indigestion, and lethargy, which could also be a refusal to submit.

<sup>91</sup> Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 159.

<sup>92</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

Biafra located in present day Nigeria, and for them to give birth while being transported to the Caribbean.<sup>95</sup>

Suffocating conditions during the Middle Passage often led to high mortality rates that ranged anywhere from five to thirty-three percent from dropsy, flux, scarlet fever, malignant fever, tuberculosis, dysentery, diarrhea, dehydration, and other gastrointestinal diseases, which resulted from a lack of fresh food and water: it is estimated that only one percent of these losses came from violent acts.<sup>96</sup> According to Falconbridge the slave compartment bore a similar appearance to a slaughter-house with the blood and mucus of diseased slaves covering the floor, and the constant presence of feces given their physical restraint and the few available toilet buckets.<sup>97</sup> These squalid conditions were intensified by the continuous water seepage from the flooring and the airborne diseases nurtured by the stifling heat and lack of fresh air.<sup>98</sup> When the air-ports on either side of the vessel were closed due to rough waters and storms, the smoke generated from the firewood sometimes caused blindness.<sup>99</sup> The motion of the ship during the Middle Passage would also rub flesh off the bodies of the restrained enslaved, causing further exposure to the bacteria and disease festering on the floor.<sup>100</sup> Every morning, the surgeon would inspect the slave quarters and have those who perished unshackled from the living and then thrown overboard.<sup>101</sup> A report from the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations reported

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 92-3; Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 159, 186; Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 74-75.

<sup>97</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*. Falconbridge maintains that once a slave had been afflicted with fever or dysentery there was very little that the surgeon could do to ameliorate their condition. Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.



that at least thirty thousand slaves would, on average, need to be purchased to secure twenty-five thousand as a result of mortality during transportation.<sup>102</sup> These calculated financial observances concerning disease and slave mortality demonstrate how the European sponsored trans-Atlantic trade in Africans functioned as a form of necro-economics.

In 1792, the British Parliament outlawed any vessel from transporting more than five slaves for every three tons of ship weight for a maximum total weight of two hundred and one tons.<sup>103</sup> An additional slave per ton above this threshold was permitted with the caveat that this would constitute a male slave taller than four feet four inches in height, or three males for every additional five tons of the vessel's weight.<sup>104</sup> This policy underscores how the quantification of life commoditized the enslaved. Any shipmaster who contravened the law, however, was ordered to pay thirty pounds for each slave, with one moiety being claimed by the informant and the other half to the King.<sup>105</sup> Offering a reward for bounty hunting was a measure to reinforce the sovereign power of the British Empire and structured a potential disciplinary regime among slave-traders. Governmental taxation, fines, and regulatory control, no matter how ineffective at regulating the private-slave trade, were a critical practice in the administration of racialized subjectivity in the Atlantic milieu and a fleeting attempt of the Crown to reclaim lost revenue with the collapse of the Royal African Company.

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<sup>102</sup> "Some observations on extracts taken out of the report from the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations"

<sup>103</sup> "A Bill, Intituled An Act to continue, for a limited Time, several Acts of Parliament for regulating the shipping and carrying Slaves in British Vessels from the Coast of Africa"

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

Each vessel arriving in the Caribbean had to present a certificate of registry to an imperial officer detailing the number of slaves, male and female, and those who were above four feet four inches, to draw a distinction from children, for the entire voyage since departing from the Coast of Africa.<sup>106</sup> Failure to meet these conditions would result in a customs officer searching the vessel and levying a fine of five hundred pounds for any violation, which would also be divided equally between the informant and King.<sup>107</sup> The financial benefits of overcapacity made slave-traders all too willing to risk lives to maximize profits. Falconbridge stated that one slave vessel departing from Bonny took on board seven hundred slaves, and that as a consequence of its limited capacity, the captives were forced to lie on top of one another; even though the slave ship did not encounter any setbacks along its voyage, by the time they reached the Caribbean almost half of them had perished.<sup>108</sup>

Captives were commoditized through their seizure, incarceration, trafficking, and sale. Records from 1789 to 1791, concerning the transportation of goods leaving England for the purpose of purchasing enslaved Africans, reveal that a total of three hundred and sixty-five vessels carried over sixty-eight thousand tons of goods from Liverpool, Bristol, and London.<sup>109</sup> Bristol led the way with two hundred and fifty-two ships, transporting

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*. Falconbridge declares that on another voyage of three hundred and eighty slaves, one hundred and five had perished, a ratio that he suggests was by no means uncharacteristic given the conditions they faced during the Middle Passage. Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> "An account of the Number of Vessels, with the Amount of their Tonnage, their names, the Port to which they belong, and the names of the respective Owners of each, that have cleared out from the Ports of London, Bristol, and Liverpool, to the Coast of Africa, for the Purpose of purchasing Slaves, from the 5th of January 1792 to the 4th of May 1792," House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century 1715-1800, Slave Trade, 1 March 1791 to 14 May 1792. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=f573f80a-6b83-4e17-b657-0c4e398b7169&rsId=16FA28047D8>

almost forty-eight thousand tons of goods over this period.<sup>110</sup> In a further effort to consolidate colonial trade under governmental power in 1792 the British parliament also moved to prohibit the export, transport, and trade of enslaved Africans from any English colony, plantation, and territory belonging to a foreign sovereign or state, and that any found violating this law would face a fine and risk forfeiting their vessel, arms, tackle, and apparel.<sup>111</sup>

Notwithstanding these threats, the documentary record illustrates that the importations of enslaved persons to Barbados and surrounding islands continued to thrive. A report from the British Inspector General's office of Imports and Exports illustrates that Barbados imported slaves directly into its economy for plantation labour and functioned as a repository for transporting captives to neighbouring colonies. Between January 5<sup>th</sup> 1789 and January 5<sup>th</sup> 1792, 75,053 slaves were kidnapped and transported to the British Caribbean from Africa, 953 of these slaves were transported to Barbados and 571 of this total were exported to other locations throughout the Caribbean.<sup>112</sup> The House of Commons also provided an accounting of the three-year period from 1796 to 1798 where thirty-four

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> "A Bill for Abolishing the Trade carried on for supplying Foreign Territories with Slaves," House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, Seventeenth Parliament of Great Britain: third session, 24 May 1793, House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century 1715-1800, Bills 1792-93. 26 December 1792 to June 17 1793." Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=4863f79d-7523-4eff-9fc6-0b02ae957ef4&rsId=16FA28BF6AE>

<sup>112</sup> "An Account of the Number of Slaves which have been imported from Africa into the British Caribbean, between the 5th January 1789 and the 5th January 1792, distinguishing each Year; and of the Number retained in the British Caribbean, and the Number re-exported thence to the Settlements of Foreign Powers," House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century 1715-1800, Slave Trade. Vol. 82. 1 March 1791 to 14 May 1792. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/result/pqpresultpage?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=775f7343-83af-4b01-962f-ca16f39027ee&rsId=16FA56E62B1>. Unlike other British colonies in the document which detail the specific origins of slaves, such as Angola, New Calabar, Cameroon, Bonny, Anamaboe, Cape Mount, Isle des Los, Gambia, Sierra Leon, Benin, and the Gold Coast, the origins of the slaves imported to Barbados on the vessels *Boyne*, *Molly*, *James*, *Little Ben*, *Peggy*, and *Nancy*, are only listed as being from Africa." Ibid.

ships imported a total of 10,207 slaves from Cape Mount, Cape Coast, Anamaboe, Angola, and Cape Verde, into Barbados, with 7,090 of these captives being exported to the islands of St. Vincent, Demerara, Martinique, Trinidad, St. Croix, and St. Thomas.<sup>113</sup>

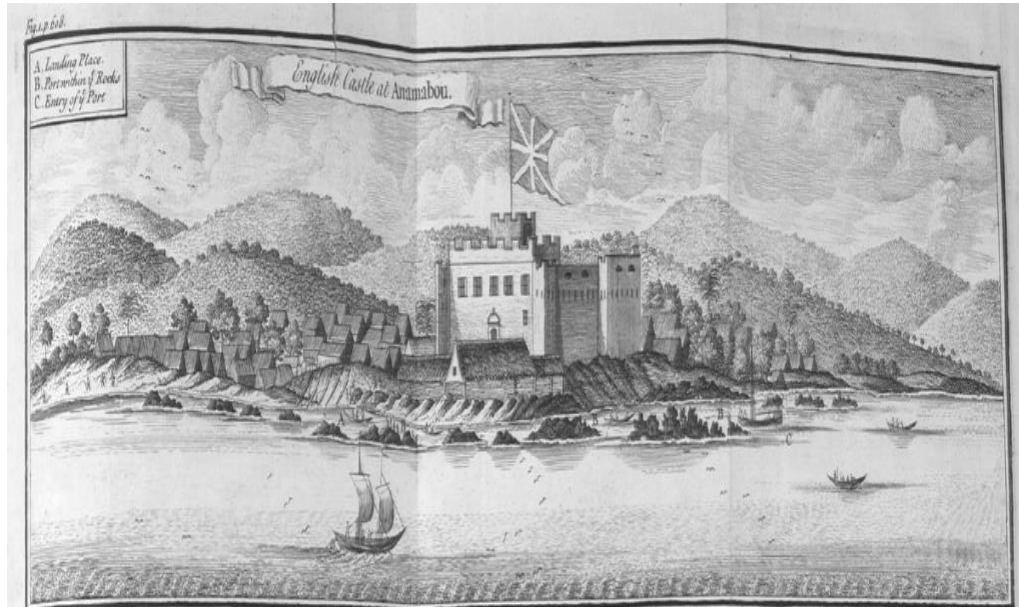


Figure 12. Annamaboe Castle, Gold Coast, late 17th cent. Thomas Astley (ed.), *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1745-47), vol. 2, plate 64, facing p. 608. (Copy in Special Collections, University of Virginia Library). “View from the sea; places identified by letters are the “landing place”; “port within ye rocks”; and “entry of ye port.” Annamaboe was a major English slaving station on the Gold Coast during the 17th century. In the 1690s, an account of the Royal African Company's forts in West Africa reported that the facilities at Annamaboe included “twelve great guns . . . a large tank or cistern . . . and a Negroe-house for one hundred and fifty Negroes. This fort . . . opens a trade . . . for gold, corn, palm-oyl and oyster-shells; also a very great trade for slaves”(A Particular of the Royal African Company's Forts and Castles in Africa [London, ca. 1698]). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

Sidney Mintz’s declaration that slaves were a “false commodity” because a human is not an object offers a critical observation into how planter sovereignty initiated a thanatopolitical environment that designated inhuman status upon African peoples

<sup>113</sup> “Accounts, presented to the House of Commons, respecting the trade to the coast of Africa, for slaves,” Papers relating to Trade to Coast of Africa for Slaves, 1796-1802, House of Commons Papers; Accounts and Papers, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1801-02. (88). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=8a3f0f2c-975f-4eb9-a0c4-8770af5c09b1&rsId=16FA73BE26E>

through human trafficking and racialized slave-labour.<sup>114</sup> Techniques of carceral force secured the corporate dimensions of the slave-trade (promotion, contract, and exchange.) Slave auctions in the Caribbean were advertised in local newspapers to provide local planters and merchants with an overview of the arriving “cargo.” Purchases were often made on credit and payment was sometimes not due for up to twelve months.<sup>115</sup> The strongest and healthiest sold first, and each ethnic group valued according to stereotype: Angolans were the least desirable, slaves from the Gold Coast and Bight of Benin were considered strong labourers but rebellious, Mandingoes from Senegal were associated with thievery, Eboes from Nigeria were believed to be timid, and Pawpaws to be docile.<sup>116</sup> This form of ethnic racism illustrates how essentialist characterizations of bio-genetic ability and health, as well as stereotypes of conduct and performance, assembled a commercial grammar for slave valuation that ordered a disciplinary ethos.<sup>117</sup>

Large-scale slave sales ordered, commoditized, and disposed of captive Africans within the slave colony. A common form of slave sale in Barbados for large shipments of incoming captives was the “scramble.” On a chosen date the enslaved would arrive by ship and be herded together in an open space of land to be sold at an equal price.<sup>118</sup> When access was granted for purchase, slave-traders would rush upon the captives with a predatory zeal

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<sup>114</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 1985, 43.

<sup>115</sup> As previously noted, the purchase of slaves on credit was a factor in the liquidation of the Royal African Company as planters in the Caribbean were in arrears for considerable sums of money.

<sup>116</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 64-65, 76-78; Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 38. Of course these stereotypes were by no means universal, as European traders, planters, and merchants often had conflicting ideas about the diverse ethnic groups forced into slavery. Falconbridge himself even refers to Angolans as being mild in nature and expert mechanics. Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*. It appears that Aristotle’s advice that slaves be of diverse origins to ensure labour supply and prevent rebellion was a strategy also undertaken by English slave-traders. *The Politics of Aristotle*, 306.

<sup>117</sup> Ligon stated that Barbadian planters would purchase naked captives as if they were animals, taking care to purchase those that appeared the most youthful, strong, and attractive. Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 46.

<sup>118</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

and tie them off with ropes.<sup>119</sup> “Surplus” slaves, those who appeared to be injured or dying were disposed of by public auction sometimes for as little as one dollar.<sup>120</sup> The conditions of necro-economic slave exploitation incorporated spectacular forms of sovereign violence and discipline. From the dungeon rooms of slave citadels that peppered the West coast of Africa, to the suffocating disease environment of the slave cabin during the Middle Passage, the frenzied seizure of the enslaved during public auction, we can see how racial subjugation was achieved through the capture, order, commoditization, and disposal of life.<sup>121</sup>

While the conditions of enclosure in the slave castle, ship, vendue, and plantation, were a universal feature for the slavocracy’s spatial command, commoditization, and disposal of the enslaved, the other two features of Foucault’s analysis of panoptic power (light and visibility) were intervallic. Foucault argues that panopticism both “automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up.”<sup>122</sup> In this regard it “reverses the principle of dungeon; or rather of its three functions- to enclose, to deprive of light and to hide- it preserves only the first and eliminates the other two.”<sup>123</sup> While the conditions of panoptic power exercised on the plantation complex are considered in this study related to slave housing, labour exploitation, and punishment, light and visibility

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> In regard to the American slave market, Stephanie Smallwood argues that it was a “theatrical stage” and expression of illusory power where the commodification of captive Africans would be “convincingly fashioned into slaves.” Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 159.

<sup>122</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1995), 202.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 200.

were also employed on the slave ship and during a sale through exercises of physical performance to preserve the body and while under the inspection of prospective buyers calculating value.

Slave-traders would make an effort to preserve their “merchandize” while on board the slave ship when conditions at sea were calm. The enslaved were not just exposed to auditory, haptic, olfactory, and visual frequencies of sensory deprivation and maltreatment, such as darkness, detention, overcrowding, disease, and disorientation, but to demands of physical performance and preparation to preserve their value. The nakedness, fragility, manipulation, and disposability of the enslaved body was revealed as a *krikos economicus* (economic circle/ring), whereby the enslaved were forced to perform physical activities under threat of violence. The enslaved would be brought to the top deck, shackled together in large groups of sometimes fifty or sixty, and then compelled to dance, play music, and sing, with the expectation that these exercises would help sustain their health.<sup>124</sup> These movements represent the commoditization of both the enslaved and, ironically, of cultural performance. Falconbridge stated that while on deck a member of the crew would be standing by with a “cato’-nine-tails” ready to discipline any captive who refused to partake in these events.<sup>125</sup> This culture of discipline was undertaken to preserve the physical health of those enslaved in order to maximize profit during sale.

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<sup>124</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

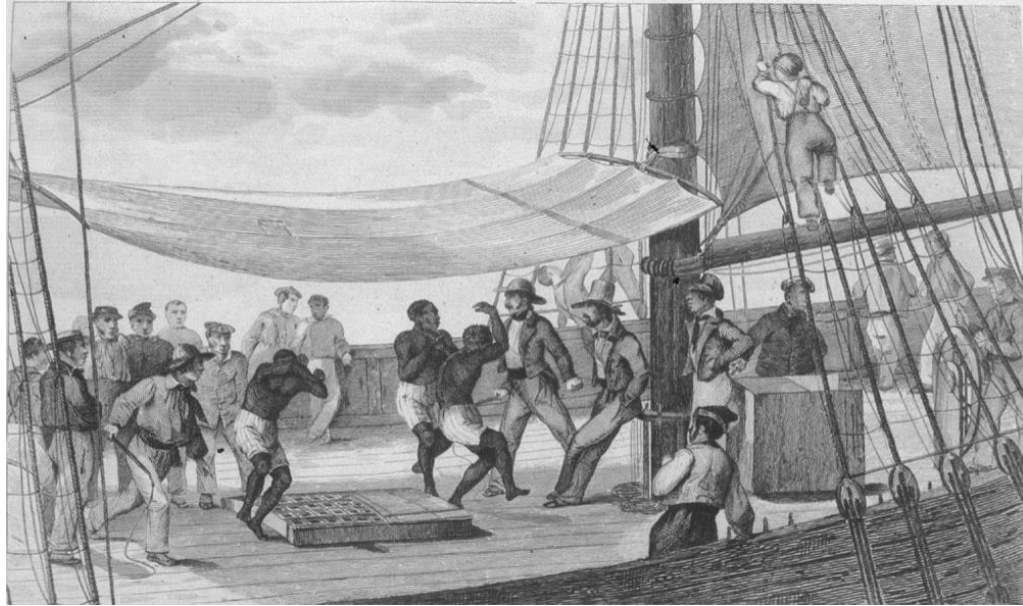


Figure 13. Source: Amédée Grehan (ed.), *La France Maritime* (Paris, 1837), vol. 3, facing p. 179. "Danse de Negres." "Also published in Anthony Tibbles (ed.), *Transatlantic Slavery: Against Human Dignity* (London: HMSO, 1994; fig. 5)." Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."

Enterprising slave-traders would apply a medical treatment upon their captives in an effort to obtain the highest market value. The sovereign right of seizure and control over the body through the preservation and disposal of life within the slave-trading economy highlights the exploitation of professional knowledge for profit. African and English slave-traders would prepare their captives before a sale by washing, rubbing on oils, and applying medications such as a "lunar caustic," which was a silver nitrate solution used to temporarily abate infections and bacterial growth.<sup>126</sup> A keen eye for discovering deception was crucial both at the beginning process (captive phase) and at the end (purchase phase), as Falconbridge stated that one Liverpool Captain would have his surgeon apply oakum to captives suffering from dysentery in order to prevent any anal discharge when they were

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.



asked to stand alongside purchasers.<sup>127</sup> Buyers would investigate “if they are afflicted with any infirmity, or are deformed, or have bad eyes or teeth; if they are lame, or weak in the joints, or distorted in the back, or a slender make, or are narrow in the chest; in short, if they have been, or are afflicted in any manner, so as to render them incapable of much labour.”<sup>128</sup> Thus were the extremes attained by the sovereign seizure of life, and its subsequent transformation into a profit-generating commodity. The serialization of space was not just applicable to the devices, architecture, and systems of commoditization, but to the very anatomization of the physical body as a site of expenditure. In this regard, the slavocracy’s invocations of sovereign power were also disciplinary as the body was exposed to a field of visibility in the marketplace and the abusive demands to preserve the body.

Commercial speculation in capitalistic trade in African lives also took the form of insurance on captives while at sea. At an average rate of five percent, slave-traders could diminish the costs of lost “cargo” resulting from slave rebellions and mortality, or simply choose to throw enslaved persons over board when supplies became exhausted.<sup>129</sup> The 1783 Mansfield case concerning the ship *Zong* demonstrates not only the value but the fatal consequences of such insurance, as thirty pounds were awarded for each of the one hundred and thirty-two slaves who were thrown into the ocean, with the rationale that their “disposal” was equivalent to the death of horses or other analogous fatalities, which all fell within the “perils of the sea” convention.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, 159. Shares in slave-trading and planting could also be purchased from English firms engaged in the financing of these trades. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 168; Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 37.

<sup>130</sup> Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 46.

According to English law the master of a slave vessel was not responsible for any harm brought to its cargo of slaves resulting from piracy, insurrection, fire, enemy capture, barratry of the crew, and the “perils of the sea” convention.<sup>131</sup> An Imperial Officer at the port receiving a slave vessel was responsible for reviewing the ship’s records, and if no more than two slaves per hundred had perished on the voyage from the Coast of Africa to the Caribbean, the Officer would issue a certificate to both the ship’s master and surgeon authorizing a payment of one hundred pounds and fifty pounds respectively from the Receiver General of Customs; these compensation amounts were halved if the rate exceeded three slaves per hundred.<sup>132</sup> The insurers were ordered to pay for losses, and the captain and crew of the *Zong* were not held legally culpable for the death of the captives, which were considered chattels or commodities.

Women on board slave ships were at risk of sexual abuse as it was common for officers to have intercourse with their female captives.<sup>133</sup> These acts of sexual abuse sometimes led to suicide.<sup>134</sup> The sexual abuse of enslaved female captives during transportation was an initiating act of racialized gender violence that would also be a common disciplinary practice by overseers, planters, and other agents of colonial subjugation as a means to dehumanize and punish within the plantation complex. Patriarchal violence in the form of sexual exploitation in the aforementioned conditions of

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<sup>131</sup> “A Bill, Intituled An Act to continue, for a limited Time, several Acts of Parliament for regulating the shipping and carrying Slaves in British Vessels from the Coast of Africa”

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Emma Christopher challenges Alexander Falconbridge’s testimony that “common sailors” were obligated to obtain consent from captive African women during the voyage, but that officers could act without any restraint. She states that this is not a true characterization of what transpired and that the sexual exploitation of captive women was a common practice for all traders. Emma Christopher, “The Slave Trade is Merciful Compared to [This]: Slave Traders, Convict Transportation, and the Abolitionists” in *Many Middle Passage: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern World*. Eds. Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus, and Marcus Rediker, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 120.

<sup>134</sup> Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*

bondage during transportation were expressions of necro-economic and bio-economic expenditure, as they represented calculations of monetary value and speculative labour production.

## **PART II: DISCIPLINE: PANOPTICISM, PUNISHMENT AND ENSLAVED LABOUR**

These crimes against humanity entail extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape, forced abortions and other sexual violence, persecution on political, religious, racial and gender grounds, the forcible transfer of populations, the enforced disappearance of persons and the inhumane act of knowingly causing prolonged starvation. United Nations Report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, July, 2014.

Whereas these “crimes” against humanity were identified by the UN Commission inquiry into the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2014, similar activities were commonplace in Barbadian slave society. In the second part of this study, I explore how the Barbadian plantocracy coordinated an architectural environment of panoptic surveillance and employed a disciplinary regime of punishment on the plantation complex, and how the enslaved responded to these conditions of oppression.<sup>135</sup> The Barbadian plantation complex was an institutional site critical to racial bondage exercised in the Atlantic as it carried out a managerial apparatus that integrated strategies of biopolitics and capitalism. The planter class's strategies of slave government included attempts to invoke spectacular forms of mortal punishment (sovereignty) and shape a docile labour force through the application of punitive behavioural interventions to enhance performance (discipline). In part III, I will show how the introduction of an incentive regime, often referred to as “amelioration,” served to reinforce the institution of intergenerational slavery through a pro-natalist strategy (governmentality).

My examination of plantocratic power illustrates how disciplinary slave management techniques buttressed protocols of sovereignty associated with containment

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<sup>135</sup> Handler and Lange's research indicates that in Barbados “during most of the plantation slave period there were, on average, close to 400 medium and large plantations” and these entities would have incorporated at least one sugar mill on the premises, but that several hundred more could be added to this number if smaller farms are included. Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 37-38.

and expenditure. These practices were undertaken to improve security and stabilize labour production. The Barbadian planter class implemented the following practices of discipline in an effort to achieve these ends: territorial containment of those enslaved through an architectural system of panoptic control; managerial strategies of surveillance and punishment to achieve efficiencies for the extraction and preparation of material resource required for the production of sugar planting; and the deployment of a security apparatus through the entrenchment of a visible plantation hierarchy, a state police and militia force, and the expansion of juridical procedures to govern the enslaved.

The Barbadian plantocracy developed an art of slave government that incorporated discipline and racism: the configuration of a panoptic environment to achieve surveillance and containment vis-à-vis the plantocracy's command of environmental terrain and resource<sup>136</sup>; the maximization of material infrastructure and labour production through a hierarchical grid of gendered and racial identity; the appropriation of technologies and serialization of time to increase efficiency; the creation of a security apparatus to regulate and punish the enslaved in public spaces; and the securitization of profit as the *modus operandi* of plantocratic commerce through the achievement of institutional white supremacy (economic, juridical, and political).<sup>137</sup> Taking these elements of disciplinary

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<sup>136</sup> Morgan argues that enslaved Africans were the most economical labour force to carry out the "disciplined and productive" demands of gang labour associated with large-scale sugar cultivation. Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 4. The second part of this dissertation explores how disciplinary practices and strategies of resistance impacted the development of exploitative labour as a capitalistic enterprise.

<sup>137</sup> Handler and Lange state that "[t]he plantation slave settlement was the center of the slaves' social and cultural life. It was the context for forming household groups, sustaining various family connections, and activities such as music and dance, magicoreligious practices, and curing, as well as other domestic and leisure pursuits." Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 30. Clarence Talley agrees with Handler and Lange's analysis and argues that the "plantation structures of labour control serve as the basis of social practices and the legal structure of the plantation economy and society." Clarence R. Talley, "The Social Transformation of Plantation Society," *Plantation Society and Race Relations: The Origins of Inequality*, edited by Thomas J. Durant, Jr. and J. David Knottnerus, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1999): 181.

management into consideration the third chapter of this study interrogates how the Barbadian planter class shaped an architectural apparatus of confinement, surveillance, and punishment on both the plantation and throughout the wider colony. Following this the fourth chapter examines how this disciplinary regime of violence targeted the enslaved body through techniques of planter management and juridical rule in the marketplace, and how the enslaved resisted these tactics of oppression to create spaces of opportunity and freedom.

My approach to plantocratic biopolitics investigates how the bodies and social circumstances of those enslaved were targeted by technologies of discipline and governmentality, and how subsequent instruments of conventional, legal, and institutional design were leveraged by the planter class as a *dispositif* of capitalist exploitation through the dissemination of large-scale sugar production and plantation market economy.<sup>138</sup> This observation follows Benítez-Rojo's argument that the planter class "controlled the construction, maintenance, technology, and proliferation of the plantation machines" and that "it usually produced the Plantation, capitalized to indicate not just the presence of plantations but also the type of society that results from their use and abuse."<sup>139</sup> The social milieu of plantocratic supremacy in Barbados was facilitated by the reinforcement of cultural, discursive, and institutional practices from identifiable philosophies of slave management techniques that together identified the normative institution of black enslavement for the development of the capitalist Atlantic economy.

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<sup>138</sup> Morgan states that the slave-trade and institution of slavery were comprised of three primary groups – merchants, planters, and the enslaved – and that the former often progressed to slave owners through the accumulation of capital. Morgan also argues that slave-trading voyages would yield between an 8 and 10 percent profit, and that during periods of economic stability, a sugar plantation in the British Caribbean would generate a return between 7 and 15 percent. Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 34-5.

<sup>139</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *Repeating Island*, 9.

Through the integration of racialized blackness, capitalism, and biopolitics, the plantation served as a broader epistemological anchor of European modernity, and not just a regime of racism. Whereas Beckles argues that the ruling planter class did not govern with a “specific socio-political ideology other than racism,”<sup>140</sup> I argue that strategies of plantocratic management in Barbados between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries cannot be reduced only to the logistics of racial rule.<sup>141</sup> The coordination of a planter ideology included both cultural value systems such as patriarchal marriage, bourgeois class ideals, and nationalism, as well as institutional prerogatives of power engendered from geopolitical assembly between the Barbadian plantocracy and West Indian interest in England, economic partnerships that stretched beyond the domestic colonial economy, and the privileged access of the elite to the institutions of higher learning and the concomitant intellectual authority of European philosophy and law. Beckles, however, is correct to argue that in Barbados “the landed elite considered itself an aristocracy that had mastered the art of government and economic management” and that this elitism was fostered by marriage among powerful families who remained proud of their English heritage.<sup>142</sup> Morgan adds that the hegemonic position of the Barbadian plantocracy was reinforced by their lobbying efforts in English Parliament. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries “The West India Interest” was comprised of several members of Parliament who lobbied Whitehall to secure their commercial interests, colonial properties, and investments

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<sup>140</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 43.

<sup>141</sup> It is important to note that in 1780 it was estimated that 88 percent of the enslaved in Barbados laboured on plantations and that even upon emancipation in 1834, 67 percent were identified as agricultural labourers, 13 percent as domestic labourers, and the remaining 20 percent as children, elderly, and disabled. Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 29.

<sup>142</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 42-3.



in the Atlantic slave-trade of African peoples and plantation enterprise throughout the Caribbean.<sup>143</sup>

Cooper and Stoler argue that the attempt of the European bourgeoisie to define their cultural identity with economic progress and technological rationality resulted in violent militarism and racism.<sup>144</sup> Tactics of colonial incursion and plantocratic subjugation in Barbados demonstrate the replicating force of thanatopolitics and the conditions for the rapid concentration of wealth and political authority required for the entrenchment of a disciplinary environment. This environment of racialized subjugation and labour extraction laid the groundwork for a republican movement to secure economic and governmental independence from the metropole: this watershed movement can be observed in later plantation zones such as South Carolina, and the wider movement for independence of the Southern colonies.<sup>145</sup> The disciplinary transformation of slave management and the development of planter capitalism in Barbados inspired vociferous demands for political autonomy and economic free-trade beginning in the seventeenth century. This governmental bifurcation between the metropole and colony was an example of political apoapsis, a challenge to the sovereign authority of the crown over the colony. The emergence of a capitalist market economy established a trans-national network of interdependence between the metropole and colony that was predicated on a division of labour that married black racial identity with enslavement and normalized the disciplinary conditions of labour exploitation with racialization as economic progress.

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<sup>143</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 50-51.

<sup>144</sup> Cooper and Stoler, "Between Metropole and Colony," 3.

<sup>145</sup> A comparative republican movement for independence was carried out by a wealthy group of planters in South Carolina. My archival research undertaken at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History supports the conclusion that the southern plantocracy, which had its roots in the Barbadian sugar plantocracy, was also premised on a proto-capitalist and corporate movement for self-government that was supported by large-scale plantation slavery.

Colonial lobbying in the metropole had a significant impact on the institution of slavery as a disciplinary regime in the Caribbean and Barbadian planters enjoyed considerable insider access to the networks of administration that shaped governmental policy. They benefitted from legislation that protected the slave-trade, bolstered domestic security, and safeguarded trade systems for their product. The Barbadian plantocracy were slave owners integrated into the domestic and metropolitan institutions of government, and were ideologically aligned to the cultural values of English bourgeois society given their educational training, social connections, political interest, and wealth.<sup>146</sup> What makes the plantation complex a state of exception and catalyst for the unfolding of capitalism in modernity, however, is the activation of these hierarchical developments and their contribution to a racist biopolitical regime to service large-scale labour exploitation as a normative enterprise. This state of exception was achieved through the plantation's managerial apparatus of colonial intelligibility to execute sovereignty (capture, detainment, and death) as an ontological constitution of blackness as *praemium*: the exploitation of labour and its benefits through conquest. The several conspiracies to overthrow the Barbadian planter class in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the indentured and enslaved, however, indicate not just a challenge to exploitative labour practices and the animation of racialized subjugation through mechanisms of biopolitics (obedience, training, security, and life), but the groundwork for a future working class as well as the foundation for black exploitation, discrimination, and poverty.

This observation carries importance for contemporary conditions of discrimination, exclusion, poverty, and violence experienced by the descendants of enslaved blacks. In the

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<sup>146</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 44.

context of the United States, Patterson argues that while slavery and Jim Crow have been abolished, and that the American Civil Rights movement marshaled profound economic, legal, political, and social advancement for black Americans and other minoritized populations, a cultural milieu of white privilege continues to foster racial inequality. Patterson's research evidences how white cultural hegemony is manifest in the enduring disparity between blacks and whites concerning wages, property ownership, job security, housing, labor rates, educational attainment, health, and marriage.<sup>147</sup> Percy Hintzen's (2019) "Precarity and the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Caribbean: Structural stigma, constitutionality, legality in development practice" evidences how poverty rates and inscriptions of Christian morality regarding sexuality and concomitant stigmatization, advance rates of HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean.<sup>148</sup> Through a Foucauldian analysis of biopolitics, these observations indicate how "social death" is not just a Manichaeian hypostasis of the colonial paradigm but also contemporary practices of medico-administration that perpetuate exposure to socioeconomic adversity. This is achieved through the bureaucratic and capitalistic maneuverings of modern state power: these machinations of the global imperium are also present in the denial of culpability exercised by former colonial powers to address the humanitarian violations of the slave-trade and institution of slavery in the Caribbean.<sup>149</sup> Patterson's research into the connections between

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<sup>148</sup> Percy C. Hintzen, "Precarity and the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Caribbean: Structural stigma, constitutionality, legality in development practice", *Global Public Health*, 14:11. (2019): 1624-1638, DOI: 10.1080/17441692.2019.1632367

<sup>149</sup> Patterson's attention to addressing how contemporary American society can rationalize huge disparities of wealth raises significant questions that are germane to how class, gender, and race continue to influence systemic inequality. Throughout his works he argues that it is in America's interest to lift marginalized groups out of poverty, to encourage education, dismantle the carceral state, suspend the war on drugs, and to invest resource into economic development. This advocacy is galvanized by his call for meaningful reparation to those who have suffered from historical injustices that remain imbedded in the socio-economic fabric of American society.

the historical conditions of gendered violence and contemporary trafficking and sexual slavery draws attention to the circumstances of rape, torture, and prostitution throughout the various stages of African captivity – capture and transportation prior to being taken onboard, while being transported on the slave ship, during periods of detainment awaiting sale, and on the plantation complex – and offers perspective into the sadistic practices of gendered violence perpetrated by the slavocracy.

I propose that the discipline of enslaved blacks on the plantation complex, as racialized inhuman subjects, is an epistemological and material sibling of the exploitative practices of indentured management visited upon “undesirable” whites. The first chapter of this study explored how the exploitative, xenophobic, and punitive subjugation of Great Britain’s “undesirables” was carried out as a campaign against perceived moral degeneracy related to criminal behavior, forms of idleness and reliance on state welfare, and political dissent, class-based alienation. This movement, however, assisted in the development of a far more wide-reaching enterprise of violence in Barbados that constituted its ideological praxis as supra-racism and the creation of a future capitalistic necropolis.<sup>150</sup> The conditions of white subjectivity continued an ideology of class-based alienation, which culminated into a political movement to address white poverty. The exclusion of poor whites from the wealthy planter class created the conditions of inter-racial alliance against the elite, but also hardened boundaries of racial identity, intensified racism, and reinforced the destitution of blacks and their position of sub-

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<sup>150</sup> The post-emancipatory capitalistic necropolis is the transition of the enslaved class to the subsistence wage-labour exploitation carried out in the agricultural sector. While the lash and other forms of formal physical abuse were eradicated from plantation labour and transferred to other areas of institutional abuse, such as the prison, the means of production, wealth, and hierarchy of the elite white planter class continued in Barbados for more than a century after abolition.

humanity in the colony. This observation is crucial to understanding how capitalism simultaneously accommodated typologies of bondage, indentureship, and waged exploitation, and how the elite planter class benefitted from the material poverty of the masses.

Discipline on the plantation complex accelerated the transition from mercantilism to the industrial and capitalistic revolutions of modernity. This is evinced by the plantocracy's application of seventeenth-century English bourgeois values, which targeted idleness, political dissent, and criminal activity as a general panacea for the perceived lack of black discipline, and as a history of the present given the characterization by some historians such as Anthony Albanese (1976) who observed that "the plantation did provide valuable lessons and discipline for the blacks."<sup>151</sup> Couched within this specious claim is the insinuation that a coercive disciplinary apparatus was required to "civilize" the enslaved into obedient and productive automatons, and that this preparation was necessary to their inclusion in the market economy as viable actors. To diminish the physical abuse and psychic trauma suffered by the enslaved not only endorses the practices of inferiorization, subjugation, and punitive correction carried out on the plantation, but also sanitizes the disciplinary architecture that synthesized racism and capitalism into a system of human exploitation. Patterson, however, argues that severe intergenerational repercussions have resulted from the violence and fragmentation of black families from the time of plantation slavery. His contemporary writings pay special attention to the realities of sexual trafficking, child labor, and domestic servitude that have ensnared millions of adult women and girls, and the familial and social fragmentation resultant from the mass

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<sup>151</sup> Gerald Anthony Albanese, *The Plantation School*, (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1976), 147.

incarceration of black men. For Patterson the gendered dimensions of contemporary slavery continue the historical legacies of female exploitation, which focus on the materiality of the body as a socio-economic engine for parasitic expenditure.<sup>152</sup> Circumstances of female and child exploitation provide reference to the enduring practices of gendered biopolitics and capitalist exploitation in the twenty first century: the contemporary realities of child labour, domestic servitude, forced marriage, prostitution, and human trafficking.<sup>153</sup> Infrahuman subjectivity as it concerns capitalistic exploitation rests not only on the individuated rationality of homo-economicus as an agent for the extraction of forced labour, but the effective coordination of a social, legal, and political apparatus that stages capitalistic vampirism as necessary for development.

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<sup>152</sup> See, Orlando Patterson, "Beyond Compassion: Selfish Reasons for Being Unselfish." *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, 131.1. (2002): 26-38; "Black Americans." *Understanding America: The Anatomy of an Exceptional Nation*, edited by Peter H. Schuck and James Q. Wilson. New York: Public Affairs. (2008): 375-410; "Ecumenical America: Global Culture and the American Cosmos." *World Policy Journal*. 11.2. (1994): 103-117; "Equality." *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, 11. (Winter 2009); *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture*. New York: Basic Books, 1991; "Freedom, Slavery, and the Modern Construction of Rights." *The Cultural Values of Europe*, edited by Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt, translated by Alex Skinner. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. (2008): 115-151; *Rituals of Blood: Consequences of Slavery in Two American Centuries*. Washington DC: Civitas/Counterpoint, 1998; *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982; "Taking Culture Seriously: A Framework and an Afro-American Illustration." *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, edited by Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington. New York: Basic Books. (2001): 202-218; *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development, and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica*. London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1967; "Trafficking, Gender & Slavery: Past and Present." *The Legal Parameters of Slavery: Historical to the Contemporary*. Harvard Law School: The Houston Institute, 2011.

<sup>153</sup> "The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an Urban World" report estimates that "215 million boys and girls aged 5-17 were engaged in child labour in 2008, 115 million of them in hazardous work", and that "[d]omestic workers, most of them girls, are isolated and subject to the whims and arbitrary discipline of their employees, for whom they may suffer abuse. Sexual abuse is frequent but seldom prosecuted." The 2011 Unicef report states that "roughly 90 per cent of children involved in domestic labour are girls." "The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an Urban World," Unicef, 32 [http://www.unicef.org/sowc2012/pdfs/SOWC%202012-Main%20Report\\_EN\\_13Mar2012.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sowc2012/pdfs/SOWC%202012-Main%20Report_EN_13Mar2012.pdf); "The State of the World's Children 2011: Adolescence – An Age of Opportunity." Unicef, 33. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [http://www.unicef.org/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report\\_EN\\_02092011.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_EN_02092011.pdf)

## **CHAPTER THREE: DISCIPLINARY SLAVE MANAGEMENT: PLANTATION PUNISHMENT**

### **3.1 THE PLANTATION DISPOSITIF**

Some historians, most notably Dunn, Morgan, Curtin, and Tomich, tend to reify the plantation into homogeneous structures (paternalist vs. capitalist, patriarchal vs. maternalist, and old vs. new) when evaluating conditions of slave-labour, technology, and management. This chapter begins with a critique of these approaches to advance my broader argument that the resistance efforts of those in bondage demanded alternative strategies of biopolitical power and capitalism. Biopolitical planter management integrated a fluid system of patriarchal, paternalistic, capitalistic, and ameliorative rule to protect the economic, institutional, governmental, and social conditions of racialized slavery. Various combinations of these diverse systems of planter rule were employed to mitigate circumstances of ‘adversity’ that threatened the institutional integrity of slavery between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries (including environmental degradation from overplanting, economic insecurity engendered by foreign conflict and market valuation, and the pressure of the metropolitan abolition movement).

My analysis of prevailing historical scholarship of plantation slavery illustrates that Foucault’s theorizations of disciplinary power are a more adaptive theoretical framework to examine discourses and practices of planter management than the more seminal historical approaches on plantation economics by Craton, Curtin, and Mintz, among others. This chapter undertakes a brief analysis of Aristotle’s paternalistic model of slavery in Ancient Greece to draw critical distinctions in the historical treatment of slave government and to explore how theorizations of biopolitical force outlined in Foucault’s œuvre can be

used as a lens to explore how this strategy of management helped shape a capitalist system through economic expenditure, legal servitude, and political supremacy, and how contemporary historical analyses of plantation slavery does not fully consider the complex relationship between planter power and the resistance of those enslaved.

In his analysis of plantation slavery, Dunn states that the Barbadian planter class appropriated some of their institutional practices and managerial techniques from Brazilian sugar planters. He argues that the Portuguese *senhor de engenho* (lord of the mill) ruled in a paternalistic manner by exercising control over the labour, security, and care of the enslaved.<sup>1</sup> He also maintains that English planters in the Caribbean diverged from their Portuguese counterparts by favouring capitalism over paternalism, being first and foremost businessmen who were not weighed down by concerns of inadequate provision, clothing, and education, but committed instead to free-market capitalism.<sup>2</sup> Dunn's analysis of paternalistic and capitalistic slave management, however, introduces several problematic inferences related to the conceptual treatment of labour, security, and care, which ultimately reveal the limitations of a comparative methodology that seeks to divaricate planter management into such focused typologies. My archival analysis of plantation accounting records in Barbados, for example, indicates that it would be problematic to conclude that there is an observable division between paternalistic and capitalistic planter management, as the conditions of paternalism outlined by Dunn (labour, security, and care) were utilized in the Age of Amelioration in eighteenth and nineteenth century Barbados as a naked maneuver to perpetuate an intergenerational slave-labour force in the wake of the abolition movement germinating in England, as well as to secure a position of economic

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<sup>1</sup> Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 64.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 65-67.



hegemony with the subsequent transition to wage-labour after emancipation. Dunn's theorizations concerning paternalism in this milieu illustrate reforms of governmentality that were initiated by English planters in Barbados during the Age of Amelioration, between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a pro-natalist strategy to encourage childbirth. What must also be asked are how these conditions of paternalism theorized by Dunn reinforced the development of capitalism in the Atlantic economy through the perpetuation of a disciplinary regime that could preserve practices of labour exploitation in Barbados after emancipation.<sup>3</sup> The realities of plantation slavery in Barbados therefore escape Dunn's theoretical framework and call into question the value of such general typologies to analyze the conditions of slave management.

Another problematic approach to understanding how strategies of planter management carried out the institution of slavery is put forward by Morgan who argues that a shift from patriarchal to paternalist governance occurred in the eighteenth century: whereas patriarchal management "emphasized order, obedience, hierarchy, and subjection," planter paternalism "proffered a generous treatment of slaves and expected gratitude in return; they promoted the myth of the happy, contented black worker."<sup>4</sup> I would argue, however, that disciplinary management in Barbados intensified mechanisms of patriarchal control through the entrenchment of a panoptic spatial environment and a

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<sup>3</sup> While the conditions of capitalistic labour exploitation that continued to nourish white supremacy in post-emancipation Barbados are not examined in this dissertation, the third part of this work analyzes how Barbadian planters introduced pro-natalist policies, and how this incentive regime functioned as a technique of capitalist management to secure intergenerational slavery, increase profit, and enlarge the slave-labour force. The final part of this dissertation focuses on amelioration as a biopolitical approach to management that was carried out through official metropolitan interventions of legal reform, domestic standards of care, and through the decisions of planters to increase provision, clothing, and improved housing for couples, and financial rewards and reprieve from hard labour for enslaved pregnant women to encourage reproduction.

<sup>4</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 116.

regime of punishment that targeted the distribution, functionality, and potentiality of the physical body. The eighteenth-century paternalistic features Morgan associates with the humane treatment of the enslaved were in fact procedures of governmentality, such as pronatalism, which aimed at fostering slave life for the purpose of securing economic supremacy in the plantation colony and its subsequent transition to an exploitative wage-labour economy post-emancipation. In the same way that Foucault reveals the contemporaneous presence of sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality, and that one of these modalities of power emerges with intensity over the others at specific junctures of time, an analysis of the Barbadian plantation complex indicates that the shift from patriarchal to paternalistic management outlined by Morgan cannot be taken as an historical supervention. Instead, the relationship between patriarchal and paternalistic slavery should be seen as a dynamic interplay between systems of management that mutually reinforced a competitive environment for the development of plantation commerce at the local level vis-à-vis adversities of environmental pressure, slave resistance, weak planter leadership, and political turmoil, as well as through broader materializations of macroeconomic and geopolitical exchange ushered in by foreign conflict, metropolitan opposition, economic transformation, and imperial conquest. The discernible transition in the culture of punishment during the eighteenth century in Barbados, which included a more advanced division of labour, the integration of industrial technologies for production, the application of panoptic surveillance techniques, and strategies of disciplinary punishment, was not a shift from patriarchal to paternalistic management, as much as it was the development of an art of government that began to unlock new possibilities of exploitation through a focus on the life of the enslaved.

Problematic characterizations of the plantation complex are also illustrated by the historical reification of plantation archetypes, as well as the synchronic unification of plantation slave-labour and feudal labour. Curtin's (1990) reading of plantation slavery situates the conditions of feudal labour being exercised in Europe alongside racialized slavery in the Caribbean. While the first part of this dissertation established how analogous conditions of exploitation were shared between white indentured servants and enslaved blacks on the plantation, practices of mortal wasting, punishment, and racism created a *sui generis* regime of necro-economics that can be applied specifically to experiences of enslaved blacks. Curtin's analysis of feudal labour in Europe and black slavery in the Caribbean are reduced to a few superficial observations: plantation labour concentrated the authority of the planter class, increased gang-labour, and resulted in higher mortality rates.<sup>5</sup> Applying Leps' analysis of Agamben's *paradigm* and Foucault's *dispositif* to these circumstances exposes the limitations of conflating *paradigmatic* movements of history, such as the exploitative labour conditions that cut across both feudalism and slavery. Leps states that "[w]hereas Agamben uses the concept of *paradigm* to define forms of thought and government reiterated across centuries and cultures, Foucault develops the concept of *dispositif* to apprehend historical assemblages of discourses, institutions, laws, architecture and behaviours that are in perpetual flux."<sup>6</sup> Whereas Curtin situates the exploitative conditions of European feudalism and racialized slavery as analogous systems of material oppression under a *paradigmatic* framework that is consistent with Agamben's work, I employ Foucault's concept of *dispositif* to explore how biopolitics (discipline and governmentality) positioned plantation slavery as a mobile institutional site that

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<sup>5</sup> Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, 11-13.

<sup>6</sup> Leps, "Thought of the outside: Foucault contra Agamben," 27.

incorporated a diverse assemblage of slave management practices. This methodological orientation is guided by Foucault's observation that "[h]ow to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor" are questions that emerge with the destruction of feudalism and creation of the colonial state.<sup>7</sup> I argue that the plantation complex is the primary colonial site to examine how conditions of government come to realize a new field of possibilities in modernity as it relates to how forces of discipline intersect with labour and production.

Curtin's analysis does not explore the critical impact a panoptic labour environment and disciplinary punishment had on eroding the sovereign dimensions of planter supremacy, the transition to gang-labour, and the subsequent expenditure of the enslaved black body. His work does not consider how the socio-political dimensions of plantocratic power were shaped by contestations of power between the master class and enslaved over the commoditization of the enslaved body into the Atlantic market. This study follows Davis' argument that the plantation system was entirely capitalistic, given that the plantocracy governed with an economic logic that was driven toward the maximization of profit, not a feudal social and religious community.<sup>8</sup> The plantation complex was a capitalist structure given its disciplinary economic architecture, but governmental management also fostered slave life as an attempt to secure intergenerational slavery. The application of governmental force in this regard (demographic, social, and political) implemented a model of *gemeinschaft* that shaped the desire to promote life through

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<sup>7</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power*, 202.

<sup>8</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 116.

childbirth and family, and the intergenerational structures of exploitative labour to sustain capital extraction.

Analyses of the juridical erasure of the enslaved from the plantation have had a strong presence in historical works of slavery and can be seen in Goveia's argument that English slave laws criminalized the enslaved by placing them outside of the family and society, withholding religious instruction, limiting economic independence, constraining mobility, and exacting severe punishments.<sup>9</sup> Similar to Mbembe's characterization of the plantation slave as a "shadow," both Curtin and Goveia position the slave subject outside of the family, law, and society (*ab extra familia, legem, civitas*) of colonizing forces. This approach fails to acknowledge how the shifting deployments of slave management were simultaneously ordered through an economic, legal, and political power-knowledge matrix, and how juridical subjectivity, not expulsion of the enslaved, created legal categories of prohibition and punishment that were not only directed by a racist ontology, but amenable to the advancement of plantation production. Moreover, the difficulties of the planter class to institute permanent structures for the bondage of those enslaved and to mitigate a growing free-black and free-coloured population within the colony speaks to the efforts of resistance and sacrifice endured under conditions of white supremacy that are considered in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

Disciplinary management techniques were implemented through a general administrative field of power to coordinate a productive labour regime: these mechanisms of force included aspects of panoptic authority and coercion, the enforcement of prohibition for social control, and the practice of punishment for non-compliance. The features of

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<sup>9</sup> Goveia, *West Indian Slave Laws of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, 25.

disciplinary power as a form of social conditioning can be witnessed in the planter class' attempts to train an efficient and docile labour force through instituting forms of positive reinforcement (rewards, prestige, responsibility), and negative reinforcements (physical punishment, increased restraint, isolation, and hard(er) labour). Measures of disciplinary control reveal how negative reinforcements, such as physical punishment and hard labour were utilized by planters, and how positive reinforcements were offered to encourage productivity. I argue that negative reinforcements speak to features of slave management that are positioned within the interstices of sovereignty/discipline (thanatopolitics), while positive reinforcements can be regarded as techniques of discipline/governmentality (biopolitics). At their core, these systems were jointly pursued to maximize productive output, minimize resistance, and perpetuate the system of slave-labour.

My focus on discipline in this section challenges Tomich's deduction that plantation production was coordinated by the master's direct domination of the enslaved. The exercise of power on the plantation was both polyvalent and diffuse, as evidenced by the willful, autonomous, and concerted acts of mortal risk carried out by the enslaved to challenge the plantocratic culture of bondage, racism, and neglect.<sup>10</sup> While planters and managers appear at first glance to have carried out a unique approach to maximize production through systems of exploitative labour that contributed to the maturation of industry and technology, this study is more interested in the developing intelligibility that represented rationality, commerce, and administration, as an art of government.

The managerial focus on quantification and value, as rendered through labour supervision, productive output, skills training, the administration of space, etc., was the

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<sup>10</sup> Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery*, 7.

driving force behind the development of Barbados into an industrialized zone of exploitation beginning as early as the seventeenth century. This assertion debunks Tomich's claim that a mature plantation economy (industrialization and global connectivity) did not come into being until nineteenth-century Cuba.<sup>11</sup> Tomich's World Systems Theory analysis of plantation slavery offers two problematic assertions, first that there is a visible division between old vs. new plantation zones according to a spectrum of industrial development and that British hegemony was exercised through the territorial epicenter of trade and finance in the metropole.<sup>12</sup> I argue that the microphysical permutations of labour, punishment, and management, as expressed through the biopolitical techniques of force executed in Barbados, reveal how the diffuse replicating conditions of planter power shaped a capitalist market economy in the Atlantic. This study also challenges an analysis of the geo-economic/political ordering of planter power, and the subsequent exchange of commercial trade, labour systems, and manufacturing technologies, as a bifurcated zone (core and periphery) of intelligibility outlined in Tomich's study. A more elongated historical analysis of slavery back to its European roots in Ancient Greece evidences not just the paternalistic designs of bondage as a microeconomic institution, but how labour exploitation nourished the development of a more complex understanding of State power.

Aristotle believed that the *politikos* (statesman), who was responsible for the political affairs of the *polis*, was altogether different from the manager of a household or slave master. The fundamental difference for Aristotle concerned the art of government required to rule a kingdom versus that of a household where the primary relationships were

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 60-61.

between a husband and wife, parents and children, and master and slave.<sup>13</sup> Aristotle argued that the slave was an animate instrument or article of property that had no life or *being* outside the relationship of belonging, that the acquisition of those enslaved belonged to the art of war and hunting, and that the art of slave management was concerned with knowing how best to exploit the capacities of those in bondage.<sup>14</sup> Paternalistic slavery in ancient Greece represents a relationship of sovereign power, but the exercise of disciplinary and governmental power, however, represented a fundamental shift in the art of slave government that cannot be reduced to the observations outlined by Curtin and Goveia: the erasure or social death of the enslaved from structures of familial, juridical, and political space. The conditions of slave government as a paternalistic enterprise of capital acquisition, however, are captured by Foucault's historical analysis of the development of government in European modernity:

To govern a state will mean, therefore to apply economy, to set up an economy at the level of the entire state, which means exercising toward its inhabitants, and the wealth and behaviour of each and all, a form of surveillance and control as attentive as that of the head of a family over his household and his goods.<sup>15</sup>

Whereas paternalistic plantation management illustrates the sovereign ability to extract, allocate, and expend resource, disciplinary power (panoptic surveillance and punishment) and governmentality (pre-emptive security strategies and the fostering of life) organize human activity to generate and protect the accumulation of capital: these modes of power, however, are connected through the capacities of bondage as a continuum of

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<sup>13</sup> Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, ed. and trans. Ernest Barker, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 1-2, 8-9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-11, 18, 104.

<sup>15</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power*, 207.



personal exploitation and marketable commoditization at the level of the economy. Slavery in ancient Greece was exercised at an atomistic level, the individual household, but biopolitical slave management functioned through the macroeconomic and political dimensions of the colonial state to conform the behaviour and life of those enslaved toward labour production. In the analysis that follows, I investigate how the conditions of plantocratic sovereignty outlined in the first part of this study gave way to practices of discipline that enabled the large-scale mobilization of plantation slave-labour and capital growth at the macroeconomic level of the colonial state, and how this transformation was shaped by a dynamic of resistance that challenges and re-constitutes our understanding of slavery.

### **3.2 PANOPTIC POWER ON THE PLANTATION**

The architectural design of the plantation complex functioned as an individuating panoptic environment intended to shape docile labourers. Machinations of panoptic power organized a manufactured space of strategic physical control that informed a broader territorial regime of discipline throughout the plantation colony. Cooper and Stoler argue that the colonial apparatus cannot be understood as a monolith, and that it is not completely visible how “agents of empire,” in our case the planter elite, coordinated tactics of colonial power.<sup>16</sup> The architectural topography of the plantation, however, reveals how principles of panoptic power targeted the individual body of the enslaved to facilitate labour production. These techniques of control unlocked capitalistic features of labour

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<sup>16</sup> Cooper and Stoler, “Between Metropole and Colony,” 6.

exploitation on the plantation complex through the maximization of slave-labour production, the private accumulation of the plantocracy, the commoditization of environmental resource, the creation of manufacturing technologies, the proliferation of an advanced division of labour, and the international development of commerce. The plantation complex organized not just a space for racialized subjugation, but an epistemological blueprint, which through the deployment of biopolitical force, enhanced the strategic expropriation of black labour in the modern market economy.

In “Colonial Governmentality,” David Scott states that Foucault’s methodology can be utilized for interrogating the “targets of colonial power (that is, the point or points of power’s application, the object or objects it aims at, and the means and instrumentalities it deploys in search of these targets, points, and objects); and the field of its operation.”<sup>17</sup> This chapter examines how the plantation complex functioned as a panoptic institutional edifice: how it organized techniques of efficiency, supervision, and production through a “non-discursive field of practices, appropriation, interests, and desires.”<sup>18</sup> Through panoptic controls, the plantation disseminated the Manichaeian ethos of the colonizer to achieve agronomic industrialization and free-labour capitalism. The industrialization of agricultural production and the establishment of an international commercial arena positions the plantation complex of late eighteenth-century Barbados and beyond, closer to the industrial model of capitalism, than to a mercantilist institution given the development of disciplinary controls in the factory like setting rendered by large-scale sugar production.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Scott, “Colonial Governmentality”, 193.

<sup>18</sup> Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 69.

<sup>19</sup> Justin Roberts notes that Barbadian planters employed “innovative and skilled management” to dramatically increase sugar production after having contended with severe adversities from 1760-1780:

Plantation labour was severe, and included the clearing of land, planting, harvesting, and the preparation of produce for transport to the European marketplace.<sup>20</sup> Planters had to ensure that their labour force was disciplined, dexterous, durable, and knowledgeable of agricultural practices and industrial manufacture. While this dissertation does not explore the cultural currency of African agricultural knowledge, nor trace the contestations of skilled black labour in Barbados and its impact on the institution of slavery and race, the *bios* of those enslaved on the plantation was largely shaped by disciplinary practices that organized labour, exploited artisanal craftsmanship, and deployed technologies to optimize output. Tomich argues that “superiority of slavery as a form of social labour lies in its capacity to forcibly concentrate large masses of workers and compel their cooperation.”<sup>21</sup> Tomich’s reference to “cooperation” is a critical observation, but one that goes without significant treatment into underscoring how the relationship between the planter class and those enslaved on the plantation complex depended on a highly fluid engagement of appropriation, desire, compromise, negotiation, and violence, that extends beyond a hegemonic reading of the master/slave relationship. I argue that strategies of management that produce circumstances of labour subjectivity, regardless of its institutional order (camp, factory, or plantation), can be captured through the behaviours and norms evidenced

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global competition, diminished sugar prices, soil depletion, and invasive insects. Justin Roberts, “Working between the Lines: Labor and Agriculture on Two Barbadian Sugar Plantations, 1796-97”, *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2006): 557.

<sup>20</sup> At first, Barbadian planters failed to sow their sugarcane in a manner conducive to large-scale agricultural production, as their practice of inserting the plants into small holes three feet apart caused them to become tall and heavy, and therefore prone to rotting, weeds, and inclement weather. In order that rooting would withstand heavy storms and not decompose, the planters dug channels six inches deep and wide that would hold two sugarcane plants beside each other and would plant every two feet. The Barbadian planters also planted *ad seriatim* to have a continuous yield of sugarcane. Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 87-88.

<sup>21</sup> Dale W. Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital and World Economy*, (Toronto: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc., 2004), 141.

in the organization, classification, and command that are geared toward the maximization of production. The plantation complex was the first labour site to incorporate elements of disciplinary power and racialized violence, and the matrices of power-knowledge that came to assemble its space as a panoptic institution were inextricably linked to the processes of capitalism. In *Foucault*, Deleuze describes that for the deployment of panoptic power:

We need only insist that the multiplicity is reduced and confined to a tight space and that the imposition of a form of conduct is done by distributing in space, laying out and serializing in time, composing in space-time and so on. The list is endless, but it is always concerned with unformed and unorganized matter and unformalized, unfinalized functions, the two variables being indissolubly linked.<sup>22</sup>

After the slavocracy exercised practices of sovereignty (trafficking, detainment, exchange, threat of death), which ultimately displaced those in bondage from their communities through profound acts of violence and abuse, disciplinary measures were employed to coordinate a large-scale labour regime. These strategies were an attempt to maintain control through surveillance and punishment for the purpose of extracting labour. Disciplinary management techniques configured the spatial dimensions of the plantation; coordinated systems of regimented labour to unlock resource; applied technologies to increase efficiency and maximize generation; and introduced time and motion surveillance

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<sup>22</sup> Deleuze, *Foucault*, 29. Nicholas Crawford argues for a re-examination “of colonial amelioration as one in which slaveholders consolidated their control over plantation landscapes through the elaboration of legal codes and the maintenance of relations among managerial and medical communities in order to keep slaves spatially “fixed” to estates for labor and sustenance.” Nicholas Crawford, *Calamity’s Empire: Slavery, Scarcity, and the Political Economy of Provisioning in the British Caribbean, C. 1775-1834*, Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, 2006, 25.

to evaluate productivity long before Frederick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*.<sup>23</sup>

Disciplinary power on the plantation was facilitated by the planter class' capacity to manufacture a controlled architectural arrangement, the legal authority to deny privacy and mobility, and the exposure to *bare life* through neglect and deliberate acts of violence. This was accomplished through the organization of buildings and housing into aggregated formations such as rows for enhanced surveillance, the legal right of the planter, his henchmen, and policing apparatus to search slave dwellings, and the risk of harm induced by deficient housing, lack of provision, and labour injury.<sup>24</sup> The plantation complex often integrated a bifurcated spatial environment: a landscape of natural beauty, aesthetic architecture and industrial innovation that projected a vision of progress, and another underneath this mirage, a dystopia of exploitation, violence, and destitution. As a *fata morgana* of the colonial space, the plantation complex was grounded on *architectural anisotropy* (where the planter's residence and slave cabin reveal both bio-social and material difference), *dynamometric force* (the fusion of industrial technology and biophysical slave-labour), as well as the proliferation of capitalist exploitation through the designation of the slave as financial reserve (as will be examined in the procedures of accounting and management in the final section of this study). The attempts for the disciplinary mechanization of large-scale plantation production were undertaken to create

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<sup>23</sup> Frederick Taylor's modus operandi for capturing the best possible way to perform a task, and ultimately for developing the principles of scientific management, called for observing the various physical motions and instruments labourers used to conduct a particular trade, timing these diverse activities to discover the fastest movement, removing unnecessary routines that wasted time or caused inefficiency, organizing the most effective movements into sequence, standardizing this practice and having managers teach the superior technique to labourers, and continuing to refine these movements for optimal productivity. Taylor, *Scientific Management*, 227. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://sites.ualberta.ca/~yreshef/orga432/docs/TaylorScientificManagement.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 46.

conditions of a permanent socioeconomic space of white supremacy through labour expropriation and violence.

The considerable estates of large-scale planters typically comprised hundreds if not thousands of acres of property to support the cultivation of sugar, tobacco, indigo, and other forms of agricultural produce. Plantations were a complex of architectural and industrial design which, apart from confining the enslaved, consisted of several structures related to agricultural production and housing. Slave quarters in Barbados were located near their place of work and in close proximity to one another to enhance supervision, increase land efficiency, and order labour production.<sup>25</sup> At minimum, a plantation complex would usually consist of the planter's residence, an overseer's house, slave-quarters, structures particular to the type of agriculture being produced, and housing for animals and agricultural storage.<sup>26</sup> In the late eighteenth century, Sampson Wood, who managed both the Seawell and Newton plantations in Barbados, employed a multi-tiered management structure, which included: "two chief overseers, four suboverseers, two slave rangers, and six slave drivers."<sup>27</sup> Disciplinary power on the plantation factory was achieved through the functionalist and centralized architectural design, which operated as a sophisticated institutional apparatus by manufacturing a controlled environment.

Archival records from the nineteenth century indicate that elite Barbadian planter Henry Drax estate called upon his Manager Archibald Johnson to provide him with "an

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<sup>25</sup> Handler and Lange argue that "plantation slaves and their most fundamental social groupings centered in the compact villages that were part of every Barbadian plantation. These villages were located close to the mill yard, not far from the plantation owner's or manager's house, and were small communities in the sociological sense." Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 30.

<sup>26</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 46.

<sup>27</sup> Justin Roberts, "Working between the Lines: Labor and Agriculture on Two Barbadian Sugar Plantations, 1796-97", *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2006): 557-558.

exact inventory taken of all things taken on the plantation.”<sup>28</sup> A list of inventory taken on the *Drax Hall* in 1815 and 1817, which held 163 enslaved persons, and 160 respectively, reported the following buildings: a boiling-house, cellar, corn-house, curing-house, distil-house, dwelling-house, kitchen, loft, lumber room, rum-house, sick-house, servant’s room, smith shop, still-house, stable, and store room.<sup>29</sup> Structures necessary for large-scale plantation sugar production such as the boiling-house incorporated technologies for the processing of sugar that required specialized artisanal skill. Enslaved labourers who refined the sugar in the boiling-house were at the top of the hierarchical division of labour on the plantation, but also risked severe injury from chemical and other burns in the processing and transportation of sugar. Drax Hall’s inventory also lists a sick-house, which would have operated as a location to treat injuries and illness to mitigate lost production. Structures for aiding the sick, diseased, and injured, as well as for the birthing of children, helped preserve levels of production. An organized and tightened formation enhanced visibility and responsiveness to potential labour adversities and resistance. According to Handler and Lange’s analysis of Drax Hall,

the slave village, or Negro yard field, was located near the plantation yard, mill yard, or, simply, the yard. “Yard,” both during slavery and today refers to the plantation area that includes the owner’s or manager’s house, the sugar mill or mills, boiling house, and other buildings used in the manufacturing of sugar; the yard also included the cattle pens, horse stables, and miscellaneous other buildings and sheds that served a variety of plantation needs [and that] documentary sources, including

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<sup>28</sup> "The Instructions of Henry Drax Esq. for the Management of Drax-Hall, and the Irish Hope Plantations", 50.

<sup>29</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1.

maps, clearly indicate that the slave village was located relatively close to the plantation yard and, probably with few exceptions, within ready visibility of the owner's or manager's house.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 14. "Drax Hall Plantation Yard, Barbados, 1971-72." "Aerial photo taken by Frederick Lange in 1971-72, shows the plantation house in the center, with the site of the former slave village in the sugar cane field in the upper left; also stables and other out buildings and base of the disused windmill in the lower right. Drax Hall plantation dates from the late 17th century and as of 2002 was still owned by the Drax family in England." Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."

Most plantations were designed to ensure disciplinary control through observation and order. Richardson asserts that although there is limited knowledge of the slave quarters in Barbados, it is likely that those enslaved lived in huts with dirt floors and cane-trash roofs throughout the eighteenth century, and that by the end of the century construction integrated stonewalls and wood shingles.<sup>31</sup> According to Antiguan Planter Samuel Martin,

<sup>30</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 46.

<sup>31</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 46. Handler and Lange assert that slave houses were constructed of fragile "wattle and daub", and that they "required frequent repair and were particularly



housing should be maintained, constructed to avoid water leakage, and properly spaced to avoid fire.<sup>32</sup> Morgan states that slave quarters in the Caribbean were “nucleated settlements,” whereas in North America, housing was more dispersed to allow for more privacy.<sup>33</sup> Morgan’s inference paints too broad a picture of slave housing in these two plantation zones by failing to acknowledge that a concentrated residential arrangement was also prefigured by planters in the Southern United States. While this dissertation does not undertake a comparative analysis of housing in these two plantation zones, archival evidence from the Southern states of Georgia and South Carolina does not support Morgan’s distinction.<sup>34</sup> A comparative analysis of the architectural design of the panopticon and the slave plantation, however, reveals how a built panoptic environment achieved surveillance vis-à-vis the containment of the physical body and the spatial distribution of the architectural buildings that encompassed daily life.

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vulnerable to leakage in heavy rains and to destruction by hurricanes, storms, and fires; moreover, the proximity of dwellings within the slave villages and the sea breezes that fanned the island facilitated the spread of fire from one house to another.” Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery*, 52.

<sup>32</sup> Richard B. Sheridan, “Samuel Martin, Innovating Sugar Planter of Antigua 1750-1776”, *Agricultural History* 34, no. 3 (1960): 130.

<sup>33</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 119.

<sup>34</sup> Archival research was undertaken at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, and the Georgia Archives, which included: Legislative Papers, 1782-1866; Series S165009 Governors’ Messages, 1783-1830 (Images on Website and Microfilm); Series S165010 Grand Jury Presentments, 1783-1877 (Images on Website); Series S165015 Petitions to the General Assembly, 1782-1866 (Microfilm); Series S165018 Resolutions of the General Assembly 1782-1865 (Images on Website); National Register Properties; S108177 National Register Nomination File, 1968-2010 (Images on Website); Consolidated Index to Multiple Record Series, 1675-1929; Series S213003 Miscellaneous Records, 1741-1843 (Microfilm); and several collections at the Georgia repository. My paper, “South Carolina’s Colonial Policing Apparatus,” was presented at the Social Science History Association’s 2014 annual meeting, for the panel *Policing African Americans: From Colonialism to Mass Incarceration*.



Figure 15. The picture above shows a slave house with stone walls and a thatched roof. According to Matthew Cornibert, the majority of remaining slave huts in Barbados of this type can be found in the parish of St. Lucy and were located very close to the planter's residence. Cornibert, Matthew. Origin and Construction of slave houses in Barbados. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <http://www.bcc.edu.bb/Divisions/FineArts/SlaveHousesInBarbados.aspx>



Figure 16. "Wattle-and-Daub Thatched Houses, Barbados, n.d." Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Frank and Francis Carpenter Collection, LC-USZ62-95078. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities." These houses were comprised of wooden strips, wet soil, and straw.

Theorizations concerning panoptic power provide a conceptual framework to analyze how the planter class in Barbados ensconced a disciplinary environment not just on the plantation, but throughout the wider slave colony. English philosopher Jeremy Bentham and his brother Samuel, who in the final two decades of the eighteenth century resided in Russia, corresponded and together drafted several architectural designs for an “Inspection-House” or “Panopticon.”<sup>35</sup> These illustrations were published under the title “Panopticon: or, the Inspection-House (1791), and again in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham* (Vol. iv, 1843).<sup>36</sup> Philip Steadman argues that while Jeremy is largely credited with the plans of panopticon, it was in fact his brother Samuel who first devised of the architectural idea. This is affirmed by a letter Jeremy wrote in 1786, which states:

My Brother has hit upon a very singular new and I think important / though simple / idea in Architecture which is the subject of a course of letters I have just finished for my Father which it is not improbable may find their way to the press [...] The architectural idea consists in nothing but / in the plan of what we / call an Inspection-house is that of a circular building so contrived that any number of persons may therein be kept in such a situation as either to be, or what comes to nearly the same thing to seem to themselves to be, constantly under the eye of a person or persons occupying a station in the centre which we call the Inspector’s Lodge.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Steadman states that Jeremy attributed the idea of panopticon to his brother Samuel, who was trained as an engineer and shipwright. While under the employment of Prince Potemkin of Russia, Samuel became a Lieutenant Colonel and was granted command to train the Russian Navy in Krichiev. Steadman notes that while Jeremy had failed to have a penitentiary erected in England despite decades of political lobbying at the highest levels of government and with significant financial cost, it was Samuel who succeeded in the creation of an Arts School of panoptic design in St. Petersburg in 1807, which would house the education of shipwrights for the Russian Navy. Philip Steadman, “Samuel Bentham’s Panopticon,” *Journal of Bentham Studies*, 14.1. (2012): 1-2, 5.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2-3.

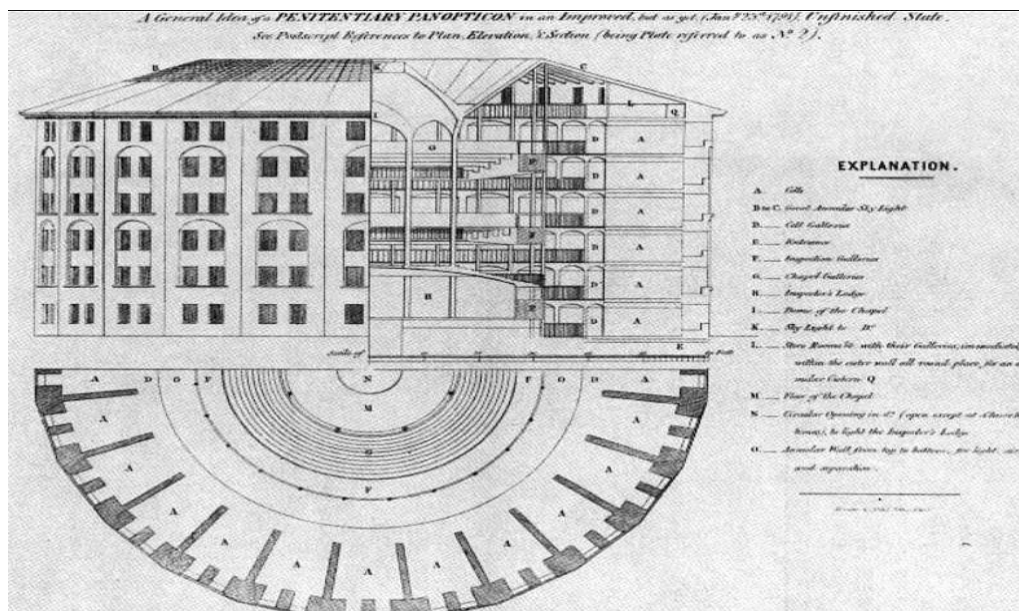


Figure 17. Jeremy Bentham's Penitentiary Panopticon drafted by Willey Reveley (1791). Jeremy Bentham, *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, vol. 4 (Panopticon, Constitution, Colonies, Codification), 1843.

I argue that the principles of panopticon proposed by Jeremy and Samuel Bentham were already being applied to both indentured white servants and enslaved people on the Barbadian plantation complex. The following objectives of panopticon outlined below illustrate the comprehensive institutional diversity of disciplinary power, and indeed echo the socioeconomic currency for securing plantation production:

punishing the incorrigible, guarding the insane, reforming the vicious, confining the suspected, employing the idle, maintaining the helpless, curing the sick, instructing the willing in any branch of industry, or training the rising race in the path of education: in a word, whether it be applied to the purposes of perpetual prisons in the room of death, or prisons for confinement before trial, or penitentiary-houses,

or houses of correction, or work-houses, or manufactories, or mad-houses, or hospitals, or schools.<sup>38</sup>

The disciplinary rationale of the panopticon was entrenched in plantation complexes and associated institutions of slave confinement in Barbados. This can be observed in the hierarchical and dynamic relationships of power that governed plantation life as socio-cultural performance, legal identity, and most importantly, as economic calculus, among various roles (planter, manager/overseer, black driver, artisanal craftsman, domestic labourer, and field labourer). As an economic imperative, the built architectural anatomy of the plantation grounds attempted to fuse the enslaved to practices of exploitative labour necessary to harness environmental resource, create and employ technologies of industrial manufacture, and appropriate artisanal skills to maximize productive capacity. As a panoptic apparatus, the plantation complex facilitated the surveillance of production and enhanced security through the spatial distribution of bodies; facilitated the development of the factory environment and industrial agriculture through the anatomized divisions of labour that were informed by planter perceptions of gender, colour, ethnicity, and skill of those enslaved. The plantation was an institutional site where the application of disciplinary force activated procedures of repetition to normalize conditions of inhuman subjectivity and punishment. These protocols were put into place to maintain life and limb, mitigate absconding, rebellion, and lost production to generate capital for the planter class.

For Foucault, the panopticon both “automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies,

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<sup>38</sup> Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 33-4.

surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up.”<sup>39</sup> Foucault states that the panopticon “reverses the principle of dungeon; or rather of its three functions- to enclose, to deprive of light and to hide- it preserves only the first and eliminates the other two.”<sup>40</sup> As a site of disciplinary containment, the plantation complex depended on visibility in order to repress those enslaved and carry out a regime of predictable labour performance. This efficiency to capture agricultural produce for the European marketplace through the disciplinary patterning of exploitative labour was critical to the emergence of capitalism. This was achieved through the commoditization of natural resource into private wealth for the Barbadian plantocracy; the capital accumulation derived from the goods and services produced by plantation agriculture in the international marketplace; the technological instruments and professional practices of domestic and metropolitan investment to acquire profit; and the rationalities of power-knowledge that reinforced the commoditization and accounting of black labour as an indispensable component of the modern economy.

The physical anatomy of Bentham’s panopticon was circular in shape with the prisoner’s cells surrounding the central inspection tower.<sup>41</sup> Panoptic discipline was theorized to modify the behaviour of those incarcerated, as any transgression was visible to the occupants within the central tower. In much the same way, the centralized configuration of the plantation complex depended on a strategy of proximity and visibility

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<sup>39</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (New York: Random House, Inc., 1995), 202.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 200. Bentham’s ideas for penal reform marked a shift in the application of punishment as a spectacle of state vengeance to a utilitarian calculus for public welfare by exposing the prisoners’ efforts to conspire and carry out indecent acts, as well as to expose any administrative abuse and corruption. He believed that panopticon would provide a better understanding of the human condition, which in turn would achieve greater institutional efficiency, public security, and social harmony. This ideological change, however, was already being undertaken by Barbadian planters at the end of the eighteenth-century.

<sup>41</sup> Semple, *Bentham’s Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 116.

with the residences of those enslaved a close distance from the great house and/or the supervisor's dwelling. Richardson states "slave cottages throughout the Caribbean were situated sufficiently close to the other plantation buildings so as to facilitate slave control."<sup>42</sup> This observation is corroborated by the Barbadian archival record and demonstrates how the architectural anatomy of the plantation complex formalized a spatial environment indicative of the factory. The plantation model exceeds the disciplinary aspects of surveillance beyond Bentham's vision, as the planter was able to intensify control without those enslaved having to surrender absolute privacy. Under these circumstances a *fata morgana* can emerge, as the carceral realities of plantation life appear to be superseded by a communal living space and a routinized labour arrangement. This configuration of biopolitical force speaks to Foucault's theorizations concerning the disciplining of the body.

Large-scale plantations in Barbados during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were sophisticated institutions of modern enterprise that advanced machinery and processes of agricultural production; professional accountants, lawyers, and medical doctors; and diverse architectural structures, which included both commercial and residential units. State-of-the-art architecture, technology, and knowledge made the Barbadian plantation complex a symbol of English supremacy and modernity, and alongside conditions of squalor, reasserted and normalized the cycle of destitution and the costs of labour extraction endured by the enslaved. My analysis of panoptic power in this regard comes closer to Janet Semple's interpretation of Bentham, rather than that of Foucault, as its institutional design supported by innovation, utility, and the aesthetic, in

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<sup>42</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 47.

such a way as to demonstrate its socio-economic and political value as a transmodern enterprise. In her work *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, Semple argues "Foucault described the panopticon as 'a cruel ingenious cage', a pitiless contraption designed for control and subjugation. But Bentham's vision was of a beautiful building, a stately pleasure dome."<sup>43</sup> Bentham believed that the panopticon would be a modern marvel, an "ornament" in the community, "a cheerful place...a faerie palace, tinted in muted shades of pink and grey."<sup>44</sup>

The 1785 "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes" advised that slave houses be situated in a uniform row and not exceed twelve feet in width.<sup>45</sup> The organization of the plantation complex did not lend itself to an unmitigated focal point for observation, but the planter attained greater surveillance through the architectural design of the plantation grounds, the limited range of housing, and by relinquishing spaces of privacy, especially during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the aftermath of several aborted plots to overthrow the plantocracy as will be discussed in the chapter that follows. These conditions of discipline evidence how panoptic devices of plantocratic rule could be used to facilitate visibility in order to induce behavioural changes for fear of being punished. Foucault argues that disciplinary power would be "an interrogation without end, an investigation that would be extended without limit to a meticulous and ever more analytical observation, a judgment that would at the same time be the constitution of a file that was never closed."<sup>46</sup> In this context, the

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<sup>43</sup> Janet Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 114.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>45</sup> "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes," 30.

<sup>46</sup> Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 227.



plantation complex must be conceptualized as a mobile and archetypal apparatus of security that implemented material infrastructure to elicit responses of distress and compliance through galvanizing the relationship between racism and commoditization. Similar to the architectural design of panopticon, the plantation complex was for the most part a self-sufficient institution comprised of all the basic services that would have been found in a small town.<sup>47</sup> The planter was able to maximize labour production, resource management, and frustrate resistance by creating a system of dependency and imposing an ordered lifestyle upon the enslaved population.<sup>48</sup> According to Bentham, those under inspection should not only feel that they are being watched, but in fact be subject to intense examination as much as possible to achieve discipline.<sup>49</sup> Slave housing on the plantation contracted space similar to other institutions of confinement to utilize immediacy, observation, and disclosure for the purpose of disciplining a large congregation of captives by a smaller oppressive force.

A crucial aspect of the function of the plantation complex as a site for capturing visibility was the layout of the buildings, which often included rowed housing for the enslaved, such as Drax Hall. We can observe how the plantation complex incorporated architectural design similar to Bentham's panopticon in regard to efficiencies concerning labour production and the maintenance of security. While the layout of the plantation yard included housing in rows, unlike the circular configuration of the panopticon, the range of

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<sup>47</sup> Janet Semple reveals that in his manuscripts "Bentham sometimes referred to 'Panopticon Town' or 'Panopticon Hill', and was clearly envisaging a wider neighbourhood than the prison factory of his public schemes." Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 285.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Fogel argues that resisters could surely diminish but not effectively suspend the labour output of the gang labour system on the plantation, and that efforts to disrupt were often met with increased whipping, reduced nutrition, and greater restrictions. Robert William Fogel, "Cliometrics and Culture: Some Recent Developments in the Historiography of Slavery", *Journal of Social History* 11, no. 1 (1977): 36.

<sup>49</sup> Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 43-44.

planter surveillance was undertaken in a mobile environment. The overall layout of panopticon would be circular in shape, with illuminated prison cells surrounding a central inspection tower; the movements of those incarcerated would be completely visible, while the observer's gaze would remain concealed by dimmed glass.<sup>50</sup> Bentham expected that the possibility of interminable surveillance would induce self-regulation, stating that:

The more constantly the persons to be inspected are under the eyes of the persons who should inspect them, the more perfectly will the purpose of the establishment have been attained. Ideal perfection, if that were the object, would require that each person should actually be in that predicament, during every instant of time. This being impossible, the next thing to be wished for is, that, at every instant, seeing reason to believe as much, and not being able to satisfy himself to the contrary, he should *conceive* [emphasis in original] himself to be so.<sup>51</sup>

Semple illustrates how isolation was a crucial feature of Bentham's designs, as "the panopticon is haunted by the same 'gloomy paradox of crowded solitude' by the chilling vision of men packed together and yet alone."<sup>52</sup> The plantation complex also served as a disciplinary site to congregate the enslaved into a confined location, apply mechanisms of surveillance, and carry out forms of punishment to shape behaviours in ways that could encourage alienation and isolation. The deployment of panoptic power on the plantation can also be observed in the alienating techniques of slave-labour. Plantation equipment was fused to the *bios* of the slave through practices of disciplinary power: the exposure of the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 34.

<sup>52</sup> Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 129. Semple agrees with Foucault that "light becomes a trap: 'An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against himself.'" Ibid., 322.

body to physical injury, the surveillance of labour to reinforce security, calculate productivity, and develop new and efficient methods of industry. Beckles argues that the Caribbean sugar plantation complex was “probably Europe’s largest industrial complex in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its deployment of state-of-the-art production systems, energy and chemical technologies, and a disciplined labour force set it apart as something altogether innovative and futuristic.”<sup>53</sup> Slave management focused on labour productivity to calculate future plantation generation and to profile individual and collective effort. Systems of accounting became a formalized disciplinary mechanism to justify the punishment of slaves who failed to reach expected standards of labour performance. The biopolitical features of plantation accounting and management are analyzed in the third part of this study as they relate to amelioration and pro-natalism.

Another aspect of Bentham’s corpus that positions the plantation complex as a disciplinary site are his ideas concerning “Panoptic Town” and “Paedotrophium,” which Semple argues were proof of a more far-reaching objective of panopticism.<sup>54</sup> Bentham’s panopticon would realize a “range of different processes: Silkworm culture, trout-farming, vegetable-drying within the heating system, distillation, dyeing, mushroom-growing, an aviary for guinea fowls, and the breeding of angora rabbits. Panopticon was to have its own coinage, newspaper, almanac, and maps.”<sup>55</sup> The plantation complex, through its expansive institutional network to integrate and encapsulate the environmental, social, and material conditions of slave life, also functioned as a totalizing apparatus. Barbadian plantations integrated on-site facilities, amenities, and resources, which could include the cultivation

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<sup>53</sup> Beckles, “Capitalism, Slavery and Caribbean Modernity,” 779.

<sup>54</sup> Semple, *Bentham’s Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 285.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 288

of produce for domestic consumption, the manufacture of utensils for production and housing, as well as systems for child-care and medical-care to ensure production.

Foucault does not approach Bentham's political philosophy through a positivist historical lens, which would interpret the designs for panopticon as an endeavour to institutionalize utilitarian thought through the pragmatic reformation of the penal system in England for economic efficiency and humanitarianism. Instead, Foucault's genealogical approach evidences how the panoptic project reveals the broader disciplinary and governmental deployments of power in Bentham's utilitarian philosophy.<sup>56</sup> As an art of planter government, the epistemological mapping of panoptic power on the plantation complex uncovers a diagram of transmodern exploitation that connects together the commoditization of blackness in the Atlantic economy with the biopolitical convergences of surveillance and punishment. By identifying how disciplinary power functioned as a *dispositif* of slave management, we can trace how the plantation complex materialized a cacotopia of racism, physical punishment, labour exploitation, and psychological trauma.

Foucault's analysis of the panopticon, however, cannot be exclusively reduced to a demonstration of how disciplinary power can lead to an overarching totalitarian reality that suffocates human agency through mechanisms of force, but as a grid of intelligibility that can mobilize controlled environments of training, production, and efficiency. For Foucault, disciplinary power differs from sovereign power, as the latter organizes relations of force through a matrix of localization, acquisition, and hierarchy. In "The Anthropology of Colonialism" Peter Pels illustrates how an analysis of colonial discipline should focus on

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<sup>56</sup> Foucault argues that genealogy identifies "the accidents, the minute deviations- or conversely, the complete reversals- the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations." Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 81.

the “nonverbal, tactile dimensions of social practice: the exchange of objects, the arrangement and disposition of bodies, clothes, buildings, and tools in agricultural practices, medical and religious performances, regimes of domesticity and kinship, physical discipline, and the construction of landscapes.”<sup>57</sup>

Biopolitical slave management in Barbados encouraged a climate for industrialization through this science of management. The discipline of both the enslaved and planter class impacted the commercial ontogeny of the plantation: the organization and efficiency of labour (the hierarchical and gendered aspects of the gang-labour system); competitive equilibrium (the decision making and risk assessment of commodity pricing, market supply, and the transportation of goods in the marketplace); and the mobilization of natural resources (the management and exploitation of the environment). Without a regimented slave-labour force, the planter, his family, and the slave colony in general were at risk of insurrections that could topple the entire plantocracy. In the planter’s absence, the overseer was the principal authority figure responsible for the day-to-day operation of the plantation and assuaging resistance. Visibility and proximity for the overseer were the most powerful tools available to anticipate complications that could disrupt labour output and threaten the security of the planter class and white population, such as arson, sabotage, and insurrection. Resistance from both white servants and enslaved blacks, included widespread acts of arson, damaging equipment, work stoppages, and absconding.<sup>58</sup> The enslaved were able to target plantation production as a source for clandestine disruption as minor damage to equipment could easily bring output to a standstill. While outright

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<sup>57</sup> Peter Pels, “The Anthropology of Colonialism: Culture, History, and the Emergence of Western Governmentality,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol.26. (1997): 169.

<sup>58</sup> See Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados.”

attempts at insurrection were undertaken, these were contained given the environmental terrain of Barbados and the presence of militiamen.<sup>59</sup>

Barbadian planters, however, recognized that an imminent threat could escalate rapidly, and as a precautionary measure used landscaping techniques to protect their property and enhance security. One strategy was to grow lime trees, which were covered with sharp barbs, around the planter's residence to ward off an attack.<sup>60</sup> Both Beckles and Watson identify several ways in which the natural environment of Barbados and architectural designs of the plantocracy mitigated a widespread insurrection: the flat terrain of the island and few forested areas and gullies to hide after the land had been cleared for sugar cultivation; an internal transportation system of roads that enabled the militia to access plantations throughout the island; and military forts to mitigate domestic insurrection and protection from foreign enemies.<sup>61</sup>

Techniques of surveillance and a visible power hierarchy, however, were the primary means to mitigate acts of resistance and provide an immediate response to challenges of planter authority that could easily spread. Bentham's theory of panoptic surveillance also demonstrates the utility of having the overseer's house directly on site. He recommended that the "principal inspector or head-keeper" should have a permanent residence on the location where surveillance is required, and that if he has a family it would be all the better as they could serve as unpaid observers."<sup>62</sup> The utilitarian approach to local

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<sup>59</sup> Beckles observes that absconding was the most prevalent form of resistance and that while the island's topography did not lend itself to large-scale marronage, it was possible for fugitives to evade capture for years. Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 58.

<sup>60</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 70. Beckles's reading of Ligon observes that the planter class' fear of a black insurrection went beyond architectural defense planning to include meetings where discussions on how they would communicate should there be a widespread insurrection. Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 36.

<sup>61</sup> Beckles and Watson, 1990, 56.

<sup>62</sup> Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 44-5.

surveillance on the plantation, mobilizing human resource and environmental considerations, was critical to the disciplinary management of those enslaved as it worked toward the establishment of an ordered social life-world.

### 3.3 DISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT

Sir Frederick Winslow Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* offers insight into the relationship between disciplinary power and capitalism and how utilitarian practices of management also formalized this relationship toward the exploitation of enslaved labour. Taylor's theory of scientific management proposed "laws, rules, and principles" to eradicate the problem of inefficiency in all aspects of the social life-world, including "the management of our homes; the management of our farms; the management of the business of our tradesmen, large and small; of our churches, our philanthropic institutions, our universities, and our governmental departments."<sup>63</sup> Disciplinary management on the plantation complex, however, preempted the *modus operandi* of Taylorism beginning in the seventeenth century by first grafting together the *bios* of the enslaved to the architecture of industrial manufacture, and second, by initiating a system of inhuman subjugation to achieve tractability, mechanization, and efficiency. These practices of labour exploitation, which were linked to ideologies of race/colour and gender to create additional layers of hierarchy and surveillance, are captured in the repetitive performances of field labour, the artisanal skills training, and time/motion calculations for productivity.

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<sup>63</sup> Taylor, *Scientific Management*, 163-64.

Caitlin Rosenthal's analysis of Caribbean and American plantation account books from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reveal that slave managers practiced "advanced accounting and management tools, including depreciation and standardized efficiency metrics, to manage their land and their slaves" and through "quantitative analysis" viewed "humans as capital."<sup>64</sup> This was achieved, in part, through the identification and measurement of labour into units "prime field hand; half hand; and quarter hand."<sup>65</sup> These observations lead her to conclude that the plantation was a site of modern management and that accounting records reveal that many slave managers "took a more scientific approach to management than the factories did."<sup>66</sup>

We can also turn to Gramsci's analysis of the factory to elucidate how labour exploitation on the plantation functioned as a site of sovereignty and discipline:

Under the capitalists, the factory was a miniature state, ruled over by a despotic lord. The lord had sole right to select the manual workers, clerks, foremen and specialists and distribute them among the workshops, offices and laboratories. The factory was a despotically organized state, with all power resting in the hands of the proprietor or his delegates.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Caitlin Rosenthal, "Plantations Practiced Modern Management," *Harvard Business Review*. (September 2013). Ian Beamish argues that several historians, such as Caitlin Rosenthal, have turned to plantation accounting sources from the Caribbean and Southern United States to develop an analysis between capitalism and slavery, which includes "practices including engagement with distant markets, credit networks, commodities, abstracted labor, the pursuit of profit, and complex financial networks." Ian Beamish, "A 'Complicated Humbug': Slavery, Capitalism, and Accounts in the Cotton South", *Agricultural History* 95, no. 1 (2021): 42, 63.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935*, ed. David Forgacs (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 97-98. Gramsci argues that "[t]he supreme law of capitalist society is free competition between all social forces. Merchants compete for markets, bourgeois groupings compete for the government, the two classes compete for the state. Merchants seek to create monopolies behind protective legislation. Each bourgeois grouping would like to monopolize the government, and to be able to make exclusive use of the spell-bound energies of the class that is outside governmental competition. Intransigents are free-traders. They do not want barons whether sugar and steel barons or



Although slave-labour is absent from Gramsci's description of the early twentieth-century factory, his conceptualization of power as both localized and mobile illustrates the relationship between capitalism and discipline outlined in the principles of Taylor's *Scientific Management* and previously apparent on the plantation complex: the resources and mechanisms of authority to situate panoptic conditions of surveillance to monitor the productive capacities and obedience of labourers, distribute bodies and configure the spatial isolation of the institution, and shape a hierarchical network of control and punishment. Disciplinary power on the plantation often functioned as a multifaceted grid of surveillance and punishment through territorial encampment, legal jurisdiction, and administrative control. Similar to Gramsci's characterization of the factory being a "miniature state," which was governed by a "despotic lord" and his proprietors, disciplinary power on the plantation targeted the enslaved body through devices of observation, juridical authority, and physical punishment to establish conformity and coordinate an assemblage of material acquisition. What distinguished the plantation complex from the nineteenth-century factory, however, was not only the disciplinary measures initiated for organized slave-labour, but the institutional synergy and entrepreneurial creativity demanded from their self-reliance. Given that the plantation environments of Barbados were typically isolated structures managed by resolute agro-capitalists whose focus was centered on their financial interests, rigorous efforts were taken to ensure self-sufficiency.

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barons in government." Ibid., 43-44. This study argues that beginning in the seventeenth century elite Barbadian planters incorporate both the feudal aspects of monarchical legitimation and the emergence of a proto-capitalist class.

Orthodox historical considerations of industrial technology on the plantation complex tend to separate the instruments of production from the *bios* of the enslaved in regard to the exploitation of mechanized labour. A genealogical analysis of disciplinary management on the plantation, however, exhibits how the enslaved were compelled not only to observe and perform standardized movements of skilled labour, but also to improve upon these executions of physical activity to increase efficiency.<sup>68</sup> Plantation slaves were forced under the bulwark of sovereign force to labour or face varying levels of punishment or face death, but the exercise of disciplinary bio-mechanics increased labour demands through established standards of performance and training. This was achieved under circumstances where physical injury became normalized through the operation of hazardous equipment such as boilers, rollers, and presses.<sup>69</sup> Taylor's ambition for a cooperative relationship between the manager and worker outlined in *Scientific Management*, and the conditions of scientific racism, punishment, and death on the plantation complex might seem incommensurate, but the undergirding fabric of surveillance and subjectivity in both circumstances of labour exploitation express an interminable feature of capitalism: the enslaved and proletariat were oppressed by disciplinary force through techniques of managerial intervention to harness human energy and transform the labourer into a "machine."

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<sup>68</sup> According to Sheridan, eighteenth-century Antiguan planter Samuel Martin spent considerable time showing new husbandry techniques directly to those enslaved and would assign expectations and practices of labour according to "age, sex, strength, ability, and temperament. Richard B. Sheridan, "Samuel Martin, Innovating Sugar Planter of Antigua 1750-1776", *Agricultural History* 34, no. 3 (1960): 130.

<sup>69</sup> Barbadian planters often bequeathed to their heirs slaves and plantations equipped with instruments for sugar production such as pots, dippers, mills, curing houses, still houses, and boiling houses. Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Harrison, Col. Robert, 4 July 1700, RB6/37; Forstall, Richard, 4 March 1702, RB6/43.

This study builds upon Davis' observation that it is erroneous to categorize slave-labour as economically backward or feudalistic in nature; that plantation production due to its organized gang-labour corresponds to the mechanistic labour appropriation of industrialized capitalism.<sup>70</sup> Another significant observation concerning slavery is captured by Mintz, who argues that the plantation was at the very least a crucial stage in both the development of industrialization and capitalism.<sup>71</sup> Davis and Mintz provide a compelling analysis into how plantation slavery impacted the broader geo-economic permutations of accumulation, production, market-based pricing, trade, and technology, but their examination of planter power fails to demonstrate how their strategies of rule galvanized capitalism. Mintz does, however, identify the plantation as agro-industrial and capitalist according to three critical elements: discipline, organization, and time.<sup>72</sup> His assertion that it is problematic to categorize what economic paradigm gave birth to the plantation, however, is a significant historical and philosophical closure. He argues that this ambivalence is due to the contemporaneous realities of slave-labour and capitalist free-trade, and that the primary difference between those enslaved and the proletariat, are that the latter exercised influence over their working conditions through their ability to sell their labour.<sup>73</sup>

Not only does this perspective diminish slave autonomy and resistance, but it also overlooks strategies of planter management to encourage "industriousness" such as specialized artisanal training to be a smith, cooper, or seamstress. Moreover, it performs a significant historical erasure of the enslaved black population in colonies such as Barbados

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<sup>70</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 6, 77.

<sup>71</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 55.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-58.

who were forced to compete in the marketplace outside the confines of the plantation as artisans, prostitutes, and labourers. Benítez-Rojo is correct that social standing on the plantation was disseminated inequitably, but his observation that most slaves were outside the orbit of capitalist relations is supported by the problematic inference that the surplus value of those in bondage was in a state of abeyance.<sup>74</sup> Similar to Mintz, Benítez-Rojo's claim that the economic utility of the enslaved can be emptied out also effectively ignores the realities of resistance, negotiation, and agency, as well as the productive value and personal accumulation of wealth.

In 1785 elite Barbadian planters, John Braithwaite, James Colleton, Edward Drax, Francis Ford, Philip Gibbes, W.M. Thorpe Holder, Edwin Lascelles, and John Walter, published "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes." This publication evinces the collusion and systematization of the plantation model as an overarching guide for best practices. These instructions were drafted to assist "Proprietors and Managers" with managing a large-scale plantation consisting "of two hundred and fifty acres of land; of which one hundred and fifty acres are cane land."<sup>75</sup> The planters advised that "[t]he art of boiling, or making sugar, is to be learned by ocular instructions, nice observations, and long experience."<sup>76</sup> These strategies of disciplinary force are echoed in Bentham's later philosophy of the panopticon as well as those of Taylor, which theorize that the objectives of detainment, forced labour, and instruction, could be enhanced according to the intensity of inspection being applied upon those who were

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<sup>74</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island*, 132.

<sup>75</sup> "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes." London: 1785. Barbados Museum & Historical Society, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 1, 46. The advisements of management outlined in the 1785 report predate Taylor's *Scientific Management*, which encourages the worker to develop innovative and resourceful methods to improve labour efficiency and encourages reward to those who show initiative. Taylor, *Scientific Management*, 232-33.

confined.<sup>77</sup> The atomization of time and resource as measured through units of production, the evaluation of labour performance in a working day, and the expenditure of capital to traders, brokers, manufacturers, and firms, exemplify how a disciplinary logic modeled plantation efficiency *in toto*.

Plantation records and colonial wills from Barbados indicate that plantations varied in size. The *Barbados Slave Register* provides data illustrating the presence of many large plantations in Barbados, a select few are listed here with the name of the complex, parish of origin, and number of slaves catalogued respectively: *Wittshires*, St. Philip, 102; *Arthur Seat*, St. Thomas, 113; *Mapps*, St. Philip, 126; *Ashford*, St. John, 127; *Sandy Hille*, St. Philip, 130; *Grove*, St. Philip, 130; *Brighton*, St. George, 137; *Todds*, St. John, 142; *Mount Gay*, St. Lucy, 150; *Rock Halle*, St. Peter, 168; *Ovens Mouth*, St. James, 182; *Four Square*, St. Philip, 189; *Simmons's*, St. Philip, 227; *Baileys*, St. Philip, 229; *Constant*, St. George, 249; *Kendals & Hallets*, St. John, 419.<sup>78</sup> For every large plantation of over one hundred slaves listed in the *Barbados Slave Register*, there are many others that are not named, housing anywhere from a few slaves to a few dozen.<sup>79</sup>

According to Ligon, a planter should prevent idleness to keep order, employ a competent overseer, plant and harvest *ad seriatum*, and sustain the efficient operation of the *ingenio*, which he referred to as the “*Primum Mobile*” of the plantation to maximize production.<sup>80</sup> He stated that the *ingenio*, which consisted of the boiling-house, coppers,

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<sup>77</sup> Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, ed. Miran Božovič, (London: Verso, 1995), 98.

<sup>78</sup> Slave Register, Cave Hill, University of West Indies, Barbados. Handler and Lange's research concerning the population of 177 slave plantations (39 of which were counted more than once at different periods) between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reveals that this sample “included 25,069 slaves, an average of 141.6 slaves for each plantation and a median of 135.5; the range was from 350 slaves per plantation at the highest, to 20 at the lowest.” Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 34.

<sup>79</sup> Slave Register, Cave Hill, University of West Indies, Barbados

<sup>80</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 55.

furnaces, still-house, and curing-house, would operate at full capacity with proper maintenance by skilled slaves.<sup>81</sup> Ligon's instruction regarding mechanical failure on the plantation illustrates the relationship between technology and the *bios* of the enslaved labourer as early as the seventeenth century and his advisements for increased efficiency indicate the prioritization of agricultural generation and manufacture.<sup>82</sup> Foucault's concept of "living dangerously" applies to these observations and speaks to the nexus of disciplinary expenditure on one hand, where realities of physical injury were prevalent, and to the possibilities of skills training, which could realize hierarchical status, privilege, and possibilities of wage-labour and freedom beyond the tentacles of the plantation complex.<sup>83</sup> These conditions were manifest in post-emancipatory societies where the perpetuation of white supremacy was supported through the hegemony of agro-capitalists.<sup>84</sup> While Foucault states that "living dangerously" applies increasingly to the liberal paradigm, the plantation complex and circumstances of racial bondage in the colony reveal the universality of harm through punitive correction, physical expenditure, and unsafe labour conditions.

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 55-56.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 66. Foucault states that "[t]he subject could demand the protection of his sovereign against an external or internal enemy. It is completely different in the case of liberalism. It is no longer just that kind of external protection of the individual himself which must be assured. Liberalism turns into a mechanism continuously having to arbitrate between the freedom and security of individuals by reference to this notion of danger [...] "Live dangerously," that is to say, individuals are constantly exposed to danger, or rather, they are conditioned to experience their situation, their life, their present, and their future as containing danger." Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> For analysis on the financial legacy of the European trade in African peoples and the institution of slavery in the Caribbean, see, Beckles, *Britain's Black Debt: Reparations for Caribbean Slavery and Native Genocide*, University of the West Indies Press, 2012.

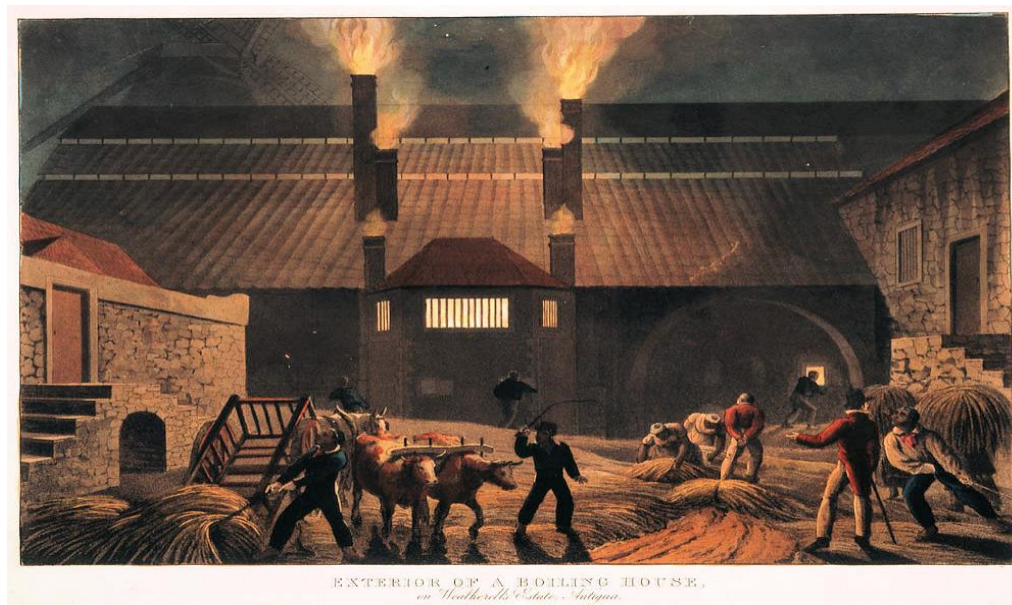


Figure 18. Sugar Boiling House, Antigua, West Indies, 1823. Caption: "Exterior of a Boiling House, on Weatherell's Estate," 'slaves hauling cane trash to fuel furnace, ox carts with sugar bags; white overseer/manager.'" Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."



Figure 19. "Interior of a sugar boiling house at Wetherall's Antigua, by William Clark, London 1823 (source: British Library)." Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism/slavery/archaeology/caribbean/plantations/caribbean35.a.spx>

The connection between slave-labour and industrialized capitalism is confirmed through the consumption of the slave's physical body by the technological instruments of plantation manufacture. As a source of plantation capital, the enslaved were expected to submit to injury and mortality to increase the planter's profit. Discipline enforced circumstances of labour hierarchy on the plantation that resigned the enslaved to the devastating physical burn up of fieldwork and severe injury while operating boilers, rollers, and presses. Bernard Moitt notes that malnourished slaves who laboured on the three vertical rollers to extract juices could expect their shift to last up to eighteen hours, and that a nearby hatchet was kept close to hack an arm off that had been pulled into the machine.<sup>85</sup>

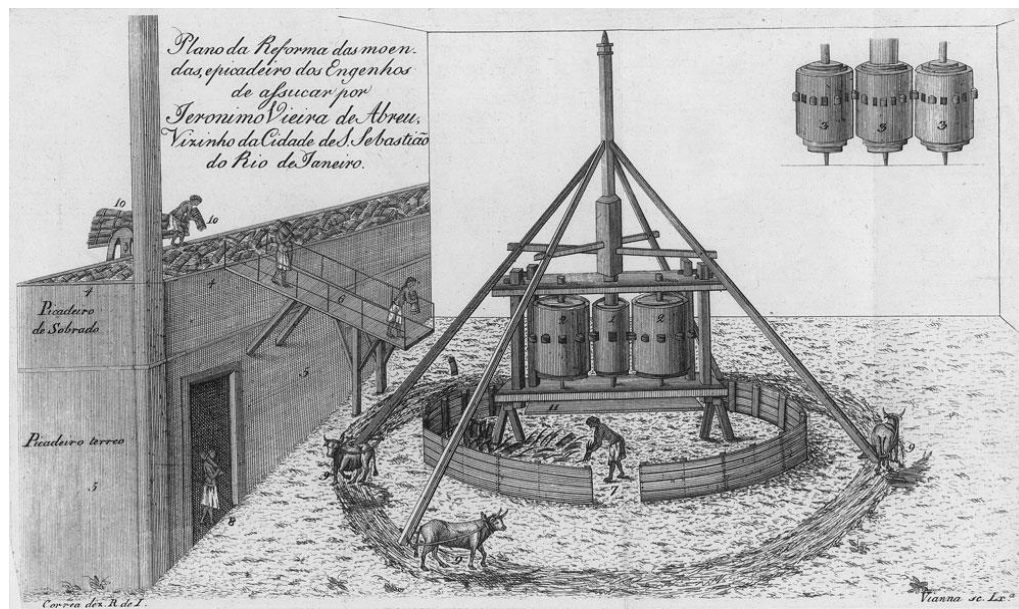


Figure 20. Cattle-Driven Sugar Mill, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1798. Source: José Mariano da Conceicao, *O fazendeiro do Brazil* (Lisbon, 1798), vol. 1, after p. 192. (Copy in the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

<sup>85</sup> Moitt, Bernard, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635-1848*, Indiana University Press, 50.



Records from the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton plantations in Barbados also list in their inventory critical injuries to the enslaved, such as scalding, arm and leg fractures, and convulsion.<sup>86</sup> What is crucial to observe are how these injuries are not reported with the personal details of those enslaved, as naming draws connection to the humanity of those in bondage. It is for this reason, one would suspect, that historians privilege the idea that the enslaved were nothing more than plantation inventory when reviewing bookkeeping.<sup>87</sup> On these plantations rudimentary topical medications such as olive oil and elastic bandages were used to treat burns and contusions, leg splints were fitted for leg fractures and breaks, and surgical amputation of limbs were undertaken for severe injury.<sup>88</sup> Handler and Lange argue that it is not clear “if sick houses, infirmaries, and hospitals existed during the seventeenth century, but by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they were common features on Barbadian plantations, especially, it can be assumed, of the medium to large ones.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>87</sup> Larry Gragg argues that the naming of those enslaved was often based on entrenching a climate of control. Upon reviewing the Barbadian archival record of “deeds, inventories, and wills” up to 1660, which included 1,010 named slaves, names were often inspired by one’s trade, biblical and classical inspiration, and place of origin. Gragg, Larry. *Englishmen Transplanted: The English Colonization of Barbados 1627-1660*. London: Oxford University Press, 2003.160.

<sup>88</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society. According to Handler and Lange’s examination of Newton Plantation, aside from injuries working on the boilers and in the mill, those in bondage “suffered and succumbed to a variety of ailments, illnesses, and contagious diseases including body sores, colds, “consumption”, coughs, diarrhea, dysentery, “dropsy”, elephantiasis, “fevers”, “influenza”, leprosy, loss of limbs or joints, measles, mumps, ruptures, smallpox, sore throats, stomach aches, tetanus, toothaches, yaws, and yellow fever; dirt eating, or geophagy, also occurred.” Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 98.

<sup>89</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 98. The authors state that “[a]ppraisals of the quality and facilities of “sick houses” ranged from Sampson Wood’s description of a “horrid unhealthy hole” to a leading planter’s claim in 1823 that “there is a good hospital on almost every estate, which is generally a clean well-ventilated building.” Ibid.

Tomich states that in the Caribbean “the efficient operation of a sugar plantation require[d] that an equilibrium be maintained between the amount of land cultivated; the capacity of the mill, refinery, and the internal transport system; and the size of the labour force.”<sup>90</sup> One strategy employed by Barbadian sugar planters, which coordinated environmental resource, industrial technology, and organized labour, was to divide plantation lands “so that they could be plant and harvest *seriatim*, assuring a steady flow of cane to the mill.”<sup>91</sup>

In relation to large-scale labour mobilization on large plantations, the enslaved were typically organized into three regimented gangs under a trusted black slave driver, who was in turn supervised by a white overseer. On some large plantations hundreds of slaves were organized into specialized gangs and required at times to work twenty-four-hour long shifts. Drivers and overseers supervised their performance to ensure that the desired output was reached; amidst the onset of exhaustion slaves would be more likely to risk injury.<sup>92</sup> According to Craton, black slave drivers were sometimes chosen according to stereotypes related to place of origin in Africa or because of their physical strength; they were also provided the best food, clothing, and housing on the plantation to ensure their separation from the general population and to encourage loyalty to the enslavers who offered limited and contingent authority.<sup>93</sup>

The disciplinary aspects of enslaved life on the plantation, however, were more complex than the racial violence exercised by the plantocracy and their managerial henchmen. Dynamics of force between the enslaved created a polyvalent field of

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<sup>90</sup> Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery*, 125.

<sup>91</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 49.

<sup>92</sup> Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery*, 144-45.

<sup>93</sup> Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, 54.

interaction that extended to mechanisms of internal disciplining. In Barbados some of those enslaved would even entrap and frame fellow captives as an alternative means of justice, rather than risk open acts of violence against each other that could be viewed “as attacks on their masters’ property” or as a way to foment disruption.<sup>94</sup> Circumventing channels of plantation authority and mobilizing possibilities of opportunity for the purpose of augmenting immediate resources (food, clothing, housing) and economic mobility (skills training, hiring outside the plantation, income) were severely limited by the development of gang-labour.

Morgan states that the gang system operated through “military precision” like “relentless cogs in a machine”: the first gang often referred to as the “great gang” was comprised mostly of women. They were responsible for the most intense physical work such as digging, cutting, picking, loading produce, clearing fields, planting, as well as construction projects such as building roads, walls, and constructing kilns; the second gang was a mixture of women, men, and adolescents, tasked with clearing debris from the fields, and cleaning and threshing young canes; the third gang, commonly termed the “weeding gang,” was made up of mothers and children who were responsible for clearing the cane fields.<sup>95</sup> Male slaves dominated the artisanal positions on the plantation such as carpentry, coopering, and blacksmithing, with the remainder working in the first and second gangs in the fields.<sup>96</sup> Restricting professional artisanal knowledge to men and assigning women to

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<sup>94</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 5.

<sup>95</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 108-9. If the sugarcane plants were neglected and weeds allowed to mature, their blades would become barbed and slice the flesh of the enslaved. In the event that a field became overgrown with weeds, the only solution was to set fire to the entire crop and replant. Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 88.

<sup>96</sup> Return of slave property of the late Richard Earl Drax Grosvenor. Endorsed – Drax Hall Registration List. 8 May 1820. Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 11/8. A report produced by the British House of Commons illustrates how a Barbadian sugar plantation in 1822 divided their one hundred and fifty slaves on the 314 acre estate: The first gang consisted of eighty-six men and women, the second gang was made up of twenty

the rigors of hard labour in the fields, in keeping with prevailing ideologies of gender, demonstrates how Eurocentric deployments of patriarchy (social privilege, management of property, and dependency) translated into attempts at limiting skill development and mobility. This disciplinary practice is also substantiated through pronatalist strategies of amelioration beginning in the latter part of the eighteenth century and are considered in the final section of this study. There was a price difference and visible gendered division of labour on the plantation complex with men typically at the apex, in keeping with their skill-acquisition, working in the artisanal crafts and women performing heavy field labour, outside of the few positions available for domestic work.<sup>97</sup> Handler and Lange state that “skilled tradesmen (such as carpenters, coopers, and masons) with specialized and valued roles in the sugar manufacture process” were typically adult men who received rewards for their labour.<sup>98</sup>

The 1785 “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes” recommended “there should be forty able people in the roll of the first gang, exclusive of constant watchman and principal tradesmen – and twenty in that of the second gang. I think one hundred and twenty negroes, plentifully fed and moderately worked, will always produce two such gangs.”<sup>99</sup> The Plantocracy’s advisements are clear that they believed principles of disciplinary management were necessary to achieve success. Aside from organizing labourers according to ethnicity,

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girls and boys, the third gang was comprised of eighteen slaves, and infants totaled eleven. “Slave trade. Papers relating to captured Negroes.” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 13th April, 1824. Reports of Commissioners, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers. 1826, (81). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=34ce832a-6d07-412d-aea6-292e243078a2&rsId=16FA77B4073>

<sup>97</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 51.

<sup>98</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 33.

<sup>99</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 5-6.

gender, age, and skill, the Barbadian plantocracy put a premium on the capacity of a manager to achieve productive output. The 1785 instructions outlined guidelines for the “care, industry, and management” of the plantation in order to forecast, identify, and diminish “failure”<sup>100</sup> and advised that “[a] manager of a strong constitution, in good health and anxious for success, is sometimes apt to judge of the powers of a gang of negroes by the strength of his own contribution. He may require them to do what he feels he could perform.”<sup>101</sup> These advisements speak to a later Tayloristic philosophy of management that is grounded on principles of observation, expectation, and leadership. This latter attribute was critical to ensuring that instructions for the agricultural, artisanal, and domestic demands of the plantation complex were performed as a lack of self-confidence in the manager could lead to resistance.

In this respect, Barbadian planter Richard Earl Drax also noted that it was crucial for the Manager to instruct slaves in the second gang on how to “manage their hoes, and to weed land, and to dig holes in a proper manner.”<sup>102</sup> Records from the *Drax Hall* plantation in 1820 also provide information concerning the occupational status of the ninety-two female slaves and ninety-one male slaves, which are indicative of gender balance, which was first achieved in Barbados (among Caribbean colonies) and the trend was towards natural population growth.<sup>103</sup> Beckles notes that black men used “violence and the

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>103</sup> Return of slaves property of the late Richard Earl Drax Grosvenor. Endorsed – Drax Hall Registration List. 8 May 1820. Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 11/8. A report produced by the British House of Commons illustrates how a Barbadian sugar plantation in 1822 divided their one hundred and fifty slaves on the 314 acre estate: The first gang consisted of eighty-six men and women, the second gang was made up of twenty girls and boys, the third gang was comprised of eighteen slaves, and infants totaled eleven. "Slave trade. Papers relating to captured Negroes." House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 13th April, 1824. Reports of Commissioners, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers. 1826, (81)

negotiation of demand” against enslaved women to secure their positionality of privilege.<sup>104</sup> Archival records, however, indicate that female slaves on the plantation also undertook leadership roles and occupations of esteem amongst those in bondage: On Drax Hall estate, for example, Yammy was the driver for the second gang, Venus Horn was the driver of the grass gatherers, but in keeping with gendered expectations that pertained to “care,” Queen was the sick nurse, Tomasin was the nurse to the children, and Mary Dixson was the cook. Female slaves on the plantation also occupied roles house servants and labourers in the first and second gangs.<sup>105</sup>

The Barbadian plantocracy advised that a Manager’s first order of business should be “to examine individually the state and condition of every negro; and then to assort them in such a manner, that they may never be employed upon any work to which their powers are not equal.”<sup>106</sup> The plantation complex was a space where markers of identity (colour, ethnicity, gender, and age) were critical to assigning labour roles in ways that would subordinate enslaved women. Arthur Stinchcombe argues that “throughout the history of the Caribbean, plantations that had to import their labour from elsewhere have much preferred male labourers. The sex ratio of the slave was much more male on Caribbean sugar plantations, especially during the sugar-frontier period”, which would have been during the beginning decades of the seventeenth-century before large-scale plantations had taken root.<sup>107</sup> This disproportionate distribution of the sexes, which existed in large part due to a belief that the heavy labour required for the initial construction phase of the

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<sup>104</sup> Beckles, 1999, 8.

<sup>105</sup> Return of slaves property of the late Richard Earl Drax Grosvenor. Endorsed – Drax Hall Registration List. 8 May 1820. Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 11/8.

<sup>106</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 22.

<sup>107</sup> Arthur L. Stinchcombe, *Sugar Island Slavery in the Age of Enlightenment: The Political Economy of the Caribbean World*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 90.

plantation was best performed by males, became a crucial factor in not only classifying labour roles, but also in determining the relative freedoms that could be accessed by the enslaved. Once Barbados had been established, however, there was a growing regard to entrench a balanced sex ratio and to pursue a homegrown slave force to encourage reproduction.<sup>108</sup> David Geggus argues that

females had much less access than their male counterparts to positions of independence, skill and prestige. The number of specialist positions open to women was extremely small, and they offered only limited rewards. Washerwomen passed much of their day unsupervised with fellow workers, but none had the mobility of the carters, coachmen, and muleteers, or the hunters and fishermen.<sup>109</sup>

Women who could escape fieldwork and gain access to the planter's house as domestic workers had a greater chance for attaining reward, mobility, and freedom, but being within the immediate path of the planter and his family, however, came with other risks such as increased physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.<sup>110</sup>

The specific crop being produced and the size of the labour force on the plantation, which ranged anywhere from half a dozen to hundreds of slaves, would determine the disciplinary strategies used to enforce labour, time management, and supervision, as demands for longer work-days and regimented task-labour were carried out. By the

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<sup>108</sup> Handler and Lange maintain that “[f]igures on the sexual distribution of slaves on individual plantations were more difficult to acquire than figures on the total size of slave contingents. Sexual data were gathered for eighty-nine cases (including seventy-five different plantations excluding Newton) spread over the 1727-1834 period; these eighty-nine cases included 12,301 slaves. The average percentage of males per plantation case was 48.1 (median percentage, 48.0) and of females 51.8 (median percentage, 52.0).” Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 36.

<sup>109</sup> David Geggus, “Slave and Free Colored Women in Saint Domingue,” ed. Darlene Clark and David Barry Gaspar, *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 262.

<sup>110</sup> Beckles, 1999, 26.

eighteenth-century Barbados was a plantation zone where the integration of industrial technologies and large-scale agricultural production demanded specialized artisanal craftsmen and knowledgeable agricultural labourers. The drive toward optimizing plantation efficiency not only led to extensive environmental degradation, but labour demand, which in turn increased domestic transportation and the separation of families.<sup>111</sup> The trafficking of those enslaved within Barbados to ease labour shortages was not only deemed an economic necessity, but also served as a declaration of personal sovereignty and acted as a strategy of discipline. The disposal of plantation slaves as expendable property is indicative of sovereign force, but the commercial exchange of the enslaved to secure plantation labour was an instrumental practice of commoditization. While it has been widely accepted that the transportation of those enslaved within Barbados was considered by planters a necessary economic outcome of the demands of large-scale agricultural production, archival evidence does suggest that some slave owners implemented governmental controls of management to preserve the intergenerational integrity of slavery as an institution, and that this sometimes would include monetary compensation. The consequences of transportation (broken families, purchase by a cruel master, or relocation outside of the colony) were not lost on some slave owners such as Martha Hooton whose 1704 will prohibited the sale or transportation of the slaves she

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<sup>111</sup> Richardson argues that the disastrous ecological consequences of Caribbean sugar planting, both short term and long term, have been marginalized in mainstream academic discourse. He explains that European plantation production subjected the natural environment to severe degradation through soil deterioration, deforestation, and the transformation of the region with the importation of foreign species and plant life. These conditions added to the workload of slaves who were forced to improve these poor soil conditions by digging holes and filling them with plant and animal fertilizer. Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 29-31.



possessed at the time of her decease, as well as those she had leased out; she also willed that twenty shillings be given annually to each while alive.<sup>112</sup>

Slave management not only systematized efficiencies concerning labour, time, and technology, but the behavioural disposition of its disciplinary hierarchy. The 1785 “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes” reveals the biopolitical nature of plantation management vis-à-vis instructions for supervisory discipline, paternalistic care, and racial segregation for white overseers:

When a man has acquired a perfect knowledge how to manage the land, to boil and to clay sugar, and to make rum, he has advanced a good way in the profession of a manager. But he is by no means qualified to undertake the management in chief of a plantation, until he has learned how **to govern** [emphasis in original] himself, and how to treat the servants and slaves over whom he is placed.<sup>113</sup>

The Barbadian plantocracy advised that white overseers “prohibit all improper intercourse between” white servants and slaves, “discipline with kindness,” and have those under apprenticeship dine every Sunday with the chief manager, and in the evening “read some portion of the Scripture, and some book of morality.”<sup>114</sup> The managerial ethic conveyed by the Barbadian plantocracy emphasized a paternalistic approach to disciplining white servants and black slaves by invoking a Christian obligation to “treat their fellow creatures with respect, kindness, and humanity, according to the rank and station in which his wisdom has placed them.”<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Hooton, Martha, 3 July 1704, RB6/16.

<sup>113</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 19.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 20. Drax also stated that on “[e]very Sunday all whites must attend church or be dined if they are absent (both morning & evening prayers).” “The Instructions of Henry Drax Esq. for the Management of Drax-Hall, and the Irish Hope Plantations. To Archibald Johnson the Manager,” Barbados Museum & Historical Society, 50.

<sup>115</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 21.

Paternalistic beliefs concerning the punishment of enslaved blacks were reinforced in the documentary record concerning disciplinary management. For many planters, the discipline and self-control of a slave manager conveyed professional comportment and was considered necessary for efficient plantation production and maintaining security. Archival records indicate that elite Barbadian planters during the nineteenth century also advised their managers to exercise self-control when disciplining the enslaved, and to “restrain the tongue from uttering unnecessary upbraidings” and “the use of harsh and approbrious [sic] terms,” as the enslaved “who deserves them, will be sensible of the indecency, though not of the justice of them.”<sup>116</sup> Correspondence between elite Barbadian planter Henry Drax and his plantation manager, Archibald Johnson, also expressed how slave management depended on the un-impassioned discipline and controlled engagement of white servants and black slaves, which also served to reveal the belief that blacks were incapable of self-control. Drax counseled Johnson, who was responsible for his *Drax-Hall* and *Irish Hope* plantations, to

never punish to gratify anger or passion; the end of punishments being to reclaim the malefactor, and to terrify others from committing the like faults. A wise prudent man will not be passionate, to servants especially, **for a passionate man is not fit to judge or to command** [emphasis in original].<sup>117</sup>

Drax stated that the manager should without reservation apply quick and severe punishment upon white servants and black slaves who committed offenses. Drax singled out drunkenness as a common pathology among indentured whites and stated that enslaved

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

<sup>117</sup> “The Instructions of Henry Drax Esq. for the Management of Drax-Hall, and the Irish Hope Plantations,” 56.

blacks were “addicted” to thievery.<sup>118</sup> While drunkenness was a moral failing and theft a crime, the response offered by Drax confirms the conditions of mortal punishment on the plantation complex. What is crucial to observe is the striking difference concerning the nature of punishment for white servants and enslaved blacks. Whereas servants did not receive any physical punishment for their intoxication, but instead were sent to the stocks until they were sober, the enslaved would be “severely handled” for “stealing sugar, molasses, or rum” as it had a direct impact of profit.<sup>119</sup> Although Drax failed to offer any further qualification as to what he meant by “severely handled,” he did warn his manager that “[i]f at any time you take notice of a fault you design to punish, let it be immediately executed; especially upon negroes; many of them choosing to kill themselves to avoid correction.”<sup>120</sup> This statement affirms both the excessive force of punishment, and resistance to the mortal structures of disciplinary punishment. He also stated that “field-overseers” should “besides having a good command, be very active, diligent, and ingenious; if possible honest, negroes so qualified, under your directions, will quickly make able overseers, as it will be your part to see that there be not too much severity or lenity used by the mill.”<sup>121</sup> Again, the plantocracy advised for a more “professional” approach to management to increase production.

Along with racialized slave-labour, the class-based estrangement of poor whites in the slave colony facilitated an interminable disciplinary apparatus of capitalist exploitation. This was achieved by the labour exploitation of the poor whites, in particular, women and children, who were now forced to contend in a more competitive labour environment after

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 56-57.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 58.

the development of large-scale slavery. Analysis in the first chapter of this study revealed that the plantocracy captured the lion's share of the most arable land and succeeded in marginalizing the underclass of white indentured labourers into a profoundly hierarchical class-based society. Beckles argues that by the end of the eighteenth century the supremacy of the elite Barbadian planter class had produced a majority white proletariat society that could be characterized as "wage labourers, peasants and unemployed 'vagrants.'" <sup>122</sup> According to Beckles many poor whites could still be found labouring on large plantations into the eighteenth century and because they suffered from chronic unemployment, poverty, and exclusion, were dependent on poor-relief institutions. <sup>123</sup> The shift to African labour on the plantations created significant intergenerational adversities for the poor white population in Barbados that impacted the material realities of life. By the end of the eighteenth century the realities of white destitution had culminated into a political campaign that called on planters to assist with poor relief for the white underclass. In the 1780s an elite planter named Joshua Steele, who was a member of the London Society of Arts, commissioned a study that concluded whites were worse off than "free coloureds, free blacks and elite slaves" given the failure to capitalize on the currency of their whiteness and to obtain trade skills in order to compete with free blacks. <sup>124</sup> In an effort to reverse the declining condition of the poor white community, Steele formed the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in 1781, which focused on the development of domestic manufacturing to improve conditions of skills training and

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<sup>122</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 46-7.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-8.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-9.

employment, and by 1783, legislated policy for the planter class to employ “‘profligate whites who lived by ‘vagrant beggary’ and other forms of ‘indolence.’”<sup>125</sup>

This movement toward economic investment in the poor white Barbadian community represented a continuation of the inferiorization of the poor, as noted in the first part of this study, and also signified a critical milestone in the development of a capitalist system where intra-racial competition in the marketplace contributed to the intensification of hierarchy through forms of educational skills training and the grooming of a white working class, which also served to mitigate intra-racial cooperation and alliance that threatened the plantocracy. Althusser argues that “unlike social formations characterized by slavery or serfdom, this reproduction of the skills of labour power tends (this is a tendential law) decreasingly to be provided for ‘on the spot’ (apprenticeship within production itself), but is achieved more and more outside production: by the capitalist education system, and by other instances and institutions.”<sup>126</sup> The maturation of Barbados as a competitive racial environment (black tradesmen v. poor whites), however, demanded that formal institutional bodies be created to intervene as apprenticeship systems within the auspices of production, and as quasi-educational apparatuses through governmental policy. These practices and institutions of disciplinary power were indispensable features for the advancement of capitalistic exploitation and the growing disparity of wealth among identifiable classes and a conduit for maintaining the economic oppression of blacks in post-emancipation Barbados.

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 49-50.

<sup>126</sup> Althusser, *On Ideology*, 6.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DISCIPLINARY GOVERNANCE AND RESISTANCE

### 4.1 ABUSE, CONFINEMENT, DEPRIVATION, AND HARD LABOUR

In his seminal work *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, C.L.R. James argues that the slave owner's whip was the "incentive to work and the guardian of discipline" and that practices of slave punishment were only restrained by the sadistic imagination of the oppressor. James details a number of sadistic acts of punishment:

irons on the hands and feet, blocks of wood that the slaves had to drag behind them wherever they went, the tin-plate mask designed to prevent the slaves eating the sugar-cane, the iron collar. Whipping was interrupted in order to pass a piece of hot wood on the buttocks of the victim; salt, pepper, citron, cinders, aloes, and hot ashes were poured on the bleeding wounds. Mutilations were common, limbs, ears, and sometimes the private parts, to deprive them of the pleasures which they could indulge in without expense. Their masters poured burning wax on their arms and hands and shoulders, emptied the boiling cane sugar over their heads, burned them alive, roasted them on slow fires, filled them with gunpowder and blew them up with a match; buried them up to the neck and smeared their heads with sugar that the flies might devour them; fastened them near to nests of ants or wasps; made them eat their excrement, drink their urine, and lick the saliva of other slaves. One

colonist was known in moments of anger to throw himself on his slaves and stick his teeth into their flesh.<sup>1</sup>

Demonstrations of spectacular punishment such as those described by James, although pursued by the majority of Barbadian planters, represented just one dimension of abuse to abate resistance and encourage increased production. Sovereign techniques of spectacular punishment would appear to be the most effective strategy to discourage resistance as they included excruciating acts of physical pain, which included amputation, burning, and laceration, among other things. Beginning in the latter part of the eighteenth century these acts of cruelty were becoming increasingly anathema to the managerial ethos of the elite planter class, who encouraged slave masters to be rational, unemotional, and professional, as it became clear that the preservation of the labour force could not be sustained by importation. Between the latter-part of the eighteenth century to abolition in 1833, affirmations of sovereignty that abandoned any concern for the preservation of the physical body, which exposed the offender to public humiliation, severe physical brutality, and mercilessness, increasingly became overtaken by interventions of biopolitical force. Strategic deployments of disciplinary power focused on shaping an organized, obedient, and productive slave society with an interest toward maximizing labour output and population growth.

Beginning in the latter part of the eighteenth century the Barbadian elite advised that slave managers avoid outbursts of unrestrained violence as it would engender desperation and conflict in ways that could destabilize production, such as increased rates of absconding, sabotage, arson, and poor labour effort. Barbadian planters argued that slave

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<sup>1</sup> C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, (2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. New York: Random House Inc., 1989), 12-13.

managers who resorted to passionate acts of verbal abuse and violence lacked the discipline to sustain a regimented labour environment. These advisements, which are noted in the “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes” reveal a shift in the development of biopolitical statecraft and its relationship to an emerging capitalistic order in the West. Jeffrey Young’s conceptualization of plantation “corporatism” outlines historical antecedents that are decisive to how the institution of slavery influenced capitalism and labour exploitation. He argues that rice plantations of the American South employed European practices of rationality and economic philosophy to increase their agricultural efficiency and market profitability.<sup>2</sup> What is absent from Young’s analysis of “corporatism,” however, are how techniques of hierarchy, surveillance, and punishment advanced racialized slave-labour as a feature of capitalist exploitation, and how the *bios* of the slave was situated as an interest of political value for the preservation of white supremacy by the elite planter class. The purpose of this chapter is to first explore how the epistemological devices of European economic rationality determined biopolitics as a vehicle for accelerating the development of commerce in the colony, and second, how the circumstances of planter liberty and the resistance of those in bondage to improve their material circumstances set into motion the dissolution of slavery in the Caribbean.

The crushing physical demands of the gang-labour system and its concomitant hierarchical grid of disciplinary force and punitive correction were preferred by planters beginning in the eighteenth century, and considered the most advantageous labour regime to assuage resistance and stabilize sugar production. According to Beckles, the creation of

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<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Young, *Domesticating Slavery*, 19.



a hierarchical labour system of worker inequality on the plantation introduced a critical barrier to resistance by fragmenting feelings of community among the enslaved.<sup>3</sup> This chapter, however, also demonstrates how this hierarchical socio-economic order became the primary catalyst for the expansion of occupational diversity, the procurement of freedoms, and the obtainment of resources to plot resistance movements beginning at the end of the seventeenth century and culminating in the armed rebellion of 1816. The alienation and hierarchy generated from the gang-labour system on the plantation differentiated levels of status among field labourers, domestic workers, and artisans, but it also produced opportunities for mobility and property for those tasked with occupations being performed in the public sphere, such as hucksters, tradesmen, and prostitutes. Competition among skilled slaves, free coloureds, free blacks, and poor whites also reified the disciplinary topography of socio-economic opportunity in ways that intensified the regulatory regime of juridical, martial, and political control exercised by the Barbadian government, and also nourished inter-racial partnerships and confrontations. This was undertaken by the expansion of a colonial policing apparatus in urban areas such as Bridgetown. This shift toward biopolitical slave management also emerged as a concern for economic and political interest given the Barbadian planter class's commercial endeavours in the colony and the wider strategic geopolitical considerations of plantation production for English empire building in the Caribbean.

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<sup>3</sup> Beckles' analysis of slave resistance also refers to the deployment of "discursive devices" for serializing and mapping out deployments of identity within a hierarchical plane of slave-labour. He states that: "Inequalities among slave groups generated differences in reward levels created differentiated social, cultural, and political behaviour in matters as varied as access to leisure and legal freedom. At different moments across space most slaves concerned with social betterment focused fastidiously on the supply of food and the attainment of cultural, domestic and recreational freedom. While this majority may have fantasised about the unfettered fellowship of legal freedom, only a minority seemed always willing to cast caution to the wind in violent pursuit of it." Hilary McD. Beckles, "Creolisation in Action: The Slave Labour Elite and Anti-Slavery in Barbados," *Caribbean Quarterly*, 44.1/2. (March-June, 1998), 108.

Despite being a nucleated labour environment that was grounded on worker hierarchy<sup>4</sup>, isolation, and competition, some of the enslaved in Barbados conspired for collective rebellion and carried out clandestine acts of resistance such as slowing down production, interrupting labour schedules, sabotaging machinery, pretending to be unskilled or clumsy, absconding, stealing, arson to crops and buildings, and damaging crop yields and stealing sugar cane.<sup>5</sup> Outright collective rebellion was the most visible expression of force to challenge the authority of the planter class, as acts of resistance that resulted in poor productivity such as working slowly, creating obstacles to completion, pretending not to understand how to perform the task or operate machinery, damaging crops, and sabotaging equipment, could delay output and offset seasonal routines, but could not overturn the entrenched system of white supremacy embedded by the economic, social, and political disenfranchisement of blacks under the plantation system. Brazen acts of resistance such as arson, assault, murder, and absconding, were more visible threats to the authority of the planter class as they focused on the fundamental aspects of plantation control – the means to physically detain the enslaved, preserve the safety of the white population, and protect the financial security of the planter class.

The ability not only to disrupt, but to induce significant financial devastation empowered the enslaved in ways that are captured in Foucault's analysis of government. Foucault argued that whereas the market in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was perceived to be an apparatus grounded on justice, in the eighteenth century governmental

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<sup>4</sup> Beckles argues that in the eighteenth-century, Barbadian society was defined by a deeply entrenched culture of social hierarchy ("a relatively privileged elite of slaves, free blacks and free coloureds") that worked to preserve white supremacy. Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 1990, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 127-29.

reason as a technology functioned in terms of utility and interest.<sup>6</sup> He theorized that the state no longer focused on “its own growth, wealth, population, and power” but on how governmental intervention could be justified through the achievement of interests themselves, such as those related to an “individual, thing, good, wealth, or process of interest for individuals.”<sup>7</sup> While the principles of natural law, as it related to the inferiorization and submission of blacks, undergirded plantocratic rule as an epistemological register, elite Barbadian planters beginning in the eighteenth century were directed toward a collective model of governance that would attempt to align their domestic interests of security alongside the bondage and continued labour exploitation of the enslaved, and to conceive this as an interest of public welfare, economic growth, and empire building. The proliferation of a disciplinary regime in Barbados during the eighteenth century was prompted by the several conspiracies and acts to abolish the slaveholding interest by the enslaved population; the growth and complexity of the market economy and its regulatory apparatus to police the enslaved; and the maturation of occupational diversity and expansion of freedoms obtained by the enslaved in the public sphere, which included the trade and sale of goods for currency, and the transition of some of their number to manumission. This chapter explores how the macro-regional bulwark of the Barbadian slave state functioned as a coordinated territory for biopolitical governance, and how this became manifest through the legal regulation of the marketplace and trade: the primary site of contestation for the socio-economic freedom of the enslaved.

The movement toward a disciplinary society in Barbados was also precipitated by the planter class’s belief that the sugar industry was both fragile as a commercial enterprise

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<sup>6</sup> Foucault, 2008, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 40-1.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 44-5.

(due to capital costs of production, transportation of goods, labour procurement and sustainment) and underestimated by the metropole as a strategic geopolitical institution (the failure of England's government to subsidize goods, reduce taxation rates and excise duties, reinforce safe-trade practices in Africa, and bolster military support both in the colony and along the coastal slave fortresses, as noted in the first part of this study). The ongoing conflict between the English government and Barbadian planters during the seventeenth century is surprising, as Handler and Lange maintain that "Britain not only received most of what Barbados produced, but it also supplied a great deal of the manufactured goods and non-organic materials that the island consumed."<sup>8</sup> It appears that poor metropolitan leadership and a limited ability to restrain the commercial ambitions and independence of elite planters contributed to conflict.

A report at the end of the seventeenth century revealed that the economic circumstances characterized by the Barbadian planters, who calculated that the large investment of capital required for establishing a sugar plantation (mills, boiling houses, coppers, still, tools, white servants, slaves, animals, and stock) would only yield a two percent profit.<sup>9</sup> Of course the plantocracy embellished their adversities to bolster a claim for increased political and commercial autonomy. As the entire system of plantation production depended heavily on capturing this profit through the exploitation of enslaved black labour, the capacity to disrupt economies of scale created a state of interdependence that suggests a far more complex reading of the comparative nuances of the proletariat and enslaved than some Atlantic historians acknowledge. Mintz, for example, argues that while both the enslaved and proletariat were estranged from the instruments of production, the

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<sup>8</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 18.

<sup>9</sup> "The present case of a Barbados planter, and reasons against laying a further duty on sugar"

latter was able to effect change in the conditions of their labour (location, hours, and employer) and also had the freedom to spend wages.<sup>10</sup> Firstly, the migration of members of the poor white proletariat class from England to Barbados was determined by a rigid class system that severely limited upward mobility, restricted employment prospects, constrained possibilities for relocation, and inhibited the generation of surplus earnings beyond subsistence living. In this regard, the economic liberties Mintz associates with the proletariat are significantly diminished. Secondly, while the elements of class-based alienation in an emerging capitalistic system differ from racialized slavery, both systems of oppression reveal the disciplinary and governmental interests mobilized by the master class to exploit the labour efforts of those marginalized by force. Handler and Lange reveal that records during the mid-seventeenth century point to economic reasons for English emigration to Barbados, where one commentator in 1655 stated that Barbados was “‘one of the Riches spotes of ground in the wordell’ where ‘the genterey ... doth live far better than ours doue in England’”, and a second who in 1667 observed that emigrants were “‘proprietors and tradesmen – wormed out their small settlements by their more subtle and greedy neighbors.’”<sup>11</sup>

Another feature of analysis that is subject to historical closure in Mintz’s work, which is crucial to understanding that the enslaved were not merely passive objects, is the impact acts of black resistance had on influencing conditions of labour. This holds true for the hucksters, tradesmen, and prostitutes who generated personal income, obtained increased mobility, and improved nutrition in large urban centers in the British Caribbean,

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<sup>10</sup> Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 57.

<sup>11</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 17.

such as Bridgetown and Kingston.<sup>12</sup> Handler and Lange state that “[i]n Bridgetown, especially on weekends and holidays, many hucksters sat at ‘the great market’ with their trays or baskets, while others wandered about hawking their wares.”<sup>13</sup> Most importantly, the occupational diversity and maturation of the Barbadian market economy created spaces of opportunity for the enslaved to devise and carry out a large-scale insurrection. As the enslaved constituted the majority population on the island and the number of overseers to respond to a possible insurrection was woefully inadequate, these considerations could encourage resistance.

The juridical framework of the Barbadian Slave Code (1661) was an imperative legal instrument in shaping the Atlantic plantation paradigm and the socio-political epistemology of racial blackness that enabled labour exploitation through the institution of slavery. Morgan argues that the Barbados Slave Code (1661) was the overarching legal inspiration for several legal instruments beginning in the seventeenth century, such as those entrenched in Jamaica and the Leeward Islands.<sup>14</sup> Beckles and Morgan explain that an elite Barbadian planter, Sir Thomas Modyford, who would become Governor of Jamaica (1664-70), used the 1661 Barbados Code, and its subsequent amendments to develop a slave act in 1696, in order to replicate the conditions of plantation management through the juridical control of the enslaved, and that the Antigua Slave Code of 1702 was also inspired by the Barbadian statute.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Beckles, 1999, *Centering Woman: Gender Relations in Caribbean Slave Society*, 141.

<sup>13</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 31.

<sup>14</sup> Morgan, 114.

<sup>15</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 35; Morgan, 2007, 117.

The 1661 Slave Code acted not only as an official legal instrument to codify white supremacy and the unbounded domain of planter sovereignty, but disciplinary mechanisms of prohibition and punishment. Planters utilized techniques of deprivation, intimidation, physical abuse, and murder, which were conventional practices of slavery and rarely punishable in the colonial courts, to marshal large-scale gang-labour. Neglect, hard-labour, branding, disfigurement, scarring, and loss of limb were exercised strategically and with enough frequency to inflict a permanent psychological inscription of trauma and a physical memorialisation of planter oppression. According to Beckles the Barbadian Slave Code (1661) drew a distinction in terms of the forms of punishment applied for private transgressions (whipping, branding, nose slitting, and amputation), from those undertaken to undermine the colonial state such as insurrection (capital punishment).<sup>16</sup> At its core, acts of resistance to undermine state authority were an assault on the institutional structures of white supremacy, but more importantly, a mimetic device of existential symbolism that the institution of slavery was friable. What we see is the failure of sovereignty (capital punishment) to mitigate insurrectionary fervor from the late seventeenth century to the rebellion of 1816 and how strategies of discipline were implemented to mollify resistance.

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<sup>16</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 33.



Figure 21. “Metal Branding Irons with Owners' Initials.” Source. Isabelle Aguet, *A Pictorial History of the Slave Trade* (Geneva: Editions Minerva, 1971), plate 33, p. 45. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.”

Relationships of disciplinary power and resistance structured complex circumstances of negotiation, conciliation, and conflict that may never fully be captured by historians. What can be examined, however, are how conspiracies to carry out colony wide rebellions to topple the planter class reconfigured strategies of rule in Barbados. Plots to undermine planter authority in the latter half of the seventeenth century have been subject to limited treatment given their relationship to the dynamics of power being exercised by the master class. Sheridan’s analysis of the 1675, 1687, and 1692 plots, for example, provide limited analytical depth into how the subsequent revisions to the Slave Code, marketplace regulations, and expansion of martial and policing apparatuses, demonstrate the belief among the planter class that they faced an existential threat in the face of a black



revolt.<sup>17</sup> I argue that the level of sophistication of these conspiracies raised viable concerns about the white population's security on the island and set into motion a series of disciplinary regulations to control blacks, which are evidenced in legislative amendments aimed at tracking and immobilizing the bodies of those enslaved beyond the plantation complex: surveillance, regulation, and detention. The conspiracies of 1649, 1675, and 1692, cannot simply be regarded as movements of resistance to improve nutrition, conditions of abuse, and general treatment, as the possibility of their success and increased range throughout the island would have surely culminated into a large-scale rebellion for direct revolution in hopes of securing freedom.<sup>18</sup> The evidence that these failed plots were more than just mere hiccups in the strategies of rule exercised by the planter class is the transformation of Barbados into a more focused disciplinary environment in the eighteenth century. The implementation of juridical and political procedures to discipline enslaved blacks, however, promoted the emergence of a capitalistic market economy in ways that would foster opportunity. In order to understand the dynamics of regulation, trade, resistance and liberty in colonial Barbados between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries it is crucial to investigate the role of agricultural production and one of the primary catalysts for resistance – malnutrition. The importance of food insecurity and its

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<sup>17</sup> Sheridan notes that although “frequent reports of Negro conspiracies appear in the annals of Barbados, no slave insurrection of any moment occurred until the ‘Emancipation riot’ of 1816, and then only one European was killed. Forty-two Negroes were executed in 1675 for plotting to massacre all the white population. In 1687 a similar conspiracy was discovered and about twenty of the ringleaders were put to death. The third conspiracy followed a few years later in 1692, and again the ringleaders and their accomplices were apprehended in advance of the appointed day, tortured, and executed. The conspiracies failed in each instance because ‘loyal’ slaves informed on their ‘disloyal’ brothers.” Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, (1623-1775)*, Caribbean University Press, 127.

<sup>18</sup> Beckles states that the 1649, 1675, and 1692 were failed rebellions that incorporated a wide range of intentions. Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990: 35.

relationship to the predatory realities of labour exploitation lies in the fact that the enslaved were denied resources in an environment of abundance.

A significant dimension of slave oppression and resistance percolated around the enduring possibilities of famine before the introduction of an ameliorative biopolitical strategy to increase labour output and slave reproduction beginning at the end of the eighteenth century through increased provision grounds.<sup>19</sup> Richardson argues that environmental events such as flooding and drought had a more detrimental impact on slave mortality related to starvation than the planter's decision to marginalize the cultivation of local subsistence foods on the plantation for higher yields of monocultural production.<sup>20</sup> This characterization of slave mortality overlooks how strategies of deprivation related to the necessities of life, such as proper nutrition, were considered financially viable when the importation of slaves was relatively accessible and inexpensive. Before the abolition of the trans-Atlantic trade in Africans the unfettered importation of captives made visible the realities of mortality throughout the Caribbean. Paton's analysis of slavery in Jamaica deduces that the majority of slave offences, which aimed at undermining the plantation order, related to property theft of livestock, including sheep, goats, cattle, pigs, as well as agricultural produce such as sugar and coffee for both consumption and trade.<sup>21</sup> Barbados'

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<sup>19</sup> In referencing colonial Doctor David Collins' "Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies", Nicholas Crawford states that while "refuse" slaves, those deemed ill or weak, were often purchased by poor white planters or free blacks, they represented a financial opportunity for slave owners who could bring them back to health them "with ease, where food only is required." Nicholas Crawford, *Calamity's Empire: Slavery, Scarcity, and the Political Economy of Provisioning in the British Caribbean, C. 1775-1834*, 2006, 32.

<sup>20</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 67.

<sup>21</sup> Diana Paton, "Punishment, Crime, and the Bodies of Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," *Journal of Social History* 34.4. (2001): 928. Handler and Lange reveal that the Slave Consolidation Act of 1826 included several policies regarding theft and cite parliamentary papers that specify – "sugar canes, sugar, rum, cotton, ginger, aloes, or other staples and export production of the soil, plate wrought or melted down, iron, lead, copper, pewter, brass, tin, or another other article or thing likely to have been stolen." Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 31.

first slave rebellion in 1649, which was carried out as a series of arson attacks on boiling equipment undertaken on several plantations, was triggered by a food crisis caused by monocultural sugar production.<sup>22</sup> By sabotaging the very instruments used to refine sugar for the European market, the enslaved demonstrated the economic power they exercised as producers and skilled tradesmen. The planter class also flexed their authority by privileging monocultural sugar production to meet European demand by marginalizing the local development and diversification of food. The failure to establish a sustainable market to feed the labour force created an environment of mortal wasting, but not one where a palpable burden of loss would translate into any reforms until the pronatalist movement. Ligon's accounting of elite planter wealth reveals how the strategic conditions of scarcity ordered a hierarchical environment of resource and how those in bondage were trapped by a system of deprivation that represented racial and economic disparity in Barbados.

During the seventeenth century enslaved blacks and white servants in Barbados rarely consumed "bone meat," and would only have access to eating cattle if an animal had perished from disease.<sup>23</sup> Even under these circumstances the choice parts of the animal were eaten by the white servants, leaving the enslaved only the head, skin, and inner organs.<sup>24</sup> The living conditions of elite Barbadian planters during the seventeenth century, however, reveal that despite their affluence and command of resource, they exercised a

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<sup>22</sup> Beckles, "Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados," 9. One Barbadian planter who had offered to reward some of his slaves for warning him of the imminent revolt with "three days of rest and 'freedom', and double portions of victuals" was refused by the enslaved on the principle that they had acted out of "justice". Ibid., 9-10. What is also interesting to note is that the plot would have gone undiscovered if no one had come forward to warn the planter, as the slaves who were to set fire to the plantation worked on the furnaces and boiling equipment, and therefore had the ability to make the attack look like an accident. Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 53.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 37. "Bone meat" refers to higher quality cuts of meat, rather than the fatty or organ parts of the animal.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

willful abandon of the provision needs of the enslaved as part of their power over quality of life and death.<sup>25</sup> A commentator during the mid-seventeenth century stated that “the Hospitality, or Number of the splendid Planters, who for Sumptuous Houfes, Cloaths and Liberal Entertainment cannot be Exceeded by this their Mother Kingdome itself.”<sup>26</sup> The capacity to organize, stockpile, manage, seize, and distribute the importation and production of food through an imposed environment of sovereign control was a tactic of subjugation that speaks to the belief in the expendability of those in bondage and economic disparity amongst whites.

Richard Ligon’s experiences feasting with two elite Barbadian planters, Colonel James Drax and Colonel Walrond during the seventeenth century, substantiate the privilege and abundance enjoyed by elite sugar magnates. Drax’s extensive banquet of food included multiple courses of beef, pork, chicken, goat, veal, rabbit, duck, turtle dove, seafood, etc., all seasoned with different herbs, spices, and sauces, as well as deserts, fruit, and an assortment of alcoholic beverages for the guests.<sup>27</sup> Ligon estimated Walrond’s feast to be slightly inferior to Drax’s, given the more limited first course of beef, but the menu was otherwise equivalent in its selection and was renowned for its assortment of seafood, which included “Mulletts, Macquerels, Parratfish, Snappers, red and grey, Cavallos, Terbums, Crabs, Lobsters, and Cony fish.”<sup>28</sup> Ligon also noted his preference for Walrond’s plantation

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<sup>25</sup> Crawford states that the enslaved “recognized that planters wielded provision of food and especially medical care in disciplinary and often coercive ways.” Nicholas Crawford, *Calamity’s Empire: Slavery, Scarcity, and the Political Economy of Provisioning in the British Caribbean, C. 1775-1834*, 25.

<sup>26</sup> “Great Newes from the Barbadoes. Or, A True and Faithful Account of The Negroes against the English. And The Happy Discovery of the same. With The number of those that were burned alive, Beheaded, and otherwise Executed for their Horrid Crimes. With a short Discription of that PLANTATION.” London Printed for L. Curtis in Goat-Court upon Ludgate-Hill, 1676, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 38-39.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

as a location to dine, as the estate was less than a quarter mile from the ocean.<sup>29</sup> In the face of this opulence the realities of food insecurity represented a domain of resource inequality that heavily impacted those enslaved, especially on those preparing the meals who had no/limited access, and were a galvanizing factor in resistance movements throughout the seventeenth century.

In 1649, just a few years before Ligon's account, the island's government uncovered a conspiracy for a collective slave rebellion, which was inspired by a food crisis and was to include two plantations.<sup>30</sup> Short-feeding the enslaved and other acts of deprivation and punishment were thanatopolitical techniques of slave management carried out to decrease costs. This strategy of wasting the human body through the rigorous demands of plantation labour and malnutrition were considered amenable to sugar production when there was an abundant supply of imported captives. Under this strategy of labour exploitation the planter class would mortally exhaust the enslaved: this strategy of extraction was most financially viable after the prime years of those in bondage had been netted and before the onset of advanced age could hinder labour performance. This can be gleaned by the labour roles assigned to women considered advanced in age, such as caretaking of children.<sup>31</sup> As the Barbadian planter class during the seventeenth century did not evidence any concern regarding the forcible importation of captive Africans nor the preservation of their health through proper nutrition, rest, and medical care until the latter part of the eighteenth century, they turned first to disciplinary techniques to mitigate future rebellion, preserve the plantation system, and to ensure the highest levels of profit.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 36.

<sup>31</sup> "Return of slaves property of the late Richard Earl Drax Grosvenor." Endorsed – Drax Hall Registration List. 8 May 1820. Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 11/8.

The development of the gang-labour system, which was a disciplinary system of reward that calculated allowance of provision on occupational status, reveals how food was used as a tool to encourage production and carry out punishment. For example, an 1822 British House of Commons report, which outlined statistical data obtained from a Barbadian sugar plantation, demonstrates how food allowance was determined by a hierarchical division of labour. Aside from revealing conditions of neglect, the report illustrates how a disciplinary labour system was structured through a graduated provision allowance based on “gang” status.<sup>32</sup> Those who laboured in both the first and second gangs were apportioned two pints of Guinea corn or two and a half pints Indian corn per diem, those in the third gang were given one and a half pints of Guinea corn or two pints of Indian corn, and infants received up to one pint of Guinea corn.<sup>33</sup> This graduated provision allowance also evidences a medico-managerial approach to deciphering the perceived nutritional needs of the body through stages of development. This division of labour also reinforced discipline through a system of neglect and punishment that intensified “short-feeding” practices for substandard labour output. It is generally accepted that before the nineteenth century the enslaved were responsible for preparing their own food, which was problematic given the realities of exhaustion after labouring in the fields all day.<sup>34</sup>

Elite planters were able to coordinate this field of discipline through agronomic command: agricultural knowledge, industrial technologies, environmental resource,

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<sup>32</sup> “Slave trade. Papers relating to captured Negroes,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1824, Reports of Commissioners, 19<sup>th</sup> Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1826, (81)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Handler and Lange state that “toward the end of the slave period, plantations sometimes provided the main daily meal for slaves from a central kitchen. Generally, however, each slave household prepared its own meal in or in front of its house. If not overburdened with fatigue from a day’s work, and provided they had the necessary utensils and fuel slaves preferred these meals cooked.” Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 54.

commercial connectivity and transport, and financial wealth. The refusal to secure the well-being of the enslaved was a consequence of the capitalistic vampirism of the plantocracy, not the environmental challenges that confronted slave communities as argued by Richardson.<sup>35</sup> The decision to allow or prohibit the enslaved from producing their own food on the plantation (based on managerial preference), the inability to obtain reliable local provision, the choice to import deficient food from foreign markets, prioritize their own opulent food consumption, and the prioritization of monocultural production signal a determined willingness to create circumstances of scarcity in an effort to diminish costs. While the legacy of malnutrition amongst the enslaved in Barbados has a protracted historical record, and its quantitative analysis is outside the purview of this study, its connection to the managerial strategies of disciplinary labour offers insight into how determinations of hierarchy structured class, race, and gender in Barbados.

The historical record concerning the ability of the enslaved to grow food on garden plots in Barbados is inconsistent. The archival record indicates that many planters banned the cultivation of gardens to maximize sugar production, while others reserved small areas to the enslaved for a variety of reasons, which included the sale of commodities at the local Sunday Market, mitigating inadequate supplies on the plantation, and to encourage and reward couples raising a family. Handler and Lange state that “[a]side from the houses, which usually contained small numbers of people who were often related, the major features of the Barbadian slave villages were the house plots on which slaves raised subsistence and, occasionally, cash crops, small livestock and poultry; the ponds from which they drew their water; and the communal burial grounds in which they interred their

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<sup>35</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World, 1492-1992*, 1992, 67.

dead (sometimes close kinsmen or friends were buried under house floors).”<sup>36</sup> Kenneth Morgan argues that it was not uncommon for slaves to tend to their own gardens on their weekly day of rest by growing corn, plantains, and yams.<sup>37</sup> Circumstances of self-reliance and entrepreneurship are reflected in seventeenth-century Barbados, where Richard Ligon noted that on Sundays the enslaved would strip bark from mangrove trees to make rope that they could trade for items such as clothing.<sup>38</sup> Handler and Lange state that “[m]ost of the nonstolen goods that slaves traded consisted of vegetables (either produced by themselves or part of their food allocations from plantations), small livestock and poultry, and sometimes such materials as animal fodder and firewood that they had gathered” and stolen goods consisted of “food crops, minor cash crops (such as cotton and aloes), and, as one planter complained, ‘canes, sugar, lead, copper, iron, new and old nails, in fact everything produced or used on a plantation or elsewhere.’”<sup>39</sup>

It is clear that the enslaved exercised agency, negotiation, and resistance in their attempt to stave off malnutrition, capture resources, and expand their social network in large urban centers. This perspective challenges Benítez-Rojo’s inference that the economic standing of enslaved was absent from the forces of plantation production.<sup>40</sup> Not only were the enslaved entrenched as producers within the plantation complex through their agricultural knowledge, artisanal skill, and domestic caregiving, but they became conduits in their role as hucksters, prostitutes, and tradesmen for the diversification and expansion of the Barbadian economy. In this regard the slave subject as producer begins to

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<sup>36</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 30.

<sup>37</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 91.

<sup>38</sup> Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, 48.

<sup>39</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 31.

<sup>40</sup> Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island*, 132.



occupy sites of circumscribed liberty associated with the relative freedom of the market economy, despite their position of exploitation. While the planter class utilized techniques of surveillance and abuse to encourage output and assuage resistance, those in bondage acquired the trust of their masters, skills, and opportunity to coordinate clandestine resistance efforts, though some were intent on removing themselves entirely from the clutches of the oppressor.

Although the geography of Barbados was not amenable to large-scale marronage, absconding directly undermined the authority of the planter, represented a loss of property and production, and threatened the security of the colony.<sup>41</sup> During the 1650s marronage emerged on the island of Barbados as “[m]any slaves escaped from the plantations and hid in the gullies and caves about the island. From these locations, they raided the plantations for food and attacked whites in the vicinity.”<sup>42</sup> Handler and Lange, however, note that the “dense forests that once covered Barbados have virtually disappeared. Most of the forests were destroyed in the 1650s and 1660s while the economy was rapidly being transformed into one based on sugar production under the plantation system; by 1665 all but the smallest traces of forest had been removed through felling or burning.”<sup>43</sup> Unlike other regions throughout the Caribbean, such as Jamaica, the relatively flat topography and small size of Barbados obstructed resistance efforts, but the island’s proximity to St. Lucia and St. Vincent offered another means of escape.<sup>44</sup> The possibility of a large-scale insurrection, however, did create a climate of anxiety among the Barbadian planter class, whose

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<sup>41</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 58.

<sup>42</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 11-2.

<sup>43</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 11-12.

response was to initiate disciplinary measures for the surveillance, detention, and punishment of runaway slaves.

#### **4.2 THE CARCERAL STATE: MOLLIFYING INSURRECTION AND SPECTACULAR PUNISHMENT**

According to Beckles Barbadian planters used “militia regiments, supported by imperial troops and navy”: “[l]egal forces were designed to regulate slaves’ social behavior, within and outside the production process, as well as to police their daily movements”, and further, slaves could not own property, testify against whites until the nineteenth century, and were punished by death for minor offences such as threatening, stealing, or assaulting whites.<sup>45</sup> Whereas Foucault identifies how comportments of subjectivity in eighteenth-century Europe were shaped by *homo oeconomicus*, *homo juridicus*, and *homo legalis*,<sup>46</sup> I argue that Beckles’s observations point us toward how biopolitics was exacted upon the enslaved subject through the relationship between bondage and capitalism: the disciplinary deployments of state power exercised through the martial, territorial, and technological components of colonial encampment to secure labour productivity as *homo economicus*; the juridical capacities of legal restraint, regulation, and punishment to subjugate the enslaved and normalize procedures of economic exploitation as *homo juridicus*; and the legal status of blacks as disposable property, their legal inferiorization and absence of protection within the colonial courts, and the disproportionate application of sovereign and disciplinary power to achieve these practices

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<sup>45</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 33-35.

<sup>46</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 276.

of punishment. Barbadian colonial law also provided soft legal protections to the enslaved in regard to clothing, cruel punishment from each other and from their owners,<sup>47</sup> but these standards were not undertaken for purposes of humanitarian intent, but as measures of security. The authority to clothe the enslaved gave slaveowners personal power over the enslaved, the possibility to identify enslaved vs. free, specific plantation origin, and could even be used on the plantation, with slight modification, to identify positions of hierarchy such as the black driver. In the case of putting a legal sanction on cruel punishment or violence, this could be said to diminish rates of absconding and mollify insurrection.

In the aftermath of the 1649 insurrection the Barbadian Assembly instituted a number of security reforms, which included a pass system that demanded all slaves to carry a ticket when off the plantation. There was also the expansion of the policing and militia force, with the latter being extended the authority to search, interrogate, and execute any suspected of inciting a rebellion during the 1650s and 1660s.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps the most far-reaching policy that initiated the disciplinary apparatus of colonial policing in Barbados came with the increased powers of the patrol in connection with the efficient organization and deployment of search and seizure. These disciplinary directives put in place by Governors in Barbados included local militiamen searching slave houses and any location of “social contact,” which could be used to incite an insurrection.<sup>49</sup> Disciplinary territorialization in Barbados at the state level appropriated devices of panoptic control leveraged on the plantation – optics, containment, and correction – and would for a time assemble vital regulatory controls to expand networks of commercial exchange.

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<sup>47</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 34.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>49</sup> Beckles, “Rebels Without Heroes: Slave Politics in Seventeenth Century Barbados,” 10.

Less than three decades later in May of 1675, however, a plot ascribed to Coromantee or Gold Coast captives to overtake the island and depose the plantocracy was uncovered. “The Relation of a Conspiracy in the Barbadoes” published in 1676 stated that the plot had been planned for three years by a group of enslaved males “and afterwards Cunningly and Clandestinely carried, and kept secret, even from the knowledge of their Wives [sic].”<sup>50</sup> Archival records indicate that the plot was discovered eight days before its launch and that those implicated were referred to as “Heathen the [sic] Negroes.”<sup>51</sup> It is clear that the disciplinary protocols that were instituted during the 1650s and 1660s had not effectively disrupted maneuverings to overthrow the plantocracy. Of significant concern to the Barbadian government was that the plot had been devised over several years and was intended to exterminate the entire planter class, which included all of the masters, mistresses, and overseers.<sup>52</sup> The plot, which was to be initiated by the sound of trumpets made of elephant teeth and gourdes, would signal the resisters to set the sugar fields ablaze and cut the throats of planters.<sup>53</sup> Accounts suggest that all were to be executed except “the Fairest and Handfomest Women (their Mistressef and their daughters)” who were instead “to be Converted to their own use”, but that it was probable that the conspirators “intended

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<sup>50</sup> “Great Newes from the Barbadoes. Or, A True and Faithful Account of The Negroes against the English. And The Happy Discovery of the same. With The number of those that were burned alive, Beheaded, and otherwise Executed for their Horrid Crimes. With a short Description of that PLANTATION.” London Printed for L. Curtis in Goat-Court upon Ludgate-Hill, 1676, 9.

<sup>51</sup> “Account of the intended Rebellion of the Negroes in the Barbadoes.” Nov. 30, 1675. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at [http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full\\_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11076646&FILE=../session/1581731177\\_21824&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=46254&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var\\_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT\\_KEYWORD=19](http://eebo.chadwyck.com/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=11076646&FILE=../session/1581731177_21824&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=46254&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=19).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> “Great Newes from the Barbadoes. Or, A True and Faithful Account of The Negroes against the English. And The Happy Discovery of the same. With The number of those that were burned alive, Beheaded, and otherwise Executed for their Horrid Crimes. With a short Description of that PLANTATION.” London Printed for L. Curtis in Goat-Court upon Ludgate-Hill, 1676, 10.

to Murther all the White People there, as well Men as Women [sic].”<sup>54</sup> The account reflects how a politics of fear and alarm could be used to reassert the existential threat of rebellion and legitimate further disciplinary encroachments upon the enslaved. The aborted rebellion was described by a contemporary observer as an “Almost Fatal Plot,” arguing that “its hopes of Succes in the general from nothing but their desire of being Eased from that Continual Work, which by being Slaves, they and their Posterity are lyable to [sic].”<sup>55</sup> These observations illustrate how English conceptualizations of idleness were attributed to enslaved blacks as biological contamination and used to justify the intergenerational perpetuation of bondage.

The rebellion in 1675 was to include a seizure of the entire island, be executed with the use of arms, and on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June crown an enslaved male named “Coffee” the King of Barbados. His coronation would include an enthronement, which would have him placed “in a Chair of State exquisitely wrought and Carved after their Mode; with Bowes and Arrowes to be likewise carried in State before his majesty their intended King [sic].”<sup>56</sup> The historical record reveals that the plot was discovered days before its inception as a result of testimony shared by a domestic slave named Anna to her master Justice Hall.<sup>57</sup> Anna divulged that she overheard two male “Coromantee” slaves having a heated conversation near the garden and that one of them stated: “*He would have no hand in killing the Baccararoës or White Folks; And that he would tell his Master* [emphasis in original].”<sup>58</sup> After the argument Anna called over the dissident who confirmed the details of the

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 4, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 10.

intended plot: “it was a general Design amongst them the Coromantee Negros, to kill all the Baccararoës or White people in the Island within a fortnight.”<sup>59</sup> Upon hearing this Anna visited her master Justice Hall to tell him of the conspiracy and after he interrogated one of the Coromantee men unearthed a widespread plot that included several of his own slaves and others from a nearby plantation.<sup>60</sup>

Upon discovery of the plot Justice Hall sent immediate word to Governor Sir Jonathan Atkins who initiated a clandestine operation “to apprehend the guilty and impeached *Negroes* [emphasis in original], with the Ring-leaders of this fatal Conspiracy.”<sup>61</sup> The governmental report that details how these events unfolded takes great issue with the disloyalty of the enslaved involved in the conspiracy and notes “that the Heads and Chief of these ungrateful wretches who I have often heard confess to live better in Servitude there, than at Liberty in their own Native Country.”<sup>62</sup> Those arraigned were subject to the colonial court: charged, brought to trial, examined, found guilty, and then executed.<sup>63</sup>

The aftermath of the discovered plot resulted in a vicious display of spectacular punishment inflicted upon those whom the colonial government identified as being involved in the conspiracy. Of the seventeen enslaved men found guilty, eleven were beheaded, six burnt alive, and their lifeless bodies trailed throughout Spikes (Speightstown), where their bodies were also burned.<sup>64</sup> The report goes on to detail that several other conspirators were executed and that some even elected suicide rather than

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 12.

face further torture.<sup>65</sup> A series of disciplinary interventions would follow these spectacular acts of violence, which were grounded in the surveillance and containment of the enslaved.

In the aftermath of the aborted plot the Barbadian plantocracy elected to carry out these disciplinary reforms through overarching policy reforms. Sharples notes that in the immediate, the Barbados Assembly moved to prohibit gatherings of enslaved peoples as there was widespread fear that “cross-island communication” was made possible by the coordination of conspirators who not only spoke the same African language but harboured cultural systems of communication the English did not understand.<sup>66</sup> Further to this, the 1688 Slave Code, which was an amendment to the 1661 Slave Act, was the most draconian legal instrument of the seventeenth century against the black population of Barbados and it included several provisions of disciplinary force, which were also used to govern the conduct of whites: the creation of a pass system that demanded the signature of the planter and a time stamp; weekly house searches; and punishments for trading stolen commodities, assaulting whites, burning sugarcane, stealing food, and absconding. Whites could be fined for failing to detain a slave without a pass, aiding an escape, murdering a slave, and for “exposing them to seditious doctrines.”<sup>67</sup> In this regard whites could be punished for undermining the framework of discipline, willing or not, and were thereby accomplices of the state in maintaining control and carrying out surveillance. A crucial provision of the 1688 Act ‘for the Good Governing of Negroes’ also included prohibiting the Irish from having arms, as a creole slave and Irish conspiracy to destroy the English planting interest

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>66</sup> Jason T. Sharples, *The World That Fear Made: Slave Revolts and Conspiracy Scares in Early America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020, Accessed August 11, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central, 30. Sharples argues that this increased surveillance and prohibition put severe challenges on the capacity of those enslaved to exercise freedom and self-organize. Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 34.

was uncovered.<sup>68</sup> This alliance was forged by both a collective interest to abolish the tyrannical rule of the planter class and the shared experiences of persecution. The plantocracy's efforts, however, failed to stamp out insurrectionary fervor on the island.

In 1692, with England at war with France, and its military focus centered on the protection of its geopolitical position in the Caribbean, some of the enslaved took the opportunity to plot an insurrection, which would include mustering an armed force with horses in an effort to seize the island.<sup>69</sup> The rebellion was uncovered by the militia and four slaves (Ben, Hammon, Sambo, and Samson) were identified during the government's inquiry as the primary conspirators: in addition, it was revealed that the principal planners of the revolt were part of the elite artisan class and that they intended to exploit their positions of trust to procure arms and carry out their plan to destabilize plantations before marching to Bridgetown.<sup>70</sup> In overtaking Bridgetown the objectives of the rebels would include the seizure of the primary infrastructure of the island (forts, shipping, and communication); the recruitment of additional support by releasing prisoners in the city's jail and converting Irishmen who were employed at the Needham fort where "400 barrels of powder, 300 small arms and 160 swords" were stored; and murdering the planters, colonial militia, and Governor.<sup>71</sup> What worried the planter class was the sophistication and development of the plot as it included cutting-off communications between slave owners, destroying the harbor and setting all of the ships ablaze, pilfering the forts of arms, and setting up a government and making preparations to safeguard the island from an imminent

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 39. Sharples states that Barbados's 1692 slave conspiracy is a watershed event that shaped the perceptions around the meaning of a slave revolt or insurrection amongst both English colonial agents and enslaved blacks throughout the course of the eighteenth century. Sharples, *The World That Fear Made: Slave Revolts and Conspiracy Scares in Early America*, 23.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 40.



outside attack.<sup>72</sup> Worrisome also for the plantocracy was the intention of the conspirators to recruit the Irish into an island wide confrontation that would overthrow the predominantly elite English planter class. This would have been an ambitious attack as archival records indicate that Carlisle Bay was safeguarded by a fortress built of stone, and that this stronghold was protected by a mount of forty guns.<sup>73</sup> After one unnamed slave exposed the plot, Ben, Hammon, Sambo, and Samson were arrested and then executed after being tortured along with ninety-two other slaves.<sup>74</sup> What this aborted plot reveals is that insurrectionary pursuits of the enslaved endured despite increased disciplinary protocols.

#### **4.3 THE EMERGENCE OF THE LOCAL CAPITALISTIC MARKET AND SECURING PLANTOCRATIC DISCIPLINE**

Disciplinary strategies of surveillance, regulation, and punishment would persist throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and reveal that the plantocracy continued to be haunted by the specter of an organized revolt. The implementation of a ticket system in the latter half of the seventeenth century effectively transferred aspects of public security related to the regulation of economic activity (marketplace vending, hiring out, and absconding) onto the fiduciary dimensions typically associated with a more advanced colonial state, as was characteristic of nineteenth-century Caribbean and the Southern United States. As an apparatus of sovereign power, the plantation complex can be studied through techniques of extraction, racialized legal subjugation, and non-wage

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> "Great Newes from the Barbadoes. Or, A True and Faithful Account of The Negroes against the English. And The Happy Discovery of the same. With The number of thofe that were burned alive, Beheaded, and otherwife Executed for their Horrid Crimes. With a fhort Difcription of that PLANTATION." London Printed for L. Curtis in Goat-Court upon Ludgate-Hill, 1676, 4.

<sup>74</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 40.

labour. This configuration of power, however, was a nascent thanatopolitical structure in the early period of plantation development in Barbados, and was grounded on what Marx referred to as “primitive accumulation.”<sup>75</sup> Plantation labour from the seventeenth century onward in Barbados combined the enslaved with the means of production (tools, machinery, and craftsmanship), but continued to alienate and exclude those in bondage from the devices of capital (investiture, infrastructural, accumulative, and generative) through mechanisms of disciplinary control.

The maturation of a disciplinary environment of surveillance and punishment off the plantation complex played a critical role in the development of the Barbadian market economy and was advanced by the hiring out of slaves and introduction of wage-labour as a function of early capitalistic exploitation.<sup>76</sup> The enslaved obtained liberties through the procurement and dissemination of monetary currency, but were initiated into the colonial marketplace through new disciplinary techniques and legal procedures, which coordinated modes of exploitation, incarceration, and punishment for those exceeding the conventional restrictions associated with their occupational status. These changes shifted the limited security resources of the planter and his henchmen onto a more expansive, integrated, and better armed militia force with political direction from the local government; a more advanced system of visibility and surveillance to monitor the movement of the enslaved; a

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<sup>75</sup> Marx argues that primitive accumulation is “the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it.” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 1978, 432.

<sup>76</sup> Marx states that: “The starting-point of the development that gave rise to the wage-labourer as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the labourer. The advance consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation. To understand its march, we need not go back very far. Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century, sporadically, in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalistic era dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.” *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 433. I argue that the hiring out of slaves represents a fundamental site in the emergence of capitalist exploitation as a disciplinary practice of colonial power.

visible colour field where all blacks, even free, were deemed possible fugitives and conspirators; and a more advanced juridical framework to identify, prosecute, and punish offenders. The growth of the colonial policing apparatus and their right to search locations suspected of harbouring insurgents both on and off the plantation, and to detain, torture, and murder in their quest to root out any plot against the state, supplemented the sovereign right of the planter to take life, and shifted responsibility of security to the state level. These strategies of disciplinary control were also amenable to the capitalistic structure of labour on the plantation and in the public sphere (vending, artisanal craftsmanship, and prostitution). In toto, these disciplinary interventions also signaled a shift in the development of colonial governmentality in Barbados.

Foucault's understanding of governmentality reveals how power is exercised as a function of government that is concerned not with the direct management of "individuals, things, wealth, and land" but how to calculate these considerations as "interests" and "values" through politics.<sup>77</sup> In this capacity, the biopolitical space of colonial Barbados, specifically the containment, management, and exploitation of the enslaved on both the plantation complex and throughout the colony, became the primary political consideration of governmental administration. This was realized as a relationship that established and reaffirmed a connection between racial blackness and labour through governmental policy, and moreover, its importance as a critical institutional engine for the capitalist market. This observation reveals how both the plantation complex and the broader functions of the slave colony assembled the absolute biopolitical space of modernity, not the camp, as theorized by Agamben. He argues that it is more important to ask not how crimes against humanity

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<sup>77</sup> Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 45-47.

in the camp could be carried out, but how the dispossession of legal rights could create a climate where these acts could be considered free of criminal intent.<sup>78</sup> While examination of the juridical status of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Africans and the institution of plantation slavery as a crime against humanity during the time of its practice has been debated as a geopolitical maneuver to discredit reparations, this chapter is focused on the relationship between juridical power and capitalism as it pertains to racial bondage.

The biopolitical management of those enslaved was undertaken through a series of juridical interventions in ways that not only reaffirmed the inhuman status of blacks, but connected blackness with labour exploitation as a natural outcome of competition between white wealthy sugar magnates. Whereas Agamben states that the camp of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. is “the political state of modernity itself” given that the State “decides to assume directly the care of the nation’s biological life as one of its proper tasks” I argue that his understanding of the nation-state as comprised of “*land, order, birth*” [emphasis in original] was established in the slave colony of Barbados by the eighteenth century through protocols of biopolitical management: land (colonial territoriality, physical containment, resource management); order (juridical authority, surveillance, punishment), and birth (breeding and intergenerational bondage).<sup>79</sup> Biopolitics became the focus of colonial statism in Barbados through the economic, social, and juridical treatment of the life of the enslaved as *homines sacri*.<sup>80</sup> Agamben’s theorizations that sovereignty and biopolitics are historically contemporaneous and that it was the modern State that exposed the treatment of biological life and the relationship between *bare life* as a device of political action, are salient

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<sup>78</sup> Agamben 1995, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 171.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 111.

observations into how the development of racial bondage relates to the maturation of capitalism in Barbados.<sup>81</sup> The capture, detention, and commoditization of the racialized body within the capitalist market was a function of sovereign power that is achieved through biopolitical devices of punishment and exploitation.<sup>82</sup>

The desire to shape a productive, self-reliant, and enterprising slave population through an incentive regime that included their increased mobility, privacy, and personal income, was as much an articulation of the planter class' abhorrence toward idleness and dependency discernible in Bentham's *Panopticon* and eighteenth-century England, as it was a strategy to assuage their responsibility of care and increase wealth generation beyond the plantation complex through the entrenchment of a more wide-ranging technology of discipline. Clawing back areas of support (food, clothing, and even shelter) issued to slaves who were contracted for work outside of the plantation, liberated the planter from aspects of material guardianship, as well as surveillance and correction. The commercial activity of the enslaved in public spaces limited the reach of the individual planter, broadened the disciplinary reach of the state (insofar as those were distinguishable), and diversified labour possibilities, freedoms, and aspects of exploitation. Handler and Lange state that "the island's internal marketing system was a powerful inducement to movement off the plantations. The slaves used it to dispose of goods they had produced in the villages, stolen from their masters' properties, or had legally acquired from plantation management."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>82</sup> Agamben argues that "[t]he sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life – that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed – is the life that has been captured in this sphere." Ibid., 83.

<sup>83</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 30.

Biopolitical power in the context of slave gardens, marketplace trade, and hiring out, introduced an alternative state of *bare life* by suspending the conventional sovereign devices of the plantation master/slave relationship (confinement, surveillance, and guardianship), however diaphanous, with an alternative relationship of disciplinary capitalism. This exercise of power concentrated regulatory exposure to the thanatopolitical force waged by the state. More importantly, however, the movement toward a more independent slave population was prompted by the perceived advantages of a home-grown slave force through breeding and care for those who reproduced. This tension between artificial scarcity and reward for reproduction introduced by the planter class was a strategy of pronatalist control to preserve the intergenerational capacity of slavery. Sheridan argues that in Barbados “[i]f, as seems reasonable, it became less profitable to import new workers from Africa than to breed slaves locally, then the ratio of working slaves to total slave population must have declined, at the same time that maintenance charges increased as a percentage of total costs. In part, some of these added maintenance charges, especially foodstuffs, were met by shifting marginal cane lands into the cultivation of provisions.”<sup>84</sup>

The participation of plantation slaves in the wider large-scale plantation environment of Barbados during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as commercial vendors, professional labourers, and prostitutes, among other occupations, transformed the conditions of slave-labour to include increased freedoms of mobility, income, and potential emancipation for those navigating this bifurcated and problematized space, where the plantation was neither completely private nor public. The archival record indicates that security measures of the requirement for planters’ financial support for those manumitted,

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<sup>84</sup> Sheridan, 1974, 143.

were considered prudent fiscal policy to mitigate the assumed costs of the state having to support those freed and to prevent resistance movements from swelling up because of material desperation. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, revisions to the “Act to increase the sum made payable by former Laws, on the manumission of a Slave, and for their better support when manumitted” was introduced to update legislation from 1739.<sup>85</sup> The original legislation, “An Act for the governing of negroes, indians or mulattoes, and providing a proper maintenance and support for such negroes, indians or mulattoes, as hereafter shall be manumitted or set free”, originally called for fifty pounds to be paid by the slave owner to the churchwarden in the appropriate parish for the manumission of any slave, and that four pounds be paid annually for the maintenance and support of those freed. Under Governor Seaforth in 1801 this was increased to three-hundred pounds for a female, two-hundred for a male, and an annual fee of eighteen pounds and twelve pounds per annum respectively.<sup>86</sup> Demanding that slave owners take on financial responsibility for those manumitted discouraged emancipation by enacting a monetary penalty. The state also increased the depth of their disciplinary apparatus by anchoring the manumitted to the parish church and the institutional oversight for governing the social life of those enslaved. What is interesting to observe is the elevated cost of manumitting a female slave given her

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<sup>85</sup> “Return made in pursuance of an address of the House of Commons to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, voted on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1815; for copies of, or extracts from, all such laws as have been enacted, in any of the colonies belonging to His Majesty, in America or the West Indies, relative to the importation of slaves into the said colonies, or to the protection or good government of slaves, or people of colour, since the year 1788: also, return made in pursuance of an order of the House of Commons, of the 27<sup>th</sup> March instant, arranging the same in the order of their dates, in each island or colony respectively, and giving their titles at length,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1816 (226). Vol. XIX.259. 17.140-142. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=7b296ceb-6789-47e0-98f8-f4f34ae1256b&rsId=16FA7942087>

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

projected value to produce enslaved offspring and the belief that further childbearing of free blacks would constitute a burden upon the state.

Under Seaforth's Governorship (1800-1806) legislation was also introduced to reduce the violence suffered by the enslaved, which included the 1805 "An Act for the better Protection of the Slaves of this Island." The 1805 Act states that "the penalties directed by the several Acts of this Island against the murdering of negro slaves have been found inadequate: And whereas the willful and malicious murder of any fellow creature, whether it be a free person or slave, ought to be punished with the death of the murderer."<sup>87</sup> The legislation stated that "if any person shall hereafter willfully, maliciously, wantonly, and without provocation, kill and murder any slave, whether such slave be the property of the person or persons, at a court of grand sessions, shall suffer death without benefit of clergy."<sup>88</sup> The law, however, also weighed down heavily on those enslaved and recently manumitted should they commit a felony. In 1809 legislation was passed that stated any former slave "accused of murder or any other felony or felonies, shall be liable to be tried as a slave, and shall be amenable and subject to all the laws and statutes of this Island now in force for regulating and directing the trial of slaves."<sup>89</sup> The tentacles of bondage under this legislation effectively disposed with the most fundamental aspects of manumission, the juridical acknowledgement of their freedom before the courts and the concomitant visibility of legal rights, however limited, to obtain counsel and testify against whites. These legal amendments also set a high threshold to preserve the life of those enslaved as it demanded the act to be "willfully, maliciously, [and] wantonly" carried out, a standard

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.



that would be difficult to meet amongst a jury of white peers. In this regard, the authorities performed a juridical maneuver to preserve white supremacy on the island.

The primary arena of disciplinary power wielded by the Barbadian government, however, was directed at the regulation of trade in the marketplace. The opportunity to retain a portion of the revenue generated from the sale of their “surplus” labour (garden produce, livestock, commodities, sexual service) at the marketplace and from being contracted out as labourers, servants, vendors, and prostitutes infused capitalistic wage-labour into the disciplinary milieu of slavery. The existing culture of bondage in Barbados was subject to economic reification as the juridical treatment of those enslaved began to extend beyond the confines of chattel expenditure and value attributed to plantation labour. In large urban centers in the British Caribbean such as Bridgetown and Kingston, some of the enslaved laboured as “shopkeepers, mariners, street sellers, and domestic servants.”<sup>90</sup> In Barbados at the beginning of the eighteenth century the enslaved sold produce from garden plots at the Sunday market and also other commodities such as “pickles and preserves, oil, noyau, anisette, eau-de-cologne, toys ribbons [sic], handkerchiefs, and other little nick-knacks.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Kenneth Morgan, 107.

<sup>91</sup> Beckles 1999, *Centering Woman: Gender Relations in Caribbean Slave Society* 144. On some Barbadian plantations the scope of slave gardens was of significant size, as records from the British House of Commons disclose that on one plantation with a slave population of 153, twenty-five of the 314 acres of total land were designated for “negro gardens.” Given that a total of sixty-six acres on this plantation were assigned for planted and ratoon sugar cane, slave gardens functioned as a vital source of food and relieved the planter of some responsibility for care. “Slave trade. Papers relating to captured Negroes,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1824, Reports of Commissioners, 19<sup>th</sup> Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1826, (81). In the eighteenth century, Barbadian slave laws entrenched a strict environment of physical control and economic dependency by prohibiting slaves from property ownership, such as animals, tools, and other commodities, which could encourage absconding, and from selling their garden produce and goods at the local market, with the reasoning that these items were likely stolen from the plantation. Beckles, *Centering Woman*, 145; Goveia, *West Indian Slave Laws of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, 26.

Sunday market regulations at this time reflected the belief that some of these goods were appropriated from their masters.<sup>92</sup> Regulations were instituted to restrict commercial activities in 1708, 1733, and in the 1779 Act “to prohibit Goods, Wares and Merchandizes and other things from being carried from House to House or about the roads or streets in this island, to be sold bartered or disposed of...from the Traffic of Huckster slaves, Free Mulattoes and Negroes.” These regulations prohibited whites from employing blacks, whether free or enslaved, in marketplace trade.<sup>93</sup> Despite these prohibitions, however, the enslaved continued to sell goods in Bridgetown and there was a resultant retraction of the 1779 Act in 1794.<sup>94</sup>

The planter class’ utilization of slave gardens, commercial activity at the marketplace, and hiring out, intensified disciplinary conditions in the public spaces of the colony by protracting the material extraction, legal subjectivity, and spatial territoriality of slavery.<sup>95</sup> This was made possible through capitalist practices that authorized wage-labour and encouraged “industriousness” to generate production. What is important to note is how the notion of “personal time” for the allocation of “surplus” production facilitated slave resistance, and at the same time catalyzed the advancement of state disciplinary power. In this regard Tomich does not observe how “personal time,” which could be exploited to diminish the responsibility of the planter and proliferate commercial enterprise beyond the plantation complex, in effect diminished the sovereign authority of the slave owner by transferring legal accountability in the public sphere toward the auspices of the colonial

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<sup>92</sup> Beckles 1999, *Centering Woman: Gender Relations in Caribbean Slave Society*, 145.

<sup>93</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 60.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Davis states that “British planters and their agents discovered that slave productivity could be greatly increased by eliminating the most cruel and grisly punishments and by offering various positive incentives, such as extra time for the slaves’ own gardening and food production as well as local Sunday markets.” Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 116.

state. As the enslaved accumulated property, established socio-economic networks, and conspired to subvert the colonial order, these possibilities of exchange, which were inspired by a capitalistic ideology that the industriousness and perfectibility of the labourer were universal, intensified state discipline through the expansion of the colonial police force and judiciary.<sup>96</sup>



Figure 22. "The Barbadoes Mulatto Girl." "Source: Engraved print from painting by Agostino Brunias. Handler and Tuite explain that this artwork depicts a free woman of colour purchasing produce from enslaved traders in Barbados during the late 1770s. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."

While commissioning the enslaved to trade at the market, perform sexual and/or domestic services, utilize artisanal skills or perform in other occupations, expanded the web of exploitation wielded by the planter class, these circumstances created possibilities of resistance that impacted the economic and political topography of eighteenth and

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<sup>96</sup> Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery*, 165-69.

nineteenth-century Barbados. The documentary record indicates that prostitution was a critical element in urban spaces such as Bridgetown and that this practice not only reinforced white supremacy, as it was a source of income for white male and female slave owners, but also included free black slave owners who hired-out women for their domestic labour, sexual service, and care giving.<sup>97</sup> While black/coloured women occupied a unique relationship of gendered and racial abuse in Barbados, some who were born free, and others able to purchase their freedom, would go on to become slave owners themselves.<sup>98</sup> The complexities of enslavement by black masters in urban spaces, interracial relationships, and general commoditization of black sexuality as an economic device within the colony, reified the possibilities of subjectivity of those enslaved.

Interracial relationships between white men and coloured women were also identified as a form of moral degeneracy by some whites in Barbados during the nineteenth century. In 1815, Eliza Fenwick argued:

It is a horrid & disgraceful System [...] the female slaves are really encouraged to prostitution because their children are the property of the owner of the mothers.... What is still more horrible, the Gentlemen are greatly addicted to their women slaves & give the fruit of their licentiousness to their white children as slaves. I strongly suspect that a very fine Mulatto boy about 14 who comes here to help wait on two young Ladies, our pupils is their own brother.... It is a common case & not thought of as an enormity.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Beckles 1999, *Centering Woman: Gender Relations in Caribbean Slave Society*, 28, 35.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>99</sup> Bridget Brereton, "Gendered Testimonies: Autobiographies, Diaries and Letters by Women as Sources for Caribbean History," *Feminist Review*, No. 59, *Rethinking Caribbean Difference*, Palgrave Macmillan Journals, (Summer, 1998), 154. Following Joel Williamson's *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States* (1980) Paul LaChance argues that "[w]here there were many whites and few blacks, as in New England, few mulattoes were born. Where there were few whites and many blacks-as in Barbados,

Sexual exploitation in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Barbados reveals critical ways in which power exerted itself upon the enslaved body as a form of subjectivity and how sovereign power intersects biopolitics.



Figure 23. Source: Illustration by Thomas Rowlandson, published separately by William Holland (London, 1796). Engraving held by the Barbados Museum. Illustration by Thomas Rowlandson, published separately by William Holland (London, 1796). Engraving held by the Barbados Museum. "Shows Pringle at the age of about 36 sitting in front of her hotel/tavern/house of prostitution in Bridgetown, capital of Barbados [...] Rachel Pringle was born a slave around 1753, the daughter of an African woman and her master, a Scottish schoolmaster. In the 1770s, she became the first free woman of color to own a hotel-tavern (and house of prostitution) in Barbados. When she died in 1792, at the age of 38, she was relatively wealthy." Accessed on February 11, 2020, at [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org). Compiled by Jerome Handler and Michael Tuite and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities."

The maturation of Barbados into a more integrated disciplinary space enhanced the containment of the enslaved through increased public surveillance, safeguarded networks

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where the ratio in 1713 ran three to one black over white, or Jamaica, where the ratio was eight to one- also few mulattoes were born." p.226.

of commercial exchange between the plantation and marketplace, and also provided additional security to respond to a possible insurrection, which in turn facilitated the durability of plantation production. The plantocracy's militant response could be viewed as an overreach of force, but when considering the realities of a majority black population in Barbados as far back as the 1640s, the amount of time it would take for reinforcements to arrive from nearby colonies in the Caribbean or from England in the event of an insurrection, and the probability that the enslaved would carry out a violent retaliation upon the white population after having endured an environment of deprivation and violence, any plot to undermine the plantation system was considered tantamount to war and was to be suppressed at all costs.

The largest and most significant slave rebellion in Barbados took place in 1816 on April 14<sup>th</sup> (Easter Sunday). Beckles argues that the reason over a century passed in Barbados without any aborted or armed insurrection was that the island had the most advanced disciplinary apparatus in the British Caribbean, which included "large militia regiments, plantation militia tenants, and frequent visits from imperial armies and naval fleets."<sup>100</sup> The local militia and imperial troops stationed on the island, which also included enslaved black soldiers, successfully immobilized the revolt, and after a three-month period of martial law, surveillance, and interrogation, effectively quelled the uprising.<sup>101</sup> Similar to the aborted plots, the casualties of the event were suffered almost entirely by blacks. There are conflicting reports in regards to the number of casualties suffered by the black community, with Governor Leith's September 21<sup>st</sup> report suggestion that there were "144 executed under martial law, 70 sentenced to death, and 123 sentenced to transportation"

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<sup>100</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, 1990, 55-6.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

and an anonymous description that states almost “1,000 slaves were killed in battle and executed at Law.”<sup>102</sup> During the insurrection several whites suffered casualties but only three militiamen were killed in battle, and some older soldiers later perished due to “fatigue” for their efforts in quelling the uprising.<sup>103</sup> The economic sabotage inflicted by the insurgents was significant, and included property damage totaling £175,000 and arson that destroyed twenty-five percent of the sugarcane on the island.<sup>104</sup> This property damage would have represented a significant financial loss and constituted a strategic point of power of the enslaved to disrupt planter commerce.

Carceral institutions that secured runaway slaves also provide context to the coordinated disciplinary apparatus of the Barbadian planter class in the nineteenth century. These institutions inhibited the large-scale assembly of absconders, frustrated resistance efforts through a diffuse policing network, and protected Barbados’ plantation industry by recycling captives back into the system of forced labour. Morgan states that advertisements in Caribbean newspapers illustrate the widespread practice of absconding and that rewards were announced to encourage their capture.<sup>105</sup> The total government “head money” awarded for the capture of runaway slaves in the Caribbean by the British Empire from 1827-1833 illustrates that absconding before abolition was a widespread strategy of resistance. During this period a total of £274,973 was awarded, with 1830 registering in as the highest year at £74,239.<sup>106</sup> According to Morgan, slave absconding occurred most

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 79, 80.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Morgan, 2007, *Slavery and the British Empire: From Africa to America*, 130.

<sup>106</sup> “Return of Head Money awarded for Captured Negro Slaves, 1827-33,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1833 (710). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=bca7aeaf-25ce-4966-b034-6052eca0d922&rsId=16FA799A1F3>

frequently in Barbados during July and August, after the harvesting season and when food supplies diminished.<sup>107</sup>

In 1818 in the wake of the 1816 uprising while the island was under the authority of Lord Combermere, amendments were made for the capture and incarceration of runaway slaves, specifically in regard to the “cage,” a term used to describe Barbados’ slave detention center.<sup>108</sup> The changes called for a new “cage” to be built, and that those apprehended be transported to the Island’s treasurer to record the date and names of both the captor and slave; a reward of twelve shillings and sixpence was provided to those who arrested and returned a slave, and planters were charged two shillings and sixpence for each slave who had been imprisoned, plus a fee of seven-pence halfpenny for every twenty-four hours of incarceration to cover food expenses.<sup>109</sup> According to this policy, magistrates were ordered to keep the cage “clean, healthy, and wholesome,” provide sufficient food to the captives, and report any abuse in writing to the House of Assembly; any deputy who violated this law would be subject to fine or imprisonment.<sup>110</sup> The preservation of the enslaved while in captivity points to governmental reforms instituted by the plantocracy post 1807. The protection of the planter’s “property” speaks to the importance of slave-labour for the preservation of industry and the efficacy of the disciplinary regime to maintain the enslaved within the plantation network.

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<sup>107</sup> Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire*, 133-44.

<sup>108</sup> “Further Papers relating to the treatment of slaves in the colonies,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1818 (433). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=a6ae99bc-7370-40b2-89e9-ccb8b40c685&rsId=16FA7A4BB23>

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.



A crucial aspect of preserving the integrity of black bondage in Barbados was to ensure the dissemination of material detailing runaways. Vital information regarding a captive slave was advertised twice for a span of ten days in the island's newspaper, after which the prisoner was then relocated to the island's jail "to be safely and securely confined."<sup>111</sup> The Provost Marshal "disposed" of slaves who were unclaimed after a three-month period at a public auction, with the money generated from the sale being absorbed by the public treasury.<sup>112</sup> The incarceration of runaway slaves in Barbados substantiates the polyvalent nature of disciplinary power, as the mechanisms of governmental and juridical authority were not only focused on the observation, confinement, and punishment of absconders, but on patterning the behaviour of planters for the better management of their slaves through financial penalty, legal action, and public embarrassment. By the beginning of the nineteenth century an environment of discipline effectively maintained the institution of black bondage as a carceral apparatus but had not satisfactorily achieved its intergenerational preservation. The plantocracy and metropole would maneuver to realize a governmental program of pronatalism in the early nineteenth century that would attempt to preserve the labour demands of large-scale plantation production.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

**PART III: GOVERNMENTALITY: PRO-NATALISM, MEDICAL INTERVENTION, AND  
ACCOUNTING FOR THE ENSLAVED**

According to Iraqi MP Vian Dakhil, herself a Yazidi from Sinjar, an estimated 6,383 Yazidis – mostly women and children – were enslaved and transported to Isis prisons, military training camps, and the homes of fighters across eastern Syria and western Iraq, where they were raped, beaten, sold, and locked away. By mid-2016, 2,590 women and children had escaped or been smuggled out of the caliphate and 3,793 remained in captivity [...] Slavery serves to increase the Isis community because Yazidi women will give birth and the children will be brought up among its fighters.<sup>113</sup> Otten, Cathy. “Slaves of Isis: the long walk of the Yazidi women.” *The Guardian*, July 25, 2017

Circumstances of sexual violence and racism visited upon enslaved women in Barbados during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included pro-natalist interventions that organized rationalities of control for disease, reproduction, and sexuality through an intersectional *dispositif* (race, class, gender).<sup>114</sup> The broader features of pro-natalism as a rationality of white supremacy and Eurocentrism in this context can be read through Cooper and Stoler’s (1997) analysis of colonialism as a cultural movement of legitimation that functioned as a Foucauldian “power-knowledge-pleasure” nexus:

We are concerned here not only with the ways – complicated as they are – in which colonial regimes regulated sexuality and biological reproduction but also with how categories of race, class, and gender helped to define moral superiority and maintain cultural differences that in turn justified different intensities of violence.<sup>115</sup>

Biopolitical intervention in Barbados strengthened a burgeoning corporate personality that had fully galvanized in the wake of its republican political agenda during the eighteenth century. Barbados’ struggle for greater autonomy from England depended on slave reproduction and labour output. The relationship between the regulation of

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<sup>113</sup> The third part of this dissertation provides a “history of the present” through an examination of biopolitical power on the plantation complex, and how the exploitation of black women in particular, through their role as labourers, mothers, and sex-trade workers, among others, impacted the institution of plantation slavery through the fostering of life.

<sup>114</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, 11.

<sup>115</sup> Cooper and Stoler, “Between Metropole and Colony,” 4.

sexuality, biological reproduction, economic production, and the preservation of the white ruling class in Barbados had implications for the project of nationalism that emerged from a managerial planter culture. Toward the end of the eighteenth century the focus of Barbadian autonomy among the elite planter class increasingly shifted away from invocations for free-trade during the seventeenth century noted early in this study, and more toward a focus on the biological management of those enslaved, specifically, women and their capacity for reproduction in order to secure additional profit. A significant repercussion of the biopoliticization of enslaved women through the technology of amelioration was the emergence of reproductive commoditization to stabilize an intergenerational labour force.

During the latter part of the eighteenth and early part of nineteenth centuries planters in Barbados promoted childbirth through the encouragement of monogamous relationships, targeted medical care, increased provisions (food, clothing, and specialty items), financial rewards, and intermittent relief from the hardships of field labour. Although their primary intent was to increase production, these reforms would also help assuage losses from injury, disease, and neglect during the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, however, they had become critical to maintain labour demands generated by the suspension of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Africans (1807). J.R. Ward argues that “amelioration” was at its core a movement in the British Caribbean beginning at the end of the eighteenth century to produce more sugar at a reduced cost by “raising standards of slave maintenance,” but that this reform did not result in a natural increase of the slave population.<sup>116</sup> The consensus among historians as stated by Richardson, however,

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<sup>116</sup> J.R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: The Process of Amelioration*, 7, 140, 190.

is that Barbados was an exception in the Caribbean throughout the nineteenth century as there was a natural increase of the slave population.<sup>117</sup>

The final part of this dissertation explores how planter reforms and legislation to promote childbirth in Barbados constituted a biopolitical form of management that unlocked possibilities for the intergenerational institution of slavery and the proliferation of a capitalistic labour order. This study investigates how biopolitical policies can be captured through plantation accounting records and practices of medical intervention that targeted the maternal health of enslaved women and, in particular, their capacity to produce children, as a new model of economic management.<sup>118</sup> Whereas the previous part of this dissertation examined how the disciplinary management of those enslaved was implemented to augment plantation production, an ameliorative *modus operandi* of colonial governmentality (desire, incentive, and security) focused on the fostering of slave life to preserve the human resources necessary for large-scale sugar production in the wake of abolitionist legislation.

Pro-natalist slave management in Barbados also established a systemic governmental apparatus of sexual exploitation by targeting childbearing as the solution to labour shortages, and concomitantly, a continuation of an economic order premised on female subjugation. This study investigates how pro-natalist policies identified the enslaved female womb as a focal point for venture capital, how the period of amelioration was connected to the science of management to secure future labour production, and how

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<sup>117</sup> Richardson, *The Caribbean in the Wider World*, 67.

<sup>118</sup> A quantitative breakdown of the managerial calculus of pro-natalism as a system of plantation accounting is outlined in Appendix A: Table 1. “*Number of Children per Mother on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*” and Table 2. “*Number of births on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations.*”

the fostering of life represented a technology of colonial governmentality. This section examines how amelioration shaped governmental procedures toward the enslaved as a field of corporate expertise – professional management through practices of accounting, medical intervention, and strategies of care – and how this domain of knowledge organized a biopolitical administration by integrating racism, paternalism, and capitalism.

As early as the end of the eighteenth century Barbadian planters engaged in a written campaign to advance “progressive management” by offering financial rewards, relief from field labour, and post-natal resources to enslaved women.<sup>119</sup> The stability of labour production as an intergenerational venture was captured through the accounting analysis of human reserve (reproduction) in much the same way as bookkeeping recorded information related to commercial wealth (property, produce, and machinery). The advisory role of managers, doctors, and overseers was critical to reinforce the enslaved as fluid and potentially appreciating sources of wealth generation. The designation of the enslaved as human resource went beyond their disciplinary preparation and performance as “machines” of capital production noted in the second part of this study, as the demands of agricultural output as a focal point for wealth generation and English empire building depended on measures of managerial intervention that would look to commoditize the enslaved black body as a biological enterprise in the colonial market.

The third part of this work interrogates the biopolitical etymologies of the fostering of life through Foucault’s analysis of ancient Greek physician Galen’s philosophy concerning the life and reproduction of community.<sup>120</sup> A central aim in this final section is

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<sup>119</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 76-77.

<sup>120</sup> Thomas Lemke argues that Foucault’s concept of governmentality can be traced to ancient Greece in “‘The birth of bio-politics’: Michel Foucault’s lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality,” *Economy and Society Volume*, 30.2 (May, 2001): 191.

to eschew analyses that suggest ameliorative interventions were inspired by humanitarian intent, such as those theorized by Young (1999) and Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2008). Ameliorative tactics were adopted to realize the *demiurgic* interests of the planter class – personal profit, political influence, and the colonization of new lands.<sup>121</sup> It is with this in mind that an examination of planter management should consider how bookkeeping tracked the transformative changes from a thanatopolitical approach to one where a biopolitical apparatus of economic management adopted pro-natalist policies in an effort to enhance the stability and output of labour production in the long-term.

While the planter class appropriated the authority to rule through a diffuse network of physical violence (abduction, incarceration, abuse, trafficking, and exploitation), the development of the plantocracy into a “professional” class was achieved through attempts to standardize slave management techniques of “care” and to incorporate strategies to achieve this overall philosophy into an island-wide enterprise. As noted earlier in this study, the coalescing of the plantocracy into a cadre of wealthy magnates who often operated their businesses *in absentia* and delegated responsibility to a hierarchy of professionals in the colony created a proto-capitalist movement to enhance the scales of labour and production: extraction of resource, enhanced systems of technology to increase productivity, the computation of profit, diversification of labour roles, and the transnational development of trade. The purpose of the final part of this dissertation is to explore how the transformations of economic management, as they were carried out through a

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<sup>121</sup> Fleischman, Richard K., David Oldroyd, and Thomas N. Tyson. “The culpability of accounting practice in promoting slavery in the British Empire and antebellum United States.” *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 19 (2008): 764-784; Jeffrey Robert Young. *Domesticating Slavery: The Master Class in Georgia and South Carolina, 1670-1837*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999. As noted in the first part of this study, the characterization of the elite planter as an adventurer who was wealthy and politically connected is exemplified by pioneers such as Sir John Yeamans, who was first a prominent Barbadian planter and then Governor of the Province of Carolina.

governmental regime of incentive that mitigated practices of sovereignty, facilitated the development of this emerging capitalist regime.

While Marx's theorizations on the role plantation slavery had on capitalism are limited, his insight into the relationship between planter sovereignty and labour provides important context for the analysis of plantation biopolitics. Marx argues that the elite American planter class exercised an unlimited expenditure of slave life before the abolition of the European trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans. In reference to the rice-grounds of Georgia and swamps of the Mississippi, he states that:

the master's interest with the slave's preservation, when once trading in slaves is practised, become reasons for racking to the uttermost the toil of the slave; for, when his place can at once be supplied from foreign preserves, the duration of his life becomes a matter of less moment than its productiveness while it lasts. It is accordingly a maxim of slave management, in slave-importing countries, that the most effective economy is that which takes out of the human chattel in the shortest space of time the utmost amount of exertion it is capable of putting forth.<sup>122</sup>

These conditions of expenditure, which are described in the first part of this study, were carried out in a similar fashion throughout the British Caribbean when the importation of captives was economically viable (in comparison to white indentured servants, transportation costs along the Middle Passage, and the price of trade) and legally permissible (before the introduction of legislative restriction and outright suspension at the beginning of the nineteenth century). In the decades leading up to emancipation in Barbados, however, planters and their managers introduced incentives to encourage slave

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<sup>122</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker. 2nd ed. New York: Norton, 1978, 374.



reproduction in order to secure a domestic population of labourers. The elite planter class determined that a strategy of preservation, and not one of careless depletion, would satisfy labour requirements and legislative restrictions being introduced by the metropole.

Plantation bookkeeping assisted both the growth of biopolitical managerial reform, and recorded, for purposes of capitalistic accountability and eventual posterity, the evolution of governmental policies focused on the “care” of those enslaved. This final section explores how biopolitical administration on the plantation produced unique material outcomes based on permutations of gender, class, and race, and how bio-power modulated this multiplicity to preserve a culture of white supremacy in Barbados. The principal sources of research for this section are drawn from plantation accounting records, colonial will documents, and legislative papers.

## CHAPTER FIVE: AMELIORATION, PRO-NATALISM, AND THE “CARE” AND “CIVILIZATION” OF THE ENSLAVED

### 5.1 ANATOMO- AND NOSO-POLITICAL MANAGEMENT IN THE “AGE OF AMELIORATION”

Barbados is a critical site to study the relationship between biopolitical government, racial oppression, and capitalism given its large-scale agricultural production (the premier producer of sugar in the English Caribbean before the rise of Jamaica); the number of large plantations and collective workforces exceeding one hundred labourers (as illustrated by the *Barbados Slave Register*); and socio-political conditions (the enslavement of a majority black population and an overarching juridical framework [Barbados Slave Code] to preserve the master class and oppress those in bondage). As far back as the middle of the seventeenth century, it was believed that a balanced slave population would encourage slave reproduction; however according to Ward, access to slave imports did not demand this approach to sustain an adequate labour force in Barbados. He argues that it is probable that women were enslaved not only for their procreative value and labour production, but also to encourage morale among enslaved men.<sup>1</sup> The enslavement of women and exploitation of procreative value in the nineteenth century was vital for future plantation production and the reinforcement of intergenerational slavery.

While the necropolis of abuse, neglect, malnutrition, and injury endured on the plantation through ameliorative reform, an attention to the preservation of life advanced the disciplinary architecture of plantation power and was present from its inception. This inherent contradiction was managed by offering an incentive regime and relief structure to

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<sup>1</sup> Ward, 1988, 34.

specific classifications of the enslaved. Richard Ligon’s 1657 *A True and Exact History of Barbados* advised planters to maintain an equal number of female and male slaves in order to mitigate the possibility of insurrection as enslaved African men could not “live without Wives.”<sup>2</sup> Sustaining an equal number of male and female slaves appears to have been the most basic biopolitical technology exercised in Barbados between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries where planters preferred male labourers during the sugar “frontier” period (in the sixteenth century).<sup>3</sup> The *Barbados Slave Register* brings to light a longstanding practice of governmental management to maintain a balanced slave population to encourage childbirth.

Although an in-depth analysis of the *Barbados Slave Register* is beyond the scope of this study, a limited survey from the nineteenth-century register (detailing the name of the plantation, parish, and gender identity of those enslaved) serves to underscore that the planter class maintained a balanced slave population:

Plantation	Parish	Number of Females	Number of Males	Total
Ashbury	St. George	80	64	144
Bath	St. John	131	118	249
Carringtons	St. Philip	142	119	261
Chapel	St. Philip	118	111	229
Clifton	St. John	129	101	230
Haggats	St. Andrew	105	104	209

<sup>2</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 94.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Appendix A.3. for an analysis of the *Barbados Slave Register*.

Hampton	St. Philip	90	111	201
Haynes Hill	St. John	48	51	99
Mount Pleasant	St. John	76	57	133
Near Castle	St. John	90	104	194
Palmers	St. Philip	94	82	176
River	St. Andrew	32	31	63
Three Houses	St. Philip	125	110	225

What can also be ascertained from these records is that Barbadian planters maintained a general gender balance among their slave population, which was believed to assuage male violence and encourage procreation.<sup>4</sup> This is a demographic intervention that speaks to a strategy of disciplinary control to encourage labour stability in relation to the mitigation of disruption, but also a governmental tactic to institute pro-natalist measures beginning in the latter part of the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> While this study cannot evaluate the success of biopolitical intervention in the area of instituting gender balance to encourage family formation through the mitigation of sexual rivalry, the encouragement of reproduction as a demographic technology of management appears to have first surfaced in Barbados.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Richard B. Sheridan notes that “[i]n order to break the vicious circle of high mortality and the need for frequent renewal of the labour force by purchase of imported slaves, the Codrington plantation managers turned in 1761 to a policy of prolonging the lives of their Negroes and encouraging them to breed by humane treatment.” Sheridan, 142-43.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

While politicians in England debated the suspension of the Atlantic slave-trade on the logic advanced by some that it was “contrary to the principles of justice and humanity,”<sup>7</sup> the *Slave Register* demonstrates that the Barbadian plantocracy already maintained a domestic labour strategy to sustain their commercial ambitions. By the nineteenth century, the planter class in Barbados moved to secure the expansion of a homegrown slave force by shifting their previous managerial strategy, which was centered on techniques of expenditure through the mortal wasting of the slave body and largescale importation, to a governmental *dispositif* that would encourage reproduction by providing supporting monogamous relationships.

The shift in Barbados to long-term coupling was believed to function as a biopolitical technology through its promise to preserve an intergenerational slave force and mollify insurrectionary fervor. Affection and loyalty amongst the enslaved could benefit the planter elite in two primary ways: first it functioned as a security measure to reduce absconding and rebellion; second, the threat of punishment, sexual abuse, and transportation of family members could be invoked to encourage childbirth. Exclusive relationships and childbirth could broaden and reinforce physical containment, surveillance and enhance the relational scope of punishment as loved one’s could be used as pawns by the overseer. Enslaved women could, however, obtain or be lured by protection from transportation, material benefits such as housing, and increased provisions regardless of being in exclusive relationships or marriage, but continued to endure exposure to rape, labour exploitation, and cultural alienation regardless of status.

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<sup>7</sup> “A bill for the abolition of the slave trade, at a time to be limited,” 19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1803-04, (110). Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=05fe888a-e3a5-4b16-8476-6841a1c02d3e&rsId=16FA7ABB6D1>

In 1789 the *Barbados Committee* determined that the separation of family members was a formidable deterrent to childbirth, and subsequently, a threat to plantation production.<sup>8</sup> According to Beckles the “promotion of motherhood and domesticity” was undertaken as a managerial strategy to commoditize “fertility, sexuality and maternity.”<sup>9</sup> The institution of marriage was conceived as a strategy to entrench an institutional apparatus (cultural, economic, demographic, social, and political), which could realize the planter class’ financial objectives through the “moral” improvement of those enslaved. Supporting marriage amongst those enslaved was a governmental tactic that integrated the administrative and corporate intervention of slave managers. A resolution from the British House of Commons in 1797 stated that the suspension of the Atlantic slave-trade would only come to fruition if planters in the Caribbean were able to secure the natural increase of their slaves through “moral and religious improvement.”<sup>10</sup> This advisement by the English government confirms that there was a strategy to move forward with the suspension of the slave-trade and transition toward a different model of slavery, which would include domestic policies for the ‘humane’ treatment of those enslaved to encourage reproduction.

By the latter part of the eighteenth century, plantation colonies in the English Caribbean had initiated pro-natalist policies that hinged on Eurocentric conceptualizations

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<sup>8</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 137; Barbara Bush-Slimani, “Hard Labour: Women, Childbirth and Resistance in British Caribbean Slave Societies,” *History Workshop*, No. 36, *Colonial and Post-Colonial History*, (Autumn, 1993): 91.

<sup>9</sup> Beckles, *Centering Woman*, 14; Beckles, “Sex and Gender in the Historiography of Caribbean Slavery,” 137.

<sup>10</sup> “Resolution of the House of Commons of the 6th April 1797, respecting the Negroes in the West Indies,” House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, House of Lords Sessional Papers 1714-1805, Vol. 003. 5 January to 1 July 1799. Accessed on February 11, 2020 at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=e0a70b6d-cd08-4072-8c83-0641b0fc4f20&rsId=16FA7AEF81C>

of family, community, and religion, to encourage childbirth.<sup>11</sup> Ward argues that the attempts to introduce moral standards and monogamy, however, were largely a failure given that the rates of “illegitimate births” and “consensual unions” in Barbados were similar to other Caribbean colonies.<sup>12</sup> While the moral or religious aspects of the Eurocentric civilizing project may have been considered an abject failure in terms of the deculturation of enslaved African peoples, the reproductive increases, which were bolstered by the sexual exploitation of the planter and his hierarchy, as well as childbirth outside of marriage, enhanced the labour force. Regardless of relationship status, the population of the enslaved was stable in the decades leading up to emancipation. Handler and Lange state that in “1817, 1820, 1823, 1826, 1829, and 1832, the slave population ranged between 77,493 and 81,902, averaging 79,767, or approximately 80 percent of the island’s total population during these years. At emancipation, on August 1, 1834, there were between 82,807 and 83,146 slaves, about 14,592 whites, and 6,584 freedmen.”<sup>13</sup>

Advisors to the master class (professional managers, doctors, and overseers) were called upon to maximize labour performance. This was achieved by allocating resources for the physical development of the body, the general health of the plantation workforce, and the reproductive potential of women. Such tactics are typical of population management, as described by Foucault who states that “for population controls, one notes the emergence of demography, the evaluation of the relationship between resources and inhabitants, the constructing of tables analyzing wealth and its circulation.”<sup>14</sup> In *The*

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<sup>11</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 29, 120.

<sup>12</sup> Ward, J.R. *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: The Process of Amelioration*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, 177.

<sup>13</sup> Handler and Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbados*, 29.

<sup>14</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, (New York: Random House Inc., 1985): 140.

*Politics of Reproduction: Race, Medicine, and Fertility in the Age of Abolition*, Katherine Paugh states that English politicians and planters turned to the demographic science of Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus at the beginning of the nineteenth century to analyze considerations of population, labour supply, sexuality, and economic benefit in the West Indies regarding slavery.<sup>15</sup> Strategies of biopolitical management in Barbados during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were achieved in part by the rapid financial success and cohesive elitism of the planter class, their involvement in political life, and their connected patterns of slave-labour importation. Barbadian planters, both in the colony and *in absentia*, leveraged their influence as parliamentarians, judges, merchants, lobbyists, and clergymen, to govern those in bondage. Craton (1982) and Morgan (2007) state that the administrative organization of a large plantation could include overseers, attorneys, managers, and the planter himself, who was typically a privileged member of England's upper class.<sup>16</sup> Nick Draper states that plantation management was mostly carried out by local agents in Barbados between 1820 and 1835, as over one hundred elite planters from the Caribbean were Members of England's Parliament.<sup>17</sup>

A critical document that illustrates the biopolitical analytics of the planter class emerged at the end of the eighteenth century: the 1785 "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes" was drafted by elite Barbadian planters, John Braithwaite, James Colleton, Edward Drax, Francis Ford, Philip Gibbes, W.M. Thorpe Holder, Edwin Lascelles, and John Walter.<sup>18</sup> This document

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<sup>15</sup> Katherine Paugh, *The Politics of Reproduction: Race, Medicine, and Fertility in the Age of Abolition*, Oxford Scholarship Online.

<sup>16</sup> Craton 1982, 36; Morgan 2007, 109.

<sup>17</sup> Draper, 2007, 91.

<sup>18</sup> "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes." These men were elite planters who operated large-scale sugar estates on the island. For example, upon Edwin Lascelles the First Baron of Harewood's decease on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1795, his cousin Edward inherited his



demonstrates that the introduction of managerial reform in Barbados was not just a heuristic exercise, but rather the affirmation that a systemic transition was required to safeguard the institution of racial bondage. The 1785 advisement evidences how ameliorative reform in Barbados was precipitated by the collusion amongst several elite Barbadian planters to enhance their own hegemonic position through principles of biopolitical rule to achieve success as a new model of economic management. It is probable that their influence concerning management practices was widespread in Barbados given their socio-economic and political status. From this document it becomes clear that the elite planter class in Barbados was developing a strategy of management that looked to identify ways in which the socialization of the enslaved could translate into increased profit. Ameliorative management was instituted with the intention of stabilizing the future supply of slave-labour, but it also set forth a more fundamental undertaking, which was to subjugate the physical body of the enslaved to the vicissitudes of plantation life. Planters in Barbados established a disciplinary incentive structure that combined facets of social mobility, institutional accessibility, financial award, and economic freedom. Amongst these was the encouragement of exclusive relationships.

David Brion Davis's (2006) contention that the endorsement of exclusive relationships amongst the enslaved on, plantations throughout the Caribbean and United States was not only a move to increase profit but an exhibition of planter "sympathy" to the pleas of couples who resided on separate plantations is problematic. He overestimates

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property, slaves, stock, and annuities. This included but was not limited to the following full ownership of several Barbadian estates: Belle Estate, Holetown Estate, Cooper Hill Estate, Kirton Estate, Mount Estate, Fortescues Estate, Thicket Estate, and partial ownership of the Pilgrim Estate. He also inherited four estates in Jamaica (Williams Field Estate, Nightingale Grove, Mammie Ridge Penn [sic], Penn at the Angels, and an estate in Tobago (Mesopotamia Estate). The Account of the Rt. Hon'ble Edward Lord Harewood with Edwin Lord Harewood dec'd. 25<sup>th</sup> January 1795. Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

the concern slave owners had for the psychological and emotional well-being of those enslaved and also fails to address the underlying security measures gained by this tactic.<sup>19</sup> Conversely, Bush (1990) assumes that planters willfully obstructed exclusive relationships because they were deemed to be an unnecessary financial impediment to the domestic slave-trade, as this could interfere with family members being separated.<sup>20</sup> These two perspectives trace a bifurcated conceptualization of exclusive relationships, which fails to adequately elucidate the impact planter management had on ameliorative practices. First, a more nuanced understanding of exclusive relationships for the purpose of encouraging reproduction reveals naked economic exploitation at work and the disciplinary tactics used to secure loyalty. Exclusive relationships amongst the enslaved while not rejecting the realities submitted by Bush (1990) and Davis (2006) *in toto*, can be better understood through the micropractices of managerial control to shape predictive outcomes for the future “increase” of plantation labour.

Marriages whether sanctioned by the church, or more informally recognized under the approval of the plantation owner without legal recognition, could offer protection from transportation, material benefits such as housing, and increased provisions but without any legal culpability it was unenforceable. The “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation” advised that young married couples should be granted a plot of land and a house erected at no cost.<sup>21</sup> Married couples would be provided “half a day in every month, from the end of the crop to the end of December, to prepare and plant his own spot of ground.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 134.

<sup>20</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 100.

<sup>21</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 30. There is no indication in the accounting books regarding the marital status of enslaved mothers who received benefits.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

If followed, these measures would have expanded freedoms associated with economic activity (the opportunity to sell vegetables and livestock at the market place); privacy (a personal family residence); and security (diminished chance of being sold to another slave owner and physically punished if deemed a “breeder”). These suggested initiatives, which can be categorized as incentives (governmentality) and punishments (discipline), would have structured the general conditions of slave marriage. Disciplinary punishments for failing to conform to the slaveholder’s expectations for reproduction, on the other hand, centered on the restriction of mobility, a reduction of provision allowance, a more oppressive labour regimen as these women had little prospect of escaping hard-labour in the fields.

Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2008) reveal that the absentee slave owner of the *Lowther* plantations in Barbados motivated his managers to increase female fertility and preserve slave life by offering a commission to the enslaved in the form of financial reward.<sup>23</sup> This technology of governmental force preceded Frederick W. Taylor’s *Scientific Management* by a century, which called for a management approach based on “initiative and incentive.”<sup>24</sup> Barbadian planters in 1785 introduced a strategy of care and stimulus that advised that “a distribution of rewards and punishments” was “necessary in the government of negroes.”<sup>25</sup> Plantation resources devoted to food, clothing, and medical care during the nineteenth century on three Barbadian plantations (*Drax Hall*, *Mount Gay*, and *Newton*), substantiate how planters adopted these ameliorative reforms and how they represent a form of “medico-administrative” population technology.

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<sup>23</sup> Fleischman, Oldroyd and Tyson, 2008, 776-77.

<sup>24</sup> Taylor, *Scientific Management*, 180.

<sup>25</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 23.

Foucault states that in the nineteenth century “medico-administrative knowledge begins to develop concerning society, its health and sickness, its conditions of life, housing, and habits” and also “a politico-medical hold on a population hedged in by a whole series of prescriptions relating not only to disease but to general forms of existence and behaviour (food and drink, sexuality and fecundity, clothing and the layout of living space).”<sup>26</sup> This regime of “medico-administrative” science was a fundamental reform that challenges an understanding of the plantation paradigm as an unmitigated space of death and violence through its inclusion of the anatomization and biopoliticization of the enslaved body.

Plantation records during “amelioration” indicate that higher quality foods, medicines, and clothing were also provided to “convalescent slaves” in an effort to preserve life.<sup>27</sup> Plantation expense records on the *Drax Hall* (1815-31), *Mount Gay* (1809-33), and *Newton* plantations (1805-33) in Barbados confirm that slaves suffering from illness and disease were given specialty foods and drink in an effort to improve health. A few common items provided to slaves listed as “convalescent,” “sick” or suffering from “dysentery” included beef, fresh fish, fowls, pork, sheep, biscuit, bread, flour, rice, cocoa, and alcohol in the form of brandy, gin, Madeira win, and Port Wine.<sup>28</sup> Other substances thought to have curative powers to treat illness and injury included castor oil, olive oil, sweet oil, bark, sulphur, tartar emetic, starch and turpentine for young children.<sup>29</sup> Expenses on these three plantations specify the purchase of fish (flying fish, herring, mackerel, and salmon), as well as pork and on occasion beef, by the barrel.<sup>30</sup> While it is difficult to discern who consumed

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<sup>26</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 283.

<sup>27</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

these commodities, other items purchased in bulk included salt, flour, castor oil, coffee, Guinea corn, Indian corn, potatoes, molasses, butter, and rice, as well as spirits such as port wine, brandy, and rum.<sup>31</sup>

Attention to the lifespan of those enslaved during the beginning part of the eighteenth century had taken root in broader public exercises of economic management necessary for the collective wellbeing of the colony. In the late eighteenth century Barbadian planters also censured “impatient” Managers for demanding ill slaves to work, arguing that it was “as injudicious as it is inhuman. If it does not cause an immediate relapse, it retards nature’s return to sound health and full strength.”<sup>32</sup> The 1785 advisement also proposed that the manager be understanding of slaves suffering from “venereal cases, slow fevers, and dysenteries, [as] the recovery of health is slow.”<sup>33</sup> Whereas a rationale of expenditure and sacrifice was the conventional logic in an environment of unlimited labour supply, governmental technology in circumstances of an anticipated restricted labour supply demanded a managerial approach of conservation. The Barbadian plantocracy in the latter part of the eighteenth century also recommended managers to provide “a sufficient quantity of provisions to feed the negroes and the flock,” adding that Guinea corn was the best produce to achieve these ends.<sup>34</sup> As it concerned the provision grounds for adult slaves, these members of the Barbadian plantocracy called for a “plentiful

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 28.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. Legislation enacted by the West India Body in England for the regulation of slaves in the West Indies in 1827, which called for a penalty of £10 to be levied upon slave owners who allowed their “diseased slaves [...] to go at large, or infest the highways, &c.” indicates not only the prevalence of disease among those enslaved, but the public interest toward the containment of the enslaved in the colonies. An Abstract of the British West Indian Statutes for the Protection and Government of Slaves. London: James Ridgway, Piccadilly. 1830. Accessed at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, 9

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 14.

allowance.”<sup>35</sup> Despite the movement toward amelioration the planter class continued to refer to the enslaved in terms of financially exploitable chattel.

Plantation records also reveal how food was used as a governmental measure to motivate the enslaved during peak labour times and as a reward during Christian observances. Both the *Drax Hall* and *Newton* plantations expense records indicate that barrels of flour and pork, as well as bags of rice were given to slaves at Christmas and Easter.<sup>36</sup> On *Drax Hall* it appears that a more expensive and higher grade of meat, fresh beef, was given to white servants for their Christmas dinner, which confirms both the entrenchment of racial hierarchy and a strategy to discourage allegiances across racial lines.<sup>37</sup> Specialty items such as port wine, gin, and tobacco were also provided to individual slaves on these three plantations for reasons undeclared.<sup>38</sup> On *Drax Hall* one barrel of pork and flour were provided for the completion of the crop, and on *Newton*, pork and beef, which were rarely provided for the same reason.<sup>39</sup>

Ameliorative slave management generated economic benefit for the planter class by stabilizing the future supply of slave-labour, as argued in the 1785 “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes.” The authors of this document argued that a systemic transition from mortal wasting to preservation was required to safeguard the institution of racial bondage, and that the primary concern of a

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>36</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>37</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1.

<sup>38</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>39</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

Manager should be toward the “preservation of the negroes.”<sup>40</sup> This advisement challenged conventional practices of negligence and violence, as it advocated for the health of the slave population to encourage childbirth: the instructions stated that if slaves were to be “fed plentifully, worked moderately, and treated kindly, they will increase in most places.”<sup>41</sup> These guidelines of care (adequate provisions and a reduction of mortal punishment) describe the principal techniques of ameliorative slave management. The instructions, however, outline a grim rationality of the commoditization of the enslaved as the rationale behind their preservation and development into productive labourers could be recorded, assessed, and subject to further modification to increase profit generation. The primary metric of success according to the advisement, however, was the preservation of life. This is emphasized by the report’s declaration that population growth was the primary measurement of success for the plantation: **“The increase is the only test the care [sic] with which they are treated [emphasis in original].”**<sup>42</sup>

Foucault’s analysis of ancient Greek physician Galen’s writings on reproduction and community offer perspective into governmental slave management on the plantation complex. Through Foucault’s analysis of Galen we can see how the planter acted as a *демиург* to perpetuate the *bios* of those enslaved as a false community through the entrenchment of a governmental incentive structure.<sup>43</sup> In *The Care of the Self*, Foucault

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<sup>40</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 2.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid; Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 76-77.

<sup>43</sup> The economic and political sovereignty of the Barbadian planter class depended on harnessing the biological aspects of reproduction. In *The Care of the Self*, Foucault states that for Galen the perpetuation of life demanded “*демиург* work” and that [t]he logos that builds the natural order is in a situation rather similar to that of the founder of a city: the latter may very well bring men together to form a community; however, the city will disappear, will fall into oblivion, if one does not discover how to make it endure beyond the death of its first citizens.” Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self. The History of Sexuality, Volume 3*. (New York: Random House Inc., 1988): 105.

reveals how the *demiurge* creates “living beings” and “a means to reproduce” by discovering an art (*technē*) and employing enticement (*delear*) to ensure the salvation of the species.”<sup>44</sup> These considerations articulate fundamental principles of pro-natalism carried out by planters who introduced incentives to encourage reproduction, and moreover, reveal how the perpetuation or salvation of life was inextricably overdetermined by capitalistic generation. Successful slave management, unlike in the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century in Barbados, was no longer to be measured solely by conventional calculations of valuation, such as the volume of plantation production and annual profits, but also by the size, preservation, and future increase of the slave population. The emergence of human reserve as a fluid financial security above other capital investments, such as livestock, land, and machinery, underscores the plantocracy’s belief that ‘proper’ management could further unlock possibilities for the increase of profit by manipulating the treatment regimen applied to those enslaved.

A more advanced biopolitical strategy was to implement utilitarian techniques for the maximization of slave-labour through adequate provision allowance. An organized plantation environment required not only the physical disciplining of slaves in an emotionally controlled manner so as to extract their productive potential without permanent injury, but also good management practices designed to avoid “short feeding,” as this would diminish labour output.<sup>45</sup> Strategies to obtain a more proficient labour force and encourage reproduction, which were pursued on plantations in the Southern United States in the nineteenth century included the appointment of a fulltime cook, the designation of a

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 105-6.

<sup>45</sup> Roles, *Inside Views of Slavery on Southern Plantations*, 1. Roles also stated that his advice to planters he counselled was to provide slaves with a sufficient amount of food, so that when his “whip cracked among them, they were able to answer to it.” Ibid., 25.



central location for the distribution of food, the calculation of rations according to age, labour, or season, as well as the supervision of the enslaved during meal times to diminish conflict that could arise from limited resources.<sup>46</sup> The most critical aspect of ameliorative reform in Barbados, however, were strategies of pro-natalism designed to increase childbirth.

The *bios* of the unborn slave was determined *a priori* through pro-natalist strategies of planter governmentality, and the treatment of female fertility as an apparatus of production, exchange, and speculation, supported the critical need for the employment of medical practitioners and slave managers to encourage the health of the enslaved. Ameliorative management in Barbados targeted areas of slave life believed to compromise fertility – poor nutrition, squalid living quarters, hard labour, and physical abuse. While this chapter focuses on the ameliorative agenda of the planter class, and not on the “chronic malnourishment, physical exhaustion, illness” and “forms of mutilation” visited upon enslaved black women, these realities of exploitation subsisted.<sup>47</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century planters in Barbados had introduced reforms such as relief from fieldwork, financial incentives, increased provision grounds, and medical attention, and to promote monogamous relationships and the encouragement of childbirth.<sup>48</sup> These interventions encompass two dimensions of Foucault’s analysis of power that relate to the disciplinary aspects for training the body (anatomo-politics) and the other which focuses on the biological processes of the species (bio-politics), as gleaned earlier through his

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> The horrors of enslavement in the Caribbean are explored in Garraway’s research. Garraway, *The Libertine Colony*, 221-22.

<sup>48</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

interpretation of Galen. Foucault argues that the power over life developed through this bipolar structure and that

the first to be formed, it seems – centred on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines: anatomo-politics of the human body* [emphasis in original]. The second, formed somewhat later, focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births, mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and *regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population* [emphasis in original].”<sup>49</sup>

The anatomo-political dimensions of slave management relate to the surveillance, distribution, and punishment of the enslaved for purposes of mitigating rebellion and securing labour production. The bio-political tactics of amelioration, however, centered on the regulation of fertility, birth, and mortality, and were carried out through an incentive regime directed toward enslaved women to encourage reproduction. The archival record does not indicate that men received any direct material reward for increased fertility rates, but as noted by Beckles, benefitted through relationships by reinforcing their masculinity

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<sup>49</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 139. Plantation slavery in Barbados illustrates how biological racism emerged well before the second half of the nineteenth century as argued by Foucault. Nevertheless, he does evidence how “it was then that a whole politics of settlement (*peuplement*), family, marriage, education, social hierarchization, and property, accompanied by a long series of permanent interventions at the level of the body, conduct, health, and everyday life, received their colour and their justification from the mythical concern with protecting the purity of blood and ensuring the triumph of the race.” Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 149.

within the plantation hierarchy.<sup>50</sup> Incentive measures were a unique governmental strategy to bolster population growth in hopes of sustaining future labour output, but the professional intervention of plantation managers carried out a concurrent disciplinary tactic: medical practitioners applied a regimen of physical interference that included forms of examination, treatment, and discovery upon the bodies of enslaved women with the intention of increasing fertility rates for their employers, while slave managers appraised the financial worth of the enslaved, tracked the distribution of plantation resource, and calculated future labour output. The primary objective of the owner-planter and the hired manager was to assess and speculate on the financial viability of the enterprise, and in so doing, apply reforms necessary to achieve these ends. The managerial ethos of the Barbadian elite moved toward a corporate *dispositif* of governmental control in what can be described as an initiation of power-knowledge-pleasure nexus that commoditized the sexuality and reproduction of enslaved women.

This observation challenges Wood's (1987) assertion that: "Planters were certainly aware of the economic value of slave children but did not allude, at least not in print, to the reproductive capacity of black women, to their value as 'breeders'."<sup>51</sup> Evidence of female reproductive value is manifest in records of slave procurement, transportation, and sale; documentation of assessment, occupational status, and projected reproductive capacity; information detailing rewards related to clothing, food, and medical care; and colonial will documents that demonstrate the custom of primogeniture and intergenerational slavery. This study follows Morgan's (2004) argument that "wills, inventories, and purchase

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<sup>50</sup> Beckles, 1999, 8.

<sup>51</sup> Betty Wood, "Some Aspects of Female Resistance to Chattel Slavery in Low Country Georgia, 1763-1815," *The Historical Journal*, 30.3, Cambridge University Press. (Sep., 1987): 608.

records” of Barbadian slave owners indicate the financial value associated with childbirth.<sup>52</sup> The official bookkeeping records of the Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831), Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), and Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41) substantiate the financial value associated with childbirth and the strategy of “breeding” future labourers for the perpetuation of plantation bondage through monetary compensation and commodity purchase.<sup>53</sup>

Morgan (2004) acknowledges the punitive nature of gendered violence and its connection to the financial valuation of enslaved women and their offspring, but a more critical dimension of slavery is lost in her analysis, which relates to how biopolitical techniques of pro-natalist intervention introduced a new *telos* of female subjugation. Scientific intrusion upon the female body and the will to harness demographic conditions amenable to plantation growth, particularly in the nineteenth century, transformed how plantocratic power shifted the interface between morality, sexuality, and economy, from a disciplinary to governmental mode of power.

While Dale Tomich’s (2004) work closely identifies with Marxist and World-systems theory when interrogating slavery,<sup>54</sup> the present study undertakes a Foucauldian analysis of the plantation complex to explore how diverse micropractices of management

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<sup>52</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 88-89.

<sup>53</sup> My archival research of the Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831), Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), and Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41) at the Shilstone Memorial Library in Barbados focused on how the accounting record situated practices of amelioration undertaken on the plantation.

<sup>54</sup> Tomich’s analysis of plantation slavery introduces several problematic observations that are consistent with a Marxist and World Systems analysis of power. He theorizes that there is a division between earlier vs. later plantation zones, according to a spectrum of industrial development, and that British hegemony was exercised through the territorial epicenter of trade and finance in the metropole. This dissertation challenges an analysis of the geo-economic/political ordering of planter power, and the subsequent exchange of commercial trade, labour systems, and manufacturing technologies, as a bifurcated zone (core and periphery) of intelligibility. I argue that a microphysical analysis of biopolitical techniques of labour, punishment, and management reveal the diffuse and replicating conditions of planter power and its role in shaping a capitalist market economy in the Atlantic. Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery*, 60-61.

were employed to construct avenues of subjectivity across different locations and periods of the plantation paradigm. According to Foucault (1984), “noso-politics” in the eighteenth century is deployed “at a multitude of sites in the social body of health and disease as problems requiring some form or other of collective control measures” and that it targets “the health of all as a priority for all, the state of health of a population as a general objective of policy.”<sup>55</sup> Early nineteenth-century plantation accounting records from Barbados reveal that pro-natalist policies had been instituted into the structures of daily living. These records demonstrate that the tracking and safeguarding of health was specific to stages of the life cycle and was heavily focused on the management of women. The care of pregnant women, newborns, and young children was the priority of managers attempting to secure future labour. Whereas the colonial police intruded on the behest of the state to restrict mobility and punish offenders off-plantation, physicians and managers were requested out of necessity to “care” for and “increase” the slave population. What would seem to be a diffusion of planter power was in practice a consolidation and intensification through the development of noso-political management.

Archival accounting records in Barbados reveal how strategies of “noso-politics” were employed to track investment in the “care” of those enslaved. According to plantation accounting records from Barbados during the nineteenth century, which include *Drax Hall* (1815-1831); *Mount Gay* (1809-1835) and *Newton* (1805-41), planters introduced reforms such as relief from field work, financial incentives, increased provision grounds, and medical attention to promote childbirth. While the economic outcome of this investment for the planter was ultimately the creation of life for future plantation labour, amelioration

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<sup>55</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 275.

also introduced another mechanism of governmental force through “care.” The introduction of an incentive system to govern the conduct, desire, and security of the enslaved within an ingrained disciplinary milieu, as noted by the architectural environment of surveillance, the serialization of time for labour production, and a system of correction to punish offenders, explored in the second part of this dissertation, afforded the planter class opportunity to advance a program of colonial bondage that extended beyond the naked economic agenda of burn-up. It is through procedures of noso-politics that the plantocracy in Barbados expressed their desire to shift the science of management toward the safeguarding of life for profit generation.

Whereas Beckles provides a compelling analysis of the historical impact the “age of amelioration” had on the slavocracy’s desire to secure a homegrown slave force, he does not interrogate how pro-natalist policy functioned as a predictive security structure to protect white supremacy by sustaining the labour force, and how the fostering of slave life augmented the established environment of disciplinary violence.<sup>56</sup> Through Foucault’s philosophical analysis into the relationship between knowledge systems and their use for the establishment of force upon the individual and populations in eighteenth-century Europe, I argue that “polymorphous techniques of power” also organized a pro-natalist incentive apparatus through the plantocracy’s “will to knowledge”, and that this movement altered the philosophy for the management of those enslaved.<sup>57</sup> In this respect, the “age of amelioration” offers unique perspectives into how the principles of plantation management concretized Eurocentric ideals of womanhood, marriage, and family within institutional

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<sup>56</sup> Beckles notes that the “age of amelioration” in Barbados was a calculated economic strategy to encourage procreation by providing pregnant women with better food, less taxing labour, childcare, and monetary compensation. Beckles, *Centering Woman*, 159-60.

<sup>57</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 11-12.

structures, and how these pro-natalist strategies were shaped by the choices and desires of enslaved women. This strategy of subjugation was both patriarchal and racist as the focus of accounting followed procreation among enslaved women, which depended on several sites of noso-political intervention and included medico-administrative knowledge.

The corporate and paternalistic underpinnings of governmental management are demonstrated by the professional emergence of medical practitioners who exercised obstetric intervention as a power-knowledge relationship. Foucault states that medical intervention “assumes an increasingly important place in the administrative system and the machinery of power – a role which is constantly widened and strengthened throughout the eighteenth century.”<sup>58</sup> In regards to the development of medico-administrative rationality in Europe, Foucault states that the physician “becomes the great advisor and expert, if not in the art of governing, at least in that of observing, correcting, and improving the social “body”” and that it is the “doctor’s function as hygienist, rather than his prestige as a therapist, that assures him this politically privileged position in the eighteenth century, prior to his accumulation of economic and social privileges in the nineteenth century.”<sup>59</sup> Barbadian slave managers controlled formal arrangements of family life, labour, mobility, housing, medical intervention, and provision to harmonize an integrative ameliorative apparatus. The role of the doctor on the plantation functioned primarily as a hygienist through prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. The bookkeeping records of the Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831), Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), and Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41) evidence that practitioners were called upon to offer advice on how to mitigate a possible disease environment, reduce financial impact from workplace

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<sup>58</sup> Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 283.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

injury, and increase the potentialities of human resource: the accounting books also indicate that efforts to augment diet and apply substance as a form of rudimentary pharmacology were used to treat illness and disease.<sup>60</sup>

What challenges any theoretical framework that suggests these reforms were humanitarian, as argued by Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2008), relates to several areas of ethical concern in the treatment of those enslaved.<sup>61</sup> *Primum non-nocere* (first, do no harm) was compromised given the client/vendor relationship between the planter and doctor. Medical practitioners were complicit in the denial (outright coercion and suppression) of autonomy, personhood, respect, and dignity of those enslaved by privileging the commercial interests of the planter, regardless of the health benefits afforded by intervention. The hierarchical and exclusionary practices of plantation slavery were also reinforced by the increased delivery of resource (food, monetary rewards, and reprieve from labour) to those who were deemed to be most valuable in terms of reproduction. This is revealed in the Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831), Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), and Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41) through forms of reward and compensation extended to enslaved women identified as ‘breeders.’ Accounting for reproductive potential under amelioration became a critical focus toward establishing a medico-administrative power-knowledge domain on the plantation complex.

Ward maintains that during the second half of the eighteenth century it had become common for planters in Barbados to employ a doctor to reduce mortality rates, and that

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<sup>60</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>61</sup> Fleischman, Richard K., David Oldroyd, and Thomas N. Tyson, “The culpability of accounting practice in promoting slavery in the British Empire and antebellum United States”



these medical professionals were often Scottish trained, as the reputation of their education and training was not respected in England and viewed as sub-standard, but could still practice on those considered sub-human.<sup>62</sup> Competent physicians, however, were sought after by slave owners trying to reduce mortality rates in an effort to maintain labour production. While medical intervention targeted the general maintenance of those enslaved in order to mitigate loss through standards of care related to addressing injury, the conditions of poor housing, clothing, nutrition, and the role and performance of sexuality became a way to control population.



Figure 24. Source: Image of Blackman's plantation hospital on Pinterest credited to Mohammed Patel <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/fa/79/0f/fa790f0294a66b3122ed1e8c4d4177f0.jpg>  
Dr. Henry Fraser of the University of the West Indies states that Blackman's plantation hospital, which is located at the Grantley Adams Memorial Secondary in the parish of St. Joseph, is the only remaining slave hospital in Barbados. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://www.barbadosadvocate.com/columns/things-matter-5>

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<sup>62</sup> Ward, 1988, 160.

The co-present mobilization of disciplinary and governmental force on the plantation complex functioned as a strategy for the fostering of slave life across a multitude of positions where intervention was deemed to be beneficial for the planter-class both morally and economically. Foucault argues that sexuality in the nineteenth century functioned through

political operations, economic interventions (through incitements to or curbs on procreation), and ideological campaigns for raising standards of morality and responsibility: it was put forward as the index of a society's strength, revealing of both its political energy and its biological vigor. Spread out from one pole to the other of this technology of sex was a whole series of different tactics that combined varying proportions the objective of disciplining the body and that of regulating populations.<sup>63</sup>

Attempts to encourage monogamy during the latter part of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries incorporated a biopolitical regime of sexuality that included a host of objectives that ranged from concerns of moral propriety (monogamy, faith, and family) and biological regulation (breeding, procreation, and the preservation of life). The planter class carried out disciplinary measures such as physical punishment and sexual abuse upon those in relationships of affection to achieve a reduction in resistance and absconding. These tactics were also pursued as a means to secure a more predictive outcome for childbirth, the attainment of an intergenerational slave-labour force, as well as the promotion of Christianity.<sup>64</sup> Marie Jenkins Schwartz's careful analysis showing that

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<sup>63</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 146.

<sup>64</sup> According to Morgan (2004) South Carolinian slave owners acknowledged that marriage assuaged male violence on the plantation. Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 95.

the slavocracy in the Southern United States exerted “hegemonic” authority over the enslaved by influencing “human reproduction”<sup>65</sup> can also be broadened to capture the critical regional diversity and nuances of power that existed between the master class and those enslaved.

The economic outcome for the planter was ultimately the creation of life for future plantation labour as an investment, but amelioration also introduced mechanisms of “care” that critically altered the institution of bondage. By initiating an incentive system to govern the conduct, desire, and security of the enslaved, within an ingrained disciplinary milieu (an architectural environment of surveillance, the serialization of time for labour production, and a system of correction to punish offenders), the planter class advanced the management of those enslaved into a far more complex and fluid program of exploitation. This could prove adaptable to changing legislation restrictions on the trans-Atlantic slave-trade in Africans and the socio-economic pressures engendered by demographic fluctuations in the free-black population and decline of white servitude. These reforms helped fortify the naked economic agenda of expropriation undertaken by the planter class but remain largely unrecognized by some historians who choose to diminish the complexity of valuation to which planters assigned those enslaved.

The metropolitan government in Britain considered ameliorative reforms radical and that they were an assault on the institution of slavery at large, this despite the planters’ efforts to preserve its viability. Legislation passed by planters in England in the decade leading up to abolition also illustrate how ameliorative policy targeted areas of slave life.

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<sup>65</sup> Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, 4-5.

The planter interest, however, made clear that these policies were not an assault on the institution nor a stepping-stone to emancipation, stating:

that they have never directly or indirectly authorized or concurred in any measure, having for its object compulsory manumission of the Slaves in the West India Colonies; and they continue of opinion that such a measure would be highly inexpedient, and that it is even inconsistent with the Resolutions of Parliament of 1823, being in their opinion opposed both to the civilization and welfare of the Slaves, and to the interests and rights of property Colonists.<sup>66</sup>

The West Indian lobby's stance concerning the "civilization and welfare of the Slaves" through the legislation reform reinforced the planter class' long-term economic objectives, the intergenerational system of slavery, and "moral" improvement of those in bondage, through an ameliorative strategy grounded on Eurocentric institutional norms.<sup>67</sup> Reforms to civilize and protect the enslaved structured an art of governmental stewardship that reinforced the legal servitude of blacks through technologies of bio-power (provisions, marriage, funerals, and education), which aimed at the Euro-Christian cultural assimilation and development of a docile enslaved labour class.<sup>68</sup> Sasha Turner argues that Abolitionists

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<sup>66</sup> An Abstract of the British West Indian Statutes for the Protection and Government of Slaves. London: James Ridgway, Piccadilly. 1830. Accessed at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, iv.

<sup>67</sup> William Dickson (1751-1823), who was Secretary to Barbados Governor Edward Hay, and later an abolitionist after witnessing the abuses of those enslaved, expressed the "moral improvement" of those enslaved through assimilation: "the instruction of the Field-negroes in the British Sugar islands; who are by no means idle, wandering savages. Their minds, no doubt, have been greatly depressed, and their character, in various respects, debased by Slavery. But, allowing for this circumstance, they are wonderfully acute, well disposed, and desirous of improvement. They already speak our language, practise our mechanical arts, highly prize our privileges, and want nothing but protection from oppression and arbitrary violence, to induce them to embrace our religion." Dickson, William LL.D., *Mitigation of Slavery*, In Two Parts. Part I: Letters and Papers of The Late Hon. Josua Steele, p. 1-7, 132-136, 177-183. Part II: Letters to Thomas Clarkson, Esq. M.A., p. 193, 338-353. (London, 1814).

<sup>68</sup> Sasha Turner states that ameliorative reforms directed toward children focused on the reproduction of "docile bodies" to safeguard the institution of slave-labour. Sasha Turner, *Contested Bodies: Pregnancy, Childrearing, and Slavery in Jamaica*, Early American Studies. University of Pennsylvania Press. 2017. Accessed at <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.9783/9780812294057>

believed that this movement toward the “civilization” of blacks would be through the appropriation of Christian morality, industriousness, and self-governance.<sup>69</sup> It is under this maturation of colonial administration that we can draw a comparative analysis to other forms of bondage, servitude, and “guardianship” practiced throughout the Americas on Indigenous peoples, such as the Reservation and Residential Schooling system.<sup>70</sup>

In 1830 an assembly of the West India Planters and Merchants held in England recognized the importance of ameliorative policies in the West India Colonies “in order to prevent the loss or destruction of so valuable a portion of the Empire.”<sup>71</sup> The West India Body stated that:

in interest with the Colonial Legislatures, and placing implicit confidence in their proceedings, recognize in those measures which they have adopted for the improvement of the Slave population, that humane disposition, as well as that local experience, and that practical observation, without which any plans of amelioration would be no less injurious to the Slaves themselves than to the Proprietors.<sup>72</sup>

What is crucial to note is that the West India Body conceded to the authority of colonial administrations in the West Indies that ameliorative slave management would not compromise the financial aspects of slavery. Legislation for the amelioration of the enslaved was granted royal assent on October 18, 1827, long after the entrenchment of the practice by slave owners, which called for the “power to appoint an acting protector, at

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>70</sup> For further analysis of the Residential Schooling system in Canada, see, Paulette Regan’s *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada*, Vancouver, UBC Press, 2010; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Summary: Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., iv-v.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., iii.

£400 per annum” as well as the following reforms: slave owners were to baptize, instruct, marry, and bury slaves in accordance with Christian practices, and provide slaves “annually with decent and sufficient clothing, suitable to sex, age, and condition.”<sup>73</sup> Ameliorative policies legislated by the West India Body in 1827 would also enfranchise the enslaved with the right to own property, stating that anyone who denied a slave “the absolute *right of personal property* [emphasis in original]” would be lawfully compelled to surrender twice the value of the appropriated property to the injured slave.<sup>74</sup> The legislation called for a fine of £10 to anyone who compelled a slave to labour on Sunday, a fine of £5 for operating a market on Christmas day, Good-Friday or any Sunday, and the forfeiture of any goods notwithstanding medicine and perishable food.<sup>75</sup>

Beyond the regulation of the marketplace, these policies also called for a reduction in acts of cruelty by providing legal mechanisms of protection for abused slaves. Legislation stipulated that “any person who wantonly commits cruelty towards a slave, by whipping, bruising or beating, &c., shall be fined by any two justices not less than £25, and not exceeding £100.”<sup>76</sup> For more serious offences, such as “maiming or dismembering,” the abused slave would be reassigned to a “master of humane repute,” and the malefactor would be imprisoned for a minimum of six months and fined a minimum of £100; the fine,

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 8-9. If a slave owner failed to provide the necessities of life, the legislation stated that “the acting protector shall take temporary possession of the slave, and hire him out until the owner’s circumstances are bettered; but if it appear that the owner had the means and withheld the same, the justices shall indict him to the Grand Sessions, and on conviction he is to be punished by fine and imprisonment. Ibid., 9.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 9. Randy Browne states that reform-minded planters in the Caribbean would have likely adopted Jeremy Bentham’s “rotary whipping machine, described in his *Rationale of Punishment* (1830)”, which was “a mechanized wheel with ‘rods of cane or whalebone, the number and size of which might be determined by law.’” Browne, Randy M. *Surviving Slavery in the British Caribbean*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/detail.action?docID=4892457>.

however, was to be held in trust and paid out to the victim throughout his or her life.<sup>77</sup>

Policy reforms enacted by the West India Body in 1827 extended to slaves the “right to be *tried* [emphasis in original] at the Grand Sessions, in like manner as white and free-coloured persons” when being “charged with capital offences,” as well as for the admission of slave testimony regarding:

actions of trespass, assault, and in cases of misdemeanor, murder, felony, or other offences, except forgery, against any person whatever: requiring only a certificate of baptism and religious instruction, and that such testimony, against free persons, be corroborated by circumstantial evidence, unless when such free person be an accomplice.<sup>78</sup>

Perhaps the most extreme measure of legal enforcement for the protection of the enslaved, and a definitive transformation of the exercise of sovereign power, was the punishment of “death without benefit of clergy” for any person found guilty of the premeditated murder of a slave.<sup>79</sup> As noted by Caroline Spence, previously a master would have been ordered to pay a fine of less than £12.<sup>80</sup> Regulations were also enacted concerning the punishment of slaves in the 1827 legislation. The West India Body demanded that slave owners whip their slaves with “instruments” proportionate to those used upon English servicemen, and that “any person fixing a *collar* [emphasis in original],

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. The prosecution of whites who were found guilty of murdering enslaved blacks extended to other slave zones outside of the British Caribbean. In South Carolina at the end of eighteenth century a monetary fine was applied to white persons found guilty of murdering a slave. This is substantiated by the £100 fine of Thomas Coburn for beating to death an enslaved man owned by Peter Horlbeck. S.C. Archives, Series S165015 (Petitions to the General Assembly 1782-1866), Year 1795, Item 00044.

<sup>80</sup> Caroline Quarrier Spence, *Ameliorating Empire: Slavery and Protection in the British Colonies, 1783-1865*, Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 2014.

chains, or irons on a slave, be punished by fine and imprisonment.”<sup>81</sup> A fine of £10 would also be imposed upon slave owners who failed to punish their female slaves “in a private decent manner, and when pregnant, to be punished by confinement only.”<sup>82</sup>

## 5.2 ACCOUNTING AND NOSO-POLITICS

Aside from the “psychic annihilation” visited upon the enslaved through the plantocracy’s attempt at deculturation, Barbara Bush (1990) maintains that women in particular were targeted by a system of alienation that involved patriarchy, class-based oppression, and racism from their white male and female masters, coloured women, and enslaved black men.<sup>83</sup> This underscores the intersectional violence of plantation slavery, but it does not sufficiently address how pro-natalism formalized the commoditization of enslaved women as appreciating/depreciating assets of plantation resource through advisory intervention as an economic classification.<sup>84</sup> This process of valuation was carried out by planters and their managerial hierarchy by assigning financial value to characteristics deemed amenable to breeding (age, physical health, and sexual history) during purchases and sales. As noted in the first part of this dissertation, slave-traders called upon physicians to provide medical assessments related to fertility, sexual behaviour, and childbirth. These systems of valuation trace the annexation of enslaved black women to a

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>83</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 7-8.

<sup>84</sup> Caitlin Rosenthal argues that accounting historians observe the analysis of “depreciation” in plantation accounting as an advanced managerial practice that tracks the value of the enslaved as an instrument of capital. Caitlin Rosenthal, “Slavery’s Scientific Management: Masters and Managers”, in Beckert, Sven and Seth Rockman, eds. *Slavery’s Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*. Early American Studies. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.9783/9780812293098>, 79.



biopolitical apparatus, particularly young women and their potential to reproduce, as a biological process that could be tracked through bookkeeping. Archival accounting records reveal a focused appraisal on the reproductive potential of young enslaved women and an absence of women deemed elderly, aside from isolated references that describe labour roles (sick nurse; cook; gang leader.) It is this presence of commoditization that reveals how the professional activities of accounting became shaped by a pro-natalist approach to management, and one that can also be understood as a regime of noso-politics.

Slave accounting records from the nineteenth century indicate that financial compensation was provided to enslaved women for producing children in the “Newton, Drax Hall, Colleton, Mount Gay, and Lowther” plantations.<sup>85</sup> My research of the Newton, Drax Hall, and Mount Gay records points to a visible shift in the approach of managers undertaking plantation accounting, which is manifest in the detailed tracking of childbirth. In addition to Beckles’ careful analysis of pro-natalist policy in Barbados,<sup>86</sup> I investigate the role of accounting in this new managerial science and how it helped shape an epistemological horizon that included patriarchal, racist, and noso-political force. The initiation of an incentive regime to exploit the demographic possibilities of slave society, by introducing cost-effective solutions, was an innovative managerial response to mitigate losses suffered by the metropole’s policy direction to suspend the slave-trade.<sup>87</sup> Targeting women as the source for the generational preservation was at the same time an anatomo-

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<sup>85</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>86</sup> Hilary Beckles, “Sex and Gender in the Historiography of Caribbean Slavery,” *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*, edited by Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995): 135.

<sup>87</sup> Davis (2006) argues “British planters also tried to encourage more slave births and longevity, especially in response to the mounting English political pressure to abolish the Atlantic slave trade, followed from 1791 to 1804 by the terrifying Haitian Revolution.” Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 116.

political and bio-political strategy directed by European belief about sexuality and womanhood.

As a disciplinary tactic the planter class' identification of black womanhood, and womanhood in general as gleaned by the treatment of white women in the colony noted in the first part of this study, was to control the biological and social functioning of reproduction under the calculus of empire building. While the inhumanity of enslaved blacks in the Caribbean has been examined through natal alienation, which includes attempts at cultural genocide, historical erasure, political isolation, and economic suppression, less attention has been directed toward how bio-political (disciplinary and governmental) intersected noso-political (political protocols of health) forms of subjectivity as it concerns maternal health. Obstetric intervention and healthcare of enslaved black women were subject to a more limited continuum of autonomy given the interference of professional practitioners under pro-natalist policies. This could include the intrusion of a planter assigning suitable sexual partner(s); assessments by a medical advisor throughout the duration of pregnancy and at childbirth; the prohibition of traditional African practices and medicines; the interference of white male doctors for examination and delivery; and the assignment of a trusted enslaved black female to care for offspring while mothers laboured in the fields.

In "From slavery to freedom: Children's health in Barbados, 1823-1838" Tara A. Inniss states that beginning in the late 1780s some Barbadian planters adopted pro-natalist policies, and that some practices included efforts to increase fertility through the expansion of maternal medical care and by relieving pregnant women from the demands of field

labour.<sup>88</sup> This approach was directed toward the disciplining of the physical body and its submission to a patriarchal and racial order. Enslaved black women were besieged by a bio-political approach of management that identified demand for intervention in the areas of birth, disease, health, and mortality. Intrusive maneuvers of medical examination, surgery, delivery, and care were augmented by incentives to encourage the development of future labourers. At this level, the disciplining of the body became a wider technology of governmental force to identify trends, successes, and potentialities for the slave colony, and is illustrative through accounting records. Whereas anatomo-politics focused on the micropractices of discipline, the bio-political art of slave government constructed a larger field of macroeconomic and social identifiers for the preservation of the plantation society.

The planter occupied the role of *homo economicus* through the biopolitical strategies of management to harness “slave increase,” as much as the development and application of agricultural knowledge and labour supervision, utilization and design of plantation technologies, and expertise of the colonial marketplace and trade. Planters in the nineteenth century turned their focus toward enslaved women as a collective population to achieve a homegrown labour force. The female slave body was present in all aspects of the aforementioned spheres of plantation life – their contribution to agricultural knowledge, navigating the marketplace as traders and prostitutes, and their contribution to the management of the planter household – but pro-natalist policy would transform the female womb into a site of economic exchange, which could be quantified by managers.

In “Plantation accounting and management practices in the US and the British West Indies at the end of their slavery eras” Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2011) argue that

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<sup>88</sup> Tara A. Inniss, “From Slavery to freedom: Children’s health in Barbados, 1823-1838,” *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 27.2. (2006): 254.

despite the extensive research economic historians have undertaken concerning slavery, the role of accounting has been marginalized.<sup>89</sup> Archival records from Barbados reveal that planters who encouraged slave reproduction relied on accounting records to evaluate how increased resources would impact prospective labour increases. Barbadian plantation records related to *Drax Hall* (1815-1831); *Mount Gay* (1809-1835); and *Newton* (1805-41), reveal a fundamental shift from a largely revenue focused perspective, to one where the adoption of cost analysis entered the commercial grammar of slave government both discursively and materially.

Fleischman and Tyson (2004) accurately demonstrate how plantation accounting organized “practices of measurement, valuation, and classification,” which realized “the commoditization, objectification, and dehumanization of an entire class of people.”<sup>90</sup> Their assertion that slave accounting constructed “racially based social relationships” through a monetary calculus, while “ignoring the qualitative, human dimension of slavery,” however, is a premature closure into understanding the role of colonial governmentality on the plantation complex.<sup>91</sup> The “human dimension of slavery” referenced by Fleischman and Tyson (2004) is anchored by and wholly commensurate with an underlying governmental program that identified and exploited typologies of racial and gendered difference. This was achieved through a technology of bio-power that converged directly on the “human dimension of slavery”: slave reproduction, death, sexuality, disease, and family life. Accounting records that reference ameliorative strategies provide proof that the enslaved

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<sup>89</sup> Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson, “Plantation accounting and management practices in the US and the British West Indies at the end of their slavery eras.” 2011, 765.

<sup>90</sup> Fleischman, Richard K. and Thomas N. Tyson. “Accounting in service to racism: monetizing slave property in the antebellum South.” *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 15 (2004): 376.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

were valuable possessions of investment, exchange, and resource that exceeded the provisional qualities of plantation inventory. In this context, privilege and wealth functioned as a stringent legitimating force for the subjectivity of the enslaved through the authoritative sanctioning power of planters and other professionals (slave traders, insurance brokers, and physicians) who participated in the assessment and treatment of those in bondage. Collectively, these agents coordinated the networks of force necessary to preserve the institution of bondage as a commercial enterprise.

What is most problematic are the inferences made by Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2008) in regard to “accounting’s potential to support emancipation in society rather than repression.”<sup>92</sup> The authors focus on the harmful impact accounting had on the denial of personhood, property, and justice, while arguing how plantation bookkeeping supported “the health and safety of the slaves in order to conserve life and preserve the value of inventory.”<sup>93</sup> This perspective is shared by Jeffrey Young (1999) who argues that planters in Georgia and South Carolina initiated a series of humanitarian reforms to regulate the health of the enslaved to establish a “well-trained” labour force.<sup>94</sup> Resources directed at the health and preservation of those enslaved, however, was pursued first and foremost, to increase profit and secure the intergenerational structure of slavery by proffering incentives within a cacotopia of bondage, neglect, and violence. Increased provision grounds and medical attention should not be exclusively attributed to humane treatment in a normative context, as the manipulation of resources for purposes of incentive and punishment

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<sup>92</sup> Richard K. Fleischman, David Oldroyd, and Thomas N. Tyson, “Plantation accounting and management practices in the US and the British West Indies at the end of their slavery eras,” *Economic History Review* 64.3 (2011): 764.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 764-765.

<sup>94</sup> Young, *Domesticating Slavery*, 1999, 184.

demonstrate a calculated intervention to preserve and make adaptable the conditions of racialized slavery.

Plantation accounting records document the broader opportunity structure of incentive rewards for slave birth on the *Drax Hall*, *Mount Gay*, and *Newton* plantations and reveal how slave accounting was used not only as a disciplinary technology to catalogue “inventory,” but how this system functioned as a governmental apparatus to evaluate demographic trends to encourage life.<sup>95</sup> Slave accounting in this regard could provide the planter class with a technique to examine, value, and predict the efficacy of ameliorative policies for fostering slave life in order to enlarge personal wealth. Armstrong (1994) argues that shifting an analysis of accounting from discipline to governmentality opens up the “discursive conditions of possibility,” but that this approach should include an examination of “material circumstances.”<sup>96</sup> Terminology such as “prime,” (the determined age range to indicate fertility) “increase,” (the future potential offspring of an enslaved woman) and “breeding” (the interventionist conditions to encourage mating) were discursive indicators of economic measurement within the communicative order of slave accounting, which were expressed in plantation records, colonial wills, auction advertisements, and deeds of sale.<sup>97</sup> Slave traders and managers applied these discursive markers in order to classify and assess the fertility and reproductive status of enslaved women. These descriptions provided planters with basic information to appraise the value

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<sup>95</sup> Appendix A: Table 1. “*Number of Children per Mother on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*” and Table 2. “*Number of births on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*.”

<sup>96</sup> Armstrong, 1994, 25-26.

<sup>97</sup> Nicholas Radburn notes that the price point of captives depended on several factors, which included the season, crop price, and demand for labour, and that “prime” slaves were separated from those deemed sick, old, or young. Nicholas Radburn, “Keeping “the wheel in motion”: Trans-Atlantic Credit Terms, Slave Prices, and the Geography of Slavery in the British Americas, 1755-1807,” *The Journal of Economic History*, Cambridge University Press, 75.3 (2015): 663.

of enslaved women, and sometimes a more “scientific” evaluation of their reproductive potential. Assessments were then used to classify the labour roles of enslaved women within the plantation hierarchy, and ultimately, their status as an appreciating or declining source of income for the planter.

Plantation accounting records, while limited in their scope to illustrate fully the devastation of bondage, do postulate evidence of mortal wasting, labour exploitation, and strategies of “care.” These records are supported by colonial wills from Barbados during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which illustrate how the enslaved were treated as “personal” property, commodities of exchange, and gifts between business associates, family, and friends.<sup>98</sup> Specific practices of gender hierarchy and racial exploitation can also be observed in the bequeathment of domestic female slaves by male planters to their daughters upon marriage. This was carried out through a system of primogeniture that excluded white women from equal property ownership and subjugated enslaved black women and their potential offspring to an economy of exchange.<sup>99</sup> Plantation estate planning demonstrates the intergenerational nature of slavery and the importance of reproduction for the perpetuation of wealth and white supremacy, as well as the social status and dependence of white women on slave-labour. Unlike enslaved men, the financial value of enslaved women was also based on their capacity for childbearing.

Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2011) argue that despite the enormity of archival evidence – “[p]lantation records, probate returns, slave narratives, census information, demographic data, and slave market documents” do not always convey the same

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<sup>98</sup> Refer to Appendix A.2. for information concerning the commoditization of enslaved women in Barbados.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

narrative.<sup>100</sup> Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson's assertion is correct when undertaking a comparative regional study examining plantation slavery, but when records are procured from one location, such as Barbados, which has a much more limited documentary archive than that of other plantation zones, such as South Carolina for example, there is a challenge in identifying overall trends, movements, and events. What can be ascertained from plantation records, government documents, and colonial wills from Barbados, however, is an expanded focus from a largely revenue focused perspective, to one where interventionist biopolitical management policies to forecast future financial viability were introduced for long-term planning to mitigate expense.

This managerial orientation is reflected in the advisements of elite planters on the island who called for significant reforms in the government of those enslaved. A primary source that outlines these measures is the 1785 Barbadian report, which stated: "a Proprietor of a plantation should put it under such a course of management, that the nett [sic] profits should more depend upon the smallness of the annual expence [sic] than upon the largeness of the crops."<sup>101</sup> This evidence disputes Fleischman and Tyson's (2004) inference that plantation management was almost entirely focused on the revenue aspects of slaveholding and not on expenditure.<sup>102</sup> The increased attention to financial outflow further emphasizes the importance of investiture in the enslaved through amelioration. Accountants of slavery were tasked with unlocking efficiencies, calculating resource, and charting annual changes in the resident slave population for the planter. According to the *Drax Hall* (1815-1831); *Mount Gay* (1809-1835); and *Newton* (1805-41) accounting

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<sup>100</sup> Fleischman, Oldroyd, and Tyson, 2011, 765.

<sup>101</sup> "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes," 2.

<sup>102</sup> Fleischman and Tyson, 2004, 391-92.



records, which identify the occupational status and demographic profile of the enslaved, the financial value of enslaved men was largely based on their age and if they had any artisanal training, whereas for women, it was determined by their agrarian knowledge, skill and endurance for field labour, gendered tasks associated with household management, and their capacity for childbearing.<sup>103</sup> Planters targeted women as an adaptable asset of plantation resource given their importance for domestic and field labour, but the legal designation of their offspring as slaves *de jure* put into focus the normative practices of “care” believed to encourage the organic development of the body for intensive labour.

Oldroyd, Fleischman, and Tyson (2008) argue that nineteenth-century slavery in the Southern United States and British West Indies was grounded on a scientific approach toward slave accounting that attempted to commoditize those in bondage.<sup>104</sup> Their observation that the “humanity” of the enslaved was overshadowed by the plantocracy’s conceptualization of slavery as “business” and not “exploitation,” however, reduces the enslaved to docile units of economic expenditure.<sup>105</sup> Slave accounting records cannot capture the complex circumstances of sexual abuse, intimacy, and exchange that existed between the master class and the enslaved, but they do provide a general road map into how procedures of pro-natalist management attempted to assuage demographic pressures that threatened labour production. If accounting supported the movement toward emancipation one would expect technologies of force leveraged by the capture of this data to correspond to moral justifications or broader ethical petitions on behalf of managers to

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<sup>103</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>104</sup> David Oldroyd, Richard K. Fleischman, and Thomas N. Tyson, “The culpability of accounting practice in promoting slavery in the British Empire and antebellum United States,” *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 19 (2008): 765.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

institute reforms regarding the practice of manumission, inheritance, and supportive annuation. If there is a discernable connection between the plantocracy's advisements for ameliorative reform and manumission, it cannot be supported by the intermittent cases of care and maintenance evidenced in the colonial will archive. I would argue that this divergence indicates a period of transformative change that could not be captured by the normative traditions of will writing, but an impulse that was beginning to surface in accounting records.

Fleischman and Tyson (2004), however, are correct to acknowledge that plantation accounting was not a system "of unbiased, neutral, and moral-free procedures," but their demand for a critical historical analysis of accounting that pertains to the "moral" issues of slavery is dubious.<sup>106</sup> A critique of plantation accounting's role within the larger bulwark of plantation slavery cannot be confined to a theoretical lens that would champion liberal conceptualizations of justice, morality, and liberty. Techniques of slave management produced rationalities for not only the justification of human bondage, exchange, and death, but also the fostering of life through reward, relief, and care. Strategies of bio-power must be understood as a polyvalent system of inquisition that not only entrenched racial subjugation and sexual exploitation as a "politics of truth" to bolster the demographic prospect of intergenerational slavery, but the invocation of a corporate logic that would protect white supremacy. The quantitative calculus of slave owners and their managers represents a numeric archive into how slavery projected the *bios* of enslaved women as the *primus inter pares* for the reproduction of labour on the plantation. The technologies employed by plantation bookkeeping confirm how critical this relationship was to the

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<sup>106</sup> Fleischman and Tyson, 2004, 378.

gendered and racial dimensions of subjectivity and the inferiorization of women in modernity through procedures of medical intervention.

In her examination of slavery in the Southern United States Schwartz (2006) identifies that the bodies of enslaved black women likely served as initial training sites for apprenticing physicians, but argues that “[i]t was generally assumed that race did not matter in obstetrics.”<sup>107</sup> In failing to observe the circumstances of racial subjectivity and how the plantation functioned as a racial enterprise, she overlooks the critical connection between medical intervention and the commoditization of childbearing.<sup>108</sup> This perspective also fails to address the relationship between bio-power and corporatism concerning the birth, death, and health of the mother and her offspring. At stake are strategic conditions of exploitation regarding the *bios* of the enslaved under both thanatopolitical and biopolitical management. The thanatopolitical dimensions of slavery – the wasting of the physical body through hard work, neglect, and malnutrition – was a formidable reality of plantation life that both preceded and reinforced the governmental strategy of amelioration to encourage childbirth. The co-present managerial techniques of thanatopolitical and biopolitical force can be observed in the treatment of the enslaved as a site of capital accumulation.<sup>109</sup> It is precisely the racial subjectivity of black enslaved women that makes possible the commoditization and exploitation of the body into a site of biological and medico-administrative interference.

Nineteenth-century plantation accounting records evidence the relationship between sovereignty (slave mortality) and governmentality (childbirth) as a managerial

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<sup>107</sup> Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South*, 36-37, 144.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>109</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 2.

strategy of bio-power. The intergenerational infrahuman status assigned to the progeny of enslaved women, which included their legal exposure to bondage, exploitation, and mortality, was supported by a patriarchal and racial ontology. Childbirth under conditions of pro-natalism realized a strategy of governmental power in a predictive capacity. Plantation records document the broader opportunity structure of incentive rewards for slave birth on the *Drax Hall*, *Mount Gay*, and *Newton* plantations and reveal how slave accounting was used not only to catalogue “inventory,” but how this system served as an apparatus to evaluate demographic trends.<sup>110</sup> Three general observations can be captured from the data pertaining to the number of enslaved women with children and the frequency of births on these plantations. First, there is evidence to support the conclusion that there was a natural increase, second, several mothers gave birth to more than one child, and third, there was an increase in the number of children born in the first two decades of the nineteenth century before a reduction in the final decade leading up to emancipation given the conditions of turmoil.<sup>111</sup> Given this increase in the number of births at the beginning of the nineteenth century it is reasonable to suggest that pro-natalist measures initiated by the planter management on these plantations supported childbirth.

The introduction, professional application, and conversion of pro-natalist tactics into a power-knowledge corporate regime intensified forensic cost analysis in plantation bookkeeping. The reason that revenue reports appear to grossly overshadow expense records are not as Fleischman and Tyson (2004) suggest, a function of managerial practice,

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<sup>110</sup> A quantitative breakdown of the managerial calculus of pro-natalism as a system of plantation accounting is outlined in table 2: “*Number of Children per Mother on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*” and 3: “*Number of births on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*” in the appendix of this study.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

but that plantation expense was typically assimilated into the aggregate outlay of agriculture and production disbursement. The existence of slave gardens and hiring out explored in the previous section of this work speak to the significance planters placed upon the cost of slave provision and a testament to the perceived benefits acquired in allocating resource for reproduction. Fleischman and Tyson (2004) are correct to acknowledge that the accounting record reflects that physical coercion was more likely carried out than “positive incentives” to bolster plantation production, but this observation does little to explain why a pro-natalist policy agenda was adopted, nor how this technology of slave management impacted bookkeeping.<sup>112</sup>

The accounting of those enslaved provided the planter class with a technique to examine, valuate, and predict the efficacy of ameliorative policies for fostering slave life in order to enlarge personal wealth. Archival research also indicates disparity in the outcome of pro-natalist interventions amongst the three plantations examined, which could suggest differences across several areas of plantation life: managerial fluidity concerning provision, incentive, and punishment; demographic difference (gender balance amongst the population, age of the enslaved, and practices for breeding); approaches toward medical intervention (strategies of care, obstetric interference, and post-natal care.) What can be observed from the accounting records for these three plantations, however, is that the management believed a regimen of care was vital to the development and preservation of the labour force and were willing to provide resources to encourage childbirth for the long-term securitization of the institution of slavery as an industry, not the well-being of those enslaved as a community.

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<sup>112</sup> Fleischman and Tyson, 2004, 392.

## CHAPTER SIX: PLANTER BIO-POWER, THE RISE OF CAPITALISM, AND ‘WILLING THE CONNUBIAL SUBJECT’

### 6.1 BRINGING OUT A CHILD AND PLANTATION PAEDOTROPHIUM

By the end of the eighteenth century, focus on the health of expectant enslaved mothers had translated into their limited respite from field labour. Enslaved women could be exempt for weeks, sometimes months, before and after giving birth, from working in the fields holing, planting, weeding, and harvesting the sugar cane. The 1785 "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes" recommended that pregnant slaves be excused from any hard labour, but that "they must not be given up to idleness."<sup>1</sup> Given the social, economic, and political standing of the authors of this advisement, it is safe to suggest that their influence on the island was widespread, and that their counsel on the management of those enslaved paramount. From this critical document, it becomes clear that the elite planter class in Barbados were developing a strategy of management that looked to identify ways in which the socialization of the enslaved could translate into increased profit. This utilitarian movement toward increased efficiency is captured by Foucault, who states that late in the eighteenth century "a general re-examination of modes of investment and capitalization" was hastened by "economists and administrators" who blamed mechanisms of social assistance for encouraging "idleness" and squandering public resources.<sup>2</sup> Europe's workhouses and early

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<sup>1</sup> "Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes," 24-25.

<sup>2</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 276. Foucault also states that "[t]he problem is to set the "able-bodied" poor to work and transform them into a useful labor force, but it is also to assure the self-financing by the poor themselves of the cost of their sickness and temporary or permanent incapacitation, and further to render profitable in the short or long term the educating of orphans and foundlings." Ibid., 276-77.

factories mobilized large populations, extracted labour, and carried out forms of discipline and punishment through class exploitation to capture profit. These practices were pursued under the guise of eliminating perceived social pathologies such as idleness, vagrancy, and criminality. The planter elite, however, congregated masses through trafficking at a global scale, exploited labour under punishment of death, instituted a legal and political program of racialization and intergenerational enslavement, and also introduced incentive measures to safeguard production through the commoditization of childbirth.

Elite Barbadian planters advised that amelioration be extended to mothers who were breast-feeding, as they were not expected to commence field work until seven in the morning and would be tasked with indoor chores should it be raining.<sup>3</sup> It is clear, however, that strategies of “amelioration” were overdetermined by the labour demands of plantation production. Craton states that by the 1780s attention to “demographic self-sufficiency” in Barbados resulted in the implementation of policies to release enslaved women from field labour if they produced six children.<sup>4</sup> While the archival record is not clear if this policy of relieving enslaved women from field labour and into alternative roles of bondage were followed by planters in the accounting records available for the three plantations examined, it was standard practice for enslaved women to receive a monetary reward for giving birth.<sup>5</sup> Pro-natalist policies were determined by, what I theorize are, necrosociological practices: strategies of deculturation, alienation, commoditization, and estrangement that relate to the marginalization of traditional custom. Pro-natalist practices sought to capture the

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<sup>3</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 24.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, 49.

<sup>5</sup> Table 3 in the appendix, *Number of Children per Mother on the Drax Hall, Mount Gay, and Newton Plantations*, illustrates that several enslaved women gave birth to more than five children. Archival records for these three plantations do not indicate that any of these women were manumitted.

demographic potentiality of the enslaved through the application of European medical treatment. Handler and Jacoby (1993) argue that while the traditional medical knowledge of those enslaved played a critical role in Barbados during the period of enslavement and endured post-emancipation, practices of European treatment were used on enslaved labourers and their offspring to “preserv[e] the fitness of the labour force and its economic productivity.”<sup>6</sup> This reality would have impacted the participatory aspects of community involvement during pregnancy, delivery, and post-natal care, and the integration of children into a domain of racism and labour exploitation.

In 1785 the Barbadian plantocracy advised that a reward of five shillings be granted to every woman for the birth of a child; they also recommended that five shillings be provided to every slave mother on Christmas day who had more than two living children, and ten shillings to those who had four.<sup>7</sup> The creation of an annuity for enslaved women who had more than two living children represents a profound incentive premium for several reasons: enslaved women as independent financial beneficiary’s in a patriarchal and racist environment; the future earmarking of revenue under conditions of forced labour considered by some historians to be outside the capitalist paradigm; and most importantly, this stipend as a pledge of responsibility, trust, or device of care between the slavocracy and bonded women.

Between 1805 and 1841 archival records from the *Drax Hall*, *Mount Gay*, and *Newton* plantations reveal that six shillings and three pence were given to each enslaved

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<sup>6</sup> Jerome S. Handler and JoAnn Jacoby, “Slave Medicine and Plant Use in Barbados,” *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, Vol. XLI 1993: 75.

<sup>7</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes”, 31.



mother for “bringing out a child.”<sup>8</sup> Monetary rewards not only demonstrate the implementation of an incentive regime to encourage childbirth, but the concomitant inclusion of enslaved women in the broader colonial economy as consumers given currency. In this regard, the commoditization of enslaved women as “breeders” and the future labour production and procreation of offspring represented not just the future preservation of white supremacy in Barbados but a formative transition toward an integrated capitalist economy. The transition from the enslaved plantation labourer to a post-emancipation proletariat would restrain the whip, but preserve the desperation produced from poor nutrition, material poverty, and servitude. The threshold of the plantation paradigm finds itself sustained within the devices and functionality of capitalistic production through unassuming, yet decisive social patterns that came to modify the behavioural outcomes of those in bondage. One maneuver of appropriation was to introduce governmental strategies of “care,” such as ensuring the proper nutritional development of young children and having them looked after by an elder female slave while mothers laboured in the fields.

The Barbadian plantocracy’s 1785 advisement recommended that “[a]s soon as children are weaned, let them be committed to some careful, good humoured women, to keep them together, and to attend upon them in the day, when the mothers are in the field” and that the caregiver “prepare their breakfast, which should always be something liquid; such as corn-gruel, ginger, or sage-tea, with a corn biscuit.”<sup>9</sup> The 1785 report also outlined strategies of care for enslaved children concerning proper attire, nutrition, and climate:

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<sup>8</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

<sup>9</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 29.

They should be warmly clothed; and if, by any accident, the cap or jacket should be lost, let another be given. A watchful eye should be kept upon the state of their health: if any child should seem to decline, though not absolutely ill, let a softer and more nutritious diet be provided for him, than the usual food; and let him be kept from the violence of heat, and the dampness of the cold.<sup>10</sup>

Attention to the health of enslaved children demonstrates not just a calculated economic investment to ensure the stable mobilization and replacement of labour, but a strategy of governmentality that could “train” and enhance the collective population of those enslaved into the best possible producers. On the other side, setting guidelines, timelines, and an overall program around post-natal care in order to mitigate lost labour time and to preserve the possibilities for future childbearing and long-term work, also became a crucial element of economic management in relation to maximizing the “utility” of enslaved women. Relief from fieldwork was never meant to be long-term, as the underlying objective of amelioration was to increase the number of labourers and aggregate output. As plantation production hinged on the participation of enslaved women primarily as field labourers and to a lesser extent as domestic caregivers, the preservation of life was tantamount with profit. The *modus operandi* of economic management is described by Foucault as an apparatus of subjectivity that calculates the utility of biological potential:

the body of individuals and the body of populations – appears as the bearer of new variables, not merely between the scarce and the numerous, the submissive and the restive, rich and poor, healthy and sick, strong and weak, but also between the more or less utilizable, more or less amenable to profitable investment, those with greater

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 26.

or lesser prospects of survival, death, and illness, and with more or less capacity for being usefully trained. The biological traits of a population become relevant factors for economic management, and it becomes necessary to organize around them an apparatus which will ensure not only their subjection but the constant increase of their utility.<sup>11</sup>

Foucault's vision of management and the role biopower plays in the economic arena (utility, profit, training, maximization, development, and organization) conveys plantocratic strategies of government toward the cultivation and extraction of life. I argue that the "age of amelioration" functioned as a diffuse system of bio-power that aimed to prevent the dissolution of slavery, an apparatus that organized a corporate agenda, which focused on the cultivation of life to secure labour production in support of the plantation industry. Foucault states that "bio-power was, without question, an indispensable element in the development of capitalism" and that

If the development of the great instruments of the state, as *institutions* of power, ensured the maintenance of production relations, the rudiments of anatomo- and bio-politics, created in the eighteenth century are *techniques* of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies), operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them.<sup>12</sup>

The Barbadian planter class' interest in preserving enslaved women and their capacity to provide future labourers is evident in the standards of relief extended to those

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<sup>11</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 279.

<sup>12</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 141.

with child. Some planters would release female slaves from working on the great gang for up to four months once a pregnancy had been declared and could reassign them to the second gang while raising their infant.<sup>13</sup>

Caribbean practices of biopolitical exploitation can also be correlated with Bentham's theorizations of the "Paedotrophium," an institution where children "would be the subject of educational, medical, dietary, and social experimentation; the industry house was a 'crucible for men'. And when they grew up they would become the subject of breeding experiments to find out, for instance, the optimum age for marriage."<sup>14</sup> Paternalistic and racist beliefs concerning fertility, reproduction, and sexual behaviour dehumanized enslaved women. The tracking of births to forecast future labour demands illustrates the pressures of biological management on the plantation. While accounting records in Barbados do not document the conditions of forcible confinement, rape, and assault endured by enslaved women identified as "breeders," Fernando Henriques states that one Caribbean planter would "encourage his female slaves to breed from a number of men, even offering prizes for this purpose, in the mistaken belief that intercourse with a number of men increased fecundity."<sup>15</sup> Sexual exploitation on the plantation formalized a colonial eugenics program of selective breeding in an attempt to refine the biological demands assumed for plantation labour. In this regard, planter management integrated

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<sup>13</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 92- 93; Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 44.

<sup>14</sup> Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 288, 300. Semple states that "the infants would be acquired in various ways; some would be the children of prisoners; some of the offspring of soldiers or seamen killed in the war; others might be paupers taken by contract or the apprentices on the footing of adoptive children." Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Fernando Henriques, "West Indian Family Organization," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 55.1. (1949): 30. Walter Johnson argues that rape is "the most extreme example of the brutal recognition of their slaves' humanity – the feelings and vulnerability upon which they registered their own violent power [...] slave traders did not ignore or abolish the humanity of the people they categorized and compared and bought and sold." Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999, 63.

fertility, sexuality, and reproduction within a panoptic environment following Bentham's utilitarian designs for government, carceral reform, and organizational austerity in order to obtain institutional efficiency and increased production.

The utilitarian technologies of "care" outlined in Bentham's *Paedotrophium* provide perspective into how governmental rationality fostered life on the plantation complex. According to Semple, Bentham calculated the costs of raising children in the "Paedotrophium" and demanded as early as the age of four that children should begin labouring to offset the cost of the support they had received.<sup>16</sup> Bentham even suggested that large troughs with artificial nipples be created to dispense quantities of milk to nursing infants.<sup>17</sup> These utilitarian measures demonstrate the connection between bio-politics and noso-politics as an economic philosophy for standardizing the development of children as human reserve. Foucault argues that noso-politics in the eighteenth century as it concerned "children" (that is, of their number at birth and the relation to births to mortalities) is now joined by the problem of "childhood" that is, of survival to adulthood, the physical and economic conditions for this survival, the necessary and sufficient amount of investment for the period of child development to become useful."<sup>18</sup> Foucault understood that the utilitarian rationality of biopolitics was to lay bare the economic potentiality of humanity as a new technology of capital. He states that biopolitical power was both "anatomic and biologic, individualizing and specifying, directed toward the performances of the body, with attention to the processes of life [...] whose highest function was perhaps no longer

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<sup>16</sup> Semple, *Bentham's Prison: A Study of the Panopticon Penitentiary*, 290. Sasha Turner notes that planters needed to calculate the financial risk associated with pronatalist interventions, specifically the investment in children over the course of their development into productive labourers. Turner, *Contested Bodies: Pregnancy, Childrearing, and Slavery*, 58.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 289.

<sup>18</sup> Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 279.

to kill, but to invest life through and through.”<sup>19</sup> According to Foucault’s analysis of biopolitics it would be specious to suggest that investments of the kind that the planter class injected into the enslaved were to preserve the status quo given the connection between the performance of the body and its biological improvement as a form of commoditization.

Morgan, however, erroneously argues that the offspring of enslaved women did not alter their economic circumstances and that children represented nothing more than “plantation inventory.”<sup>20</sup> The archival record, on the contrary, proves that relief and rewards provided to slave mothers for “bringing out” a child on the *Drax Hall*, *Mount Gay*, and *Newton* plantations were consequential and did in fact transform the status of those enslaved beyond the provisional status of inventory, as they carried biologic properties augmentative and responsive to increased value through investment. Relief associated with pro-natalist policies, while not extinguishing the enduring realities of physical abuse, psychological trauma, and cultural alienation, must be acknowledged as a tactic of biopolitical power given the cumulative financial impact experienced by planters who assigned financial rewards, gifts, medical care, higher quality food, and reprieve from labour. These manifestations are also emphasized in the procedures of “noso-politics” coordinated by the plantocracy, which included techniques of care directed at the development of children. These interventions are outlined in Foucault’s corpus, and include “obligations of a physical kind (care, contact, hygiene, cleanliness, attentive proximity), suckling of children by their mothers, clean clothing, [and] physical exercise to ensure proper development of the organism.”<sup>21</sup> Foucault’s theorizations concerning “noso-

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<sup>19</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 139.

<sup>20</sup> Morgan, 2004, 116.

<sup>21</sup> Foucault, 1984, 279.

politics” offer perspective into how the utilitarian rationalities of Bentham’s discourse organized an apparatus of economic management. The Barbadian plantocracy’s managerial focus on pro-natalism is connected to these practices of utility, and specifically, the role of “care” and labour training as a biopolitical venture of white supremacy.

Conditions of care correspond to Bentham’s “Paedotrophium,” as the cost of nursing children was measured against their future labour contribution. Similar to Bentham’s designs for raising state orphans in the “Paedotrophium,” the plantation became characterized as a supportive environment of guardianship and care. Clothing expenses for newborns and young children reveal that early development was considered an important investment for cultivating a healthy future labour force. This attention to care and pro-natalist policy is evidenced in plantation records detailing the frequent purchase of calico and flannel for young babies and sick children on plantations in Barbados throughout the nineteenth-century.<sup>22</sup> The *Mount Gay* plantation purchased ninety-six blankets in 1831 for their slaves.<sup>23</sup> The *Drax Hall* and *Newton* plantation records indicate that clothing and hats for the enslaved were also purchased in large consignments from merchants such as John Smith & Sons, Ferguson, Winkfield, & Co’s, as well as George Blackman.<sup>24</sup>

Medical procedures functioned as a biopolitical strategy by formalizing the examination, regulation, and utilization of enslaved women’s bodies. Reddock’s analysis of female slave health in the Caribbean, outlines common conditions of abuse and neglect

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<sup>22</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society. Specific references for the purchase of baby clothing are also present in plantation expense records. The *Mount Gay* Plantation ledger details the purchase of two baby outfits for Philly Vaughn’s child at a cost of one shilling and ten and a half pence on December 20, 1828. Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835).

<sup>23</sup> Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835).

<sup>24</sup> Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

before the entrenchment of more concerted efforts to exploit the potential of reproductive wellbeing:

Gynecological disorders were rife because of the absence of facilities for pregnancy and childbirth, the poor sanitary conditions, the mistreatment of pregnant women, and the heavy labor for long hours. One of the most common disorders was amenorrhea (absence of menstrual periods); this was usually due to severe malnutrition, injury to the ovaries, or problems in the endocrine system caused by severe beatings. Another was menorrhagia (excessive flow at the period). These menstrual problems often resulted in early menopause and therefore in a reduced fertile time span.<sup>25</sup>

Planters blamed female slaves for spreading disease and for negligence that resulted in the death of their offspring.<sup>26</sup> This is evidenced in the 1785 “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” which stated that when children were breast-feeding, “[c]areless and negligent mothers will indeed require a little more of your attention.”<sup>27</sup>

My argument disputes the inferences of Bush (1990), who in echoing the scholarship of Orlando Patterson, claims that the planter class achieved dominance through the cultural genocide and “social death” of the enslaved.<sup>28</sup> This understanding of plantation power is problematic given the complex realities of negotiation and resistance related to health, childbirth, and family life. Plantation bookkeeping records clearly indicate that

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<sup>25</sup> Rhoda E. Reddock, “Women and Slavery in the Caribbean: A Feminist Perspective,” *Latin American Perspectives*, 12.1, (Winter 1985): 68.

<sup>26</sup> Jeffrey Young, *Domesticating Slavery*, 184.

<sup>27</sup> “Instructions For the Management of a Plantation in Barbados and For the Treatment of Negroes,” 28-29.

<sup>28</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 3



enslaved women in Barbados continued to have children and the consensus amongst historians of the Atlantic is that the island increased their population through “natural” means. Although scholars are not unanimous as to the causes leading to miscarriage and abortion, it is clear that notwithstanding the realities of malnutrition, disease, and the physical damage incurred by hard labour and punishment, some enslaved women exercised lactational amenorrhea and sexual abstinence to control reproduction.<sup>29</sup> In “Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies” Doctor David Collins, who was a doctor and planter, blamed declining slave population levels on four primary grounds: “1. The lesser number of imported females. 2. Their sterility. 3. Their frequent abortions. 4. The great number of infants who die soon after their birth.”<sup>30</sup> As noted in the first part of this work, the squalid conditions of the ship, lack of food, and abuse suffered during transportation, made women vulnerable to infection and disease. Moreover, some enslaved women exercised their choice to terminate a pregnancy as a form of gynecological resistance by ingesting “manioc, yam, papaya, mango, lime and frangipani [...] cassava, Barbados pride, passion flower and wild tansey (a widely-recognized abortifacient used also by slaves in the American South),” and by undertaking more invasive actions such as the insertion of “sharp sticks or stalks into the vaginal canal.”<sup>31</sup>

Morgan (2004) argues that diseases such as malaria, tetanus, whooping cough, and environmental exposure to toxic metals, contributed to high rates of mortality and

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<sup>29</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 66; Bush-Slimani, “Hard Labour: Women, Childbirth and Resistance in British Caribbean Slave Societies,” 89-91.

<sup>30</sup> David Collins, *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies*, London: Vernor and Hood, 1803, 153.

<sup>31</sup> Bush-Slimani, “Hard Labour: Women, Childbirth and Resistance in British Caribbean Slave Societies,” 92-93.

diminished fertility in Barbados.<sup>32</sup> Given the realities of deprivation, illness, and abuse suffered by enslaved women, amelioration offered a significant departure from the status quo. One should not be quick to judge these reforms from a contemporary normative standard of justice and humanitarianism as the conditions of bondage were severe, nor should enslaved women be viewed as feeble hostages or complicit actors for giving birth.

The second part of this work established how the sexual division of labour on the plantation impacted divergences of labour roles and opportunity in relation to field work, domestic service, specialized craftsmanship, and huckstering. Enslaved women, whether working as field hands, seamstresses, washers, nurses, or caregivers to planters and their families, were confined to a culture of white supremacy. The most fundamental gendered difference, however, was the commodification of procreation through a biopolitical agenda to maneuver the enslaved female body through pro-natalist policies. Foucault argues that sex is a deployment of bio-political power as it

was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification, and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects of its activity. It fitted in both categories at once, giving rise to infinitesimal surveillances, permanent controls, extremely meticulous orderings of space, indeterminate medical or psychological examinations, to an entire micro-power concerned with the body. But it gave rise as well to comprehensive measures, statistical assessments, and interventions aimed at the entire social body or at groups taken as a whole.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 84, 111.

<sup>33</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 145-46.

Sexual exploitation on the plantation complex under circumstances of disciplinary force operated through the restraint and punishment of enslaved women's bodies, but governmental power introduced controls through procedures of health examination, tracking births, assessing the population of labourers, and distribution of resource. Enslaved women in Barbados were also marked by an intimate exposure to violence and an unbounded spatial environment of risk that extended beyond the plantation. Sexual abuse was both totalizing and diffuse: the planter's house, slave quarters, private dwellings in urban centers, and the marketplace.

## **6.2 PRIMOGENITURE AND THE URBAN SEXUAL ECONOMY**

Ameliorative strategies subjugated enslaved black women through patriarchal cultural institutions that extended to the social acceptance of sexual exploitation, the disposability of 'illegitimate' offspring into slavery, and the trafficking of women and children to obtain economic benefit. These circumstances of patriarchal control and expenditure are a foundational exercise of ancient and modern power in European culture, which are expressed in natural and common law. Foucault states that the sovereign right over life and death stemmed "from the ancient *patria potestas* that granted the father of the Roman family the right to "dispose" of the life of his children and his slaves; just as he had given them life, so he could take it away."<sup>34</sup> Henry Whistler, in the *Journal of the West Indian Expedition*, 1654-1655, stated that elite Barbadian planters commanded up to three hundred "miserable slave apes," taking as many wives as they pleased and produced slave

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<sup>34</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction*, 135.

offspring that they could sell off like sheep.<sup>35</sup> The treatment of the enslaved as chattel was also noted by Marx, who stated that this practice of human trafficking was merely an exchange of capital between slave owners.<sup>36</sup>

Phallocratic institutions such as the *pater familias*, Christian marriage, and primogeniture, helped to shape gender relations and the subjugation of enslaved black women. As stated earlier, female reproductive value is manifest in records of slave procurement, transportation, and sale; documentation of assessment, occupational status, and projected reproductive capacity; information detailing rewards related to clothing, food, and medical care; as well as colonial wills that demonstrate the custom of primogeniture and intergenerational slavery. Property was a principal target of exchange that illustrated the cardinal virtues valued by slave owners – liberty, self-ownership, and industry. The final will and testaments of male planters from Barbados during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries expose how the practice of primogeniture inferiorized most women through the distribution and regulation of resource, and how this patriarchal practice governed enslaved black women through the urban sex slave trade.

The underlying tactics of primogeniture, which carried out a patriarchal and feudalistic art of government by privileging males and first-born sons, however, created opportunities of mobility, property ownership, and “freedom” for both enslaved black women and slave owning white women in the colony. It is through the attempted commoditization of enslaved black women as breeders, prostitutes, and hucksters under the protocols of sexism and racism, that the exploitative tactics of capitalist relations began

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 290.

<sup>36</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker, 2nd ed., (New York: Norton, 1978), 374.

to transform and broaden the governmental practices of slavery. Inferiorized women created opportunities of exchange and freedom, which in turn nuanced the institution of slavery into a biopolitical enterprise that was salient to contemporary conditions of exploitation, marginalization, and trafficking. Prevailing custom in Barbados (as elsewhere in the British empire) was to confer legal title to first-born sons, grandsons, and other male successors the majority of plantation wealth.<sup>37</sup> These institutions of European patriarchy helped shape the plantocracy's understanding of sexuality, womanhood and marriage. An examination of colonial wills available at the Barbados Department of Archives from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Barbados reveals how these patriarchal conventions concentrated the majority of plantation wealth into the hands of male plantation owners and legitimated the treatment of all women as possessions.<sup>38</sup>

The most common practice of primogeniture exercised was to designate inheritance to a first-born son at the exclusion of other siblings. This is substantiated by slave owner Thomas Sandiford's 1711 will where he bequeathed to his son Thomas his land, plantations, slaves, and other stock upon reaching the age of twenty-one.<sup>39</sup> If the elder of Thomas' sons died, his second born son Charles would inherit the family fortune, and if Charles died it was to be transferred to Thomas' daughter Ann.<sup>40</sup> Cornelius Aston's 1716 will illustrates a form of primogeniture where his daughters were to be succeeded by the firstborn grandson. Aston willed that his three daughters be given money, horses, livestock

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<sup>37</sup> Refer to Appendix A.1. for analysis concerning the custom of primogeniture in Barbados.

<sup>38</sup> Refer to note 18 of this study.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Thomas Sandiford, 25 August 1711, RB6/7.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. All of the children were to be "maintained and educated by the guardians" and his daughters Ann and Katherine were to receive money. Ibid. Planter Walter Chamell willed his son Walter his forty-acre plantation, houses, appurtenances, Christian servants, negroes, cattle, goods, money, and plate. His wife and daughter in law Martha Hudson inherited £10 sterling, and his daughter Edith Rilderiss (sic) was to receive two thousand pounds of muscovadoe sugar to be paid yearly, two years after his decease. Ibid., Walter Chamell, 6 June 1663, RB6/15.

and female slaves, but that his grandson should inherit the plantation after he obtained an education and turned twenty-one years of age.<sup>41</sup>

An account from the late seventeenth century illustrates how the financial circumstance and social standing of white females could be determined by their husbands even after death: in his 1681 will, planter Alexander Benson bequeathed to his wife Mary a plantation in Carolina and the yearly produce of his slaves in Barbados *as long as she did not re-marry*.<sup>42</sup> If Mary re-married, however, the plantation in Carolina would transfer to John Best, Susan Perinn, and Alexander Perrin and their heirs, and she would receive only one third of the produce of the Barbadian slaves.<sup>43</sup> The general conditions of inheritance, while evidencing some instances of female ownership, appear largely skewed toward a system of gender inequity that would ensconce financial dependency for women. This was also reinforced by planters who instructed their spouses to hold slaves and plantation wealth in trust until a male family member, be it a son, nephew, or grandson, came of age.<sup>44</sup>

Such was the case for the Smith family: John Smith Sr. stated in his will that his son Benjamin would inherit the plantation, land, buildings, and sugar. He would also inherit, along with his brother John, after the decease or “intermarriage” of their mother Mary, all the “negro slaves and their increase.” Smith stated that his spouse Mary was to hold in trust “all my reall [sic] estate consisting in land and negros but if my said wife should happen to marry thee I do wholly exclude her from claiming any benefit to my estate by this my will any more than the law with allow her.” His daughter Martha Taite and her

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Cornelius Aston, 22 November 1716, RB6/4.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Alexander Benson, 6 July 1681, RB6/14.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Phillipp Bell, 9 December 1658, RB6/14.

Ibid., John Smith Sr., 22 August 1711, RB6/7.

husband Johee inherited one slave valued at twenty pounds sterling two years after the decease or “intermarriage” of Mary.<sup>45</sup>

Another practice of gendered subjectivity carried out by Barbadian planters was to designate personal property and an allowance to their spouses, but assign “real” property to male family members. Planter John Wait, for example, willed that his wife Mary receive £170 sterling, £200 annually until she died, his best riding horse, furniture, and four slaves (Jeffrey, Abbah, Ealse and Leimas), but that his brother Robert inherit “all estates personal and real.”<sup>46</sup> Slave owner John Price in 1718 also willed that his wife only receive semi-annual payments of £300 out of his estate.<sup>47</sup>

Two subsequent wills illustrate how a grandson would inherit the plantation and those enslaved by succeeding their female siblings. Susannah Holder’s granddaughter Susanna Gibbes stood to inherit £1,000 at age twenty-one or upon marriage, but her grandson William Holder at twenty-one was to receive £500, the *Black Rock* Plantation, and “all my negro slaves & the increase together with all my quick stock on the Plantation where I now live & give to him the use of the said negroes & their increase.”<sup>48</sup> Another slave owner Lawrence Lively left the plantation to his wife Joan to look after until his daughter’s (Mary Jack) son John Jack turned twenty-one.<sup>49</sup> His grandson stood to inherit all of the assets, slaves, houses, livestock, and real estate.<sup>50</sup> In the event that John Jack died before twenty-one, all of the inheritance would be divided among Lawrence Lively’s three

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., John Smith Sr., 22 August 1711, RB6/7.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., John Wait, 20 April 1696, RB6/16.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., John Price, 10 August 1718, RB6/4.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Susannah Holder, 13 December 1725, RB6/22.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., Lawrence Lively, 10 July 1687, RB6/40.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

granddaughters, suggesting that they were the final beneficiaries if all male options were exhausted.<sup>51</sup>

While white women also reinforced the intergenerational structure of slavery in Barbados through their decision to bequeath slaves to family members and mandate terms of servitude, their marginalized social position generally excluded them from becoming large slaveholders and playing a formative role in the macropolitical and socioeconomic determinations of bondage in the region.<sup>52</sup> Colonial wills from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Barbados confirm, however, that female slave owners preserved the institution of slavery and benefitted from the practice of bondage. Enslaved women and their children were treated as “personal” property, commodities of exchange, and gifts between business associates, family, and friends given their occupational training as domestic servants and the possibility of future childbirth.<sup>53</sup> The bequeathment of domestic slaves by male planters to their daughters upon marriage was meant to ensure they had necessary support for their daily living, but it also reinforced the patriarchal social conventions of gift giving given the expectation that their husbands would control the aggregate wealth, property, and slave-labour force.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> In 1684 Rebecca Ormunt bequeathed a slave girl named Hanna after her decease to Miliar Parsons for a term of thirty years, at which time she was to be freed and given twenty shillings; Rebecca Hanson on the day of her marriage was given a slave girl named Rebecca for thirty years, and was to be paid twenty shillings upon her release; Elizabeth was to be given a slave girl named Kate for thirty years and after her servitude given twenty shillings; Thomas Norwill was to be given a slave girl named Judy to serve twenty-five years and then be freed and receive twenty shillings. Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Rebecca Ormunt, 20 August 1684, RB6/10. Ann Watts of St. Johns Parish willed that her grandson John Floyd be given a slave woman named Jenny “forever, title, interest or any feart [sic] of the negros and slaves and their increase.” Ann also bequeathed to her daughters Susannah and Martha a number of slaves including their “issue and increase.” Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Ann Watts, 27 February 1710, RB6/7.

<sup>53</sup> Refer to Appendix A.2. for information concerning the commoditization of enslaved women in Barbados.

<sup>54</sup> In 1679 planter John Curtys willed to his daughter Miriam a male slave named Tom Papaw on the day of her marriage, and gifted his other daughter Mary a female slave named Hannah and her boy named Peter at



Cornelius Aston's will, for example, bequeathed to his "loving wife Eliza Aston one negro woman by name Grace to hold to her dureing [sic] her natural life & at her decease to dispose of the sd. Negro woman Grace and her issue to either of my children Cornelis or Sara or Rebecca Aston & to his or her heirs forever."<sup>55</sup> Another record states that Ann Beachamp willed that her daughter Elizabeth inherit a slave woman named Lubba, her two boys Cubbana and Tone, and daughter Abba "and all the Issue and Increase of the said Lubba that shall hereafter be born to be delivered unto my said daughter immediately after my decease."<sup>56</sup> Thus, the transference of a few enslaved women to female heirs was customary as it came with the expectation that those in bondage would be skilled in domestic affairs and would be able to produce children whose labour could be exploited for personal use, hired out, or sold - *forever*.

Single white women were also deeply imbedded into the urban slave economy. Beckles suggests that the racial privilege of white women in colonial society problematized their status as "victims" as their social behaviour reflected the "epistemological framework of slavery."<sup>57</sup> Beckles reveals that the hiring out of enslaved women for purposes of

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age fifteen. If Hannah was to have any further children, the first was to be given to Miriam and the rest to Mary. Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, John Curtys, 8 December 1679, RB6/40. Rebecca Ormunt of St. Peters Parish stated in her 1684 will that Rebecca Hanson was "to be paid on her day of marriage one negro girl." Ibid., Rebecca Ormunt, St. Peters Parish, 20 August 1684, RB6/10. Another planter named John Holder bequeathed to his daughter Ruth Holder immediately upon his decease two slave girls, and upon marriage or reaching twenty years of age, £1,250 and three additional slaves. Holder also willed that his other daughter Ulizabeth Harbin, who was married, receive three slave women "for and during her naturall life, and also all their issue and increase." Upon Ulizabeth's decease, her daughter Sarah Harbin was to inherit a slave woman "and her children and increase." Ibid., John Holder, 13 August 1700, RB6/43. Another planter named Joseph Hannis willed that his executors sell his two estates and slaves, but that his daughter Sarah Vaughan receive £1,000, his daughter Mary Hannis £700 at age eighteen and one negro girl named Nanny Rose, his daughter Elizabeth Hannis £700 at age eighteen and one slave girl named Jenny, and his daughter Theodosia Hannis £700 at age eighteen and two slaves Dolly and Susanna. Ibid., Joseph Hannis, 12 May 1715, RB6/35.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., Cornelius Aston, 22 November 1716, RB6/4.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Ann Beachamp, 25 February 1722, RB6/6.

<sup>57</sup> Beckles, *Centering Woman*, 62.

prostitution played a crucial role in the colonial economy, and was a source of income for single white female slave owners.<sup>58</sup> Widows and single white women reinforced racialized subjugation, in what Beckles refers to as the “periphery of the urban economy,” by operating “taverns, sex-houses, slave rental services, petty shopkeeping and huckstering.”<sup>59</sup> A planter’s spouse and female slave owners were afforded many privileges specific to their race and class, but the corporate dimensions of sexual exploitation exercised within the colonial sexual economy were patriarchal. In 1817, however, white Barbadian female slave owners maintained a high percentage of female slaves, owned half of the slaves in Bridgetown, and constituted forty percent of holders who had possession of less than ten slaves in the colony.<sup>60</sup>

The hiring out of enslaved women from the plantation as prostitutes and the financial benefits captured from their reproduction evidences the financial opportunity structure of sexual abuse. Far from illustrating a dimension of surplus value in addition to the formalized modes of labour exchange exercised on the plantation, the colonial sexual economy was central to the preservation of capitalist command, racial supremacy, and patriarchal control. This libidinal economy was defined by racialized sexual violence and the commercialization of human trafficking and abuse. Geggus argues that victimization of enslaved women in the colonial economy was complex and that some were able to utilize their sexuality in ways that could increase personal security, financial wellbeing, and mobility.<sup>61</sup> The spectrum of sexual exploitation experienced by most enslaved women on

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>61</sup> Geggus argues that enslaved women also exploited their sexuality to acquire benefits, which could even include marriage. Geggus, “Slave and Free Colored Women in Saint Domingue,” 265.

the plantation, however, was undergirded by an underlying rationality of expropriation that included confinement, physical abuse, and sexual exploitation.

The planter class' prostitution of enslaved women initiated a tripartite technology of corporatism: sovereignty (subjectivity through sexual and financial extraction); discipline (detention and exploitation of the body during sexual abuse); governmentality (shaping the demographic, legal, and social position of enslaved women for future wealth and the protection of the white phallocratic order through incentives.) Whereas strategies of planter governmentality on the plantation exploited female sexuality and reproduction as a domestic source of labour and profit through technologies of economic management, in the urban sphere, enslaved women were prized as a portable resource of exchange often through their own entrepreneurial activity. These two avenues of parasitic siphoning stood as a public declaration that black women were sources of income generation to be exploited by slave owners.

Following Foucault's theorizations of power, Bush (1990) explains how the sexual relationships between black women and white men cannot be reduced exclusively to conditions of exploitation and brutality, as these encounters offered white men the opportunity to benefit from liaisons outside of their marriage or social community and black women could even obtain manumission or inheritance.<sup>62</sup> In Barbados, the ideologies of paternalistic control were unequivocal in laws regarding slavery as they permitted white men the freedom to engage in interracial relationships with the reality that their offspring

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<sup>62</sup> Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, 111, 115, 117.

would be born slaves *de jure*, but white women who produced children with enslaved men threatened the slave owning class as their offspring would be free.<sup>63</sup>

Beckles (1990) explains that a small percentage of planters would manumit their children born to enslaved women but would deny them inheritance in an effort to preserve white supremacy in the colony.<sup>64</sup> This practice of social exclusion represents a strategy of biopolitical control aimed at the physical security and class privilege of whites. Freedom was generally granted to the enslaved either upon the death of the slave owner, after an interim period of time, or when a slave reached a specific age. Barbadian slave owners often qualified their decision to manumit by drawing reference to a slave's good character and service. The most exceptional conditions of manumission, however, came with substantial transfers of money and property. In this regard, planters imparted exceptional opportunity to those enslaved and challenged the intergenerational condition of bondage as a form of economic subjectivity by invoking fissures of social transformation into a bifurcated racial order.<sup>65</sup>

In *The History of Sexuality Volume I*, Foucault states that his primary interest concerning sex is to trace its discursive features: "to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said."<sup>66</sup> Similarly, records of manumission should be examined less for their "formulated prohibitions or permissions," than for the fact that a slave owner was

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<sup>63</sup> Beckles, "Sex and Gender in the Historiography of Caribbean Slavery," 130; Beckles, *Centering Woman*, 69.

<sup>64</sup> Beckles, *A History of Barbados*, 65, 67.

<sup>65</sup> Refer to the "*Barbados Colonial Wills*" section in the appendix of this study for my analysis of archival information concerning the estate planning of Barbadian planters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

<sup>66</sup> Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*, 11.

petitioning a court of his peers, in a slaveholding society, that a child born from an inter-racial union be exempt from the legal, political, and social conventions of intergenerational slavery.<sup>67</sup> What cannot be lost is the explicit association between race and class concerning an inter-racial child in a slave colony, the position of social privilege from which a white slave owner spoke, and the judicial authority he challenged whose legal precedent was to preserve the institution of slavery. Inter-racial sexual relationships and offspring constituted a discursive arena of administration, juridical confession, hierarchy, and violence that was governed by security measures for the preservation of white supremacy.<sup>68</sup>

Slave codes in Barbados denied political and legal rights to bi-racial people by instituting a eugenic model of racism that identified interracial sexual relationships as a form of biological contamination. Bush-Slimani argues that the “pro-planter faction” depicted enslaved women as diseased, immoral, and uncivilized, and blamed poor levels of reproduction on abstinence and abortion.<sup>69</sup> The dehumanization of children born from interracial unions was expressed as an early form of scientific race-thinking through both the maternal conditions of intergenerational slavery, which stood in direct opposition to the culture of male lineage and primogeniture), as well as the characterization of blackness as degenerate, polluted, and animalistic. Through the institutional forces that regulated, monitored, and calculated the behaviours of those enslaved, the plantation served as the primary location for both the creation and reinforcement of Eurocentric perceptions of racial identity in the colony. This articulation of racial identity, which was predicated

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> For further analysis on the socio-political impact of Christian missionaries and their political lobbying efforts on Afro-Barbadian women concerning pronatalist public policy measures to promote fertility, interracial unions, and Christian marriage, see Katherine Paugh’s (2017) *The Politics of Reproduction: Race, Medicine, and Fertility in the Age of Abolition*.

<sup>69</sup> Bush-Slimani, “Hard Labour: Women, Childbirth and Resistance in British Caribbean Slave Societies,” 89.

primarily on the polarization of black and white peoples, problematized the legal and social standing of hybrid offspring.<sup>70</sup> With the emerging hybridization of racial identity on the plantation came a more enhanced taxonomy of racial identity in the slave colony: the lighter one's skin colour, the better the chances of obtaining occupations of greater reward and skill, and better still the opportunity of obtaining manumission.

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<sup>70</sup> Homi Bhabha argues that "hybridity represents that ambivalent 'turn' of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification." Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London, Routledge, 1994): 113. Robert Young rightly observes that "Bhabha has extended his notion of hybridity to include forms of counter-authority, a 'Third Space' which [through] the transformational value of change lies in the re-articulation, or translation, of elements [... becoming] a third term which can never in fact *be* third because, as a monstrous inversion, a miscreated perversion of its progenitors, it exhausts the differences between them." Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, (London: Routledge, 1995): 23.

## CONCLUSION

The obliteration and re-constitution of the enslaved body, along the lines of its ontological and epistemological accounting, within the nascent capitalist economy, demonstrates how sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality intersected processes of the slave-trade and slavery: seizure, trafficking, labour exploitation, and racialization, among others. This dissertation took as its methodological focus a Foucauldian reading of the slave-trade and plantation complex to analyze how these three modes of modern power (sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality) came to order the English slave colony of Barbados between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. It also considered how the institutionalization process of slavery as a regime of power/knowledge for the exploitation of enslaved blacks was inextricably linked to the wider processes of English empire-building, colonization, capitalism, and industrialization.

There are several theoretical justifications to examine the practice of plantation slavery in Barbados as a site and apparatus for the development of modernity. In particular, how did the plantation colony of Barbados facilitate and influence the trans-Atlantic slave-trade and practice of slavery in the Anglophone Caribbean and wider Americas? While not exhaustive, foremost was identifying the conditions for the rapid emergence and economic success of the island as a plantation colony; the socioeconomic and political dimensions of English exceptionalism, nation-building, and labour philosophy; the political dynamics and exercise of power between the planter class and metropolitan government; and the unique demographic realities of the enslaved population.

What set Barbados apart from early plantation zones was its large-scale agricultural production, the concentration of large plantations, the disciplined and industrial labour

management practices, and the juridico/political authority of the planter class. What is most interesting to the trajectory of plantation slavery in Barbados was the planter class's shift from a managerial strategy of expenditure that demanded largescale importation and unmitigated burnup of the enslaved, to the techniques of biopolitical and ameliorative rule. These mechanisms of support to encourage the reproduction of an intergenerational workforce disrupt historical theorizations of slave subjectivity as exclusively thanatopolitical and offer further avenues of study into how the maturation of capitalism, industrialization, and management on the plantation continue to shape contemporary exploitative labour practices and oppressive political regimes.

While these broader research interests have produced, and continue to innovate scholarship amongst Atlantic historians, sociologists studying the legacies and contemporary impacts of racism, as well as economic theorists interrogating the machinations of mercantile, colonial trade, and capitalist trade regimes, this dissertation oriented from a nuanced interdisciplinary approach. This work looked at how the socio-political and economic circumstances of plantation slavery could be reached through the contributions of scholars engaged in reading Foucault. The inclusion, however, of seminal anticolonial and postmodern texts, which also interrogate the analytical dimensions of the European sponsored trans-Atlantic slave trade of African peoples, modernity, and capitalism, were researched to reveal how inter-textual linkages can help identify strategies and systems that perpetuate racism and biopolitical rule.

The overarching analysis of the Atlantic slave-trade and plantation complex on Barbados in this study mobilized Foucault's theorizations concerning modern power in order to identify broader assemblages of power networks, then to reveal how the



divestments and micro-practices of these institutions functioned at the most intimate levels of engagement. At the outset, this approach demanded an analysis into how the growth of international slave-trading routes and partnerships between African and European collaborators/competitors developed: viable zones of procurement and predation in Africa; the widespread economic, geographic, and political engagement introduced by the stockpiling of human reserve in slave-forts along the West African coast and their invocations for hegemonic force through procedures of militarization grounded on racial violence; shipping technologies and receptacles for human restraint and torture to the trafficking of the enslaved from Africa to the Caribbean and Americas, and within these zones of engagement; agro-industrial technology and management to enhance the practices of labour extraction to advance profitability on the plantation complex. Undergirding the institutional formalities of economic exploitation and subjugation (castle detainment, transportation, and insurance speculation) were the relational origins and conscriptions of racial rule that were made possible by papal authority, monarchical sovereignty, and European cultural supremacy. Explored were the deeper epistemological anchors of early European modernity and how planter sovereignty was facilitated by these expressions of force. Most crucial is how it illustrated the process by which the enslaved black body became the source of *praemium par excellence* toward the organization and distribution of capital in the Atlantic arena, and how later disciplinary and governmental controls were leveraged to mollify interventions of resistance aimed at challenging the commoditization of those oppressed. It is through these deployments of biopolitical force that the discipline and punishment of the black body and the regulation of the slave labour force structured identifiable movements of colonial design.

Necro-economic practices associated with the detainment, seizure, trafficking, and labour exploitation of enslaved blacks were a critical watershed moment in the development of the Atlantic capitalist economy and tantamount to the processes of commoditization that ordered the slave-trade and plantation environment. One hesitates to go as far as identifying the historical movements of the Atlantic slave-trade and plantation slavery as paradigmatic, given the tendency to describe and totalize the complexities of these oppressive regimes as demarcated, monolithic, or otherwise clearly articulable expressions of force centralized under the organizational purview of the English Empire. What can be deduced, however, is that from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century a discursive order of Eurocentric racism connected symbolic observations of blackness with pejorative imaginings of deviancy, contamination, and inhumanity. This grammar of racism was essential to the establishment of institutional justifications (religious, cultural, and economic) for the enslavement, speculation, exchange, and disposability of the black body. Modalities of economic subjugation in the Atlantic arena ensconced broader geopolitical and geoeconomic designs of nation building, formalized competitive international trading zones, increased militarization, facilitated elite partnerships, and more critically, made salient the taxonomic nomenclature of racial rule as a normative enterprise. Through these proliferating expressions of violence, the demand for the incarceration and burnup of the enslaved labourer became a generative function for the advancement of the modern marketplace and civilization of Europe.

This dissertation eschewed analyses that suggest practices of deculturation, social death, and hegemony can be taken as the panacea of the master/slave relationship on the plantation complex. The theoretical privileging of slave subjectivity as a “zone of

nonbeing” or “expulsion from humanity,” as argued by Patterson, Goveia, Curtin, Bush, and Mbembe, incorrectly positions the enslaved outside of the family, law, and society, (*ab extra familia, legem, civitas*) and diminishes strategies of defiance, negotiation, and compromise engendered by biopolitical plantation rule. The collision between racialized violence and modern power on the plantation complex engendered circumstances of profound cruelty, contestation, desire, and resistance, which problematizes unitary theorizations of subjectivity. A Foucauldian analysis of violent subjugation, political disenfranchisement, socio-cultural alienation, and intergenerational bondage on the plantation complex lays bare contemporary realities of black inhumanity that support bureaucratic and capitalistic maneuverings of modern state power. Reading the plantation complex as a history of the present establishes a model that is applicable to a wide range of vulnerable groups/individuals that endure practices of sexual trafficking, child labour, domestic servitude, forced marriage, prostitution, and violence.

Marxist and World Systems analysis theorists, such as Tomich, Kiernan, and Paolucci, also reduce techniques of trafficking, exploitation, and punishment under a hegemonic ontology. Their endeavor to reveal broad bifurcated constructs to decipher the presence of an overarching global imperium (old vs. new plantation zone, industrial vs. agrarian, core vs. periphery, feudal vs. capitalistic) smothers critical institutional differences. This study privileged a microphysical analysis of the anatomo/biopolitical techniques of planter management to investigate how techniques of labour, punishment, and management cast diffuse and replicating conditions of planter power and the resistance of the enslaved, and how these applications of institutional force, and the responses to them, contributed to the emergence of a capitalist market economy in the Atlantic.

This study also investigated how the fragmentation or compartmentalization of the enslaved body, into commoditized performances of exchange and consumption under sovereign power during the seventeenth century, facilitated the organizational capacity to order and mechanize human-reserve as a calculable resource through biopolitics (disciplinary and governmental power). While other institutional apparatuses entrenched demonstrative formalities of biopolitical force (the disciplining of the physical body; the serialization of space and time through observation; and harnessing the demographic potentialities for the capture of resource, such as the factory or camp,) between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the Barbadian plantation complex promoted racial rule as its primary point of legitimation. This distinction is a crucial step toward the development and intensification of a hierarchical socio-economic apparatus of otherness and identity violence that would be advanced by processes of politicization to shape broader logistical designs of English nation-building and monocultural form (xenophobia, alienation, patriotism, and classism). This dissertation, therefore, also investigated how the deplorable treatment of England's "others" (the Irish, poor, political prisoner, convict, and those deemed inferior and disenfranchised) were drawn into this arena of exploitation through manifestations of ethnic and cultural superiority, which created asymmetric realities of political subjectivity, economic opportunity, and cultural inclusion.

This study reveals how the technology of capital was unlocked through the mobilization of biopolitical power as both anatomo-politics (micropractices of disciplinary force) and biopolitics (an art of slave government to achieve the preservation of plantation colony through a larger field of macroeconomic and social identifiers.) Agamben's argument that bare life is a device of political action carried out by the modern State and

that sovereignty and biopolitics are historically contemporaneous offers critical insight into the how the institution of racialized slavery advanced capitalism in the Atlantic.<sup>71</sup> Whereas he states that the camp is “the political state of modernity itself” in relation to the State’s fiduciary control over biological life as “*land, order, birth*” [emphasis in original], this study demonstrated how biopolitical management emerged in Barbados by the eighteenth century: land (colonial territoriality, physical containment, resource management); order (juridical authority, surveillance, punishment), and birth (breeding and intergenerational bondage).<sup>72</sup>

The intention of this dissertation was not to situate enslaved women in the many aspects of plantation life (agricultural and domestic labourers, marketplace traders, sex trade workers, and breeders, among others) as unmitigated spaces of bondage and exploitation, but to demonstrate how the underlying convergences at work between capitalism, management, racism, and patriarchy often created complex circumstances of resistance and survival. Amelioration and pro-natalism, therefore, were not only strategic devices of care that were carried out to encourage the reproduction of those enslaved for the purpose of labour output and the safeguarding of an intergenerational workforce, but intersections of opportunity and defiance to disrupt economic rationalities for the preservation of white supremacy.

While it is clear that noso-political interventions, which included medico-administrative knowledge in the practices of breeding, birthing, and care of enslaved children were shaped by a strategy of subjugation that was both patriarchal and racist, further inquiry into the choices and desires of enslaved women is demanded to understand

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<sup>71</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 6.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

the complex negotiations of power in the plantation colony. A Foucauldian approach toward examining how noso-politics is revealed through plantation accounting records in Barbados exposes profound indicators of both micromanagement intent as well as the broader policy endeavours of health and population manifest in the colony, in particular, the pro-natalist policies directed at enslaved women: reproduction, disease, child rearing, medical care, mobility, and labour. The broader determinations and possibilities of this art of government extend beyond the technologies of force exercised on the plantation, to include the economic potentialities of human life at the level of the individual, institution, state, and collective.

The objective of this work was not merely to nuance the historical record around the European sponsored-trade in Africans and plantation complex, or to elucidate the critical theoretical lenses a Foucauldian and postcolonial analysis can bring to understanding how power was exercised through the practice of enslavement, but to offer a broader interdisciplinary framework of discussion that bears both historical and contemporary salience to the ongoing realities of labour exploitation, female sexual trafficking, and racism. This approach toward the legacy of black enslavement and dehumanization breathes life into the present by formulating a methodology to evaluate political ideologies and legacies that work to perpetuate the ongoing practices of human incarceration, economic disenfranchisement, and political persecution engendered not only by predatory and authoritative systems of government, but in contemporary Western democracies: those nation-states where a majority white population responds to the increased penetration of intercultural environments with policies to restrict immigration,

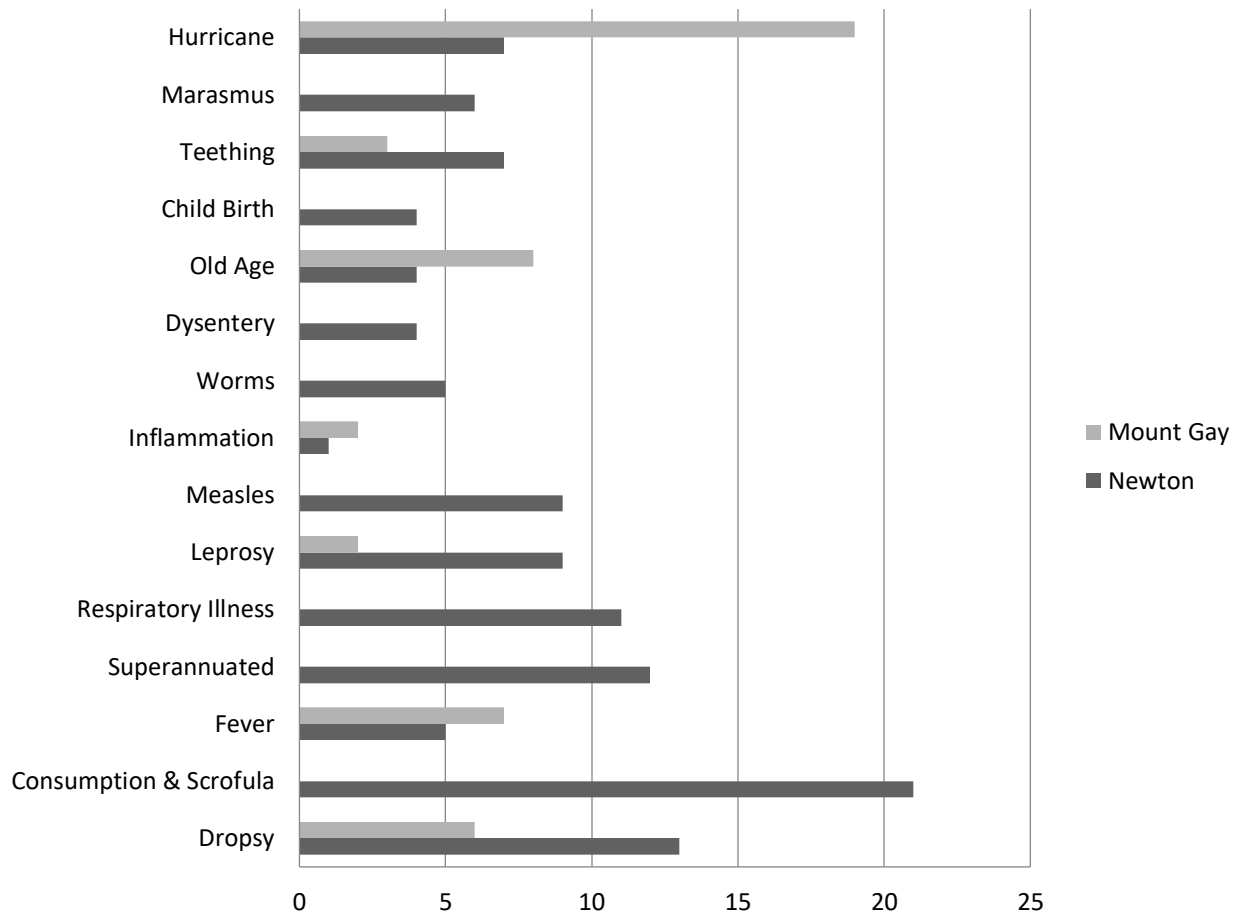
smother non-European cultural systems, and promote anemic socio-economic investments under the guise of prudent fiscal management.

Contemporarily, several populist European political parties and leaders in France (Front National), Greece (Golden Dawn), and the Netherlands (Party for Freedom), and the enduring populist forces in the United States, among others, evidence that there is an extensive appetite for xenophobic and anti-immigrant policy-making. As a “history of the present,” this study reveals how the confluence between capitalistic elitism, racism, and disciplinary management continues to order and re-order practices of human denigration as seemingly unfortunate, but rational, outcomes to either be left to the devices of the free-market or tempered by liberal democratic reforms.

The function of plantocratic power on the plantation complex offers opportunity to study not just the oppressive regime of violent control exercised by an elite class of white European men, but how the strategies of resistance and courage undertaken by those who were dispossessed, and the continuing contemporary calls to legislate, invest, and create mechanisms of accountability to combat marginalization, are not buried in the historical ether, but are proliferating in the very communities of which we are all a part.

## APPENDIX A

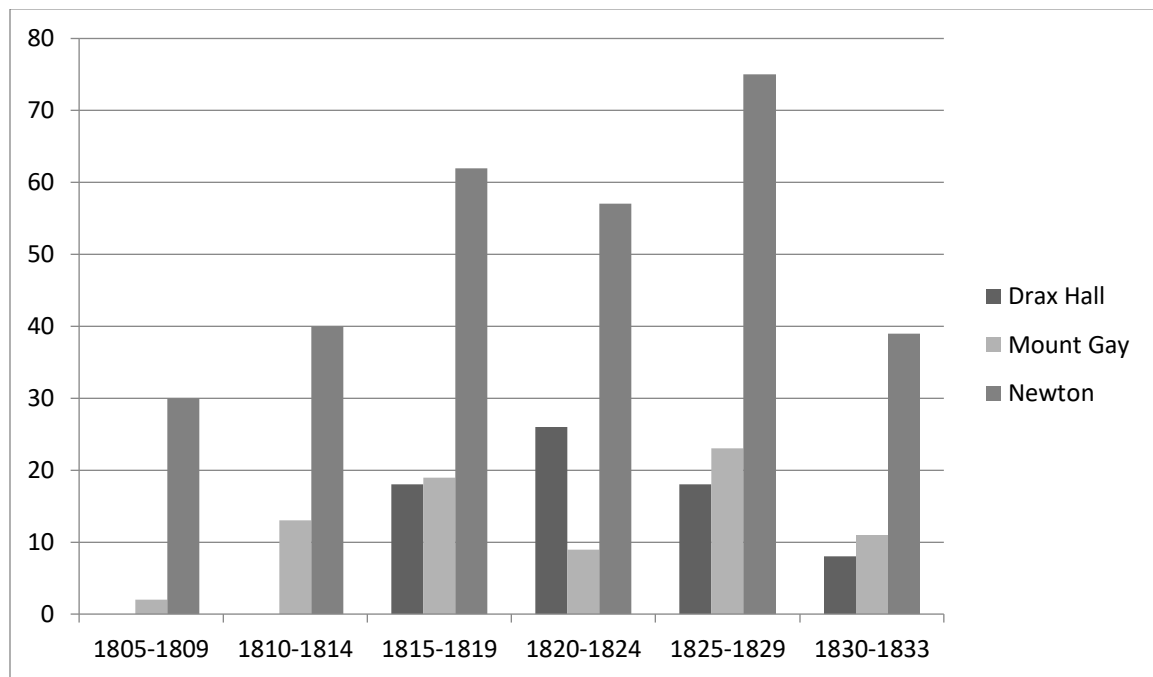
**TABLE 1. TOP FIFTEEN CAUSES OF SLAVE MORTALITY ON MOUNT GAY AND NEWTON PLANTATIONS**



*Note:* Slave mortality on the Mount Gay and Newton plantations was documented annually for financial purposes and sometimes included a value for the “decreased stock.” Slaves on Mount Gay and Newton were valued at £75 and £72 respectively, except from 1831 to 1833 where slaves on the latter plantation had a diminished value of £50. *Sources:* Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

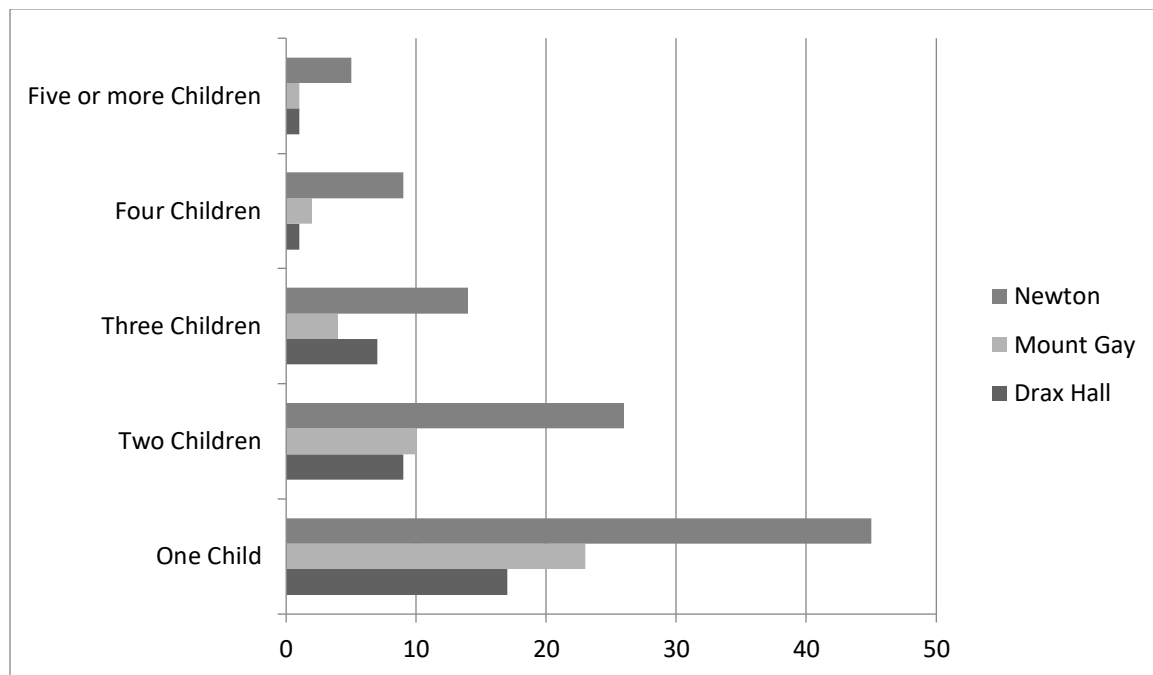


**TABLE 2. NUMBER OF BIRTHS ON THE DRAX HALL, MOUNT GAY, AND NEWTON PLANTATIONS**



*Note:* The number of annual births on Drax Hall includes the years (1815-1831), excluding the damaged records from 1816. Data from Mount Gay includes (1809-1833) and for Newton (1805-1833). *Sources:* Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

**TABLE 3. NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER MOTHER ON THE DRAX HALL, MOUNT GAY, AND NEWTON PLANTATIONS**



*Sources:* Drax Hall Day Book (1815-1831) Acc. No 97. Class No. Z9 1/1, Barbados Archives; Mount Gay Plantation Journal (1809-1835), Barbados Museum & Historical Society; Newton Plantation Journal (1805-41), Barbados Museum & Historical Society.

## Appendix B

### *BARBADOS COLONIAL WILLS:*

Colonial wills from Barbados during the seventeenth century reveal that some planters arranged to have their slaves receive formal apprentice training, and that this was extended mostly to males in keeping with prevailing gender inequity. In 1667/8 Thomas Revell willed that his slave boy named Capt. Swart would be taught how to read and write while under the care of his brother Richard “for an improvement”;<sup>73</sup> Thomas Bonnett’s 1678 will arranged to have his “slave boy” Cuffee become an apprentice, cooper, or carpenter for five or six years, and to obtain his freedom once this commitment was completed;<sup>74</sup> Samuel Pasfield of St. Phillip’s parish willed in 1699 that his “slave boy” Harry be bound to an honest cooper to apprentice for five years, after which he would then have his freedom;<sup>75</sup> John Lea’s 1663 will stated that his daughter, who was his sole heir and executor, be given all of his possessions except his mulatto “slave boy” Cullee whom he wanted to be manumitted and apprenticed as a cooper or any other profession that he might wish, and for his “mulatto girl” name Betty to also be freed and enrolled in school;<sup>76</sup> Planter Robert Curdy stated that his “negro” Tom would be trained as a cooper for six years then set free.<sup>77</sup>

The estate planning of Barbadian planters sometimes included special requests to have their slaves manumitted. Planter Walter Chamell willed that his female slave Adame

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<sup>73</sup> Barbados Archives, Barbados Wills and Administrations, Thomas Revell, 1667/8, RB6/10.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., Thomas Bonnett, 20 Oct 1678, RB6/13.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., Samuel Pasfield, 7 December 1699, RB6/43.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., John Lea, 27 May 1663, RB6/15.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., Robert Curdy, 20 August 1691, RB6/10.

be given her freedom immediately after his decease; Timothy Crowther willed that his slave Mingoe be freed four years after his death, and his slave Mitchell seven years;<sup>78</sup> William Makernes granted freedom to his slave Judith immediately after his decease, but instructed that his slave Henry would have to wait till he turned twenty-one to be manumitted;<sup>79</sup> Planter Dennis O'Canty ordered the release of his slave Mingo upon his death for his "honesty and faithful service"; Katharine Toyer manumitted and discharged from all future servitude her slave Dotio for her care and faithful service; planter John Wadsworth instructed that his slave Robin be set free immediately and receive five pounds sterling after his decease because he was "a true and faithful slave."<sup>80</sup>

The archival record indicates that some slave owners would also bequeath commodities and money to their slaves. John King willed that twelve months after his decease, his "mallato" slave Bess be freed and receive four pounds sterling of clothing; Robert Hyempsall instructed that his slave Tobey be freed two years after his death and be given twenty pounds sterling; Elizabeth Paynter, who gave her brother John Nevinson her estates, land, negroes, and houses in Bridgetown, manumitted her slaves Gands, Muddy, and Peteete, and gave Gauds a thousand pounds of sugar.<sup>81</sup>

Records also show that female slave owners bequeathed small plots of property to their slaves, such as Mary Croswell who willed that her slaves Tom and Jack be immediately freed after her decease and share one acre of land; Penelope Nixon willed that

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., Walter Chamell, 6 June 1663, RB6/15; Timothy Crowther, 20 March 1662, RB6/15.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., William Makernes, 17 December 1689, RB6/41. This was the provision willed by planter James Nickson of St. Philips Parish who called for his "negro boy" Sam to be freed when he turned twenty years old. Ibid., James Nickson, 7 December 1685, RB6/10.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., Dennis O'Canty, 17 December 1684, RB6/10; Katharine Toyer, 1 February 1686, RB6/40; John Wadsworth, 20 July 1720, RB6/6.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., John King, 12 December 1685, RB6/40; Robert Hyempsall, 20 August 1696, RB6/11; Elizabeth Paynter, 13 May 1667, RB6/15.

her “mulatto woman” Rose be freed upon her death and inherit two acres of land to “manage and employ”;<sup>82</sup> Planter Roger Kirkpatrick of St. Lucy’s Parish stated in his will that his slave Sampson, along with his wife Kate and her child were to be freed and given two acres of his land upon his death;<sup>83</sup> Planter John Mayre from St. Philips Parish stipulated in 1699 that his wife Elizabeth, who was the executrix of his will, manumit his “black boy” John Mayre, pay for his education, and after her own passing, transfer ownership of the plantation, edifices, buildings, profits, and privileges to John.<sup>84</sup> In the event that John should die, the planter stated that the boy’s mother Moll, along with her mother Gitte and son Cudgo, be freed and take possession of the plantation.<sup>85</sup>

Two other testaments offer striking evidence into the autonomy of the planter class and the unique circumstances of slavery. John Cooper granted his slaves Will and Battee freedom five years after his death and bequeathed to them and their future children his ten acre plantation with houses on it.<sup>86</sup> Symon Gething’s will stated that after his mother Elizabeth passed away “my Madagascar woman slave named Sarah be freed and absolutely discharged from all further slavery and service and that thence forth immediately shee have delivered unto her the house or tenement of mine which was formerly called Seaborns tenement to hold and enjoy the same for and during her naturall life.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., Mary Croswell, 21 February 1697, RB6/1; Penelope Nixon, 20 November 1715, RB6/35.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., Roger Kirkpatrick, 27 January 1685, RB6/40.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., John Mayre, 12 March 1699, RB6/43.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., John Cooper, 19 July 1656, RB6/13.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., Symon Gething, 22 May 1695, RB6/11.

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- Series S165010 Grand Jury Presentments, 1783-1877 (Images on Website)
- Series S165015 Petitions to the General Assembly, 1782-1866 (Microfilm)
- Series S165018 Resolutions of the General Assembly 1782-1865 (Images on Website)

##### **National Register Properties**

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“The House was moved that the select committee appointed the 7th instant to consider of the representation of the commissioners for trade and plantations relating to the laws made manufactures set up and trade carried on in any of His Majesty's colonies and plantations in America which may have affected the trade, navigation and manufactures of this kingdom be impowered [sic] to enquire of the proper methods for the encouragement and security of all trade and manufactures in the said plantations which no way interfere with the trade of Great Britain or which may be of use to the trade of Great Britain and for the better security of the plantations themselves.” Private and Local Bills and Acts, Harper Collection of Private Bills 1695-1814, February 1732 to 27 March 1735, *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*. Accessed on February 11, 2020, at <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=15115&groupid=94484&pgId=248f8262-691a-4c18-aa86-caaa3ec8a047>

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