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Becoming Catholic: Religion and Society in Colonial Grenada, 1763-1838

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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July 2020

Abstract

This thesis explores the development of black-centred Catholicism in colonial Grenada, focussing on the period between the British conquest of the colony from France in 1763 to the end of the apprenticeship scheme in 1838. I aim to understand how Catholicism progressed from a white French imperial religion to one almost exclusively identified with Black Grenadians. To do so, I focus on the social status of Grenada's Catholics of all races and classes as they struggled against the manifestations of imperial Britain in colonial society: political institutions, religious institutions, and most significantly the institution of slavery. This allows me to explore the interactions and intersections of the colonial attitudes, conflicts, and hierarchies that shaped black religious experiences.

To analyse the development of black Catholicism, I focus on specific social groups whose struggles against British imperialism slowly but surely pushed Catholicism into the margins of colonial society, away from white and free people of colour to enslaved Africans. In particular, I examine: white French Catholics whose brief political ascent resulted in a revocation of all Catholic civil liberties regardless of race while colonial power reverted completely and solely to British Protestants; free people of colour whose bid for political control through Fédon's revolution led ultimately to the removal of most free practitioners of Catholicism in Grenada; and enslaved Africans whose struggle to retain Catholic identities—or any religious identity—was frustrated and limited by dominating white colonists, particularly through enslavement, the plantation system and religious education. Through this analysis I show how the struggles of these different groups, enslaved and free, contested and defied British domination to shape black religious experiences. At the core of this project is a re-evaluation of the formation of black, and especially enslaved, religious identity forged in a crucible of white domination.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the generous funding from the Royal Historical Society, the David Nicholls Memorial Trust, and the School of Humanities at the University of Glasgow, which allowed me to complete research for this degree. Nor would any part of this have been at all possible with the unfailingly kind support of my supervisors, Simon Newman and Scott Spurlock.

Warmest thanks to my committee, to Julia McClure for chairing, and to Natalie Zacek and Christine Whyte, my external and internal examiners. Thank you all so much for making the experience truly enjoyable.

I am indebted to colleagues who provided feedback on parts of this thesis, both informally and through conferences and workshops. I would especially like to thank my own colleagues in the Slavery Studies 'cluster', now the Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies, for their contributions to the incredible research environment here at the university. Special thanks go out to Marenka Odlum-Thompson, Nelson Mundell, Stephen Mullen, and Mona O'Brien. At the beginning of this project, I was often bolstered by the warm support of my fellow PhDs, whose encouragement gave me confidence in this project.

I learned the art of pursuing excellence during my undergraduate days through my professors, Caren Silvester, Linda Hayner, and John Matzko, who nurtured my budding abilities and whose support led me to Glasgow in the first place.

I would be remiss if I left out the best cheerleading team around. Thank you to the many people at GCFC who encouraged me (and fed me) during this process, especially Evan and Alison, William and Margaret, Anne and Walter, Colin and Kathmar.

And to the squad—Heidi and Matthias, Alan, Katie—thank you for the Skittles and the love. I have been extraordinarily fortunate to have the friends I do, including my beautiful best friends (in no order of ranking at all): Katie, Jackie, Sophia.

Thank you to Papa for being my best ever cheerleader. I love you. SDG.

Table of Contents

Tables 5

Maps and Illustrations 6

Chapter 1: Introduction 9

Chapter 2: The Great Experiment: Toleration and Political Accommodation of French Catholics 34

Chapter 3: The Limits of Liberty: Catholicism and Free People of Colour in the Revolutionary Era 65

Chapter 4: Religion in Bondage: Negotiating Enslaved Religious Identities within the Plantation System 96

Chapter 5: Religious Education: Abolition and the Mission to Educate the Poor 136

Chapter 6: Conclusion 172

Bibliography 177

Tables

Table 2:1 Sugar Plantation Increase 1763-1774 by Acres 45

Table 2:2 Total Number of Plantations and Number of Sugar Plantations by Nationality, 1763 and 1774 47

Table 4:1 Enslaved Africans Disembarked in Grenada by Decade and Year, 1763-1808 103

Table 4:2 Disembarked Enslaved Africans by Region of Purchase, 1784-1794 122-3

Table 5:1 Church of England Clergy, 1763-1834 144

Maps and illustrations

Map 1:1 Map of the Antilles, 1793 7

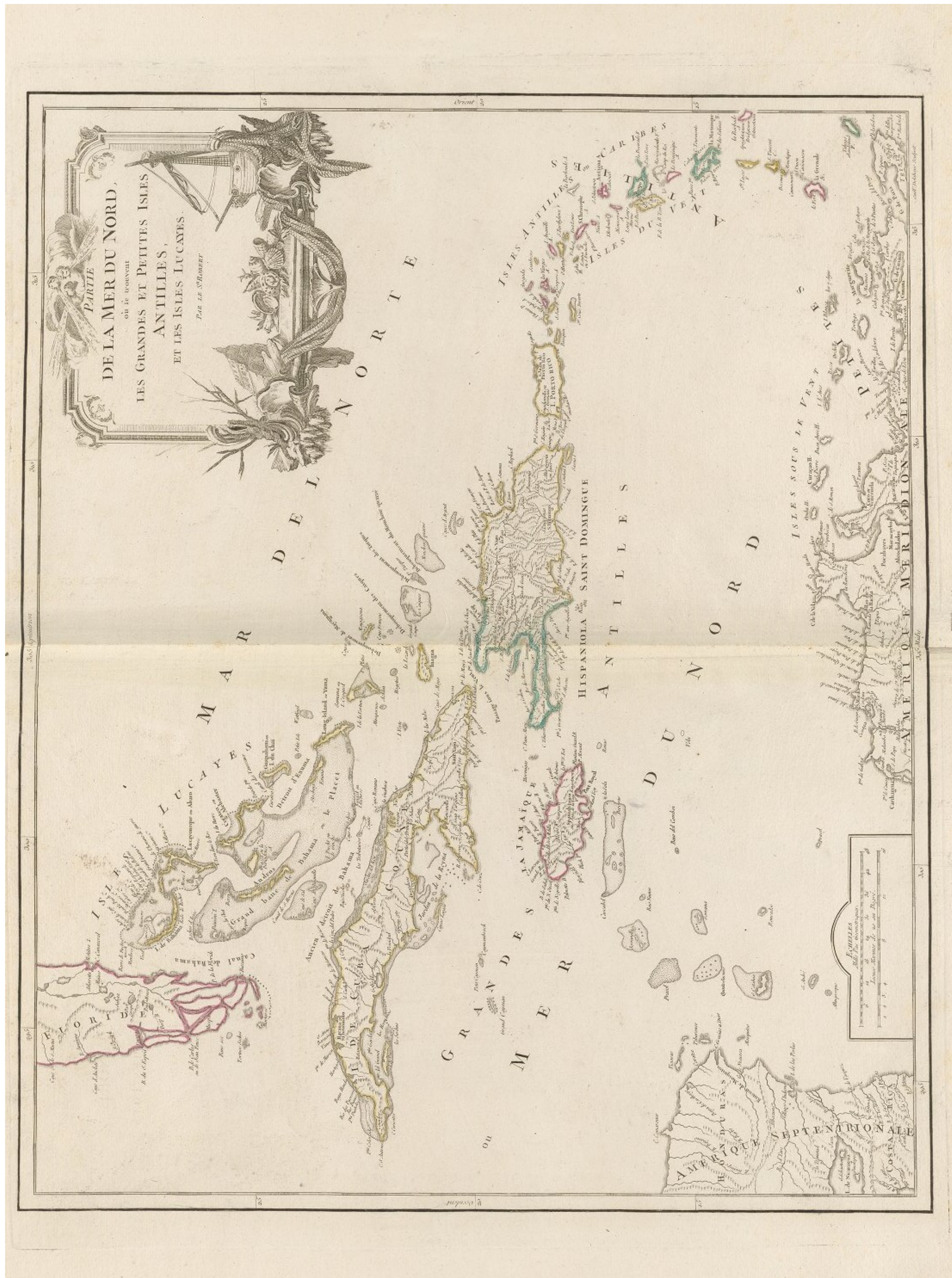
Map 1:2 Map of Grenada, 1780 8

Figure 2:1 *View on the River Roseau, Dominica* by Agostino Brunias 43

Map 4:1 Religious Centres in Grenada, 1800-1838 106

Figure 4:1 *Big Drum Dance in Carriacou, W.I.* by Canute Caliste 132

Map 1:1 Map of the Antilles, 1793



Source: Didier Robert de Vaugondy, Part of the North Sea, where the Great and Lesser Antilles, and the Lucay Isles *[map], no scale (Paris: n.p., 1793). John Carter Brown Map Collection, The John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.* Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library.

Map 1:2 Map of Grenada, 1780

Source: Daniel Paterson, A New Plan of the Island of Grenada *[map], scale: 1:34,000 (London: William Faden, 1780). John Carter Brown Map Collection, The John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.* Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Religion in Grenada has a complicated history. The French colony ceded to the British in 1763 posed a challenge for the new British colonial government. For more than a century, Catholicism had defined Grenada's religious life for both white colonists and many enslaved people. With the changes in colonial rule and a rise in the number of enslaved Africans transported to Grenada, all kinds of identities within colonial religious spaces were forged in relation to colonial power. Religion, especially Roman Catholicism, mattered in this context, because it was a way in which marginalised groups—enslaved Africans in particular—forged their own religious, cultural and social spaces in a colony where time and again these factors were controlled and defined by colonial legislation, the institution of slavery and the whims of white British planters. In this thesis, I argue that, between the colony becoming British in 1763 and the end of the apprenticeship scheme in 1838, Catholicism in Grenada developed from a largely white French religion to one almost exclusively associated with Black Grenadians. Significantly, as I examine changes to Catholics' social standing in the colony, I am able to establish a pattern of increasing marginalisation of both Catholicism and its adherents. As a result, this thesis explores the how British colonial institutions impacted social situations—and religion—of the island's marginalised people. First, I examine Catholicism's removal from white colonial spaces as French Catholics were removed from their positions of legislative power. Second, I analyse the impact of Fédon's revolution on Catholic free people of colour, which helped to establish Catholicism as an enslaved African religion. Third, I examine enslaved African negotiations of Catholic identity within the significant limitations of the plantation system and within the context of increasing British attempts to control and manipulate enslaved (and free black) religious identities. As the majority adherents to the colony's official religion under French rule, these people became marginalised and increasingly discriminated against under the British after 1763. In these ways, the fate of Catholicism in British Grenada was intertwined with the social standing of Catholic adherents.

Although the rise of Atlantic history has paved the way for new approaches to Caribbean history, it has retained a strong early modern focus that focuses on larger and better studied islands and almost entirely ignores the Ceded Islands.[1] This exclusion continues in studies focused on the

[1] The Ceded Islands were Dominica, St Vincent, Grenada and Tobago. St Lucia was ceded to Britain in 1783.

Catholic Atlantic, which centre more on the early modern Iberian empire that spread Catholicism to the New World.[2] Consequently, the influence of Catholicism in a British colony has been studied by historians of French Canada and the United States, but there has been little work on the British Caribbean. French Canada provides a comparison to the experiences of French Grenadians, since their fates as Catholics in colonies that became British in 1763 were closely linked.[3] As in Grenada, interactions between Anglicans and Catholics in French Canada were often tense, even as British colonial officials in both colonies attempted to promote religious toleration and political accommodation.[4] Catholicism continued to flourish in the British Caribbean after the Treaty of Paris (1763). Outside French Canada, Maryland housed large Catholic populations, which the respective colonial governments attempted to regulate with varied success.[5] Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, transatlantic networks brought waves of competing Catholic and Protestant missionaries to Jamaica, Barbados and the rest of the British Caribbean.[6] This thesis enhances our understanding of religion—especially Catholicism—in the Atlantic World. First, this thesis suggests that the exclusion of the significant developments occurring in the Ceded Islands in most analyses has distorted our understanding of Catholicism in British America. Second, this thesis recognises and explores the significance of Catholicism in Grenada as a religious, social and political expression of the marginalised and powerless.

This thesis takes issue with the idea that the British Caribbean colonies as a whole share a similar religious history, arguing instead that early modern Catholic Christianity in Grenada as well as the

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Some noteworthy exceptions that provide helpful insights on the Ceded Islands include Andrew O'Shaughnessy's analysis of the British Caribbean during the American Revolution: *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Nicholas Beasley, *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Kit Candlin, *The Last Caribbean Frontier, 1795-1815* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); and Jane G. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[2] For deeper analysis of Spanish Catholicism in the New World, see David Rex Galindo, *To Sin No More: Franciscans and Conversion in the Hispanic World, 1683-1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018); Charles R. Boxer*, The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion, 1440-1770* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); and Nora E. Jaffary, ed., *Gender, Race, and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

[3] For an examination of French Catholic rights, Terrence Murphy and Gerald Stortz, eds., *Creed and Culture: The Place of English-Speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

[4] Peter M. Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and Identity: Imperial Anglicanism in British North America, 1745-1795* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000) and Hilda Neatby, *The Quebec Act: Protest and Policy* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

[5] Francis X. Delany, *A History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica, BWI, 1494-1929* (New York: Jesuit Mission Press, 1930) and Robert Emmett Curran, *Papist Devils: Catholics in British America, 1574-1783* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014).

[6] Francis J. Osborne, *History of the Catholic Church in Barbados* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1988) and Francis X. Delany, *A History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica, BWI, 1494-1929* (New York: Jesuit Mission Press, 1930). Both Osborne and Delaney were Jesuit missionaries from those islands.

other Ceded Islands share a more similar trajectory with French Canada, at least during the first few years of British rule. Grenada is situated in the southern Caribbean, a couple hundred miles off the north-eastern coast of Venezuela. Today, it is known as the tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. Carriacou is the largest of the Grenadine Islands, which are sandwiched between the mainland of Grenada in the south and St Vincent in the north. Petite Martinique, a dependency of Grenada, is a 300-acre rock jutting out of the ocean just off Carriacou's north-eastern coast. All three islands are part of the Windward Islands, a geographical and political grouping including Dominica, Martinique, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. Their larger grouping is within the Lesser Antilles, the island group consisting of the smaller islands below Puerto Rico.[7] The proximity of these islands to each other might suggest that they share an identity, history, or both. Franklin W. Knight emphasised the region's shared identity in his argument for a regional Caribbean identity.[8] To some extent there is a shared identity and history, given that these islands were colonised by European powers who introduced slavery. The similarities often end there; each island history is unique defined by when it was colonised, by whom and for how long.

Breaking away from a model of British Caribbean similarities allows us to reconsider the importance of Catholicism in Grenada. While the colony's history in the narrative of British imperialism is framed by the plantation system, the purpose of this thesis is to look beyond British attempts at coercive control and to examine the agency of Grenada's marginalised people. This thesis specifically analyses white French colonists, free people of colour, enslaved Africans, and free Black Grenadians who were Catholics and identified with Catholicism. This emphasis mirrors a shift defined by Allan Greer and Kenneth Mills from the viewpoint of 'Christianizers' to 'the points of view and religious creativity of the "Christianised" or "Christianising"' in the Atlantic Roman Catholic world.[9] Shifting the analysis in this way allows for

> a reconsideration of Catholic Christianities in the colonial Americas [that] can lead historical interpreters away from artificial fragmentation and toward some illuminating connections and reverberations.[10]

[7] Map 1:1 Map of the Antilles, 1793. p 6.

[8] Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[9] Allan Greer and Kenneth Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', in *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*, edited by Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman (New York: Routledge, 2017): 7.

[10] Greer and Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', 3.

Resituating the discussion of Catholicism in the British Empire and in the British Atlantic World to one island colony illuminates the contributions and agency of Black Grenadians as they negotiated and renegotiated their religious identities.

Differences in physical location and geography as well as the different impacts of historical events shaped Grenada's colonial history. The mountain range that cuts across Grenada from north to south is composed of five extinct volcanos, the tallest and youngest of which is Mount St Catherine. These mountains were little used during British colonisation; because the land was too rocky and impenetrable to have value to planters.[11] The mountains' western slopes are nearly impassable and even today are sparsely populated, although the eastern side slopes more gently towards a flatter, more densely populated coastline where colonial plantations once flourished. The capital of St George's, nestled in the foothills on the western coast, overlooks the island's natural harbour.[12] The St George's harbour and Grenville harbour, a natural harbour on the western coast, were prized by colonisers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Carriacou and Petite Martinique lie about 34 km north of Grenada and Petite Martinique 4km off Carriacou's north-eastern coast. Both islands are hilly, reflecting their volcanic origins. Travel between these islands was common during British colonisation, and the trade network included Trinidad and Tobago.[13] Like the other islands along this arc, Grenada divides its coastline on the west with the crystal-clear Caribbean Sea and on the east with the restive Atlantic. The sea benefitted the islands—and plantations near the sea—with access to ports and a relatively easy mode of transporting goods.[14]

With its mountains and higher rainfall, some areas of Grenada remain humidly green year-round. The lowlands and Carriacou often suffer between January to July, during dry season, when the relentless sun browns the trees and grass, scorching the earth and leaving little shade. The sky is a brilliant, shimmering blue—a stark contrast to the grey cloud cover during rainy season.[15] The dry season was considered the optimal time for new colonists to arrive as the 'sultriness' of rainy

[11] Map 1:2 Map of Grenada, 1780. p 7.

[12] Known as the Carenage.

[13] Woodville K. Marshall, 'Provision Ground and Plantation Labour in Four Windward Islands: Competition for Resources During Slavery', *Slavery & Abolition* 12 (1991): 48-67.

For an analysis of these African-Caribbean trade networks, see Kevin Dawson, *Undercurrents of Power: Aquatic Culture in the African Diaspora* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

[14] David Beck Ryden, '"One of the Finest and Most Fruitful Spots in America": An Analysis of Eighteenth Century Carriacou', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 43 (2013): 552.

[15] The rainy season is from June to December; the latter months of the season are sometimes known as hurricane season because Grenada's most devastating hurricanes have hit the island around that time.

season with its accompanying deluge of mosquitos was considered unhealthy.[16] The first rains of the rainy season arrived in June, which sometimes caused calamity for the profiteering planters. As planters in Carriacou found, the parched earth after the dry season was unable to absorb the first heavy rainfalls which washed away the hardened topsoil. Soil erosion was made even worse by the over-clearing of land to make room for plantations, leaving more land exposed and creating a danger of mudslides.[17] Tropical systems and storms also whirl through the region during the rainy season. But unlike islands in the mid-Caribbean, Grenada was (and is) seldom struck by hurricanes.[18] Without the annual threat of hurricanes, plantations in Grenada became a somewhat less risky undertaking. The colony's geography and tropical environment attracted colonists who hoped to make their fortune in sugar—or cotton in Carriacou—by investing in large plantations worked by thousands of enslaved Africans. The resulting plantation system would come to define the colony's history, shaped by the defined features of Grenada's landscape.

1:1 Grenada to 1763

As a gateway island guarding one of the routes to South America, conflict reverberated in Grenada before, during, and after the first Europeans entered the Caribbean. The Caribbean islands had been populated since c4000 BC.[19] Because the Lesser Antilles were settled later, Grenada was probably not consistently inhabited until c40 BC and Carriacou not inhabited until c. AD 390-590.[20] The nomadic Taíno often bypassed the Lesser Antilles in favour of the Greater Antilles, a preference echoed centuries later by Spanish explorers.[21] By the fifteenth century, the Kalinago had

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[16] Colin Chisholm, *Manual of the Climate and Diseases in Tropical Countries* (London: Burgess and Hill, 1822): 4. University of Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, CR. N. 159.

[17] Bonham C. Richardson, 'The Overdevelopment of Carriacou', *Geographical Review* 65 (1975): 393-94.

[18] John Robert McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War In the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

George Germain, 'Pleased to hear nothing from Ferguson about the hurricane which devastated Barbados and St. Lucia and congratulates him that nothing remarkable had happened in Tobago', 3 January 1781, Whitehall, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/24/18, ff52-3.

[19] William F. Keegan, 'West Indian Archaeology: Overview and Foragers', *Journal of Archaeological Research* 2 (1994): 256.

[20] Scott M. Fitzpatrick, Michiel Kappers, Quetta Kaye, 'Coastal Erosion and Site Destruction on Carriacou, West Indies', *Journal of Field Archaeology* 31 (2006): 399.

[21] Computer simulation and carbon testing suggests a later settlement of the Lesser Antilles. See Scott M. Fitzpatrick, et. al., 'Precolumbian Settlements on Carriacou, West Indies', *Journal of Archaeological Research* 34 (2009):248.

Note that there is an ongoing discussion over the terminology for the Caribbean region's indigenous people. William F. Keegan and Corinne L. Hofman provide an explanation for these terms in *Caribbean before Columbus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017): 11-14.

established permanent settlements in Grenada. In 1498, Kalinago settlements dotted the island. Columbus came upon the island on his third voyage to the West Indies and named it Conceptíon, inaugurating the first European claim on Grenada. However, the Spanish, more interested in the larger islands, chose not to establish a colony on Grenada.

After the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604) weakened Spanish power, the English moved quickly to establish their own colonial powerbase in the New World. Although their first attempts which were undertaken toward the end of the war were not successful, they successfully established Jamestown as the first permanent English colony in the New World in 1607. The settlement faced many difficulties, including tensions between settlers and native people as well as starvation. Such a colony could not undermine Spanish power, so the Jamestown financiers, the Virginia Company of London, set their sights on illicitly establishing a settlement on Spanish territory. Their goal was to establish a tobacco colony and dislodge the Spanish from their monopoly of the tobacco trade. The Virginia Company began to raise funds to establish a settlement on Grenada.

In 1609, the Virginia Company outfitted three ships with 208 settlers to attempt the first English Caribbean and tobacco settlement.[22] Combined with a lack of manpower and their inexperience with plantation colonies, they were at daily risk of attack from the Kalinago, who were still a formidable presence on the island despite their depleted numbers. The century of Spanish hold on the region had taken its toll on the Kalinago, who originally had welcomed the Europeans and offered them aid. Kalinago enslavement by the Spaniards and constant Spanish raids had soured their relationship with Europeans, which the replacement of Spaniards by Englishmen did not alter. Within six months, the Kalinago had overwhelmed the English settlers. Those fortunate enough to escape were collected by the *Diana*, one of the ships that brought them to the island, and were taken back to London.[23] While the gamble for a Caribbean tobacco colony abruptly ended, the attempt to establish a rival, contraband tobacco trade eventually bore fruit in 1613. Learning from the mistakes of their Grenada attempt, the English brought tobacco plantations to Jamestown and reaped their first harvest there in 1613. The failures of Grenada led to the successes of the American colonies.[24] For nearly half a century after the attempted 1609 settlement, no European

[22] The same year, the English settled in Bermuda, their second successful New World colony after Jamestown.

[23] John Angus Martin, *Island Caribs and French Settlers in Grenada 1498-1763* (St George's: The Grenada Museum, 2013): 31-53. I am heavily indebted to Martin for this and the following sections. His study of early modern Grenada is hopefully only the first of many yet to come.

[24] George Arents, 'The Seed from which Virginia Grew', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 22 (1939): 124-29.

power dared to attempt another Grenadian colony. Except for occasional Spanish raids, the Kalinago were left in peace.

Jacques Dyel du Parquet took over the governorship of Martinique in the 1630s and expanded French presence in the Caribbean. Du Parquet began planning a settlement on Grenada in late 1648 without the permission of the *Compagnie des Îles de l'Amérique*, which governed French colonies in the Americas and which was also on the verge of collapse in 1648. Knowing that upon its dissolution the company would sell colonies to the governors of the French-controlled islands they controlled, du Parquet set up a force of forty-five men and sailed for Grenada. Under du Parquet, the French established the first successful European colony in Grenada, which cemented a pattern of European control and dominance of the island. French fortunes turned when Grenada became a Crown colony. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, then Secretary of State of the Navy, valued Grenada as a line of defence against the Spanish, given the island's proximity to South America. As a result, early eighteenth-century Grenada saw significant growth. The population grew steadily, more than doubling between 1669 and 1704 and continuing to grow through the first half of the eighteenth century.[25] From 1709 increasing numbers of enslaved Africans arrived in Grenada to work the plantations, and by 1763 enslaved people outnumbered the white population ten to one.

The growing enslaved African population was directly related to expanding profits. Before the slave trade was established, the labour force in Grenada was too small to sustain large, labour-heavy plantations and plantation crops. Sugar was eschewed in favour of tobacco, cocoa, coffee, and cotton, none of which demanded a large workforce. Most farmers worked small plots alongside one or two enslaved Africans. Tobacco was the first major cash crop until 1674 when the French established a marketing monopoly on the tobacco trade and tobacco became less profitable.[26] Many Grenadian planters were unable to switch from tobacco to indigo, because they could not afford the capital and labour force the crop demanded. Indigo became the first crop to be grown on large plantations in Grenada, laying the foundation for the sugar revolution in the eighteenth century. By the 1650s, planters profited from the crop, and by 1687, indigo was at its height. By the 1720s, small farmers had diversified into cocoa and coffee, the latter growing steadily to become a major cash crop by the 1730s. Sugar gained ground from the 1720s. In 1723, there were seventeen

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[25] Martin, *Island Caribs*, 366.

[26] Martin, *Island Caribs*, 183-4.

The history of early French colonisation in the West Indies is carefully analysed in James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

plantations on the island, which had grown to a significant eighty-two by 1762. Between 1723 and 1762, Grenada transformed into a sugar colony, an island now prized for its profitability rather than its proximity to enemy Spanish territory.

The Seven Years' War (1756-63) was an unprecedented global conflict that reached far beyond its North American beginnings to encompass Europe, South and East Asia, the American mainland and the Caribbean. Unsurprisingly, this global conflict disrupted trade and slowed economic growth in the Caribbean colonies and in 1759, fulfilling France's worst fears, the conflict flooded into the Caribbean when France lost Guadeloupe to the British. Determined to retain Martinique, their principal colony, as well as Grenada, the French sent more troops to the Caribbean to defend their prized colonies. Grenada's value had increased so greatly over the previous century that its defence was a French priority and its capture a British aim. The British, satisfied with the capture of Guadeloupe and Dominica, left Martinique to the French and sailed down the island chain towards Grenada. The fleet reached Grenada 3 March 1762 and after a day-long struggle, the island was officially surrendered to the British the morning of 5 March.

This thesis focuses on the eighty years which followed the British conquest in 1762 and is concentrated on religion as a continuing battlefield between French, British and African people and between Catholicism, various Protestant denominations and vestiges of African belief systems and religious practices. Like the political conflicts and competition that shaped Grenada's early history, these events often paralleled or expanded on European political developments. Just over a decade after the Seven Years' War, Grenada was again embroiled in conflicts that had originated outside its borders. The American Revolution jeopardised Grenada's position in the British Empire.[27] In 1779, the colony was captured by the French, who were openly supported by French colonists residing in Grenada. The colony was returned to Britain at the end of the American war, but the French conquest had undermined British toleration of French Catholics in Grenada that had defined the colony since 1763. As the colony's largest population of Catholics, free people of colour bore the brunt of new British discriminatory policies. When the French Revolution broke out in the Caribbean in 1791, Grenadian free people of colour took their opportunity to lay claim to the island's governorship. Their struggle has come to be known as Fédon's revolution, named after its leader, Julien Fédon.[28] The revolution lasted for eighteenth months between 1795-6 and was yet

[27] Grenada in the American Revolution is explored in greater depth in Selwyn H. H. Carrington, *The British West Indies during the American Revolution* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1988) and O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided*.

[28] There is some divergence in scholarly literature on what historians call Fédon's uprising. 'Revolution' is used when the experiences of free people of colour are under analysis and 'rebellion' when the focus is on enslaved Africans. See

another event that aligned Catholicism against Britain and British interests. Fédon's revolution brought even more marginalisation for Catholicism. British officials and planters feared Catholicism's influence over the enslaved population, which in this case they believed to have led directly to slave rebellion. Even after they quelled Fédon's revolution British authorities feared a reprisal of 'insurrection'.[29]

In response, the British articulated a rhetoric of anti-Catholicism in the colony, espoused by clergy and colonial officials. Their rhetoric identified Catholicism with the island's free people of colour and enslaved Africans. By controlling the expression of Catholicism, the British sought a means of controlling black worship and subordinating black enslaved people and free people of colour. Two key events shaped these attempts by British clergy and colonial officials to control black Catholicism in Grenada. The first was the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. As plantation growth stabilised somewhat between the abolition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, enslaved communities were better able to develop in the interim and plantation-based Catholicism grew through the influence of itinerant priests. The second key event was the abolition of slavery and, a few years later, the abolition of the apprenticeship scheme in 1833 and 1838, respectively. The British attempted to control black Catholicism through religious education and missionary endeavours. Grenadian Catholics resisted this control by supporting the Catholic Church wherever they could. Between 1833 and 1838, black apprentices attended Catholic mass in overwhelming numbers. After 1838, they sent their children to Catholic schools and financially supported the parish priests and the building of the Catholic Church in St George's. In spite of conflict and repeated British efforts at control, Black Grenadians negotiated and renegotiated their religious identities in spaces so often defined by British colonial power.

Candlin, *Last Caribbean Frontier,* 1-23; and Tessa Murphy, 'A Reassertion of Rights: Fédon's Rebellion, Grenada, 1795-96', *La Révolution française* 14 (2018): 1-26.

Wim Klooster and K. J. Kesselring use 'revolt' to distinguish the events as an uprising against the British. See Klooster, 'The Rising Expectations of Free and Enslaved Blacks in the Greater Caribbean', *Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795-1800*, edited by Wim Klooster and Gert Oostindie (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 57-74; and Kesselring, '"Negroes of the Crown": The Management of Slaves Forfeited by Grenadian Rebels, 1796–1831', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 22 (2011): 1–29.

[29] 'Insurrection' was the term British officials used to describe the revolution. See, for example, Gordon Turnbull, *A Narrative of the Revolt and Insurrection of the French Inhabitants* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1795).

1:2 Overview of thesis

The main themes of this study are agency and power, familiar themes in the history of a Caribbean slave colony whether French or British. The white colonising elite sought complete control and enslaved Africans were at the mercy of fickle and unfeeling slaveowners. The study of religion in that context highlights the role it could play within this significant power imbalance. Enslaved religious identities were subsumed by the religious identities of plantation owners, who decided what type of religious activity could occur on their property. On Catholic plantations, slaveowners mandated baptism in accordance with the stipulations laid out in the *Code Noir*. On British plantations in the eighteenth century, slaveowners opposed any enslaved Christianity; in the nineteenth century, British slaveowners in Grenada slowly began to allow enslaved people to benefit from Protestant Christianity. Even then, enslaved people often had little choice but to adhere to master-determined officially sanctioned religion. Their choices related to the outward expression of religion—in rituals or liturgy—and they were always directed by colonial, elite power. The impact of this imbalance of power is clearly evident in the following analysis but, I hope, so is the hint of personal agency.[30]

Conversion to Christianity could also be an important expression of enslaved religious agency. There were many reasons for enslaved people to convert. During French colonisation, the French *Code Noir* stipulated that all enslaved people should be baptised into Roman Catholicism, which meant that, when Grenada came under British control in 1763, the colony's enslaved population was already converted to Catholicism. With the advent of British rule and the rise of Protestantism in the colony, the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism became clear. British colonists and colonial officials denounced 'the Pagan rites and idolatries' of enslaved people and refused to consider conversions that were not a full renunciation of previously held religious beliefs.[31] Conversion to Protestantism brought a range of practical benefits, including, for example, the ability to testify in court, which enslaved people were only allowed to do if they had been baptised in the Church of England. The later arrival of Methodism gave enslaved people an opportunity to exercise spiritual leadership in an official capacity on plantations. Methodist missionaries appointed enslaved leaders on plantations who led their peers in worship and this opportunity for spiritual leadership may have motivated Methodist conversion. Yet beyond the

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[30] Noel Leo Erskine, *Plantation Church: How African-American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014): 117-118.

[31] Duquesne to Bishop of London, n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff118.

public displays of conversion and in spite of their bondage, enslaved people still made personal religious choices based on their beliefs. The colony was filled with enslaved people from a myriad of backgrounds: Temné, Akan, Islam and Christianity among many others. African people found it easier to blend their religious identities in the colonies with Catholic religious identities, as rituals and traditions creolised on plantations.[32] Many enslaved Africans maintained elements of these religious beliefs in bondage. Noel Erskine points out that

> [o]ne of the reasons that enslaved persons survived on plantations in the New World in spite of the long hours and brutality was their ability to adapt their religious practices and beliefs to a Christian frame of reference without losing the essentials of their native beliefs. . . . Because they made the connections with their religion from Africa, enslaved persons were free to risk, adapting and making substitutions as they appropriated the new religion to their needs.[33]

Catholicism remained a strong religious choice motivated most likely because it allowed enslaved people to merge 'their religious practices and beliefs to a Christian frame of reference without losing the essentials of their native beliefs'.[34] Under British rule, enslaved people continued to find Catholicism more attractive than British Protestantism.

The terms used throughout this analysis reflect the complexities of colonial religious life. Distinguishing between 'colonial' and 'imperial' power allows me to emphasise sources of power. 'Colonial' describes the local government and society within the colony itself, and 'imperial' relates to the power of government and society in Great Britain as it was exercised over Grenada. Over time as residents' identities became blurred, British, French and African identities became creolised. They developed a new culture and outlook based on these precedents but which were shaped by local conditions, experiences and traditions.[35] As a process of power forged and forced by institutions, creolisation was far from homogenous within colonial society, since members of society interacted with institutions of power differently. Therefore, Afro-Creoles share an identity different from Euro-Creoles because of differences in the social hierarchy and an imbalance of

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[32]Erskine, 32-60; Albert J, Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004):14-32.

The influence of Islam on some Afro-Grenadian rituals is discussed in Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved In the Americas* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

[33] Erskine, *Plantation Church*, 117-18.

[34] Erskine, *Plantation Church*, 117.

[35] Nigel O. Bolland, 'Creolisation and Creole Societies: A Cultural Nationalistic View of Caribbean Social History', *Questioning Creole: Creolisation Discourses in Caribbean Culture*, eds Verene A. Shepherd and Glen L. Richards (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2002): 17.

power between races. Religion was, of course, one facet of creolisation. The term 'Christianity' in this thesis encompasses all Christian religious expression present in Grenadian colonial society, but particularly Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, and Methodism. Creolised religion encompassed African religious expression as well as the many other religious groups that were present on plantations.

The colonial power that shaped enslaved religious choices also crucially shaped Grenada's social hierarchy, which was reinforced by colonial rhetoric. Colonial officials in Grenada and imperial officials in London shared aims of enhancing Britain's economic and political standing and building their profits in sugar. The earliest historical analyses of Caribbean history promoted this imperialist perspective, that sugar and its corollary, enslaved labour, were essential parts of empire-building in the West Indies. Bryan Edwards wrote *The History, Civil and Commercial* (1793) with input from William Young, who was the Commissioner of the Ceded Islands.[36] Edwards was a Jamaican planter and a colonial official. He firmly believed in the importance of empire in bolstering British commerce. [37] The stance he takes on British priorities echoed that of imperial legislators in Parliament; commerce and trade were the sole purpose of the Caribbean colonies. The human labour on which commerce and trade depended was considered to be little more than another commodity. Within the colonial hierarchy, colonial elite defined their relationship to marginalised groups, which was especially clear in how colonial officials defined themselves in relation to enslaved people. At first, that relationship was viewed in commercial terms with the enslaved appearing as productive property. Later, as the abolition movement strengthened, colonial officials began to redefine that relationship, casting themselves as moral benefactors to increasingly humanised enslaved people. The colonial narrative shifted with this redefinition and colonists began to openly criticize slavery. Frederick Bayley's *Four Years' Residence in the West Indies* (1830) emphasised the evil of slavery and contrasted its practice with the demands of Christian conscience.[38] Observing the harsh realities of slavery against a backdrop of an increasingly influential abolitionist movement, Bayley used his narrative to criticize slavery and to propose ameliorating conditions for enslaved people, although he did not specifically support full abolition. However, nearly twenty years after the Abolition Act (1833) was passed, John Davy, an army surgeon, expressed his full support for the end of slavery in his *The West Indies, Before and Since*

[36] Bryan Edwards, *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies*, vol 3 (London: G. and W.B. Whittaker, 1819): ii-xx.

[37] Edwards, *History, Civil and Commercial*, vol. 1: 297-306.

[38] Frederick Bayley, *Four Years' Residence in the West Indies* (William Kidd: London, 1830).

Abolition (1854).[39] Davy obliquely criticized his predecessors, noting that an abolitionist narrative was simply matter-of-fact, since the evil of slavery was now 'so well understood'.[40] Davy lauded the morality of the British benefactors who worked to bring abolition about, the same morality, he noted with further praise, which was now being taught to freed Black West Indians to nurture them according to the mores of British conscience.[41] The narrative of moral British benefactors would come to shape the religious experiences of Black Grenadians after abolition through religious education, yet another manifestation of British colonial power.

Articulating the strata of the colonial hierarchy is somewhat challenging because some descriptors, such as 'slaves', are infused with political and racial connotations that reduces the personhood of African people to an enforced and violent social status. Throughout this study, I will use the term 'enslaved Africans' instead of slaves. I do this intentionally in order to continually emphasise that slavery is not a natural state of being but is a state forced upon human beings. The phrase 'free people of colour' is bound to a specific time period. 'Free people of colour' in the eighteenth and nineteenth century refer to the group of largely mixed-race French and free black people who made up Grenada's largest free population. Because so much of Grenada's early history under the British centres on the marginal social status of French-descended free people of colour, I occasionally make a distinction between French free people of colour and free Black people, especially when discussing Fèdon's revolution. I use the term 'free Black population' or 'Black Grenadians' to refer to the entire free, non-white population in Grenada in the post-abolition era, including mixed-race people and people of African descent. In doing so, I am making a rhetorical decision to emphasise a growing sense of Grenadian identity. Clarifying what these terms mean should aid understanding of the different social groupings that made up Grenada's population without undermining the humanity and personal agency of enslaved people, even though their status was defined within a powerful colonial hierarchy.

A study like this encounters the significant challenge of the archives, the silence that surrounds the black African enslaved experience which if we are not careful can reaffirm the power hierarchy and violence of slavery. The most meticulous histories imbued with empirical details cannot erase 'the subalternity [that] still structures the histories of the enslaved'.[42] '[W]hat we think we can know

[39] John Davy, *The West Indies, Before and Since Abolition* (W. and F. G. Cash: London, 1854).

[40] Davy*, The West Indies*, 22.

[41] Davy*, The West Indies*, vii.

[42] David Kazanjian, 'Freedom's Surprise: Two Paths Through Slavery's Archives', *History of the Present* 6:2 (2016): 140.

(about these enslaved histories),' David Kazanjian rightly points out, 'will always be less than what happened.' Writing this history has necessitated long hours in archives and libraries sifting through thousands of documents in which enslaved voices are conspicuously absent. The empirical evidence of enslaved religious identities is recorded through the perspective of white colonists, which are some of the fragmentary records we have of enslaved religious experiences. In this study, I attempt to go beyond archival records and look at geography, space, language, music and dance in an attempt to together a history of negotiated religious experiences that adds to 'what we think we can know', while acknowledging that even this 'is less than what happened'. As I approach these sources, I am only too aware of my own limitations in foregrounding a speculative narrative that is necessary to navigate the 'violent dispossessions' of the archive.[43] This thesis is, I am sure, only the beginning of my own continued efforts to ask questions that the archives leave unanswered.

In the following analysis I argue for the importance of religion in Grenada's colonial history, focussing on the ways in which their versions of Catholicism were used by marginalised people as an expression of religious identity and personal agency. Marginalised people constantly negotiated and renegotiated their religious identities. In the next chapter, I focus on white French Catholic colonists whose political and religious agency was stripped away after the British conquest in 1763. This chapter demonstrates how religious spaces overlapped with the political sphere, which was negotiated and renegotiated in religious terms. Most significantly, French Catholics argued that their religious identity did not and should not disbar them from enfranchisement and political representation under British rule. Throughout the transitional period from 1763 to 1783, this political sphere was negotiated and renegotiated. At first, British officials promoted religious toleration and granted Catholics these rights. Similarly tolerant laws were passed in Canada. Considering the intense anti-Catholic politics within Great Britain at this time, most visibly evident in the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots in London, Glasgow and elsewhere in 1780, these concessions were not insignificant. They served the political purpose of maintaining peace in an increasingly diverse British empire. Religion mattered because white French Catholics utilised religion to define

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This entire volume of *History and the Present* is devoted to understanding ways of approaching archival sources as we seek to understand the narratives we are presented with and the subaltern narratives we can evidence from them. Telling the story of enslaved people is how some historians like Saidiya Hartman and Seth Moglen navigate the silences and gaps of knowledge which the archives leave us with.

Saidiya Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts', *Small Axe* 26 (2008): 1-14 and Seth Moglen, 'Enslaved in the City on a Hill: The Archive of Moravian Slavery and the Practical Past', *History of the Present* 6:2 (2016):155-183.

[43] Jennifer Morgan, 'Accounting for "The Most Excruciating Torment": Gender, Slavery, and Trans-Atlantic Passages', *History of the Present* 6:2 (2016): 186.

and redefine their political rights and privileges under British rule and yet in contrast to the white British Protestant ruling elite.

After Grenada was restored to Britain in 1783, the key agents of Catholicism were no longer white French people but instead were the island's free people of colour. Chapter three analyses the experiences of Grenadian free people of colour, often the mixed descendants of white French slaveowners and the Black African women they enslaved. Marginalised on the basis of both race and religion, it is little wonder that French free people of colour rose up in revolt against Britain. Religious spaces once again overlapped with political spheres. As free people of colour negotiated political spaces through revolution, religious spaces were also subtly being renegotiated. The success of Fédon's revolution would have meant not only self-governance for free people of colour but also freedom for expressing Roman Catholicism in a political sphere. The ultimate failure of the revolution pushed free people of colour further into the margins of colonial society and with them the Catholic Church. Religion mattered for Fédon's revolution because—for the British—the revolution further cemented Roman Catholicism with treachery against Britain and with the dangerous ideals of the French Revolution.

The end of the eighteenth century saw an immense surge in the number of enslaved Africans transported into Grenada as planters made up for the years of disruption to the trade because of the American Revolution and with an eye on the likely end of the transatlantic slave trade. Chapter four explores how the colony's enslaved Africans negotiated and renegotiated their own religious identities in the context of plantation slavery. Plantations were spaces where enslaved religion and religious identity were defined and negotiated through a variety of religious expressions, including expressions of Christianity and African religions. Their struggle for religious identity mirrored their fierce struggle 'against the growing power of the planter class and their masters' determination to reduce Black people to labour and little more'.[44] Religion mattered for Africans enslaved on plantations because it was one way enslaved people could negotiate the terms of their captivity. These creolised expressions of identity formed the foundation of Black Grenadian culture throughout the rest of the nineteenth century.

In the era of abolition, religious identities mattered as free Black Grenadians renegotiated their status as free people. Chapter five analyses the ways in which Catholic religious identity was

[44] Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2003): 96.

defined and redefined in this new era, both by the powerful colonial elite and by Black Grenadians themselves. The coercive control exhibited by white British educators, clergy and colonial officials influenced the growth and development of education and religion in colonial society. Black Grenadians negotiated the undue control and influence of British power by forging strong Catholic identities. Religion mattered for Black Grenadians because religious identities empowered them to resist British control over their educational and religious choices. Religion continued to matter in the years following abolition and the end of the apprenticeship scheme. As Paula Aymer points out, Black agency in religious matters is negotiated and renegotiated through the nineteenth century until eventually it is fully expressed and controlled by Black Grenadians themselves.[45] Catholicism, more than any other religious expression in colonial society, empowered Black agency.

1.3: Literature review

Grenada was one of the Atlantic World contact zones where cultures and races mingled and was a space in which inhabitants actively adapted to regime changes in order to create Richard D. E. Burton's 'hybrid creole culture' of opposites.[46] Unlike other British Atlantic World colonies, with the exception of Canada, religion played a key role in these developmental processes. In this creolised society, cultures were layered on top of each other, sometimes melding, often opposed. Religion was a facet of that contact culture and was evident in society through individuals and through imperial institutions of culture and power. Just as 'the common people . . . were active agents' in the creolising society, so too were beliefs and institutions. [47] Allan Greer and Kenneth Mills trace a shift in approaches to Atlantic Catholicism from the viewpoint of Catholic 'Christianizers', the Catholic missionaries, to 'the points of view and religious creativity of the "Christianised" or "Christianising"', black and indigenous people.[48] These histories were largely North American and focussed on the early modern Catholic missional efforts to convert indigenous

[45] Paula Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings in the Anglophone Caribbean: Studies from Grenada and Barbados* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

[46] Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005): 61; Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997): 42.

See also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008): 7-8.

[47] Bolland, 'Creolisation and Creole Societies', 17.

[48] Greer and Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', 7.

people.[49] Those historians 'tended to treat missionaries as the main agents of religious change, while Indians in the accounts displayed either resistance or compliance'.[50] In recent studies, however, influenced by the sub-disciplines of Atlantic and global history, focus has turned toward the convergence of 'Christianizers' and 'Christianised', 'contribut[ing] and collid[ing] to produce a variety of shifting local variants'.[51] While there is still much more research needed to fully understand the convergences of colonial Catholicism, this thesis contributes to this growing body of research on colonial Catholicism by examining the religious agents at work in Grenada.

The small historiography of religion in Grenada is framed more by political and social histories than it is by religious histories. The handful of religious histories focus on Catholicism and Methodism. Raymund P. Devas, a Dominican priest, wrote the first extended religious history of Grenada.[52] Devas's account traced the history of the Roman Catholic church in Grenada based on primary documents and unpublished manuscripts. His work dominated the following decades, and every history of Grenada since then has found him a necessary resource. John A. Parker, a Methodist missionary to Grenada, narrated the rise of Grenadian Methodism, and his study focuses primarily on the late nineteenth century.[53] Both of these histories took an uncritical narrative approach to their subject, and their denominational biases are strong. Paula L. Aymer provides a refreshing perspective on Grenadian Methodism in *Evangelical Awakenings in the Anglophone Caribbean: Studies from Grenada and Barbados*.[54] Aymer argues that the roots of twentieth-century Pentecostalism in Grenada were based in the evangelical individualism of nineteenth-century Methodism. More general histories of Grenada were largely written after the 1980s, after Grenada's 1979 revolution and the subsequent 1983 American invasion propelled the island to global

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[49] See, for example, James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[50] Greer and Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', 12.

[51] Greer and Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', 13. See also Jodi Bilinkoff and Allan Greer, eds., *Colonial Saints: Discovering the Holy in the Americas, 1500-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Lincoln Mullen elucidates this shift toward convergence of 'Christianizer' and 'Christianised' in chapter two of his study on the history of conversion in the United States*: The Chance of Salvation: A History of Conversion in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017): 64-102 .

[52] Devas's history of the Roman Catholic Church was published before his history of Grenada. The latter is heavily dependent on his earlier research but helpfully expanded to cover island politics and colonial institutions beyond the 1930s.

Raymund P. Devas, *Conception Island or the Troubled Story of the Catholic Church in Grenada* (London: Sands & Company, 1932) and *A History of the Island of Grenada, 1498-1796: With Some Notes and Comments on Carriacou and Events of Later Years* (St. George's: Carenage Press, 1974).

[53] John A. Parker, *A Church in the Sun* (London: Cargate Press, 1959).

[54] Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*.

attention. Historical research during this period often focused on Grenada's modern political history and concentrated, implicitly and explicitly, on the dynamics of historical Grenadian identity as an explanation for present-day events. Taking the stance that Grenadian identity was centered on conflict, politician and former prime minister, George Brizan, drew a parallel between Grenada's tumultuous past and the explosive events of the 1970s and 1980s.[55] Beverley Steele's later publication of *Grenada: A History of Its People* also implicitly connected the vibrant roots of Grenadian history with identity by highlighting Grenada's multicultural and multi-ethnic society.[56] The earliest roots of that identity were based in the Carib and French society of early modern Grenada, as John Angus Martin ably demonstrated in the first detailed study of Grenada's indigenous people and first European settlers.[57] Grenadian identity is layered with the cultural history of indigenous people, European colonisers and African-Grenadians. The layered complexity of Grenada's religious history is similarly interlaced with these creolising and creolised identities.

Bringing these religious and political histories together demonstrates how the Atlantic world influenced the formation of Grenadian society. The colonial social hierarchies that came to define colonial Grenada were created by European colonists. White planters and merchants in the eighteenth century, such as Alexander Campbell, placed themselves at the top of a colonial social hierarchy and frequently played an influential role in both imperial and colonial politics. They formed themselves into the upper echelons of plantation society.[58] Grenada's free people of colour, many of whom spoke French and identified as Roman Catholic, influenced the formation of Grenadian religious and cultural identity through Fédon's revolution which associated French

[55] George Brizan, *Grenada: Island of Conflict*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1998).

[56] Beverley A. Steele, *Grenada: A History of Its People* (Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2003).

[57] John Angus Martin, *Island Caribs and French Settlers in Grenada (*St. George's: The Grenada National Museum Press, 2013).

[58] Mark Quintanilla, 'The World of Alexander Campbell: An Eighteenth-Century Grenadian Planter', *Albion* 35 (2003): 229-256.

Transatlantic and transcolonial society made up Grenadian society. For other examples of Grenada's transatlantic Scottish and American connections, see H. Gordon Slade, 'Craigston and Meldrum Estates, Carriacou, 1769- 1841', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 114 (1984): 481-53; and Joel Montague, Mariam Montague and Shahnaz Montague, 'The Island of Grenada 1795', *The Americas* 40 (1984): 531-537.

For Scottish connections in the Atlantic World generally, see T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire, 1600-1815* (London: Allen Lane, 2003) and Douglas Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean, and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005).

For the impact of trade and merchants in the wider Atlantic World, see K. R. Andrews*, Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984) and David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1835* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Catholicism with resistance to British rule.[59] The influence of African Grenadians can be seen most strongly in creolised forms through music and dance, as Lorna McDaniel and Rebecca S. Miller illustrate.[60] Ronald F. Kephart's study of the linguistic origins of Carriacou's English Creole emphasizes the strong impact people of African heritage had on Grenada.[61] His analysis shows how Carriacou Creole, although semantically English, is based on African grammar and morphology. These studies are invaluable in tracing both European colonial and African-Grenadian history between islands as well as across the Atlantic. This thesis adds to these studies and expands on the theme of Grenadian identity to include the impact enslaved Africans had on forming Grenada's creolised religious identity.

The impact of slavery on Caribbean colonial history has been well studied since the mid-twentieth-century publication of Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*.[62] Williams seismically shifted focus away from an imperialist perspective common in earlier historical analyses that promoted the idea that empire was necessary for (especially) British supremacy.[63] By the 1970s, Williams' proposition that capitalism both impelled and destroyed the plantation economy was used by historians grappling with paradigms of economic and institutional power. Richard Dunn and Richard Sheridan both argued that the planation economy centered on sugar and that slavery was a natural outgrowth of a system bent on expanding profits.[64] Since the mid-twentieth century, West Indian history has had a strong focus, politically and economically, on the institution of slavery and the plantation system. Re-imagining the dialogue around slavery by focussing on the plantation system positioned slavery as the backbone of the West Indian colonial economy, instead of on the planters through a metropole-focused perspective.[65] In *Capitalism and Slavery,* Williams also argued that as

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[59] Edward L. Cox, *Free Coloreds in the Slave Societies of St. Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984); Knight, *The Caribbean*, 86-7.

[60] Lorna McDaniel, *The Big Drum Ritual of Carriacou: Praisesongs in Rememory of Flight* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1998) and Rebecca S. Miller, 'Performing Ambivalence: The Case of Quadrille Music and Dance in Carriacou, Grenada', *Ethnomusicology* 49 (2005): 403-440.

[61] Ronald F. Kephart, *"Broken English": The Creole Language of Carriacou* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

[62] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

[63] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (reprint: London: Verso Books, 2018): 114-117.

[64] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); and Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Eagle Hall: Caribbean Universities Press, 1974).

[65] This does not preclude an end to the decline theory in the late twentieth century. Selwyn Carrington studied the British Caribbean to 1810, maintaining that its decline solidified then. Perhaps if he had extended his study beyond that date, he would have seen—as Drescher and Higman detailed—the post-1815 Caribbean underwent a growth spurt. Selwyn H. H. Carrington, *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1775-1810* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002).

the British utilised the huge profits from slavery to spur on industrialisation after abolition, they no longer saw the West Indies as a sustainable, gainful investment. When slavery was abolished, the British then could turn their attention to industrialise Britain rather than have their investments consumed by an unwanted and already declining Caribbean sector. Williams' theory of economic decline places the height of the British Caribbean empire prior to 1763 and blames war, rising competition, and the eventual abolition of slavery for the decline of the plantation system.[66] One of Williams' critics, Seymour Drescher, pointed out that the end of the American Revolution spurred the British Caribbean economy. Loss of the American colonies increased the value, and thus the industry, of the Caribbean colonies, as sugar became the new currency of Britain.[67] The weakening of the decline theory has not negated Williams' effect on Caribbean history. As Drescher remarked:

> the achievement of *Capitalism and Slavery* is that Williams made it impossible for historians ever to return to the posture of splendid moral isolation which characterised the story of British slave emancipation for more than a century. Williams' foremost aim was to insist on the banality of the history of slavery.[68]

Sounding a powerful death knell for the economic decline theory, Barry Higman's *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* laid out in incredible detail the growth of slavery post-1776.[69] These historiographical developments illustrate the necessity of studying the British Caribbean after the Seven Years' War. In colonies such as Grenada, the plantation system did not reach its height until the 1780s; and, while the slave trade declined after 1807, the plantation system still had an immense impact on Grenada's economy and society in the nineteenth century.

These studies demonstrate the close connection between empire and religion and the challenge that archival sources and scholarly studies present in accommodating and supporting the attitude of white moral superiority. Before Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*, the British empire was described in terms of 'splendid moral isolation[ism]', as Drescher put it.[70] The Church of England contributed to the narrative of British moral superiority by promoting moral and religious

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Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999) and Bernard Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean 1807-1834* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

[66] Lowell Joseph Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York: The Century Co., 1928): 133.

[67] Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 368-9.

[68] Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 371.

[69] Higman, *Slave Populations*.

[70] Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom,* 371.

education across the British empire. Britons understood their role in empire-building as one which brought 'civilisation' to the 'heathen' at home and abroad.[71] That attitude of moral superiority was especially evident in how Britons interpreted their role in the abolition of slavery, which they understood was a direct result of the religious and morally inspired humanitarianism of the abolitionists.[72] According to this viewpoint, abolition resulted from the humanitarianism of the morally righteous whites, such as the Clapham Sect. The 'Clarkson-Coupland tradition' was called after Thomas Clarkson, whose *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* was influential in the early abolitionist movement, and Reginald Coupland, a twentieth-century British historian who perpetuated the traditional imperialist narrative.[73] One of the first challenges to the Clarkson-Coupland tradition was in Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*, which proposed that economic pragmatism rather than humanitarian motivation propelled the abolition of slavery. Williams argued against moral decline in the Caribbean after abolition, although he supported the economic decline theory which had also become popular within the imperialist perspective. This idea of British moral exceptionalism extended beyond abolition, however. Coupland, in particular, emphasised a moral basis for British imperial rule, which was echoed by Frank W. Pitman and Lowell J. Ragatz in their respective studies of West Indian planters.[74] Both Pitman and Ragatz assumed that inter-racial sexual relationships created a moral vacuum in the West Indies and that people of colour, especially those of mixed parentage, were incapable of self-rule.[75] This perception stemmed from an enduring American belief in the purity of the races, which forced mixed-race people into their own even more marginalised pockets of American society. In this thesis I focus less attention on the attitudes of the British empire in general and more on how these attitudes were expressed in a regional context.

Aiding in establishing a pattern for regional colonial perspectives is the development of Atlantic history as an historical framework. In the late twentieth century, analysis of Caribbean history shifted to an Atlantic perspective which was perhaps the most significant development for West

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[71] The 'heathen' at home and abroad were the irreligious and poor—in the colonies, the indigenous and enslaved—who bore the brunt of Britain's industrialisation. Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The 'Heathen' at Home and Overseas* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009): 25-51.

[72] For an extended analysis of this perspective, see Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

[73] Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom* ,184. Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (J. Philips: London, 1786).

[74] Frank Wesley Pitman, *The Development of the British West Indies, 1700-1763* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917); Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class.*

[75] Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 27, 33.

Indian history since the Ragatz-Williams decline theory. The framework of Atlantic history helped to redefine geographical focus and emphasised interconnectivity between the coloniser and the colonised, which gave rise to a reoriented focus on trade and imperial connections across the empire. This framework was first proposed by Robert R. Palmer and Jacques Godechot and was popularised in the 1980s by Bernard Bailyn and Jack P. Greene.[76] Greene popularised a hemispheric perspective, so that the earliest historical analyses from an Atlantic perspective focused on North American connections, which has remained a strong emphasis in the field.[77] The allure of Atlantic history, over the economic focus of the early twentieth century, stems from the perspective's encompassing of an infinite variety of subjects for study, of ideas and people and places. An Atlantic approach places Africa and Africans more centrally to this history. Studies of the transatlantic slave trade and studies that compare colonial structures are a result of this movement, and in the years following, interest in the transatlantic slave trade fostered a spate of analyses examining the trade from the African coast to the New World.[78] The Atlantic history focus also influenced comparative colonial histories that examine European empires on both sides of the Atlantic.[79] Atlantic history redefines regional studies by expanding the geographical unit of analysis and highlighting transatlantic networks.

[76] Alison Games, 'Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, Opportunities', *American Historical Review* 111 (2006): 744-45.

See also Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959-1964); Jacques Godechot, *Histoire de l'Atlantique* (Paris: Bordas, 1947); Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[77] Greene and Morgan, *Atlantic History*, 13.

[78] Games, 743-44. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

These studies included a new emphasis on the role Africa and Africans had in the slave trade. See, for example, Joseph E. Inikori and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economics, Societies, and Peoples in Africa, the Americas, and Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992). Herbert Klein countered the abolitionist idea of the high mortality rate of the Middle Passage, arguing that most deaths occurred in captivity on the African coast in *The Middle Passage: Comparative Studies in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). David Eltis posited that Europeans chose to enslave Africans because of their preconceived ideas of freedom in *The Rise of African Slavery* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

For studies showcasing instances where Europeans were bound in servitude, see Hilary Beckles, *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1715* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989) and Simon P. Newman, *A New World of Labour: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[79] J. H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006). Atlantic history has propelled the redefinition of regions within the Atlantic in order to better analyse shared histories and economies. See, for example, 'the Greater Caribbean' redefined in Matthew Mulcahy, *Hubs of Empire: The Southeastern Lowcountry and the British Caribbean* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

The history of Catholicism in an Atlantic or Caribbean context has largely focused on the early modern empires. As a result, these studies are often concerned with establishing the transatlantic networks of religion and placing regional studies in a wider Atlantic framework. John W. Catron examines the creation of Black Christianity before it crossed the Atlantic and traces how that identity changed in the New World. He argues that the creation of African Christianity in America drew around denominational rather than political boundaries.[80] Carla Gardina Pestana's *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* is influential in emphasising religion as part of the movement of ideas that followed Atlantic networks, following Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra's study on the ideology of the Spanish colonial Catholic Church.[81] Pestana analyses England's role in spreading Protestantism across the British Atlantic World and English encounters with Roman Catholicism in Spanish and French colonies—some of which eventually became British and Protestant. Louis B. Wright refers to the expansion of Protestantism as a kind of manifest destiny, which captures the spirit of largely Anglican encounters with Catholicism in the Caribbean.[82] The two denominations can be seen as competitors for religious space, as Kristen Block describes in both religious and economic terms.[83] Competition for religious spaces in colonies is a common theme in these studies and becomes even more evident when historians narrow their focus to individual persons or individual colonies. Like Catron, Aaron Spencer Fogleman places black religious experience in an Atlantic context but focuses on the Danish West Indies. The narrower focus in a wider context allows Fogleman to focus in on the creation and re-creation of religious identities on the move.[84] Similarly, Kristen Block uses microhistories to show how Protestant religious identities allowed greater opportunities for white Protestants where Protestant people of colour had none. Although focused on the life of one woman and her varied religious experiences, Jon F. Sensbach expands beyond individual experience to show how religion

[80] John W. Catron, *Embracing Protestantism: Black Identities in the Atlantic World* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016).

[81] Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[82] Louis B. Wright, *Religion and Empire: The Alliance Between Piety and Commerce in English Expansion, 1558-1625* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943).

[83] Kristen Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean: Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

[84] Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Two Troubled Souls: An Eighteenth-Century Couple's Spiritual Journey in the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

provided an expression of freedom and choice to marginalised groups.[85] In her study of early modern Catholicism in the Leeward Islands, Jenny Shaw argues for the importance of Catholicism to enslaved Africans and especially the importance of Irish priests in English colonies in supporting enslaved Catholicism.[86] Her study underscores the importance of religion in shaping colonial society, not just for white and free colonists, but also for African people enslaved on plantations. In limiting the scope and focus of Atlantic religious experiences, historians have formed a body of historical analysis that emphasises the impact that the formation of empires and the transatlantic network had on the development of Caribbean religion. These studies have added depth to Caribbean history and highlighted the importance of religion as a shaping force in the Caribbean colonies.

However, research on Atlantic religious experiences has focused overwhelmingly on the Greater Antilles and Barbados with less focus on smaller islands and has overwhelmingly focussed on the early modern era. This limitation creates a problem when researching the Ceded Islands, even when that research examines the colonial plantation system. Jack P. Greene's phases of colonialism may be true for Barbados or Jamaica but cannot be applied cleanly to the Ceded Islands, which were filled with French colonists and were already settled by the eighteenth century.[87] In contrast, Barbados was settled in 1627 and Jamaica in 1655. The former was unpopulated when claimed by the English, the latter populated by indigenous people, Spanish and enslaved Africans when captured by Cromwell's forces. Jamaica had been part of the British Empire for a century before Grenada was ceded to the British. If the trends and similarities that are identified within early modern plantation colonies rarely hold true for every British Caribbean colony, then the religious trends and similarities identified in early modern studies likewise cannot be applied to every British Caribbean colony.[88] Studying religion in colonial Grenada allows us to expand our understanding of the complexities of the British Caribbean. As the following chapters will show, religion shaped Grenadian colonial through marginalised people's continued negotiation and renegotiation of religious identities with the powerful structures of a white British colony.

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[85] Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[86] Jenny Shaw, *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013). Chapter 4 in particular.

[87] Jack P. Greene, 'Changing Identity in the British Caribbean: Barbados as a Case Study', Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden, eds., *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987): 213-266.

[88] Knight, *The Caribbean*, 86.

Chapter 2

The Great Experiment: Toleration and Political Accommodation of French Catholics

Sir Peter Francis Laurent had resided in Grenada for about ten years when the British took Grenada from the French in 1762.[1] Born in France, Laurent trained as a lawyer before moving to Grenada. He owned considerable property in Grenada, most of it inherited from an uncle. Like many colonists in the mid-eighteenth century, Laurent believed his prosperity as a West Indian planter depended on sugar production, and he invested heavily in that venture. The expense of developing a sugar plantation in 1770 cost an average of about £17,160 Grenada currency.[2] Establishing a plantation was so expensive that many French planters chose to remain in the island after the British conquest rather than lose their investments. Laurent, unlike most of his French peers, had access to money after the conquest and was able to purchase more land from French colonists who chose to emigrate.[3] Within a few years, he had become one of the wealthiest and most influential men in the entire colony. He proved such an ally to the British that in 1766 he received a knighthood.[4] Laurent's crowning achievement under the British came in 1772 when he, along with four other French planters, was elected as representatives to the colonial legislature.[5] With some disdain, a French source alleged that Laurent's achievements under British rule were due to his leaving the Catholic Church and embracing Protestantism.[6] His achievements, however, cannot be simply explained away with a conversion story. Undergirding the rise of this Frenchman and his compatriots to representative seats in the Grenada colonial legislature were two important factors. The British policy of toleration and the enfranchisement of French Grenadian Catholics was one. Sugar was the other.

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[1] Bernadette and Philippe Rossignol, *La Famille DUNOT De SAINT MACLOU Et De GRANDVAL (Calvados, Marie-Galante, Guadeloupe) Et L'Oncle LAURENT, De La Grenade*, PDF (Paris, 2012) http://www.ghcaraibe.org/articles/2012-art14.pdf.

[2] Russell R Menard, *Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery, and Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006): 131. About £10,725 sterling.

[3] Daniel Paterson, *Topographical Description of the Island of Grenada* (London: W. Fade, 1780).

[4] Rossignol, 'La Famille', 12; Shelburne to Rochford, 5 November 1766, Whitehall, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/271/42, f106.

[5] Minutes of the Council, April 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/5, ff9-11.

[6] Rossignol, 'La Famille', 10.

Catholicism, anti-Catholicism and the place and rights of French Catholics within the British Empire defined Grenadian politics in the aftermath of the Seven Years' War. As the British empire grew over the centuries, governing an increasingly diverse colonial population demanded new political strategies.[7] These new strategies developed as a result of the British imperial government's evolving relationship with its expanding empire. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the British empire consisted of vast trade networks that spanned oceans and continents.[8] The success of this commercial empire was imbedded in the system of self-government of each colony.[9] In this system of self-government, British colonists were governed directly by their own governors and legislative assemblies who presided over local issues and adjudicated local disputes. After the Seven Years' War, the weaknesses of the old maritime, commercial empire fell away to give room to an 'imperial version of the centralised nation-state'.[10] The empire and its colonial population grew rapidly, and the old system of government underwent some strain. The new centralised imperial government was already causing upheaval in the empire as colonists questioned the increasingly obtrusive and potentially arbitrary role of the imperial government in their affairs, especially as the government promoted toleration and political accommodation.[11] In Grenada, these imperial policies were categorically opposed and brought about more than twenty years of fractured politics as French Catholics negotiated their political and religious rights.

While the implications of imperial policy changes are well-documented in British North America, the impact of these changes in the British Caribbean is no less significant but is less well-known and

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[7] Hannah Weiss Muller, *Subjects and Sovereign: Bonds of Belonging in the Eighteenth-Century British Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[8] Jack P. Greene, *Evaluating Empire and Confronting Colonialism in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 84; Amy Turner Bushnell and Jack P. Greene, 'Peripheries, Centers and the Construction of Early Modern American Empires', in *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500–1820*, edited by Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (New York: Routledge, 2002): 1-14.

[9] Kevin Whelan calls this 'incorporating empire'. 'The Green Atlantic: Radical Reciprocities Between Ireland and America in the Long Eighteenth Century', *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840,* edited by Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 217; Elizabeth Mancke, 'Empire and State', in *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, edited by David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002): 175-95; Jack P. Greene, 'Transatlantic Colonisation and the Redefinition of Empire in the Early Modern Era', in *Negotiated Empires*: 274.

[10] Bushnell and Greene, 'Peripheries, Center': 12; Mancke, 'Empire and State': 192-3, and Eliga H. Gould, 'Revolution and Counter-Revolution', in *British Atlantic World*: 208-9.

[11] 'An ordinance regulating the elections for the General Assembly of Grenada, the Grenadines, Dominica, St Vincent and Tobago, and for limiting the powers of that part of the said General Assembly presently to be called for Grenada and the Grenadines', 10 February 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff227-234; Mancke, 'Negotiating an Empire: Britain and its Overseas Peripheries, c.1550-180, in *Negotiated Empires*: 256; Greene, 'The American Revolution', *The American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 94-95. For an analysis of the legal basis of the protests against the imperial government, see Greene, *The Constitutional Origins of the American Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

understood.[12] In particular, the Ceded Islands are a fascinating focus for study. The islands of St Vincent, St Lucia, Dominica, Tobago and Grenada were not only the site of transitioning British imperial policy but also faced a complete change of imperial and colonial rulers.[13] After French Canada, Grenada was the most important British North American acquisition at the end of the Seven Years' War; and as a result, its colonial governance was especially important for its survival as a valuable sugar colony.[14] Hannah Weiss Muller frames this political crisis as part of an on-going redefinition of subjecthood across the British Empire.[15] Jessica Harland-Jacobs argues that the political accommodation of new British Catholic subjects in Grenada was part of the changing imperial policies that typified the late eighteenth century.[16] Both of these perspectives illustrate the complexity of these new colonists' position within the empire. The rights of French Catholic Grenadian colonists were tied to both the colonial fight for suffrage and representation and the imperial experiment of toleration. Both colonial and imperial tensions were rooted in the political upheaval caused by the Seven Years' War and in the anti-Catholicism of Grenada's colonial governors and members of the colonial legislature.[17]

Tensions between French and British colonists quickly became evident. Imperial transitions and ethnic and religious differences contributed to the ceded colony's controversies. The conquered

[12] On how changing imperial policy impacted the American colonies: Jack P. Greene, 'Origins of the American Revolution: A Constitutional Interpretation', *Understanding the American Revolution: Issues and Actors* (Charlottesville : University Press of Virginia, 1995): 72-95; and Bernard Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2017). Fred Anderson's classic examines the policies that shaped British America leading at the end of the Seven Years' War, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000). The impact of the changed imperial policies in the Americas reverberated back to Britain. See Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Eliga H. Gould analyses the impact of foreign policy shaping not only the American Revolution but also the British imperial policies that had such an impact in the American colonies. *Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Impact of imperial changes in governance in the British Caribbean is briefly touched on in some of the above analyses. Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy analyses the impact of the American Revolution and imperial policy on the British Caribbean, giving a clear explanation of how policy shaped the establishment of governments in the Ceded Islands. *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). P. J. Marshall examines how the introduction of new colonies changed the established model of empire. 'Ideas of Empire 1763–1776: The "New" Empire', in *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c.1750-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[13] St Lucia was captured by the French in 1779 and was not restored to British rule like the other Ceded Islands of 1763 after the American Revolution.

[14] James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 60, 183.

[15] Hannah Weiss Muller, 'His Britannick Majesty's New Subjects: The Rights of Subjects in Grenada and Quebec', in *Subjects and Sovereign*: 121-165; and 'Bonds of Belonging: Subject and the British Empire', *Journal of British Studies* 53 (2014): 29-58.

[16] Jessica L. Harland-Jacobs, 'Incorporating the King's New Subjects: Accommodation and Anti-Catholicism in the British Empire, 1763-1815', *Journal of Religious History* 39 (2015): 203-223.

[17] O'Shaughnessy, *Empire Divided*, 60.

French settlers suspiciously surveyed the British enthusiastically arriving in the island. Many French settlers took the offer stipulated in the Treaty of Paris and sold their land within the allotted eighteen months before leaving as quickly as they could for France or nearby French islands.[18] While the Treaty of Paris officially brought peace to Grenada, the intersection of empires within its shores made long-lasting peace impossible. Every governor of Grenada was faced with the near-impossible task of regulating peace between ethnically and religiously opposed colonists. The governors tended to resolve colonial tensions by officially acquiescing to orders from the metropole while allowing the powerful factions of planter allies to disrupt the successful enactment of those orders. The constant battle between governing and governed mired the colony in a constant state of conflict, especially where those governed were French Catholics.

2.1: Tolerating French Catholicism in Grenada

During the first decade of British rule, imperial officials focussed on incorporating the new subjects into the British Empire as peaceably as possible.[19] They hoped that shared religious and political spaces would ensure a smooth transition and maintain economic profits, so recently disrupted by the Seven Years' War. The British national debt had almost doubled during the war, and imperial authorities' search for cheaper government shaped their administration of the growing empire. The imperial government's values were manifest in the promise of religious toleration and political accommodation for French Catholics which surpassed the almost non-existent political freedoms allowed to Catholics in Britain.[20] In the years after the British gained Grenada, fears and suspicions on both sides fuelled ethnic and religious tensions. These tensions certainly stemmed from old animosities; but in this new age of empire building, tensions between French and British colonists were also exacerbated by a transitioning imperial government. Policies of toleration were meant to encourage French Catholic loyalty to Britain and minimise disruptions, such as rebellions, to the

[18] On the difficulties the French faced in selling their land: Claude-Louis-François Régnier, Comte de Guerchy, ambassador of France to UK (later Marquis de Blosset), 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/4, f9; Memorial from Bertrand de la Clauserie, 3 August 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/86, f209; Benoise Billion Coreil to César Gabriel de Choiseul, duc de Praslin, 3 May 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/87, f213; Francis Seymour Conway, Marquess of Hertford, ambassador to Paris to George Montagu-Dunk, 2nd Earl of Halifax, 21 December 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/88, f182.

[19] Harland-Jacobs, 'King's New Subjects', 208-10.

[20] Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth Century England c.1714-80: A Political and Social Study* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1993): 164-203; Conway, *British Isles*: 203-37.

economy. But as the imperial government attempted to promote tolerant policies, British colonists opposed these imperial tactics.

The capitulation of Grenada in 1763 did not immediately place British laws in effect; and for two years, French laws remained in force, although ironically to the detriment of French residents. Lt-Col George Scott, governor of the newly ceded colony, headed a British government that operated uneasily on unfamiliar French laws.[21] French colonists criticised Scott for his failure to uphold the laws or even the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Embittered French colonists lodged complaint after complaint that Scott blocked the sale of land, wrongly imprisoned people, and generally mistreated the Grenadian French population.[22] Scott's reluctance to immediately establish a British legislature stemmed from the numerical disadvantage the British still faced.[23] French colonists made up the majority of the island population; and, while British investments in Grenadian property were reasonably steady, British immigration to the colony was relatively low. Added to French Catholics' concerns regarding Scott was his obvious preference for British Protestant interests. On his part, Scott was concerned that immediately establishing a colonial legislature might be too heavily influenced by the more numerous French Catholics, who had been granted 'full and free liberty [both] civil and religious'.[24] This was an odious prospect for Scott who defended the full implementation of the Test Act (1673) in Grenada.[25] Until British interests could be protected by a British majority in the colonial legislature, French laws remained in effect.

[21] 'Conway [Secretary of State, Southern Department] to Blosset [French chargé d'affaires]', 3 October 1765, St James, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/268/1, f1. C. P. Stacey, 'George Scott', in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003.

[22] Some of the cases include impeding the return of assets to a bereaved French family (Memorial on behalf of a French subject against Scott, requesting the return of funds left by his deceased son, a doctor in Grenada, 10 September 1764, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/263/50, f116); slowing the sale of French property (List of complaints made by French, who have suffered difficulties from the governor of Grenada in selling and removing their property in the island, 1763, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/85, f207-217); and the imprisonment of a Dominican priest and the British man who attempted to purchase the Dominican plantation in Grenada (Memorial from the Superior of the Dominican mission in Martinique to Choiseul about the imprisonment of Vidal and the seizure of property on Grenada, 14 August 1763, Martinique, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/259/88, ff215-16).

[23] Aaron Willis, 'The Standing of New Subjects: Grenada and the Protestant Constitution after the Treaty of Paris (1763)', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42 (2014): 4.

[24] 'Orders intended to be sent to Robert Melvill, governor in chief of Grenada and Grenadines or to George Scott, commander in chief the islands', 1764, The National Archives, State Papers, SP 78/261/2, f50.

[25] The Test Act was a prerequisite political office in Britain and required the sworn official to declare that 'there is not any transubstantiation in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or in the elements of the bread and wine, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever' ("Charles II, 1672: An Act for preventing Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants.," in *Statutes of the Realm: Volume 5, 1628-80*, ed. John Raithby (s.l: Great Britain Record Commission, 1819), 782-785. *British History Online*, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp782-785).

The tensions between British and French planters became clearer after the appointment of the colony's first colonial lieutenant-governor. After the brief military governorship of Lt-Col George Scott, the King appointed Robert Melville to the governorship of Grenada and charged him with establishing a British government, complete with Assembly and Council, justices of the peace, and elections.[26] Born in Monimail, Fife, Melville was the orphaned son of a clergyman, brought up in Leven by relatives.[27] He attended both the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, where he studied medicine. But Melville, against his relatives' wishes, had other plans for his career. In 1744, he left Scotland for the Netherlands where he purchased an ensigncy in a Scottish regiment. At the start of the Seven Years' War, he was promoted to the rank of major with command of his own regiment. After the capture of Guadeloupe, Melville took command of that island, where his duties included arbitrating between French and British colonists. At the end of the war, based on his military exploits and experience of governance in the West Indies, Melville was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Ceded Islands and Governor of Grenada. During his seven-year governorship in Grenada, Melville influenced the economic growth of the colony, achieved primarily by a surge in the imports of enslaved labourers and the consolidation of plantations.[28] One of the primary goals of the new British government in the Ceded Territories was to promote the peaceful coexistence of French Catholic settlers with their new British Protestant neighbours so that this economic expansion could proceed smoothly.

In 1765, British laws were set in place and rendered French laws moot. Immediately, French Catholic colonists claimed that they had the right to vote and sit in the colonial legislature in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Their claim was based on their treaty mandated status as British subjects, whose Catholic identities were no more than 'insidious distinctions' that amounted to an unnecessary exclusion.[29] But for Melville and his associates, these distinctions necessitated exclusion. Their efforts to stamp out the visible presence of Catholicism in the Grenada, though initially unsuccessful, were powerful statements of distrust and suspicion. And so two factions were born. One was led by wealthy, influential French and British colonists and openly

[26] Halifax to Melville, 30 June 1764, St James, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/9, f214-5.

[27] Evan W. M. Balfour, 'A Biographical Sketch of General Robert Melville of Strathkinness', *The Scottish Historical Review* 14 (1917): 116-18; Rory T. Cornish, 'Melville, Robert (1723–1809), Army Officer and Colonial Governor', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* 23 Sep. 2004.

[28] He purchased his own plantation near St George's from Louis la Guerre and later owned plantations in Dominica and Tobago as well. Paterson, 6; 'Will of Robert Whyte Melville', 18 July 1818, The National Archives, Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/1606/296.

[29] 'Memorial of his Majesty's adopted subjects in the island of Grenada', 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, f 219.

supported Catholic inclusion. The other was led largely by anti-Catholic Scotsmen, who were ardently opposed to French Catholic inclusion.

Tolerance and political accommodation created a divide between the imperial government and the local, colonial government.[30] Pursuing a policy of tolerance in the new Ceded Territories was politically convenient and seemingly unthreatening, now that the French empire was defeated. In the new era of post-Seven Years' War imperial politics, the government believed that placing the new Catholic subjects under the same restrictions as British Catholics would jeopardise the new imperial acquisitions in which these French Catholics were a powerful presence. Toleration seemed like the best compromise to ensure the stability of Britain's new colonies. Tolerance in this context was not, of course, indifference but a means to 'quicken the inevitable demise of popish superstition'.[31] Toleration was a means to an end. Allowing Catholics into politics was part of the process of anglicising the island—a policy Britain also pursued in Quebec. Tolerance, from the British imperial perspective, was a short-term compromise to disempower the existing church and slowly, but inevitably, turn the colony Protestant.[32]

Competition between British and French colonists was exacerbated by the exclusion of French Catholics from colonial politics by British officials on the ground. The conflict that erupted around the issue of French Catholics in the legislature brought the colonial government to a standstill. Political factions formed in support of and opposition to the French. The conflict reverberated back in the metropole as well, where the question of Catholic relief also plagued Parliament and excited the public. The events were widely interpreted as a constitutional crisis, threatening the stability of Grenada, Britain, and the whole British Empire.[33]

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[30] Peter M. Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity: Imperial Anglicanism in British North America, 1745-1795* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000): 93; Mancke, 'Empire and State': 192-3; Bushnell and Greene, 'Peripheries, Centers': 11-12; Jack P. Greene, 'Transatlantic Colonization and the Redefinition of Empire in the Early Modern Era: The British-American Experience', in *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500–1820*, edited by Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (New York: Routledge, 2002): 267-82; 'The Green Atlantic: Radical Reciprocities Between Ireland and America in the Long Eighteenth Century', *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840,* edited by Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 216-38.

[31] Doll, *Revolution, Religion*, 97.

[32] Frederick Madden, 'Origins and Purposes in Formation of British Colonial Government', *Essays in Imperial Government: Presented to Margery Perham*, edited by Kenneth Robertson and Frederick Madden (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1963): 1-23.

[33] *Political Register and Impartial Review of New Books*, vol 6 (London: Henry Beevor, 1770): 277-82.

2.2: Forming a ruling sugar oligarchy

The first British colonial government in Grenada was a defiantly British and Protestant sugar oligarchy. When the first colonial government was called in 1766, all the men appointed to the Council and nominated for positions in the Assembly were British Protestants closely linked to the sugar trade.[34] The Frenchmen who were the most ardent in their fight for political inclusion were also wealthy sugar plantation owners.[35] British supporters of French Catholic inclusion questioned the practicality of excluding French settlers from colonial politics based on religion. After all, the French sugar plantation owners met all other requirements for political office and had sworn loyalty to George III, abjuring all other sovereignties. Denying French colonists a role in politics was denying them their rights as British subjects. Prominent planters and merchants of both ethnicities promised their support for enfranchisement and representation. Transitioning from small plantation ownership to large-scale sugar plantation enabled French plantations owners to establish themselves in the colony as powerful partners in empire.

Sugar created the plantation economy that later defined the British West Indies. With the plantation economy came a powerful plantocracy, men who made their wealth in sugar and who ruled the colonies as a close group in exclusion of all others. Grenada never quite had a plantocracy as wealthy or powerful as those in Jamaica and Barbados in the early eighteenth century. Absenteeism allowed the expanding middle class a chance in politics—with even an Anglican priest governing the colony in 1800.[36] But in 1763, when the British first took control of Grenada, the idea of a ruling plantocracy seemed like the accepted mode of governing. This meant that consolidating small French plantations and purchasing a great deal of land was important not only for enriching owners but also for establishing a ruling class.

Sugar built on earlier precedents established by both the French and British Empires. Early modern empires were initially built through the formation of global trade networks for a variety of commodities. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Spanish controlled the tobacco trade, which the English were keen to undermine in order to advance their own imperial goals in the

[34] Council Minutes, 12 September 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 104/1, f2.

[35] Melville to the Lords Commissioners, 7 February 1765, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff296-7.

[36] Samuel Dent was an Anglican clergyman who briefly acted as governor of Grenada between 1801-2. Raymund P. Devas, *Conception Island: or The Troubled Story of the Catholic Church in Grenada* (London: Sands and Co., 1932): 113; Frederick Maitland, 'Transmits an application from the House of Assembly regarding appropriation by the legislature of the revenues from the Church lands', 24 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/2, ff4-5.

Americas. Tobacco's popularity in England had opened opportunities for the English cultivation of that valuable commodity overseas; but by the early seventeenth century, English adventurers had yet to cement a successful tobacco colony.[37] In 1607, the Virginia Company outfitted the Jamestown settlement. By 1609 Jamestown's success was still questionable. Perhaps, investors schemed, the soil in the West Indies would yield the quick, rich profits they had hoped for with Jamestown. So in 1609, a company of London merchants outfitted three ships to sail to the West Indies—to Grenada—the first planned English settlement in the Caribbean.[38] This settlement was a spectacular failure and has since faded from the narrative of English imperial expansion. The English went on to form successful tobacco colonies in North America and initially limited their West Indian profiteering to Barbados.[39]

The formation of the sugar economy shifted English focus from forming settlements to establishing colonies with large plantations.[40] Although absenteeism had plagued the British West Indies throughout the eighteenth century, a plantation economy demanded more permanency than an outpost settlement. The first successful English sugar colony was Barbados, colonised from 1625. As the most prolific exporter of West Indian sugar in the seventeenth century, Barbados produced over half of England's consumed sugar in the 1670s. Before the Seven Years' War, that island was almost entirely devoted to the production of sugar with exports to Britain around to 80 percent of all sugar imports.[41] But after the war, the plantations of Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua and St Christopher's could no longer be relied on to maintain the sugar economy on which the British West Indies depended. William Young, surveyor of the new Ceded Islands in 1764, reported that the overproduction of sugar in Britain's old colonies had depleted their value to the empire, and the

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[37] For discussion of tobacco in early modern Atlantic, see Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures; A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[38] John Angus Martin, *Island Caribs and French Settlers in Grenada* 1498-1763 (St George's: The Grenada Museum, 2013): 31-53.

[39] Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 78. The first three chapters of Menard's *Sweet Negotiations* follows the rise of sugar in Barbados where the British first established a prosperous sugar colony (1-66).

[40] This shift, marked by the rise of sugar plantations in the English Caribbean, has been well-studied: Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Kingston: Canoe Press, 1974). On the influence of sugar in forming the planter class and its ultimate downfall, see Philip D. Curtin's *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*; Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); Lowell Joseph Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York: The Century Co., 1928); and Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

[41] Curtin, *Rise and Fall*, 82-83.

Figure 2:1 *View on the River Roseau, Dominica* by Agostino Brunias

Source: Agostino Brunias, View on the River Roseau, Dominica, c 1770-1780*, oil on canvas, The Art Institute of Chicago.*

vast swathes of cleared land had contributed to the degrading soil. The new islands, Young argued would change that. 'More produce and, consequently, greater profits, from less expense' would draw new colonial adventurers to the lush and verdant Windwards instead of the parched, overworked Leeward Islands.[42] To encourage new colonists, Young brought Agostino Brunias with him to the Ceded Islands to create images that depicted their lush, green fertile lands.[43] Colonists were reasonably quick to take advantage of the new colonies. Between 1763 and 1774, Grenada saw an exponential increase in sugar plantations. Debt grew amongst the planters, who hoped that their purchases would bring the returns Young had promised.[44] The immense increase in land devoted to sugar meant thousands of pounds were invested, but planters who assumed debt in sugar ventures never quite saw the same kind of sugar boom that Barbados and Jamaica had enjoyed earlier in the century.[45] Their ventures during the first few decades of British colonisation faced an insecure market as war with France and North America hindered trade. Even nature seemed against the venture; during the 1770s, a plague of sugar ants decimated acres of cane.[46] But the dream of great wealth drew new British adventurers to the colony, and the chance to join the British sugar trade inspired many French colonists to remain on the island.

Under French colonisation, Grenada had grown from a wild, rough settlement into a profitable sugar colony.[47] After being abandoned by the British in the seventeenth century, Grenada was claimed by the French in the late 1640s, following the success of colonising Guadeloupe. Jacques Dyel du Parquet established Grenada's first successful settlement in 1648-49, near what was later known as St George's town.[48] Like the English, the French imperial goal was simple—plant a cash

[42] William Young, *A Just Idea of the Nature, Importance, and Settlement of our New West Indian Colonies* (London, 1764): 20-21, 24, 26. The king's instructions to Young echoed the belief that these islands, especially Grenada, would prove prosperous ('King's instruction to the commissioners for disposing by sale or otherwise of certain lands in the islands of Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago, St Lucia and Dominica', The National Archives, Treasury, T1/436/4, ff17-36).

[43] Agostino Brunias, *View on the River Roseau, Dominica*, c 1770-1780, oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago, https://www.artic.edu/artworks/79037/view-on-the-river-roseau-dominica.

Kay Dian Kriz argues that Brunias' paintings had to appeal to colonists as 'a potentially civilised space, as well as a profitable one' *(Slavery, Sugar and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700-1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008): 37). For further analysis of Brunias' paintings, see Mia L. Bagneris, *Colouring the Caribbean: Race and the Art of Agostino Brunias,* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2018.0

[44] The cost of establishing a plantation in the 1770s was around £17,160 Grenada currency or £10,725 sterling: Menard, *Sweet Negotiations*, 131; Young, *A Just Idea*, 3.

[45] Grenada sugar planters failed to mimic the success of other colonies because of war, the credit crisis, the Fédon revolution, and the abolition of slavery. O'Shaughnessy, 163, 269; Richard Sheridan, 'The British Credit Crisis of 1772 and The American Colonies', *The Journal of Economic History* 20 (1960): 161-86; Edward L. Cox, *Free Coloureds in the Slave Societies of St Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984): 88-90.

[46] John Castles, 'Observations on the Sugar Ants', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 80 (1790): 346-58.

[47] Martin, *Island Caribs,* 107-42, 210-46; Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, 162-86.

[48] Martin, *Island Caribs,* 54-87.

Table 2:1 Sugar plantation increase, 1763-1774 in acres

Parish	1763		1774	
	ACRES	PLANTATIONS	ACRES	PLANTATIONS
St George	1136	13	6440	22
St John	679	10	3139	13
St Mark	308	6	1716	9
St Patrick	1278	18	7723	25
St Andrew	1673	23	8761	23
St David	926	11	4232	12
Total	**6000**	**81**	**32,011**	**113**

Sources: Sources: Daniel Paterson, Topographical Description of the Island of Grenada (London: W. Fade, 1780) and 'State of the islands of Grenada and Carriacou', April 1772, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office Papers, CO 101/16, ff181-89.

crop and become wealthy off its profits.[49] Tobacco was their primary cash crop, though later settlers would diversify into cocoa, coffee, and indigo. Over the eighteenth century, France had built Grenada into a moderately successful colony planted with diverse crops dependent on enslaved African labour. French colonists were just beginning to branch out into large-scale sugar production when the Seven Years' War broke out.

Through the eighteenth century, sugar had become a major cash crop and its cultivation underwent rapid growth. At the start of the century, Grenada had only nine sugar plantations. By the 1760s, sixty-four were in production.[50] Over the first decade of British colonisation, thirty new sugar plantations were established, six by French planters and twenty-four by British planters.[51] The growing demand for sugar in Britain prompted many new colonists to heavily invest in sugar

[49] James Pritchard gives an overview of French colonisation in the West Indies, exploring colonial priorities and prosperity. Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, 72-188.

[50] Martin, *Island Caribs*, 197-204.

[51] Paterson, *Topographical Survey*, 6-13; and 'State of the islands of Grenada and Carriacou', April 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff181-89.

cultivation, though few planters, French or British, had the means to sponsor those investments independently. Both British and French planters who were financially unable to speculate in sugar grew cacao, coffee, cotton, and, decreasingly, indigo.[52] The steady development of the island's sugar works seemed to put the colony on the edge of becoming Britain's next booming sugar colony.[53]

The concessions made to French colonists after the Seven Years' War encouraged many to remain in Grenada, enticed by access to the British sugar trade and its accompanying promise of sweet profits. There was, however, one obstacle. Sugar plantations required a large amount of capital and at least one hundred labourers. Few French plantations possessed the means or the labour needed for a sugar plantation; in 1763, few French planters owned more than fifty slaves and even fewer more than 100 slaves.[54] Without access to the credit and investors available to British planters, French planters were at a significant disadvantage and were unable to quite as easily purchase acres of land and hundreds of slaves for labour. If French planters could not join the sugar boom because of financial constraints, they had to invest their small capital as best they could in cocoa, coffee, cotton, and indigo. This had the unwanted result of excluding most French planters from the burgeoning plantocracy, regardless of the length of their residency in the colony.

The French formed an important middle class of planters. Most French planters did not own sugar plantations. Once French Catholics were granted representative seats on the legislature, these coffee and cocoa plantation owners did not stand for election or become appointed members of the Council. Although they were not seen as part of the island elite, this French planter, middle class were the majority of Grenada's free population.[55] The disparity in plantations owned by French planters versus British planters may seem insignificant. The total number of plantations in Grenada had risen almost imperceptibly between 1763 and 1774 from 313 to 334, an increase of less than seven percent.[56] Ownership had changed incrementally as well. British-owned plantations increased from 130 to 139 while French-owned decreased from 183 to 166. The dramatic increase came in the establishment of sugar plantations. The British established twenty-six new sugar

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[52] Carriacou primarily planted indigo and cotton. David Beck Ryden, '"One of the Finest and Most Fruitful Spots in America": An Analysis of Eighteenth Century Carriacou', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 43 (2013): 539-570; Martin, 282-3.

[53] Pritchard, *In Search of Empire*, 182-4.

[54] Martin, *Island Caribs,* 292-5; 'Extracts from the capitulation rolls', 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff18-31. The capitulation rolls list the assets of each French planter and includes a count of enslaved people.

[55] 'Petition of the planters, merchants and others, inhabitants of the island of Grenada to Governor Leyborne', 14 March 1771, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff83-4.

[56] Paterson, 6-13; 'State of the islands of Grenada and Carriacou', April 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff181-89.

plantations, compared to the six new French-owned sugar plantations. The amount of land planted in sugar dramatically increased between 1763 and 1774 as well, from roughly 6000 acres in 1763 to over 32,000 acres in 1774. Most of that increase was controlled by British planters.[57] For the French, fewer sugar plantations meant that fewer planters, in the eyes of the British colonists, were thus eligible for seats in the colonial government.[58] For the few who did become colonial officials, their ownership of large sugar plantations was an unspoken prerequisite for admission to government. Without sugar, not one Frenchman could hope for a place in the colonial political system.

Table 2:2 Total number of plantations and number of sugar plantations by nationality in 1763 and 1774

	Total (1763)	***sugar***	**Total (1774)**	***sugar***
French-owned	183	24	166	30
British-owned	130	57	139	83
Total	**313**	**81**	**334**	**113**

Sources: Daniel Paterson, Topographical Description of the Island of Grenada (London: W. Fade, 1780) and 'State of the islands of Grenada and Carriacou', April 1772, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office Papers, CO 101/16, ff181-89.

Lured by prospects of prosperous plantations, British colonists wagered borrowed capital in what would become one of Britain's most valuable new colonies. The success of these ventures was, however, dependent on the prosperity of plantations, especially on the prosperity of sugar. This proved difficult. Unlike Barbados, Jamaica and Antigua, Grenada was still largely uncultivated, and most of that uncultivated land was still covered with woodlands and brush. Young estimated that clearing sufficient land for a new sugar plantation would take around five years.[59] The colony also lacked adequate infrastructure, especially good roads; transporting stores to and from plantations had to be done by pack mules since few carts could make the journey.[60] It seemed, for many British colonists, that their best option for quickly establishing profitable plantations was purchasing cleared land from the French. Little seemed to dissuade the new British colonists who came to

[57] 'State of the islands of Grenada and Carriacou', April 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff181-89.

[58] Minutes of the Council, April 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/5, ff10-11.

[59] Young, *A Just Idea*, 44.

[60] Young, *A Just Idea*, 2.

Grenada. Many British colonists, the majority of whom were Scottish, migrated to the colony eager for jobs and profit.[61] The influx of colonists brought about several key changes in the composition of Grenadian society. First, as land was surveyed and put up for sale by the Crown, colonists buying land edged out their French neighbours. The island elite became almost entirely British within the first five years. Second, the formation of a mercantile class became much more apparent as incoming British colonists, unable to purchase land for themselves, took on managerial or business positions. The rapid rise of sugar production, with the creation of employment opportunities associated with that industry, encouraged the growth of the mercantile class.[62] Third, the rise of sugar production caused rapid growth of the enslaved population as demand for enslaved labour increased. Within the first decade of British colonisation, sugar more than anything else defined the strata of colonial society. Within that society, an oligarchy began to develop with sugar at its center, led by those colonists—planters and, later, merchants—who had achieved their dreams of prosperity.[63]

Sugar plantations undergirded the rise of select Frenchmen to positions of power in the colony. The institutions of slavery and the plantation system helped to bridge the divide in the colony as much as imperial directives. The importance of sugar plantations to French Catholic colonial power is evidenced by those who were allowed into the hallowed environs of the British government. On examining the men elected or appointed to serve in the 1772 legislature, the connection they all had to sugar suggests that sugar wealth was an important factor in gaining political power. One of the first French councilman, Paul Mignot Devoconnu, like other Frenchmen who served on one of Grenada's legislative bodies, was a long-time resident of Grenada and owned land in the colony at the time of the Treaty of Paris, which made him eligible for the office.[64] Devoconnu owned a sugar estate in St Andrews.[65] The other French Councilman, Charles Déchanteloupe, represented St George parish where he too owned a sugar plantation. Of the other councillors, all owned or co-

[61] T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1600-1815* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2003): 226ff; Douglas J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005): 66ff; and Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish Migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992): 46-49.

[62] T. M. Devine, 'An Eighteenth Century Business Elite: Glasgow-West India Merchants, c.1750-1815', *The Scottish Historical Review* 163 (1978): 40-67; and Stephen Mullen, 'A Glasgow-West India Merchant House and the Imperial Dividend, 1779–1867', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 33 (2013): 196-233.

[63] The oligarchy in Grenada was not always a plantocracy. O'Shaughnessy, 124-126, 134; Mark Quintanilla, 'The World of Alexander Campbell: An Eighteenth-Century Grenadian Planter', *Albion* 35 (2003): 229-256.

[64] Also children of such were eligible. Hillsborough, et. al. to George III, 29 March 1770, Whitehall, The National Archives, Privy Council PC 1/60/7, ff24-6.

[65] 'Extracts from the capitulation rolls of the Quartier of Marquis for the year 1763', 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff22.

owned sugar plantations in Grenada and often in other colonies as well.[66] Thus the ruling sugar oligarchy was formed with eventual disregard for religious differences. Sugar and toleration paved the way for a French Catholic ruling elite to join the ranks for British Protestants in the colonial legislature.

2.3: French Catholics in the legislature

From the imperial government's perspective, toleration was the natural step towards building a peaceful and loyal empire. The wars leading up to the Seven Years' War had forced Britain to reconsider the nature of and dangers posed by Catholic threat. Before the war, the threat of Jacobinism, and its accompanying threat of French invasion, had strengthened Protestantism within Britain and unified different Protestant denominations against Catholicism. During the early eighteenth century, alliances with Prussia and Austria had also strengthened the unifying continental Protestant interest against Catholic Spain and France.[67] By the end of the eighteenth century, however, these threats seemed inconsequential. The Duke of Cumberland had defeated the Jacobites in 1746. The pope had removed his support for a Catholic Stuart king. Religious reforms beginning to take place across Europe weakened a unified continental Catholicism.[68] And, best of all, the British had emerged triumphant over the French in 1763, diminishing, if not removing, the threat of a strong imperial Catholic competitor.[69] Magnanimously granting toleration to the new colonies strengthened the loyalties of Catholics within the newly conquered colonies. Toleration, of course, came with qualifications. 'As far as the laws of Britain permit', the Treaty stated. The cunningly vague stipulation left the issue of toleration open to interpretation. However vague, one thing was certain. Religious toleration was entirely in the control of the imperial government, to be permitted and denied when politically expedient.

The tolerant policies toward Catholics in former French territories sent ripples of alarm across Britain. Some fears were assuaged with the widely regarded Protestant victories over Catholic threats in the mid- to late eighteenth century.[70] But centuries of anti-French and anti-Catholic

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[66] Paterson, *Topographical Survey*, 6-13.

[67] Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007).

[68] Doll, *Revolution, Religion*, 96.

[69] Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000): 374-5, 497-506.

[70] Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe in the Eighteenth Century: Similarities, Connections, Identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 178-9.

sentiments were not easily or quickly overcome. As the government moved toward easing antiquated penal codes, familiar fears soon resurfaced. As Catholics abroad were granted rights and privileges, almost as if they were Protestant and British-born, it made less and less sense to retain the old penal codes within Britain itself. When Grenadian Catholics obtained suffrage and the right to sit in the legislature, Catholic and Protestant Britons alike followed the ensuing debate closely, anxiously, with every new report. The *Political Register and Impartial Review of New Books* reviewed the several pamphlets written by Grenadian colonists, concluding that the granting of rights and privileges to anyone professing Catholicism was 'unconstitutional and illegal'.[71] In 1774, the Quebec Act stirred up more fear in the British public, as French Canadians gained rights as citizens. For those who harboured anti-Catholic sentiments, their fears seemed to come to life when, in 1778, Parliament passed a relief act allowing Catholics in England and Wales to own land on the same basis as Protestants and allowing priests to conduct religious services.[72] The fervour of anti-Catholic sentiment violently erupted in 1780 with the Gordon riots in protest of Catholic relief.[73] Outside London, the strongest public opinion against Catholics came from Ireland and Scotland.[74] The anti-Catholic laws in Scotland, enacted before the Union in 1707, required a new set of laws to replace them. The outcry and ensuing riots caused governing officials to fear rebellion. Public opinion, particularly in places where rioting occurred, murmured against the government. The public believed the government enforced authoritarianism by introducing these changes and encouraged popery. While many in Parliament no longer perceived Catholicism as a political threat, the public was not yet convinced popery was unthreatening.

Dealing with the negative attitudes and active resistance of the British public at home and abroad created more difficulties for the British government. The imperial government's pursuit of a policy focussed on moderate, tolerant governance encouraged the loyalty of French Catholic subjects but enflamed the closely held prejudices of the British colonists. In the years following the Quebec Act, anti-Catholicism remained an ever-present force made visible through inflammatory

[71] Political Register (1770): 226.

[Grenada Planter], *A Full and Impartial Answer to a Letter in the Gazetteer* (London: J. Almon, 1769); Alexander Johnstone, *Narrative of the Proceedings Against Governor Melvill* (London: T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt, 1770; [Grenada Proprietor], *A Letter to Hillsborough* (London: J. Wilkin, 1769); and William Macintosh, *Audi Alteram Fortem* (London: W. Nicoll, 1770).

[72] Conway, *British Isles*: 246-7.

[73] H. M. Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of American Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990): 294.

[74] Conway, *British Isles*: 247-256, 267-314.

Brad A. Jones links the Gordon Riots in Glasgow and Edinburgh with those in London, arguing that these demonstrations showed the loyalty many Scots had toward the King ('American Revolution and Popular Loyalism in the British Atlantic World', PhD diss (University of Glasgow, 2006): 198).

pamphleteering and riots.[75] Opposition to the Whig government—and, often more subtly, to the king—went hand in hand with an anti-Catholic, anti-French political agenda.[76] Public opinion so closely aligned Catholicism with political authoritarianism that both were referred to as 'popery' in public addresses and in print. Even the king, whose support for tolerance and Catholic relief was widely known, did not escape charges of popery. George Gordon, whose petition against Catholic relief inspired the 1780 riots, alleged that some Scots regarded the King as a papist.[77] Public opinion, especially that of Scotland, would have devastating consequences for Grenada's French Catholics. The fervent anti-Catholicism in Grenada ensured that Catholics would eventually lose their right to vote and govern, in direct defiance of the king's orders, and that French Catholic influence would be violently stamped out of the colony.

In Grenada, the divide between the priorities of the imperial government and the fears of British Grenadian colonists forged political factions that supported either the inclusion or exclusion of French Catholics in colonial politics.[78] These factions were informed by the political situation in Britain on the question of Catholic rights. For both supporters and the opposition, the crux of their argument rested on the interpretation of the capitulation terms, particularly on the definition of subjecthood and on an understanding of rights and privileges granted to the new subjects. Colonial governors in Grenada were swayed by their own prejudices and were pressured by planters to decide on the issue. Robert Melville's governorship exemplified how starkly defined imperial and colonial divisions could be. In February 1766, a small but extremely powerful faction wrote to the new governor of Grenada:

> Your Memorialists . . . think it their Duty . . . to submit to Your Excellency and the honourable Council, whether the admitting of the French Roman Catholick inhabitants to vote for Representatives, wou'd not be striking at the Root and foundation of [the most fundamental and constitutional Laws of the Mother Country]; And might in the present state of this Colony . . . greatly endanger the very being of the Colony itself, as well as the property of His Majesty's

[75] Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism*, chapters 5-6; and Conway, *War and State*, 180.

[76] Conway, *War and State*, chapter 7; *British Isles*, 255.

[77] Conway, *British Isles*, 253; Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism*, chapter 6.

[78] 'The humble address of His Majesty's subjects in Grenada', 19 April 1765, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff189-90 lists British supporters of French inclusion; 'The memorial of several of His Majesty's natural born subjects, possessors of property, and actually residing in Grenada', 1 March 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff217-18 lists British anti-French supporters; and 'Memorial of His Majesty's adopted subjects in the Island of Grenada', 1 March 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff219-22 lists French supporters.

> natural born Protestant Subjects. For your Memorialists apprehend, that every person who has a right to vote, has a right to be Elected.[79]

The men who signed this memorial would become some of the colony's most influential political figures, including Ninian Home, later governor of Grenada, and his close political ally, Alexander Campbell.[80] They, along with Governor Robert Melville, formed a powerful and intensely anti-Catholic political faction in the colony.

At home, Britons debated the extent of the British penal laws in the new Ceded colonies. Understandably in the context of imperial transition, there was confusion at the conclusion of the Seven Years' War over the stipulation that the new Catholic subjects were permitted free exercise of their religion 'as far as the laws of Britain permit' given that Britain had penalised Catholics.[81] There were two interpretations of this. One interpretation took the clause literally, arguing that the laws of Britain included the full force of Britain's anti-Catholic laws. Those laws included limiting the visibility of nonconformist services and preventing Catholics from voting and representation. Another interpretation argued that the clause only applied in the Ceded Colonies as far as expediency demanded. Supporters argued that the full force of the penal code could incite rebellion and disloyalty amongst Catholics who were the majority population in these colonies.

As the British adjusted their imperial laws after 1763, the issue of Catholic inclusion in government had already been under debate in other British colonies with a large Catholic population. Irish Catholics had populated the British colony of Montserrat since the seventeenth century, most immigrating from Ireland and some from the American colonies.[82] The Irish community had retained their Catholic identity, despite a lack of Catholic clergy until 1756.[83] As was the fate of Irish Catholics in the French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe, Irish Catholics in Montserrat were poor farmers and could not afford the capital required for sugar plantations. They planted what they needed to survive with small crops of tobacco and indigo for market.[84] A few acquired the

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[79] 'The memorial of the undersigned British Protestant Inhabitants of the Island of Grenada', 14 July 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/11, ff100.

[80] Mark Quintanilla, 'The World of Alexander Campbell: An Eighteenth-Century Grenadian Planter', *Albion* 35 (2003): 243.

[81] Treaty of Paris (1763), Article XX.

[82] Donald H. Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World: Montserrat, 1630-1730* (Montreal: McGill-Queens UP, 1997); Robert Emmett Curran, *Papist Devils: Catholics in British America, 1574-1783* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014): 89-94; Evan Haefeli, 'Toleration and Empire: The Origins of American Religious Pluralism', in *British North America in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Stephen Foster (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 115.

[83] Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World*, 123.

[84] Curran, *Papist Devils,* 91.

capital to purchase sugar plantations and thus the opportunity to advance in colonial society. With their rise in status and wealth, they could hope for political advancement as well, but only if the penal codes were lifted. In 1761, the reorganisation of the Leeward government enfranchised Irish Catholics and allowed them to hold minor elected and appointed public offices, though they were barred from sitting as representatives. Becoming Anglican on paper while remaining Catholic at heart enabled a few Irish men to hold some of the highest offices in the colony; William Stapleton even became the head administrator of the Leeward Islands.[85]

Governing Irish Catholics in Montserrat set a precedent for the new governments in the French Ceded Territories. First, the condition of Irish Catholics yet again highlighted the importance of sugar as the basis of colonial political involvement. The few Irish who achieved political power did so from a position of wealth derived from their sugar plantations. Second, political advancement to the highest positions in society was set for Protestants alone, although the example of Stapleton illustrated that conversion need only be nominal. Third, changing the law to accommodate Irish Catholic enfranchisement set an important, if limited, precedent for other Catholic colonies, including Grenada. Catholicism did not have to be an insurmountable barrier to political advancement.

In French Canada, inclusion in politics came much later for Catholics. There, as in Grenada, the close association of Catholicism with France, the despotic rival, threw suspicion on French Catholics. Toleration was part of the Anglicisation process, even while being touted as the natural expression of British liberal politics. Canadian Catholics were faced with the same prejudices as Grenada's Catholics. As in Grenada, Canadian Catholics expected a generous interpretation of the capitulation.[86] In Canada, unlike Grenada, Catholics' most pressing concerns were initially more focussed on freedom of religion and less an interest in politics. The much larger Catholic population had stronger ties to Rome than Grenada did, evidenced by the monasteries and clerical hierarchy. The Dominicans in Grenada had established a plantation before the British conquest but sold it after the conquest. The order moved back to their seat in Martinique.[87] Orders in Canada were more numerous and were more firmly established in that colony. Leaving was not an option, so the need to establish religious freedoms was more immediately pressing than lobbying for political privilege.

[85] Curran, *Papist Devils,* 93-94; Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World*,88.

[86] Hilda Neatby, *Quebec: The Revolutionary Age, 1760-1791* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966): 108; and John G. Reid and Elizabeth Mancke, 'From Global Processes to Continental Strategies: The Emergence of British North America to 1783,' in *Canada and the British Empire*, ed. Phillip Buckner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 38-9.

[87] Raymond P. Devas, *Conception Island or the Troubled Story of the Catholic Church in Grenada* (London: Sands & Company, 1932).

When the Quebec Act was passed in 1774, Grenada's Catholics had already enjoyed full political inclusion for two years.[88] The Quebec Act allowed Canadian Catholics citizenship and made them eligible for public office. The fate of Catholics in Grenada and Quebec were tied together in an imperial struggle as the British sought to control Catholic expression in public life.

Across the British empire, Catholic political inclusion was not merely attainable; it was directed through changing imperial policy. Grenada was a canvas on which the British government could paint their ideas of a new system of government, a trial before launching more fully in higher-risk locations like Quebec. The policy changes in both colonies reverberated across the empire and back in the metropole as the debate over Catholic political inclusion raged on. Amid ardent opposition, particularly from apprehensive Britons at home, Catholics in Quebec and Grenada were enfranchised and allowed to hold public office. How this change came about begins with the expectations of Grenada's French Catholics towards their new colonisers.

2.3.1: Enfranchising French Catholics

The enfranchisement of Catholics in Grenada was the direct result of changing imperial policy after the Seven Years' War. The Seven Years' had led to a reconfiguration of imperial power and the institutionalisation of the colonial government, which prompted a change in British imperial goals. This change called for a sweeping reconfiguration in government into what Jack P. Greene terms 'a directive mode of imperial governance', an 'imperial version of the centralized nation-state'.[89] Governing their new, large and diverse empire made direct imperial control a political necessity, but that change led to other problems. The Treaty of Paris with its concessions to the Catholics within the new British dominions testified to the developing dialogue around toleration as part of state and imperial policy.[90] The introduction of new, Catholic, colonies helped to strengthen a more direct approach to colonial governance. Enfranchisement also underscored the impact of challenges to colonial rule and added to the debate about the rights of British subjects more broadly, whether natural-born or adopted.

[88] Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976): 122.

[89] Greene, 'Transatlantic Colonization': 278-9.

[90] Not without causing considerable suspicion. Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism*, 187-188.

George III called the first legislature in Grenada in 1765, the year British law took effect in the colony, and the second in October 1766.[91] Both the first and second legislatures in Grenada were composed entirely of British Protestants. In response to the furore of the pro-Catholic faction, George III granted the enfranchisement of French Roman Catholics in 1766, which initially did not include legislative representation.[92] Grenada's Election Bill (1767) was apparently not widely disseminated at the time (nor is there an official copy still extant).[93] The reason for this document's absence in official records is likely because it questioned two essential tenets of British legal tradition. First, the bill questioned whether Parliament or the king had direct control over the colonies. Second, the bill questioned the prudence of enforcing the Test Act in the colonies. *The Political Register* reported on this Election Bill, arguing against the legality of the bill and taking into consideration the terms of capitulation and the precedent set in other colonies.[94] Importantly, the Political Register argued that enfranchising Catholics in Grenada, unheard of in any other part of the empire, set a dangerous precedent. Enfranchisement in Grenada, the authors argued, was hardly constitutional and jeopardised the security of that colony and the empire.

The demonstration at the first elections for the Assembly in 1767 illustrated the colony's perilous developments, for both factions. The candidates standing for election solicited votes from old and new subjects. In exchange for French votes, however, some of the candidates may have made promises to their new constituents that they could not keep. Governor Melville attempted to keep the new subjects peaceful, leading them to believe that representation in the legislature would soon follow enfranchisement.[95] Allowing Roman Catholics to represent their parishes was, for the anti-Catholic faction, ludicrous and completely unconstitutional. What would be next, the faction's London supporters ridiculed. Would slave owners 'be commanded to educate their slaves, and then chuse [sic] them for their representatives'?[96]

For the supporters of Catholic representation, mere words were not enough to make their position clear. When the polls opened in 1767, M. Demonchy went forward as a candidate for St George

[91] 'Treasury report to the Privy Council on a representation from the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations concerning disposal of land in Grenada and the Ceded Islands', 21 January 1764, Whitehall, The National Archives, HM Treasury, T 1/436/1, f4.

[92] C. S. S. Higham, 'The General Assembly of the Leeward Islands', *The English Historical Review* 41 (1926): 371.

[93] Amended version, 1786. 'A Bill intituled "An Act for Regulating Elections", 1786, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/27/51, ff175-87.

[94] *Political Register* (1770), 61-62.

[95] Grenada Planter, *A Full and Impartial Answer,* 14-15.

[96] *Political Register* (1770), 68.

where he co-owned a sugar estate.[97] At the polls, both old and new subjects gathered around to cast their vote in his favour. But no one was allowed to vote for him. All were turned aside by Walter Robertson, a known member of the anti-Catholic faction.[98] This was within Robertson's power; no bill had yet been passed allowing Catholics a seat in government nor would there be such a law until 1768.[99] At this point, the motivation for this encounter became evident. Demonchy and his fellow sugar plantation owner, Cazoud de Roumillac, staged this event to demand French Catholic representation in the legislature. Together, they confronted Robertson. Their statement, which they had brought with them in preparation, echoed the language of the pro-Catholic faction. Representation was the right of British subjects, they argued, and should not be denied on the basis of religion or ethnicity. If the Election Bill could exempt French Catholics from taking the Test, then why should their religion bar them from the legislature?

This was precisely what the anti-Catholic faction and their London supporters feared. What would allowing Catholics into the Grenada legislature result in? A politically and commercially unstable colony was their most immediate fear. The French could take over control of the colony, even restore its government to France should Britain once again engage in war with France. The most vocal supporters of the anti-Catholic faction were London-based merchants who had made the heaviest investments in the new colony and who were especially keen to have their commercial interests safeguarded by Protestant political allies.[100]

The demonstration staged by Demonchy and De Roumillac failed in the face of strong opposition. They were both openly reprimanded for their behaviour and were called before the Council to answer for their actions. After being summoned to the Council, De Roumillac deferred his hearing for two days, excusing himself because of business back home. When he returned to St George's on 2 December 1767, he was immediately arrested and imprisoned. Catholic supporters took this measure as yet another example of the despotism that characterised Melville's government. The Grenada Planter denounced Melville and his supporters, ironically stating that 'these folk were so intoxicated with the idea of their dignity and importance that they turned papist for a moment, and formed themselves into an Inquisition.'[101] The furore that erupted over De Roumillac's arrest was

[97] Paterson, *Topographical Survey*, 7.

[98] Signed anti-Catholic memorial, CO 101/1. Douglas J. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), 158.

[99] Passed in 1768. 'The memorial of the undersigned British Protestant Inhabitants of the Island of Grenada', 14 July 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/11, ff101.

[100] *Political Register* (1770), 264, 53, 261.

[101] Grenada Planter, *A Full and Impartial Answer*, 26.

only a small part of the problem. The rhetoric and actions of both factions intensified the growing political instability in Grenada. Demonchy and De Roumillac's demonstration resulted in the collapse of Melville's government.

For several months after Melville's government had failed, the colony was without a government of any kind. Melville's recall to London did not mend the relations that had split the colony and rendered the government impotent.[102] Melville's and the anti-Catholic faction's side had supporters in London.[103] As a result, those in London who favoured Catholic political inclusion found it difficult to present their case to Parliament and were openly thwarted in their attempts to defend their position.[104] During the years Melville was in London, the governor of Dominica, Ulysses Fitzmaurice, took temporary control of Grenada. When the King issued French Catholics in Grenada the right to representation in 1768, Fitzmaurice implemented them immediately.[105] This attempt to counter the anti-Catholic faction mired the colony in further political discord.

According to the King's new instructions, Roman Catholics in Grenada were eligible for public office if they were freeholders who owned at least fifty acres, had a capital worth of at least £50 Grenada currency, and were aged twenty-one or older.[106] Voting rights were extended to any white man who owned ten acres, had a capital worth of £20 Grenada currency, and had reached twenty-one years of age. French Catholics were eligible to vote in all colonial elections, including voting for Assembly representatives for their parish. Only five French Catholics could sit on the Council and Assembly at any one time, however. Three French Catholics could sit in the Assembly and two in the Council. No more than one French Catholic member per parish was allowed, although two could be elected to the Assembly from the town of St George. Catholics could also serve as justices of the peace. With these new stipulations in place, French Catholics could enjoy rights denied their fellow Catholics in other parts of the British Empire, including the British Isles.

With Melville in London between 1768-1770, the anti-Catholic faction had lost one of their key supporters. Fitzmaurice implemented the new policies by appointing new members of the Council

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[102] O'Shaughnessy, *Empire Divided*, 124-5.

[103] *Political Register and Impartial Review* 8 (London: Henry Beevor, 1771): 196-202.

[104] Macintosh, *Audi Alteram Fortem,* 49-123.

[105] Ulysses Fitzmaurice to the Earl of Hillsborough, 2 September 1768, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/3, ff32.

[106] 'At the court of St James . . . present The King's Most Excellent Majesty in council', 7 September 1768, St James, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/3, ff1-5; 'An ordinance regulating the elections for the General Assembly of Grenada', 14 February 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff227-34.

and by approving the election of three new representatives in the Assembly. Immediately, the anti-Catholic faction attempted to block these new appointments. When the newly appointed Catholic legislators took their seats on the Council and in the Assembly, six British Protestant members walked out in protest. They refused to sit as representatives with French Catholics. Fitzmaurice responded by suspending these members entirely.[107] For the following three years, Grenada's colonial government was at an impasse. The government ground to a halt. The crisis impacted trade and the economy. Without a sitting legislature, important measures protecting the security of the colony could not be passed nor were measures regulating trade and commerce passed. The fallout of the political crisis proved a loophole for planters and merchants, however. Many had undertaken large debts to establish plantations, and they took advantage of the anarchy to avoid paying off their debts. When Melville returned in 1770, the government had been at a standstill for three years. Melville's return, however, did not restore the government but exacerbated the political crisis even more. His return was short-lived as a result. Failing to restore peace and a working government, Melville was again temporarily replaced as governor by Fitzmaurice in 1771 until William Leyborne was appointed governor.

2.3.2: Representing French Catholics

Sir Peter Francis Laurent took his seat in the 1772 Assembly, elected by the combined parishes of St Andrew and St David. Alongside him were two other French Catholics, Caxoud DeRoumillac and Roume de St Laurent. Together they filled the three places allowed French Catholics in the Assembly. Their colleagues, Paul Mignot Devoconnu and Charles Nicolas Déchanteloupe, took their places at the same time as Councilmen.[108] This legislature marked a turning point for French Catholics. The 1772 legislature was the first fully incorporated legislature in the history of British colonisation in Grenada. When Fitzmaurice attempted to incorporate the king's directives in 1769, the outrage was so great that the government ground to a halt. That outrage held by those same anti-Catholic colonial officials was still present in 1772. While the events leading up to the 1772 legislature were similar to what took place in 1769, one thing was different. Governor William Leyborne upheld the imperial directives that ordered the inclusion of Roman Catholics in the

[107] John Graham, et. al. to the Earl of Hillsborough, 4 October 1769, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/3, ff79-80; Fitzmaurice to Earl of Hillsborough, 29 September 1769, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/3, ff81; Fitzmaurice to the Earl of Hillsborough, 5 October 1769, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/3, ff94-5.

[108] Council Minutes, 9 March 1772, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 104/5, ff6-7.

Grenada legislature. In doing so, he ensured that the government of Grenada was finally subject to Parliament and the king.

The events that took place at a Council session on 23 July 1772, right after the new Council was appointed, illustrated a crucial change in how the colonial government responded to imperial directives.[109] The members present that late afternoon were Thomas Townsend, Paul Mignot Devoconnu, Hugh Dalrymple, Andrew Irwin, Hugh Hall Wentworth, and Charles Nicolas Déchanteloupe. The meeting was called to swear in Thomas Townsend, who had been absent when Leyborne called his first government. Townsend was not unfamiliar to people in the colony. He had been an active member of the legislature before and an outspoken member of the anti-Catholic faction. Townsend had been appointed to the Council along with another member of the anti-Catholic faction. William Lucas was no ordinary Councilman either. He had just been appointed President of the Council by Leyborne. This position was the second highest in the colony. If the governor was called away from the colony, the Speaker of the Council would be in command for the duration of the governor's absence. On the day Townsend delivered his tirade in the Council chambers, Lucas was notably absent. Townsend was left to protest alone. After being sworn in, Townsend moved that the minutes of the first Council meeting of Leyborne's government be read. These minutes contained the regal mandamus granting Devoconnu and Déchanteloupe their positions as Councilmen.[110] Townsend then immediately launched into his tirade. The presence of Devoconnu and Déchanteloupe in the Council was illegal and unconstitutional, he argued. His written statement, which he had brought with him, was reportedly 'in substance the same with those which had been published by the late suspended members on a similar occasion, but expressed in terms much more disrespectful to the Crown, His Majesty's ministers, His Excellency and the Board [Council]'.[111] Townsend concluded his speech.

Townsend spoke with surety, assuming his anti-Catholic, anti-French sentiments would meet sympathetic ears. But since Melville's removal as governor, colonial anti-Catholicism had declined. The anti-Catholic faction had lost much of its power and influence. The 'late suspended members' of Townsend's speech were councillors Patrick Maxwell, John Melville, John de Ponthieu, Robert Maclellan and Israel Wilkes, members of the anti-Catholic faction and had been members of the Council in 1771. In 1771, the first French Catholic, Déchanteloupe, was appointed to the Council,

[109] Council Minutes, 23 July 1772, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/5, ff34-5.

[110] *Political Register and Impartial Review* 9 (London: Henry Beevor, 1772): 165.

[111] Patrick Maxwell, et. al., to the Earl of Hillsborough, 5 December 1771, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff13-18.

which the men had refused to acknowledge and 'wilfully absented themselves from the council'.[112] Leyborne immediately suspended them.[113] Of the Councilmen appointed to the legislature, only William Lucas and Townsend were left to represent the anti-Catholic faction. When Townsend gave his own anti-Catholic, anti-French speech in the 23 July 1772 Council meeting, he protested without allies in the Council before being dismissed himself. Despite the suspension of nearly half the original members, the Council had continued with new members, including the two Frenchmen.[114] Even the departure of the six suspended members, including Townsend, caused no government crisis. Having sustained years of a constitutional crisis and still riddled with factions, the Grenada legislature and judiciary continued to pass bills and regulate colonial affairs alongside men from both factions. This was, perhaps, the greatest triumph of religious toleration and political accommodation yet in Grenada.

For the next few years, Frenchmen were regularly appointed to the Council by British governors and elected to the Assembly by British and French colonists, representing all colonists in their parishes, not just the French. The events of 30 May 1775 illustrated just how much the legislature had finally accepted the imperial directives on Catholic political inclusion.[115] The previous day had been the Grenada Assembly's first session in the summer term. Two new members had been sworn in, elected to their seats by both British and French land-owning men of their parishes. Although at some point during their year in office most members would be absent from their posts, wrapped up in business for several days in a remote corner of the island or even removed to Britain for much longer absences, that day in May, however, all were present. One of the new members was Berkley Lambert, a British Protestant who represented the combined parishes of St Patrick and St Mark, commonly known as the country parishes in reference to their remoteness. The other new member was a French Catholic, whose election had been made possible by the enfranchisement of French-Grenadian Catholics. Etienne Molinier represented the combined parishes of St George and St John. His election ushered in a new achievement for French Catholics in public office. Both Lambert and Molinier had stood before Governor William Leyborne to be sworn in before taking their seats in the House. Following over a century of tradition, Lambert swore the state oaths and subscribed to the Test Act. Molinier, as a Catholic, exercised his right to be exempt from the Test Act and instead

[112] *Political Register* (1772), 166

[113] William Leyborne to the Earl of Hillsborough, 30 November 1771, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/16, ff11.

[114] Leyborne to the Earl of Hillsborough, 20 November 1771, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/5, ff3-4.

[115] Assembly Minutes, 29 May 1775, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/4, ff27-30.

swore his allegiance and loyalty to the British Crown and State. Molinier, however, had one small problem—his English was poor. Unable to fully understand the proceedings was a significant hindrance for him and created an immediate problem for the Assembly. He could not fulfil his duties to his constituents if he could not understand the debates and bills.

The following day on 30 May, the Assembly returned to the House to address the problem of language.[116] After the Speaker, Alexander Winniett, opened that day's proceedings, Sir Peter Francis Laurent stood and made a proposal. Laurent moved that the House appoint an interpreter, a motion immediately agreed to by the other members. The House unanimously chose Joseph Mallan to fill the new office and he was sworn in that very day.[117] This was an unprecedented step forward in accommodating the French who took political office. Added to the rights French Catholics had spent the previous decade in achieving, this privilege seemed to indicate new heights for the British colony's Catholic subjects. Britain's policy of religious toleration and political accommodation gave French colonists rights that Catholics in Britain were decades away from achieving. After centuries of British anti-Catholic fervour and wars against papists, it is difficult to imagine the British officials of the Grenada legislature calmly making concessions like translators for non-English speakers. It is even more astonishing to consider how soon this occurred after the constitutional crisis of the 1760s with its accompanying government failure. Only six years earlier, Grenada was without a legislature because of rampant anti-Catholic opposition.

Even more remarkable, these events took place only weeks after 'the shot heard round the world'.[118] The 1774 Quebec Act granted North American Catholics some of the toleration that French Grenadian Catholics had received since the 1760s. American colonists viewed the Quebec Act suspiciously, alleging that toleration of Catholicism aligned popery with overbearing British imperialism.[119] In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine had decried the monarchy as 'the popery of government', a sentiment echoed in the anti-Catholicism and anti-British imperialism of

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[116] Assembly Minutes, 30 October 1775, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/4, ff39-41.

[117] In November later that year, when Mallon was sworn in for a new term, all three French Assembly members were present. Mallon's reappointment was affirmed by Clozier and Molinier. Assembly Minutes, 17 November 1775, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/4, ff64-65.

[118] Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Concord Hymn', *Poems* (New York: Everyman's Library, 2004): 1.

The first skirmish at Concord took place 19 April 1775.

[119] Curran, *Papist Devils*, 240-5.

Karen Stanbridge, 'Quebec and the Irish Catholic Relief Act of 1778: An Institutional Approach', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 16 (2003): 375-404.

revolutionary sermons and pamphlets.[120] American revolutionaries listed the Quebec Act alongside the Coercive Acts (1774) as impetus for revolt against British government. These events took place at the same time British colonial officials extended civil liberties and political freedom to Catholics in Grenada. Perhaps, as American loyalist plantation owners in Grenada looked on with horror as their homeland became mired in revolt, they felt that showing toleration to Catholics in Grenada would distinguish their own loyalty in contrast to their revolutionary compatriots.[121] If the events of the 1770s is a triumph of British toleration and political accommodation, it is a triumph indeed.

2.3: A British Protestant colonial oligarchy

The conflict surrounding Catholic enfranchisement and representation shaped the political climate of Grenada's first legislatures. At the cessation of outright defiance to the King's instructions, French Catholics in Grenada exercised political rights and privileges that the Catholics in Britain would not achieve for decades. But this triumph was short-lived. On 2 July 1779, Charles Henri Hector d'Estaing anchored a fleet of French ships off Grenada's coast. The French had joined the Americans the year before and planned to capture profitable British Caribbean colonies. Comte d'Estaing had captured St Vincent only a few days before sailing to Grenada. As d'Estaing's fleet prepared for battle, Grenada's French Catholics seized the opportunity to pledge their support to their French compatriots. After a decade of diminished rights and hard-fought political gain, Grenada's French must have seen the capture of Grenada as a return to the old order, a reassertion of French rule that would put themselves at the forefront of the colony. They could not know that hardly five years later, British rule would once again be restored. Their support for France in 1779 would disastrously end the great experiment of toleration and political inclusion when Grenada was restored to Britain in 1783. By the end of the American Revolution, the colonial legislature ensured that their government would continue into the nineteenth century as a British Protestant oligarchy.

The last French colonist who served in the colonial legislature was Sir Peter Francis Laurent, who represented the united parishes of St Andrew and St David on the Council.[122] After nearly twenty years of British rule, Laurent had cemented himself in the colony as a trusted British subject. He

[120] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (reprint: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 15.

[121] Grenadian planter and Bostonian, Samuel Cary, had brothers who were sympathetic to the patriots an may have harboured some of these sentiments himself (Susan Clair Imbarrato, *Sarah Gray Cary from Boston to Grenada: Shifting Fortunes of an American Family, 1764-1826* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018): 56-9).

[122] Council minutes, 14 May 1778, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 104/2, n.f.

had achieved his status in the colony partly as a result of changing imperial policies regarding the political status of French Catholics. Some of his status and power were derived from his sugar wealth. He represented over 1300 white colonists, many of whom were French.[123] The absence of other French Catholics in the Grenada legislature suggests that the great experiment of religious toleration and political accommodation may have already been in decline before d'Estaing captured Grenada. The reason Laurent was still appointed to the Council and not any other Frenchman was that he—at some point during his service—converted to Protestantism.[124] His conversion may well have been nominal. After French rule was restored in Grenada, Laurent approached d'Estaing and requested a position in the new French government. Because of his position in the British government, however, the new governor Jean-François, Comte de Durat, suspected opportunism and refused him. Laurent was disgraced.[125] His conversion was one of the reasons French officials distrusted him. Contemporary and colonial lawyer, Hilliard d'Auberteuil, described Laurent in a report,

> He is seductive, ostentatious; he made himself loved by the English and made himself look like a man of spirit oppressed by arbitrary power and French prejudices. . . . He was at London [in 1766]; it is likely that this request was preceded or followed by the oath of the test and that he became an English citizen since the King gave him the title of knight and that he was admitted to assemblies and places like a real Englishman as long as the colony had remained under British rule but it is not clear in what deposit is the act of his oath.[126]

Laurent had sworn to the Test Act and seemed to have anglicised as much as he could while Grenada was ruled by the British. The fact that he was the last serving Frenchman in the Grenada legislature strongly suggests that the brief experiment of toleration was already fractured. After the colony was restored to Britain in 1783, members of the ruling elite were only Protestant.

Laurent illustrated the intended purpose of toleration and accommodation. These imperial policies were never meant to be permanent; they were part of an anglicisation strategy. Allowing French

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[123] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 14; 'Transmits a copy of a statement of the inhabitants of Grenada at different periods signed by Arthur Leith', 12 April 1788, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/28/33, ff121-28.

[124] Rossignol, 'La Famille', 10.

[125] Rossignol, 'La Famille', 12. Laurent wrote, Sa disgrâce s'étendit à toute sa famille, son jeune frère et son beau-frère étant dépossédés des places de procureur du roi et de greffier en chef que M. de Durat leur avait données (qtd. in ibid.).

[126] Qtd in Rossignol, 'La Famille', 10.

'Il est séduisant, ostentueux [sic] ; il se fit aimer des Anglais et se fit regarder comme homme d'esprit opprimé par le pouvoir arbitraire et les préjugés français. . . . Il fut à Londres ; il est vraisemblable que cette demande fut précédée ou suivie du serment du test et qu'il se fit citoyen anglais puisque le Roi lui donna le titre de chevalier et qu'il a été admis aux assemblées et aux places comme un véritable anglais tant que la colonie était demeurée sous la domination britannique mais on ignore en quel dépôt est l'acte de son serment.'

Catholics in the legislature would encourage them to fully integrate into British society, including conversion to Protestantism, which Laurent had done. Colonial officials in French Canada similarly believed that these policies would diminish French loyalty to Rome and disconnect Catholicism in Canada from the still powerful Holy See. Francis Laurent was by far the greatest example of what British toleration and political accommodation could achieve.

At the restoration of British rule in 1783, the new treaty restored the terms and conditions of the original treaty (1763). Notably, the new treaty did not restore all the laws passed in Grenada during the first British colonisation, which meant that the concessions made to French Catholics were no longer in place. The firm and quiet removal of French influence in the colonial government would have deadly consequences for the British in the following decades. At the height of the revolutionary era, Grenadian French free people of colour rebelled against the government that had shuttered its doors to their fathers.[127] Hundreds of French Catholics emigrated, many of whom were white. As a result, the island's white population began a steady decline, reaching its lowest at the turn of the century; and as French Catholics left the colony, Catholicism became more strongly identified with enslaved and free people of colour.[128] After years of factions and the failure of the first British government in Grenada, the effects of British imperial toleration and political accommodation colonial rule were realised in the complete Anglicisation of colonial rule. Colonial politics after 1783 had no room for French Catholics; that was solely the province of white British Protestants.[129] The great experiment of toleration and political accommodation in Grenada came to an inglorious end.

[127] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 80-88. Curtis Jacobs, 'Fédon's Rebellion in Grenada (1795-1796)', presented at 8th Cultural History Conference, University of York, 2008: 3-7.

[128] Cox, *Free Coloureds* , 14. This was in stark contrast to the rising number of enslaved people. See 'An account of the number of Negro slaves imported into this port since the year 1788', 1804, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/42/4, ff19-21; and 'Account of slaves in the colony of Grenada', 2 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/45/36, ff190.

[129] Gerbner terms this 'Protestant Supremacy'. Katharine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018): 46-48.

Chapter 3

The Limits of Liberty: Catholicism and Free People of Colour in the Revolutionary Era

On 12 July 1791, George Washington received a letter from the free people of colour in Grenada.[1] The letter concerned a pamphlet that had made its way to the island, purportedly from American government officials. The author alleged that the American government extended liberty, freedom and equality to all people regardless of colour, a freedom and equality that would soon be cemented by a plan to encourage West Indian free people of colour to immigrate to the American South. There they could live as free and equal as any white man, while growing their own personal wealth through sugar planting. This proposition seemed too good to be true, these Grenadian planters admitted, and so requested confirmation that this pamphlet had indeed come from the United States government. Washington never answered the letter.[2] It is doubtful that the planters ever believed it themselves. But, perhaps, in this age of revolution, this slow and sure rise of the free black man, such tales seemed ever so slightly more possible. For Louis la Grenade, a co-signer of the letter to Washington, the idea of a society where a man like himself could live as an equal must surely have seemed like a paradise. A few years later, Julien Fédon attempted to inaugurate such a society by force. During the 1790s when revolutionary feeling reverberated around the Caribbean, free people of colour in Grenada attempted to create their own free and equal society, one in which they could exercise their civil, political and religious rights without hindrance.

There were few free people of colour in Grenada who enjoyed acceptance in Grenada's white British society.[3] One exception was Louis la Grenade, a French Huguenot who owned the Morne Jaloux sugar plantation in St George.[4] La Grenade was a naturalised as a British subject in 1785,

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[1] Petition from Grenada Negroes to George Washington, 24 January 1791, St George's, *George Washington Papers,* Series 4*,* General Correspondence, 1697-1799. Library of Congress.

[2] Dun, James Alexander, *Dangerous Neighbors: Making the Haitian Revolution in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016): 54.

[3] D. G. Garraway briefly highlights la Grenade's role in supporting the British during Fédon's revolution in *A Short Account of the Insurrection* (St. George's: C. Wells and Son, 1877). His support cemented his position in Grenadian society.

[4] *Morne Jaloux Estate,* Legacies of British Slave-ownership, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/1289; Edward Cox, *Free Coloreds in the Slave Societies of St Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1984): 61.

unlike hundreds of French white planters similarly resident around 1763.[5] La Grenade was a prominent planter and owned the extensive Morne Jaloux sugar plantation in St George. Like many free people of colour, la Grenade benefited from the network of free families of colour, relying on business connections within that network to purchase his estate. He went into business with Jean Baptiste St Bernard, another French resident of Grenada who was present before 1763. The two men co-purchased the 99-acre Morne Jaloux for £4980 in 1787. In 1792, la Grenade had made a significant investment in converting his former cocoa estate to sugar, requiring a loan of £3200 to purchase the necessary machinery.[6] His rise to prominence partially hinged on his success as a sugar planter. Like his white contemporary, Peter Francis Laurent, acceptance in British society started with sugar wealth. But the similarities stopped there. La Grenade could never achieve the political power Laurent did because the qualifications for representatives still required all legislators to be white. Unlike white French Catholics marginalised after the British reconquest in 1783, however, la Grenade was Protestant and thus was eligible, in British eyes, for some increased rights.

La Grenade was the captain of the company of free people of colour attached to the St George's Regiment and proved himself a useful ally of British colonial officials, especially in capturing runaway slaves.[7] In 1790, Governor Edward Mathew recommended Grenade for a medal to recognise his distinguished service to the colony. An honour of this kind must have been bittersweet for la Grenade. He fulfilled every characteristic needed to gain prominence in the colonial government, except the obvious distinction of his race. The medal too, which he reportedly wore to official engagements, was a bitter reminder for all free people of colour that acceptance in a white slave society meant the denial of any brotherhood of race, conversion to the Church of England, and absolute loyalty to a British sugar plantocracy.[8]

Grenadian colonial society, so neatly regulated according to wealth, class and race, collapsed in March 1795 when Julien Fédon, a free man of colour, and his lieutenants took control of Grenada. This revolution was not simply an uprising against British policies of continued restrictions on free people of colour in the colony. Nor did the revolutionaries fight merely against the anti-Catholicism and anti-French attitudes of the colonial government. This revolution demanded freedom for the

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[5] 'List of persons residing in the island of Grenada', 2 March 1786, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/26/75, ff281.

[6] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 62.

[7] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 79.

[8] Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British West Indies,* vol. 3 (London: G. and W.B. Whittaker, 1818): 281.

island's people of colour—enslaved and free—and reasserted the rights stripped away from French colonists at the restoration of the colony to British rule in 1783. This revolution was directly tied to the French Revolution in the Caribbean and its rousing call for '*Liberté, Égalité, ou la Mort*'.[9] Catholicism was evident in the movement by the presence of Pascal Mardel, the parish priest from Gouyave, although Fédon was not interested in nationalising Catholicism as the French revolutionaries had nor was he interested in removing Catholicism from colonial society, which had been one of the goals of France's Reign of Terror.[10] Mardel supported the revolutionaries financially and travelled with Fédon's army, dressed without clerical distinction in the garb of an artillery man.[11] The consequences of Fédon's revolution redefined colonial politics and forced Catholicism even further to the margins of colonial society.[12] For the British, Catholicism represented danger to the established order that they had long suspected. Many of Grenada's Catholics were 'French Negroes', a pejorative the British used to describe Catholic free people of colour. In this way, British officials coupled religion and revolution together with treason against Britain and associated it with the violence of an allegedly inferior race.[13] This attitude permeated British rhetoric through the nineteenth century.

3.1: Fédon's revolution, 1795-96

During this era of revolution, the whole of colonial society could be turned on its head through a single victory. In Haiti, free people of colour and enslaved Africans had fought against imperialism and established a black republic. In America, thirteen colonies had declared their independence and established their own republic. The Haitian Revolution was the main example of revolutionary ideology, but the spread of those ideas came from Guadeloupe. By 1795, Guadeloupe had become the base for Victor Hugues' French revolutionary forces in the Caribbean. From there, Hugues

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[9] The words inscribed on the revolutionaries' flag. Garraway, *A Short Account*, 3.

[10] Xavier Maréchaux, 'Les séquelles de la déchristianisation de l'an II : l'héritage laïc sous le Consulat et l'Empire', *Napoleonica. La Revue* 3 (2012): 4-16.

[11] Francis McMahon, *A Narrative of the Insurrection in the Island of Grenada* (St George's: John Spahn, 1823): 11; Thomas Turner Wise, *A Review of the Events Which Have Happened in Grenada* (St George's: n.p., 1795): 52; Gordon Turnbull, *A Narrative of the Revolt and Insurrection of the French Inhabitants* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1795): 82.

See Curtis Jacobs, 'Revolutionary Priest: Pascal Mardel of Grenada', *The Catholic Historical Review* 101 (2015): 317-341.

[12] The aftermath of the French Revolution in the West Indies impacted other colonies as well, including Saint Domingue. Erica Johnson analyses the impact of the revolution on Catholicism in Saint Domingue, which provides a helpful framework for understanding the importance of colonial Catholic identities in a revolutionary context ('Religion and the Atlantic World: The Case of Saint-Domingue and French Guiana', *The French Revolution and Religion in Global Perspective: Freedom and Faith*, Bryan A. Banks and Erica Johnson, eds. (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 49-71.

[13] Dun, *Dangerous Neighbors*, 80-84.

worked to spread revolutionary fervour to the predominantly French-speaking southern Caribbean islands, including Grenada.[14] Fédon's revolution was not only a revolution motivated by a desire to see British colonisation overthrown but was an attempt to create a self-determined, free black society. Haiti succeeded in accomplishing just that. Grenada's attempt came close.[15] A free black society, equal in all aspects to white society as envisioned by the pamphleteer, nearly became a reality in Louis la Grenade's own home.

The historiography of Fédon's revolution is still relatively sparse, making the choice of words to describe these events somewhat challenging.[16] In this chapter, the events of 1795-6 are referred to as 'revolution'. Although his preferred terminology for these events is 'rebellion', Kit Candlin expertly demonstrates how using both revolution and rebellion can signal narrative shifts in his study of frontier colonies in the Caribbean in his analysis of Fédon's revolution.[17] Edward Cox provides another precedent for using the word 'revolution' to emphasise the role of free people of colour.[18] Cox uses 'revolution' similarly to Candlin to emphasise Fédon's connection with the French Revolution in the Caribbean and the revolutionary perspective and objectives of free people of colour. Calling the 'popular fury' of 1795 a revolution and not a rebellion or insurrection is an intentional narrative choice to emphasise the perspective of free people of colour. In this chapter, the events will be called a revolution for two reasons. First, Victor Hugues commissioned Fédon to lead the revolution in Grenada; and these events took place as part of Hugues' vision for expanding the French revolution in the Caribbean. This was not some colonial version of a peasants' revolt; it was structured and planned and intentionally allied with French revolutionaries in Guadeloupe.

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[14] Michael Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower: The British Expeditions to the West Indies and the War against Revolutionary France* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987): 136-146.

[15] Johnson, 'Religion and the Atlantic World', 59-60.

[16] See Kit Candlin, *The Last Caribbean Frontier, 1795-1815* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Edward Cox, *Free Coloureds in the Slave Societies of St Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984). These two provide the most comprehensive examination of Fédon's revolution.

For an examination of the events in the context of the French Revolution, see Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2004). For an examination of the plantocratic perspective, see Donald Polson, 'The Tolerated, the Indulged and the Contented: Ethnic Alliances and Rivalries in Grenadian Plantation Society 1763-1800', PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2011; and Mark Quintanilla, 'The World of Alexander Campbell: An Eighteenth Century Grenadian Planter', *Albion* 35 (2003): 229-256.

Michael Craton examines the context of slave insurrection in *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).

[17] Candlin, *The Last Caribbean Frontier*, 1-23.

[18] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 76-91. Wim Klooster and K. J. Kesselring use 'revolt' to distinguish the events as an uprising against the British. See Klooster, 'The Rising Expectations of Free and Enslaved Blacks in the Greater Caribbean', *Curaçao in the Age of Revolutions, 1795-1800*, edited by Wim Klooster and Gert Oostindie (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 57-74; and Kesselring, '"Negroes of the Crown": The Management of Slaves Forfeited by Grenadian Rebels, 1796–1831', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 22 (2011): 1–29.

Second, referring to these events as a revolution highlights the agency of free people of colour who planned and executed a revolt against the oppressive rule of white British elite. However, this was not a revolution to regain political rights that the British had denied the revolutionaries.[19] Most of the revolutionaries had enjoyed no access to those political rights before or after the British reclaimed Grenada in 1783. The leaders of the French Revolution in the Caribbean promised political rights that Grenadian free people of colour were denied under the British. Fédon's revolution was indeed a revolution and struggle against British authorities that profoundly impacted the society of free people of colour.

Several eyewitnesses of Fédon's revolution account that the simultaneous attack on Gouyave and Grenville came as a complete surprise to the British authorities and settlers and plunged the colony into a period of destructive chaos.[20] Around midnight on 2 March, two separate companies of Fédon's band launched attacks on opposite sides of the island. Fédon, with his lieutenant Stanislaus Besson, led a company of around 100 on Grenville, the colony's second port located on the Atlantic coast in St Andrew. By all accounts, this attack was the bloodiest. The company broke into houses, tearing people from their beds and hauling them into the streets to be shot. Storage-houses were likewise broken into and destroyed. Inhabitants attempting to escape the massacre were shot as they fled or mauled with cutlasses. Some did manage to escape and took temporary refuge in surrounding plantations, as did the surviving members of the Grenville militia, where Alexander Campbell discovered them the following day. The second attack on Gouyave, renamed Charlotte Town by the British, was significantly less violent. Etienne Ventour and Joachim Philip led this attack, looting and destroying storehouses. On their way back to their base at Fédon's plantation in the mountains of St Mark, this company captured overseers and managers. Among these hostages were Dr John Hay, the Rev Francis McMahon, and William Kerr. The first two later wrote accounts of their experiences.

[19] Tessa Murphy analyses Fédon's revolution as a fight to regain rights extended to French Catholics before 1783. 'A Reassertion of Rights: Fédon's Rebellion, Grenada, 1795-96', *La Révolution française* 14 (2018): 1-26.

[20] The following are the eight narratives. [Anonymous], *A Brief Inquiry into the Causes of and Conduct Pursued by the Colonial Government* (London: R. Faulder, 1796); J. D. G. Garraway, *The Revolt: A Poem* (London: John Booth, 1796); D. G. Garraway, *A Short Account of the Insurrection* (St George's: C. Wells & Son, 1877); John Hay, *A Narrative of the Insurrection of the Island of Grenada* (London: J. Ridgway, 1823); Francis McMahon, *A Narrative of the Insurrection in the Island of Grenada* (St George's: John Spahn, 1823); Henry Thornhill, *A Narrative of the Insurrection and Rebellion in the Island of Grenada* (Bridgetown: Gilbert Ripnel, 1798); Gordon Turnbull, *A Narrative of the Revolt and Insurrection of the French Inhabitants* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1795); and Thomas Turner Wise, *A Review of the Events Which Have Happened in Grenada* (St George's: n.p., 1795).

Colonial government officials first heard a garbled version of the evening's events the morning following the attacks.[21] At first, many believed that a French force had landed near Grenville on the windward side of the island and that they were marching towards St George's. On the day of the attacks, Governor Ninian Home had left St George's for his St Patrick estate, Paraclete, located a few kilometres away from Grenville. He too believed the rumour that the French had landed in Grenville and immediately sent out a report to St George's confirming that belief, based in part on the testimony of Alexander Campbell, who had accompanied him to Paraclete.[22] Campbell had gone down to the outskirts of Grenville to the Paradise estate where he had found the St Andrew militia taking cover with a few escaped colonists. He quickly grasped the danger he and the governor were in, separated as they were from the strongholds and militia of St George's. He immediately returned to Paraclete where he, Home, and the rest of their party quickly set off for the safety of St George's by way of Sauteurs. The advantage of this route was that the party succeeded in avoiding Grenville, where the alleged French army had landed. They left Paraclete on horseback; but when they arrived in Sauteurs, they decided to go the rest of the way by boat, which would hasten their journey by a couple hours. They decided on this new mode of transportation after learning that the enemy who had attacked in Grenville was not the French after all but that 'the free people have risen against the whites'.[23] As Home and his company sailed down the leeward coast and approached Gouyave, they realised that the rebels had taken that town as well and commanded several cannons. The rebels, spying Home's ship and fully aware that the governor himself was onboard, fired at the vessel. The crew on board were frightened and confused—little of the previous night's events was yet clear and the full extent of the uprising was still uncertain. The rebels in Gouyave could number hundreds or dozens or fewer. In light of this uncertainty, the ship captain urged Home and his company to continue sailing down the coast to St George's even though this would entail sailing directly past rebel fire. Home, however, decided that it would be safest to land and, instead of making his way to St George's, would return to St Patrick on horseback. This decision was disastrous. Unknown to Governor Home and his companions, Fédon and his company knew of Home's exact whereabouts, and the whole company were captured almost immediately upon landing and taken as hostages to Fédon's camp.

In April 1795, Mather Byles, Governor Ninian Home's secretary, wrote to his aunt Kitty Byles back home in Boston of the 'popular fury' that had eclipsed the island.[24] He and other supporters of

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[21] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 3-13.

[22] Campbell was Home's business partner and political ally. Quintanilla, 'Alexander Campbell', 253-255.

[23] Ninian Home to Mather Byles, cited in Turnbull, *Narrative of the Revolt*, 32; Garraway, *A Short Account*, 7.

[24] Mather Byles to Kitty Byles, 14 April 1795, Byles family papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.

British rule had taken refuge in St George's, which was the only part of Grenada not yet taken over by the revolutionaries. Their situation was dire. By then, of course, the revolutionaries had captured Governor Home. Keeping the island in British hands was colonial officials' primary concern. Timing of the attacks worried British settlers as well. March was one of the prime months for cutting sugar cane and the attacks jeopardised the harvesting and processing of the island's primary cash crop. This brought about heavy financial losses for the colony. To make matters worse for the British, St George's was in the middle of an outbreak of yellow fever and, as colonists from across the island poured into town, the spread of that illness turned into an epidemic.[25] The small colonial militia in St George's provided some reassurance for the frightened colonists. That assurance was tempered, however, by the fact that nearly half of the militia, a company of 771 men, were free people of colour and at least 87 were naturalised British subjects.[26] White colonists were reassured by the presence and leadership of the inveterate loyalist, Louis la Grenade.[27] The Fifty-sixth Regiment, which had formerly protected the town at Fort George and Richmond Hill, had been reassigned to Martinique, so this diverse colonial militia was the only protection the entire island had at the start of the revolution. Home's capture added to the anxiety as the colony faced attack with a lack of leadership amidst much uncertainty and confusion.

The next three days were a muddle of panicked reports and ineffectual attempts to regain control of the colony. Around noon on 3 March, Mather Byles received a letter from his employer, Ninian Home, clarifying who the attackers were and ordering the first official alarm to be sent out.[28] Home also voiced his concern that most of the militia were disloyal to British rule, ordering that no arms should be given to militiamen who were people of colour, except for the company led by Louis La Grenade. A few hours later, the President of the Council, Kenneth Mackenzie, and the rest of the legislature heard of Home's capture, and Mackenzie assumed command of the colony. The following day, Fédon sent representatives to the Council at St George's with a demand for surrender. The declarations were delivered by two of Fédon's lieutenants, Charles Nogues and Joachim Philip. The

[25] Colin Chisholm, an army doctor in Grenada, had only just discovered that yellow fever was contractable three years earlier. Chisholm, *An essay on the malignant pestilential fever: introduced into the West Indian Islands from Boullam, on the coast of Guinea,* vol. 2 (London: J. Mawman, 1801).

[26] Cox, 86; Edward Mathew, Refers to 'spirit of emulation' in inhabitants since legislature has passed the amendment of the Militia Bill', 2 October 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/30/44, ff214-16.

Kenneth Francis Mackenzie, 'Update on Grenada [Fédon revolution]', 15 September 1795, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/34/23, ff146-50.

[27] Edward Mathew, 'Reports in consequence of Secretary of State's secret letter of 6 October 1790', 28 November 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/31/6, ff46-7.

[28] Home to Byles, cited in Garraway, *A Short Account*, 7.

declaration was signed by Fédon himself, demanding surrender to him on the basis of the authority invested in himself and Stanislaus Besson 'by the commissioners delegated by the National Convention in the Windward Islands'.[29] The second declaration was signed by Victor Hugues, commander of the French Republic in the West Indies and then residing in Guadeloupe.[30] These declarations raised the likelihood of Fédon receiving support from Hugues' forces at Guadeloupe. The pressure to regain control of Grenada increased as republican forces grew in strength on nearby St. Lucia, which would fall to black French republicans only days later.[31] These developments hastened Mackenzie's decisions to launch an attack on Fédon as soon as possible. Mackenzie, in an announcement published as soon as he assumed control, made it known that leniency would be shown to any of the insurgents who chose to desert Fédon. None had done so. Now the threat of invasion by additional French revolutionary forces affirmed Mackenzie's decision to attack Fédon as vital for the preservation of the colony.

Launching an attack was not easy, because Mackenzie did not have the support of the militia or the confidence of the colonists. For years he and the other members of the Council had vied for control of the colony, a conflict partly stemming from the political and religious factions that developed during the first years of British control. When Mackenzie ordered the first attack on Fédon on the 6 March, his order was met with resistance from some of the militia led by Gordon Turnbull, who later wrote an account of the events.[32] The lack of unity amongst the British colonists hindered their success against Fédon. Added to disunity, many in the militia were ill-equipped against the superior revolutionary forces. Most of the British forces were armed colonists, while Fédon's forces had been partially fitted by Hugues and commanded cannons and muskets.[33] Later, as a result of Hugues' failure to resupply the republicans, Fédon's forces became much less well-equipped, many armed with pikes and cutlasses instead of muskets.[34] On 8 March, however, many members of Fédon's army were outfitted with muskets and enjoyed the artillery benefits of two six-pounders. When the British militia arrived near Fédon's camp at his estate in Belvidere, they quickly realised the impracticality of carrying out an attack. The British shortage of men and weapons was only part of the problem. Fédon's camp was well protected by many rebels and situated high on a hill covered on all sides in dense brush and trees. The British militia could not scale the hill or keep the rebels in

[29] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 10.

[30] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 10-12.

[31] St. Lucia fell to French forces on 18 March. Duffy, 136.

[32] Turnbull, *Narrative of the Revolt*, 44-63.

[33] One hundred muskets with 10,000 cartridges. Jacobs, 'Fédons Rebellion', 17.

[34] Hay, *Narrative of the Insurrection*, 77.

sight. Situated on this high ground, the revolutionaries had been able to see the British forces as they marched towards Fédon's plantation. Faced with these obstacles, the attacking party decided that it was more expedient to retreat than to carry out an attack and arrived back at St George's that very night, the expedition a dismal failure.

When Mather Byles wrote his aunt on 14 April 1795, Julien Fédon and his company had been in control of the whole island—except for St George's—for over a month. They controlled one of the colony's two ports and most of the island north of the mountains above St George's. The few plantations that the revolutionaries had not yet destroyed provided them food. They also controlled the port town of Grenville, which provided them a base from where they could relay men and weapons to other colonies attempting revolution and from where they could receive their own support. In early April, a French schooner had been sighted anchored in Grenville Bay, delivering arms and stores to the revolutionaries. This ship likely also carried away the only survivors of the massacre to Guadeloupe: Rev Francis McMahon, Dr John Hay, and William Ker.[35] That summer the revolutionaries in the Windward Islands seemed to gain more ground, and the British were faced with great losses. In Grenada, refugees flooded into St. George's from all corners of the island.[36] This last remaining British stronghold could not sustain the number of people crammed into it. Food quickly became scarce, and a yellow fever epidemic continued to rage.[37] Kenneth Mackenzie desperately begged his British superiors and neighbours for military support. But by the time support came, Fédon had strengthened his forces to over 4000, far outstripping the roughly 880 men in the British force, including their reinforcements from Don José Maria Chacon, the Spanish governor of Trinidad. It was unusual for the Spanish to come to British aid, but Chacon was concerned that the revolution might spread to his own colony where many Grenadian free people of colour already lived and where there was a significant enslaved population. Although the British had been successful in holding off an attack on St George's, they feared further attacks. The news of Ninian Home's death, along with forty-two other captives, added to the colonists' distress. Fédon executed the captives on 8 April in retaliation for the execution of one of his revolutionaries, Pierre Alexander. Alexander had been captured on his way back from Trinidad where he had been sent to

[35] Ker was likely spared because of marriage to French woman of Grenada (Wise, *Review of the Events*, 100).

[36] Carriacou and Petite Martinique were not captured, although there was a recurring fear that those enslaved in Carriacou would revolt (Frederick Maitland, 'Representation from two slave 'owners' from Carriacou, William Scott and McLean, made to Maitland', 12 September 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/18, ff79-80). See H. Gordon Slade, 'Craigston and Meldrum Estates, Carriacou, 1769- 1841', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 114 (1984): 505-506.

[37] Thornhill, *Narrative of the Rebellion*, 114.

purchase arms for the revolution.[38] By the time General Nicholls arrived in Grenada, several hundred enslaved men and women had joined with Fédon, and the governor along with many prominent colonists had been killed. British colonists feared that Grenada's French revolutionary uprising would mirror the uprisings that were taking place across the Caribbean in places like St Domingo and Curaçao.[39] They feared that a slave uprising would unfold in a similar manner to the Haitian Revolution. Byles' letter reflected the uncertainty of the colony remaining British, the anger British colonists felt towards Fédon, and the fear that all would be lost to a French Catholic free man of colour hiding in the impenetrable hills of Grenada's interior. Nicholls was the British colonists' last hope. At the end of April, he regained the outpost in Grenville overlooking the harbour, Pilot Hill. After gaining control of the eastern coast as well, he pushed the revolutionaries into the interior. He established posts in each parish to maintain control but could not rout the revolutionaries in the interior. As a result, Fédon remained in control of the colony's interior until late spring 1796.

3.2: Grenada and the French Revolution

The layers of conflict in the Caribbean at the time of Fédon's revolution made Grenada's revolutionary fervour even more worrying to the British. Their anxiety stemmed from the fact that Britain was at war with the new French republic. The Ceded Islands could once again be at risk of recapture.[40] British fear on this front was substantiated by the first reports of Fédon's attacks, which spread the assumption that the fighting was part of a French invasion.[41] But the greatest threat to the stability and success of this British colony came from within. The most dangerous residents, the British believed, were free people of colour. One eye-witness to the 1795 attacks noted that the main participants were the free people of colour born to a white father who were made 'more desperate and more dangerous' because of their marginalised state.[42] British officials, especially those with heavy investments in sugar production, were terrified that Fédon's revolution could quickly turn into a violent slave insurrection. Later reports of Fédon's movements alleged

[38] Betrayed by fellow revolutionary, Lussan. Anon, *A Brief Inquiry*, 71-75.

[39] Mathew, 'Reports man arrived from La Guaira, bringing information that they had received accounts at the end of September from Spanish St. Domingo and from Curaçao', 1 November 1791, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/31/91, ff300-2.

[40] Dubois, *Colony of Citizens* , 222-248.

[41] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 14; Hay, *Narrative of the Insurrection,* 24. Hay notes that Etienne Ventour told him French national troops had landed. Hay assumed he was telling the truth because he and those with him were wearing the national cockade, 'a . . . symbol of national patriotism' (Nicola J. Shilliam, "'Cocardes Nationales and Bonnets Rouges": Symbolic Headdresses of the French Revolution', *Journal of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* 5 (1993):114).

[42] Anon, *A Brief Inquiry*, 13

that enslaved people in the country parishes were revolting against their masters and joining Fédon in his bloody cause added weight to such fears.[43] Only too aware of the consequences of a violent slave insurrection, the British were terrified that the bloody conflict in Saint-Domingue and Guadeloupe would be repeated in Grenada. This fear only grew as more enslaved people joined Grenada's revolution.

The fear that the island's revolution was part of a French attack was not entirely untrue, however. Fédon's revolution in Grenada was planned as part of the French Revolution in the Caribbean. Only a few months before the Grenada revolution, Victor Hugues had defeated the British at Guadeloupe. He had been appointed the governor and immediately had set about establishing a colonial government in accord with the principles of the French Revolution. His priorities were to abolish slavery, to establish a plantation system that was viable without slavery, and to spread the French Revolution across the Caribbean. With the support many French colonists in British colonies gave to the conquering French navy during the American Revolution, Hugues knew he could count on French support in these British colonies.

By abolishing slavery, he garnered more support from free people of colour. In Paris at the end of March 1792, the National Assembly decreed political rights to all people of colour in French colonies. Later that year, after France was declared a Republic, French citizens in Guadeloupe took control of the formerly royalist-controlled colony.[44] Among these republican citizens were people of colour. The political rights they gained as republicans established an important precedent for the rest of the French Caribbean. Within the French republican empire, people of colour could vote and take an active role in government.[45] This promised freedom inspired slave uprisings across the Caribbean. In the years leading up to Fédon's revolution, enslaved Africans in Saint-Domingue and Guadeloupe had already begun their fight for freedom and equality.[46] In 1793-94, their fight led to the abolition of slavery, first in Saint-Domingue and, a few months later, across the entire French empire. French Revolutionary ideals motivated revolutionary uprisings in the Caribbean. Political rights and freedom for all colonists, regardless of race, was one powerful motive. Abolishing slavery

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[43] Turnbull, *Narrative of the Revolt,* 15.

[44] Christopher M. Church, *Paradise Destroyed: Catastrophe and Citizenship in the French Caribbean* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2017): 23-24. See Dubois, *Colony of Citizens*, 107-114, 119-123.

[45] Malick W. Ghachem, 'Introduction: Slavery and Citizenship in the Age of the Atlantic Revolutions', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 29 (2003): 7-17.

[46] Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2004); and Jeremy D. Popkin, *You Are All Free: The Haitian revolution and the Abolition of Slavery* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

in Guadeloupe after it fell to the French galvanised Hugues' support. It did not take long before his plans of revolutionary fervour spread to formerly French colonies. After Hugues took control of Guadeloupe in August 1794, he turned his attention to the formerly French colonies in the Windwards. In the first half of 1795, Hugues supported attacks on St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenada.[47]

Fédon's revolution was a direct part of Victor Hugues' campaign to bring revolution to the Caribbean and aligned with revolutionary ideals. Hugues supported Fédon's revolution by commissioning the leaders and providing arms and ammunition. Sometime between October 1794 and April 1795, Julien Fédon sent Jean Pierre Vallette and Charles Nogues as emissaries to Guadeloupe. There they met with Hugues and were given commissions for the revolution's leaders. Fédon, already voted the leader by his peers, was given the official rank of Commandant General. Stanislaus Besson was appointed second-in-command. Nogues and Vallette were appointed captains. Hugues also supported the Grenada revolution by providing the newly appointed revolutionaries with arms and ammunition.[48]

Fédon's goals aligned with those of the French Revolution. A few days after the revolutionaries initially attacked the colony, Charles Nogues and Joachim Philip arrived in St George's from Fédon's camp with two documents. The first was a demand for surrender written in French signed by Fédon himself, and the second was a letter in English from Hugues to colonial officials threatening retaliation if the officials executed any revolutionary of any race on any island. Both letters drew their authority from the National Convention in the Windward Islands. Both letters denounced colonial officials as cruel and barbarous tyrants. They denounced Frenchmen who worked for the colonial government, calling them 'traitors to their country'.[49] The phrasing of these documents aligned the Grenada Revolution with the goals of the French Revolution, to remove tyrannical rulers from power and to revert that power to the people. Fédon chose to write his demand in French in order to make his connection to the French Revolution clearer. He needed to communicate to the British that this was no slave uprising or disorganised revolt but a carefully planned and intentionally aligned part of the French Revolution in the Caribbean.

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[47] St Lucia the next month was another success. An attempted invasion of Anguilla failed the following year. Dubois, *Colony of Citizens,* 227-236.

[48] A necessary provision made even more important considering that arms in Grenada were kept locked up in storage. Witnesses alleged this is one reason that the British could not stop the revolutionaries when they attacked. See Anon, *A Brief Inquiry*, 12; Turnbull, *Narrative of the Revolt,* 16-17.

[49] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 9-12.

The symbols of revolution illustrated the alliance between Fédon and Hugues. Along with the commissions and arms, Hugues had sent symbols of the French Revolution to Grenada with Fédon's emissaries. Vallette and Nogues returned with symbols of the French republic—the tricolour cockade, Phrygian caps, and a large flag inscribed with the revolutionary cry, '*Liberté, Égalité, ou la Mort*'.[50] When John Hay was startled by the revolutionaries the night of 2 March and taken away to their camp, he noted that all were dressed in the short coats and national cockade that made up the French revolutionary uniform.[51] Nogues and Philip carried the flag with them when they brought demands for surrender to the Council in St George's. These revolutionaries, from the leaders to the newest recruits, understood that they were fighting as part of something greater than freedom and equality in Grenada. They were fighting as citizens of France. The revolutionaries used the tricolour to create a sense of community amongst themselves and aligned their cause visually with the revolutionary fight in other colonies.

Fédon's revolution symbolised freedom from slavery as well as equality and the chance to exercise political power, regardless of race or religion. Means to gain freedom from slavery were in place before Fédon's revolution. Grenada had undergone a sharp rise in manumissions after the British regained control in 1783.[52] Fédon and his family continued that trend through the early 1790s. and his family manumitted at least twenty-three enslaved people. The rapid rise in the population of free people of colour after 1783 was aided by the rise in manumissions and not only by natural growth and immigration. Freedom could also be obtained through military service. [53] The 'Africanisation' of the military was necessary because there were not enough white people able to serve. Grenada had a Black Corps since at least 1784.[54] The attraction to join Fédon and the revolution was not only an issue of desiring freedom, although that must have attracted many enslaved people. Free people of colour and enslaved men and women joined Fédon in the hope that discrimination could decrease and that the disabilities affixed to them because of race, ethnicity, or religion could be overturned.

[50] Garraway, *A Short Account*, 3, 9.

[51]William S. Cormack, 'Communications, the State, and Revolution in the French Caribbean', *French Colonial History* 6 (2005): 39.

[52] Jacobs, 'The Fédons of Grenada, 1763-1814', presented at Grenada Country Conference, Grenada, 2002.

[53] Lester D. Langley, *The Americas in the Age of Revolution*, 1750-1850 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996): 104-5

[54] Edward Mathew, 'Transmits June and July Returns of the Regiments serving in Islands, lately under his command', 28 July 1784, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/25/37, ff191-2; Dubois, *Colony of Citizens* , 231.

For the white French planters who joined Fédon, the revolution was as much a revolt against British rule as it was a bid for freedom and equality. Although the tolerant policies of the 1760s and 1770s had granted Grenada's French population unprecedented opportunities in government, those rights had not been restored to them in 1783. Some voting rights still existed but were no more than a reluctant concession of laws that would soon be obsolete. In 1789, French colonists had attempted to regain their political rights by putting forward M. Prudhomme of the town of St George's for a seat in the Assembly.[55] Despite Prudhomme receiving the majority vote, he was not allowed his seat , which was given instead to the British incumbent. In effect, French colonists had no political rights, either of representation or enfranchisement. They joined Fédon in a bid to regain their own rights in full as Frenchmen.

3.3: Free people of colour and the bonds of Catholic ritual

Many of Julien Fédon's primary supporters were Catholic, French colonists and free people of colour who were descendants of French colonists. The network that developed amongst these groups and especially the network of free people of colour were crucial to the revolution's success. Understanding how this network developed and worked in Grenadian society is critical for understanding how this network contributed to the religious landscape of the colony and why it was irrevocably altered by revolution.

Fédon's ability to support an attempt for control in Grenada rested on the support he could expect from free people of colour and French planters in Grenada. Fédon's supporters may have joined his revolution because they were inspired by revolutionary ideals as the French Republic expanded its influence in the West Indies.[56] But support for Fédon was also in response to the particular colonial situation in Grenada. Political exclusion for French colonists of any race was a significant impetus as was social exclusion and religious discrimination. The latter had been an issue since the British had first taken control in 1763 when Catholicism was an important part of French Grenadian society. Catholic clergy had established churches and glebe lands in each parish at the time of British conquest.[57] The clergy maintained a steady presence in the colony throughout the following

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[55] Edward Mathew to Lord Sydney, 'Reference to French inhabitants of Grenada and relating to their admission into the Council and Assembly', 30 May 1789, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/29/8, ff88-9.

[56] Johnson, 'Religion and the Atlantic World', 59-61.

[57] Daniel Paterson, *A New Plan of the Island of Grenada* (London: William Faden, 1780).

Edward Mathew, 'Description of French Church Lands in Grenada', 27 December 1784, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/26/13, ff74-6.

decades. Initially, the British colonial government tolerated Catholicism as a religious practice and even went so far as to allow white French Catholics the political rights of enfranchisement and political representation. However, these tolerant policies did not deter the British from attempting to gain control of Catholic glebe lands to support their own clergy.[58] This controversy over the glebe lands remained an issue in colonial politics in 1783, when Britain recaptured the colony from the French.

At this new turnover, the British were much less tolerant. They revoked former political privileges through the new Treaty of Paris (1783). The new treaty restored the island to British control under the same conditions delineated by the Treaty of Paris (1763). Crucially, these new terms disregarded any legislation clarifying the position of French Catholics in Grenadian society that had been passed between 1763 and 1783. This meant that French Catholics of any race and from any social class were prevented from voting in elections, from standing for and being elected to public office, and from sitting on the colonial legislature in either an elected or appointed position. Many white French planters left the colony after 1783, refusing to subject themselves to these terms. Making matters worse, after the new treaty was established, British colonial authorities reignited their attempts to take over Catholic glebe lands. Attempts prior to 1783 had been unsuccessful, partly because the British did not have an established clergy and struggled to establish Anglicanism in any capacity.[59] Now they claimed rightful ownership, in the name of the Crown, of Catholic glebe lands, including the church buildings. The colonial legislature, aware of growing discord between the French and British colonists, suggested that the churches ought to be shared between the two denominations. The Catholics refused this compromise, arguing that sharing their churches was a desecration of sanctified space. In early October 1790, a group of armed British soldiers forced open the doors of the Catholic church in St George's and destroyed the images and sacred items they found inside.[60] The invasion of their churches by force outraged Catholic residents, particularly their priest, Pére Felicien. Felicien began holding services in the parsonage in protest and continued

[58] Edward Mathew, 'Encloses petition from the Council and Assembly of Grenada to the King relating to the Roman Catholic religion in Grenada and Church property', 7 April 1785, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/26/35, ff131-5; Edward Mathew, 'Reference to French inhabitants of Grenada and relating to their admission into the Council and Assembly', 30 May 1789, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/29/8, ff28-9; Frederick Maitland, 'Transmits an application from the House of Assembly regarding appropriation by the legislature of the revenues from the Church lands [previously Roman Catholic Church land]', 24 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/2, ff4-7.

[59] The first clergyman appointed to Grenada died before he even left Britain. At the time of the recapitulation in 1783, Grenada had only had four other clergymen resident at any time between 1763-1783. See Table 4:1.

[60] Edward Mathew, 'Reference to 'new' subjects and letter reporting that a detachment of 50 Grenadiers with bayonets forcibly opened the Parish church at St. George's in Grenada', 30 October 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/30/57, ff275-8.

to do so until he was expelled from the island as a disloyal subject in 1795.[61] The attack on Catholicism helped to unify French Catholics under Fédon.[62] As a result, the network of free people of colour in Grenada was strengthened by a common religious identity while also strengthening Catholic religious identity through Catholic rituals, particularly marriage and baptism.

The networks of free people of colour were a crucial development for their political and social advancement in colonial society, even though civil freedoms were continually denied free people of colour until 1832.[63] Colonial society was formed of three main social groups: free whites, free people of colour and enslaved Africans.[64] The hierarchy of a slave society, like colonial Grenada, formed around racial distinctions, wealth and religious identity. This hierarchy triangulated at the end of the eighteenth century after the French captured Grenada in 1779. During the brief reinstatement of French rule, Grenada's French population expanded. Many of the new colonists were free people of colour. Between 1777 and 1783, the free people of colour population jumped from 210 to 1,125. That increase contrasted with a drop in white colonists whose numbers fell from 1,324 to 996.[65] As a result, free people of colour were in the majority within colonial environs. This was a new dynamic in the colony, and the political and social exclusion of free people of colour from elite colonial society became even more pronounced. Most of these new colonists moved to the island from French Catholic colonies around the Caribbean.[66] The large number of French immigrants worried British colonial officials so much that they enacted a series of laws between 1783 and 1815, at times prohibiting immigration entirely and at other times carefully legislating the terms for immigration.[67] Ninian Home, who governed Grenada at the start of Fédon's revolution, made removing French immigrants a priority, stating at the start of his governorship in 1793 that

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[61] Thomas May, 'State of churches in Grenada', 1796, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Archives, Fulham Papers, XX 27/6/18, ff160.

[62] Jacobs, 'Pascal Mardel', 321-25.

[63] This bill removed disabilities from free people of colour and allowed Roman Catholics to serve on the Legislature. *The Grenada Handbook* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., 1897): 42; 'An Act for the relief of certain classes of His Majesty's subjects within this government', 1832, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/13, ff101-11.

[64] Distinctions within these groups could also be racial. See Arnold A. Sio, 'Race, Colour, and Miscegenation: The Free Coloured of Jamaica and Barbados', *Caribbean Studies* 16 (1976): 5-21.

[65] Edward Mathew, 'Transmits a copy of a statement of the inhabitants of Grenada at different periods signed by Arthur Leith', 12 April 1788, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/28/33, ff121-3.

[66] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 19.

[67] Henry Dundas to Ninian Home, 1 May 1793, Whitehall, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/33/17,ff65-8; Ninian Home to Henry Dundas, 'Refers to measures previously reported 'for clearing this Colony from the suspicious Foreigners who have resorted here', 10 April 1793, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/33/20, ff77-80.

he took the 'earliest and most effectual measures in [his] power to remove them from the Colony'.[68] To British officials, the 'suspicious foreigners' coming in from the French West Indies were suspect enough, not to mention concerns about the enslaved people they brought with them.[69] Ostracised because of their race, ethnicity, and religion, the social grouping of free people of colour was the only social space where French Catholic free people of colour could advance their status within the colony.

As discussed in the previous chapter, white society developed into a power structure based in sugar wealth. By 1783, power in Grenada was synonymous with white Protestant sugar planters. Their prosperity afforded them the privilege of absenteeism and the ear of Parliament. The least powerful in white colonial society were tradesmen and overseers. These latter usually owned no land; many of them were young arrivals who took these jobs in hopes of eventually acquiring a higher position through land speculation, individually or in a cooperation.[70] For free people of colour, gaining a position of power in society was more difficult. Often disadvantaged by their religious identity as Catholics, free people of colour could only hope to engage in colonial politics by identifying as Protestants and by owning sugar plantations. In the late eighteenth century, few free people of colour met even one of these characteristics. Louis la Grenade was the only free person of colour who met both. Not being part of the privileged society lowered free people of colour's chances of making business connections and raising their social standing. The network provided those connections and was a means for improving social status.

3.3.1: Status and the networks of free people of colour

Property, especially estates, distinguished the well-off of all free classes in society but had an especial meaning for free people of colour society. Free people of colour predominantly owned small subsistence farms rather than the large estates typical of the British planter.[71] A sugar estate owned by a free person of colour signified that person's position as the upper echelons in society of

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[68] Ninian Home to Henry Dundas, 'Reports arrival in Grenada and has assumed the government', 28 January 1793, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/33/9, ff19-20.

[69] Ninian Home to Henry Dundas, 'Refers to measures previously reported 'for clearing this Colony from the suspicious Foreigners who have resorted here', 10 April 1793, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/33/20, ff77-80; Samuel Williams to Henry Dundas, 'Refers to exertions to preserve the 'tranquillity' of the colony and to the legislature', 28 December 1792, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/33/5, ff11-12.

[70] Stephen Mullen, 'A Glasgow-West India Merchant House and the Imperial Dividend, 1779–1867', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 33 (2013): 196-233; Mark Quintanilla, 'Mercantile Communities in the Ceded Islands: The Alexander Bartlet & George Campbell Company', *International Social Science Review* 79 (2004): 15-17.

[71] Daniel Paterson, *A Topographical Description of the Island of Grenada* (London: W. Faden, 1780).

free people of colour and even, for some, their position in colonial society as a whole. The Philip family became prominent in both free society of colour and in white society.

The Philip's prominence was linked in part to their extensive landownership with multiple estates in sugar. Honoré Philip, a former Parisian baker, died before 1775 and left all his property to his wife, Jeannette, a formerly enslaved woman.[72] By the 1780s, the Honoré Philips family owned the Grand Ance, Susannah, and Tyrell Bay estates in southern Carriacou as well as Petite Ance and North Point in Petite Martinique.[73] Several members of that immediate family also owned property in Trinidad, where a couple of the siblings had relocated. The extended family, particularly a French uncle François, also owned some land on the mainland of Grenada.[74] After the death of both parents, the bulk of the Philip's estate fell to Judith Philip, then consort of Edmund Thornton, an English plantation manager in Carriacou.[75] Her prominence in society did not grow beyond her inherited plantation wealth until after Fédon's revolution and after she had separated from Thornton. After the revolutionary fervour died down in Grenada, Philip moved quietly back to her childhood home from her house on Great Coram Street in London.[76] In the following years, she built her reputation as one of the most prominent individuals in Grenada, largely because of her three estates worked by hundreds of enslaved people. She was initially viewed with some suspicion—her brother Joachim had been one of Fédon's lieutenants—which changed to some regard as her prominence grew in the early nineteenth century. She invested in the sugar industry, which required a substantial financial investment in purchasing sugar refining equipment and enslaved people to work the plantation.[77] Her wealth and property ownership gave her prominence in colonial society, specifically listed as one of the island's 'principal inhabitants' in 1834.[78] Property ownership

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[72] Candlin, *Last Caribbean Frontier*, 9-10; Lorna McDaniels, 'The Philips: A "Free" Mulatto Family of Grenada', *The Journal of Caribbean History* 24 (1990): 179-181.

[73] 'Grenada: St Andrew, St David, Carriacou and the Grenadines', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/267, ff230; 'Grenada: Carriacou Island: general registry', 1833, T 71/319, ff133.

[74] François was a Justice of the Peace. See 'Marie Magdalaine Vigi Philip', *Legacies of British Slave-ownership*, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/29174>.

[75] 'Will of Judith Philip', 26 December 1849, Grenada, The National Archives, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/2105/45, ff51-2.

[76] Candlin, Kit, and Cassandra Pybus, *Enterprising Women: Gender, Race, and Power in the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015): 69-71, 76-79.

[77] Quintanilla, 'Alexander Campbell', 246.

[78] See Sir Lionel Smith, 'Transmits further communication on the case of asking for the King's mercy for an enslaved person called José', 12 August 1834, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/78/22, ff144-7 when Judith Philip was listed as one of the island's principal inhabitants.

contributed to Philip's prominence and positioned that family as part of the elite within free society of colour.

Julien Fédon, leader of the revolution, achieved his elite status in free society of colour without extensive property and sugar wealth. Unlike the Philips, the Fédons owned comparatively little property. Most free people of colour, like the Fédons, usually planted coffee and cacao (or cotton, in Carriacou), because those crops required less investment in equipment and enslaved labour than sugar did.[79] Julien Fédon, leader of the 1795 revolution in Grenada, was the son of a Frenchman, Pierre Fédon, who had moved to Martinique in 1749.[80] Pierre, like many of his contemporaries, moved to the West Indies in hopes of bettering his circumstances.[81] While in Martinique, Pierre met and married Brigitte, a black woman from Martinique. Sometime between Pierre's arrival in Martinique in 1749 and the British conquest of Grenada in 1763, the Fédons moved to Grenada. By the time of his death, Pierre Fédon was the owner of some land in St Mark near the centre of the island, a mountainous area best suited for coffee and cocoa cultivation. In 1788, the six Fédon siblings, three brothers and three sisters, gifted their widowed mother, Brigitte, two parcels of land in St Mark that had formerly been their father's. The Fédons were well established planters by then, and both Julien and Jean Fédon owned their own estates. By the time of the revolution in 1795, Julien owned Belvidere, a 360-acre coffee plantation in the mountains of St John's, and Jean owned Montreal in St Mark, a modest 141-acre estate.[82] The third Fédon brother may have been employed as a merchant or worked in skilled labour, occupations filled by many of Grenada's free people of colour residents.[83] The combined worth of Julien and Jean's plantations also contributed to the Fédon family's social standing in free society of colour as owners of substantial coffee and cocoa estates.

Julien Fédon's family history of long and peaceful residence in Grenada provided him with many intimate connections across the social network of free people of colour, nearly all of whom banded together with him against the British in 1795. Some of these networks were established through business connections, often solidified by intermarriages. The Cloziers, another French Catholic

[79]John Beck Ryden, '"One of the Finest and Most Fruitful Spots in America": An Analysis of Eighteenth Century Carriacou', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 43 (2013): 539-70.

[80] Jacobs, 'Fédons of Grenada'. Pierre Fédon paid taxes on slaves in 1763 ('Extracts from the capitulation rolls', 1763, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff26).

[81] Another prominent family in Grenada, the Philips, had similar beginnings. See Candlin, 8-18; McDaniels, 'The Philips', 178-194.

[82] Possibly Lot 23 on Paterson's map [*A New Plan of the Island of Grenada* (London: William Faden, 1780)]. Deed Book C4: 252, 259 in Jacobs, 'Fédons of Grenada'.

[83] McDaniels, 'The Philips', 185.

family of prominence, had such an extensive family network in Grenada that every planting venture undertaken by one was supported or joined with another. Wealthier family members helped their poorer relatives to secure property that allowed them to engage in commercial activity beyond the colony. In this way, a poor tailor like Charles Nogues another of Fédon's lieutenants, could purchase a small plot and contribute to the colony exports of low-overhead crops, such as cotton, cocoa, or coffee.[84] These commercial networks helped create an internal market, as free people of colour and enslaved people traded their produce at weekly markets.[85] The networks also contributed to the economic growth of the island as free people of colour traded beyond their colonial borders. For free people of colour, positions of prominence within Grenadian society could be bolstered by interfamilial connections made through the network of free people of colour.

3.3.2: Ritual and the networks of free people of colour

Although landownership and mercantile connections were important for attaining social status, the network of free people of colour achieved its close connections through religious ritual, particularly through the rites of marriage and baptism. The rite of marriage strengthened not only the familial and mercantile ties within the colony but also strengthened revolutionary ties. Similar to other colonies that reverberated with revolutionary ideals, Grenada's French Catholic free people of colour 'continued to use the structure of the Catholic Church to strengthen their blended communities'.[86] For example, Judith Philip set aside £20 Grenada currency in her will to be used by the Church 'for the purpose of saying the customary masses or prayers'.[87] Her desire reflected her attachment to her religious identity 'as a Christian of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church'. The rituals of the Catholic Church helped Grenada's free people of colour maintain their religious identities.

Many of Fédon's supporters in the 1795 revolution were bonded through the rituals of the Catholic Church. A look at the St George's baptismal and marriage records for 1779-1782 shows a number of baptisms of children were free people of colour.[88] Such seems to be the case of a child named

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[84] Wise, *Review of the Events*, 8; Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 62-65.

[85] See Woodville K. Marshall, 'Provision Ground and Plantation Labour in Four Windward Islands: Competition for Resources During Slavery', *Slavery and Abolition* 12 (1991): 48-67.

[86] Jane G. Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010): 89. Landers uses Saint Domingue as an example.

[87] 'Will of Judith Philip', 26 December 1849, Grenada, The National Archives, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11/2105/45, ff52.

[88] St George's Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1762-1785, Grenada, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 295/2/2, n.f.

Bernard who was baptised in November 1787 to an unnamed 'mulattresse libre' whose godmother was also a free woman of colour.[89] The contents of this and other registers made within the same time period show that free people of colour made up most of the baptisms and marriages taking place within the Catholic Church. The rituals surrounding birth and marriage were crucial to maintaining Catholic religious identities in a British colony.

The rite of marriage had the double benefit of establishing business connections while also strengthening social and cultural norms within French Catholic society. Because marriages conducted by the Catholic Church were not recognised by British colonial authorities, some French Catholic free people of colour had two ceremonies. Julien Fédon married Marie Cavelan in 1774, when Grenada was under British control. The Cavelan family, old friends of the Fédon family, owned a 192-acre coffee and cacao plantation in St Mark in 1763.[90] The three Fédon brothers married three Cavelan sisters. Julien married Marie Rose; Etienne married Elizabeth; and Jean married Marguerite.[91] In 1780, when Grenada had reverted temporarily to French control, Fédon and Marie Cavelan were remarried by a Catholic priest in St John parish. Later that same year, the parish records show that Fédon and Marie Cavelan's daughter was baptised in the Catholic Church.[92] They may have chosen to be remarried at this point because of the pregnancy. The unification of these two families strengthened their modest rise in free society of colour and forged stronger business connections within the family network. The rituals of marriage and baptism underscore how important Catholicism was to these families.

More than a spiritual connection, some Catholic rituals also indicated a growing social status, such as the ritual of baptism.[93] Free people of colour had few opportunities to hold positions of social authority. Standing as godparent to the children of other free people of colour bestowed social prominence. Fédon, as a man growing in social status, joined his mother as godparent at the baptism of his brother Jean's daughter in April 1780. This signified his growing stature within the family network. His growing prominence would later aid his rallying the network of free people of colour to revolution in 1795.

[89] St George's Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1762-1785, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 295/2/2, f8.

[90] Lot 4 on Paterson's map [*A New Plan of the Island of Grenada* (London: William Faden, 1780)].

[91] Jacobs, 'Fédons of Grenada'.

[92] Gouyave Register of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1779-1782, Grenada, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 295/2/3, 2.

[93] Landers, *Atlantic Creoles*, 42.

Taking advantage of this network, Fédon inspired about half of the island's free people of colour to join his venture. The eighteen months of the revolutionaries' control of the colony could take place because of the support the revolutionaries received from this network. The network of free people of colour had grown during the French occupation when that population jumped from around 210 to 1125.[94] French free people of colour made up 40% of the island militia in 1794, nearly matching the 49% of British-born militiamen.[95] Julien Fédon would have so much influence in people of colour society that he was able to galvanise nearly that entire group under his leadership in the revolution. His closest advisors and lieutenants were all connected to him and his family by marriage or through business ventures. When Fédon's revolution broke out in 1795, he could rely on this network of free people of colour for financial and military support.

Fédon actively recruited enslaved people for the cause. Because white people had nearly completely deserted the country parishes, enslaved men and women were abandoned to fate on the plantations with no arms to protect themselves. Nor was there much food available to enslaved people after the revolutionaries looted and burned all the storehouses they encountered. Cox estimates around 4000 former slaves joined the revolution throughout Fédon's eighteen months in control.[96] For some, joining the revolution was the only way they could survive. For others, joining meant much more. Fédon promised freedom from slavery. According to the National Convention, slavery was abolished in all French colonies. By declaring the terms of surrender under the revolutionary colours of France, Fédon signalled his support of the abolition of slavery. More than that, he had liberated enslaved people during his initial attacks, offering them a part in the revolution.[97] Those who chose to join him became as free as Fédon himself. Should the colony remain under the control of Fédon and take its place in the empire of the First Republic, all enslaved people would remain free and equal.

Fédon's support remained steady amongst French inhabitants, including white French colonists. Their political rights to vote and to sit as representatives in the legislature were stripped away when the British reclaimed Grenada in 1783. They hoped that supporting Fédon would bring the colony back into the French empire and restore their rights as Frenchmen. One commentator of the events in 1795 argued that the governors intentionally withheld the knowledge that the position of

[94] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 38.

[95] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 86.

[96] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 68.

[97] Hay, *Narrative of the Insurrection*, 29. Jacobs also suggests that Fédon and his company had freed their own slaves prior to the revolution breaking out (Jacobs, 'Fédons of Grenada').

French Catholic subjects reverted to the same status they had in 1779 rather than their status in 1763.[98] This caused resentment amongst French colonists who found themselves once again disenfranchised and unrepresented.

Adding to French Catholic grievances, the British establishment continued to harass Catholic clergy throughout the 1790s. Taking control of the Catholic churches was only the first step. The British wanted control of Catholic glebe lands and priests' houses. They intended to destabilise the power of the Catholic church on the island, especially within the society of free people of colour. 'An Act for Providing a Support for the Clergy of these Islands', originally passed in 1785, was finally put into effect for Catholic glebe lands.[99] The Act turned over the control of Catholic glebes to the Anglican clergy, diminishing the revenue Catholic clergy received and destabilising their livings. The Act, coupled with the invasion of the Catholic church in Gouyave, was widely considered an attack on all who practiced Catholicism, especially those who rose up together in revolution against the British.

The revolutionary era heightened tension around any kind of resistance to British rule. In Grenada, this tension was already at work because of the many French colonists in free white society.[100] British colonists looked with suspicion on their French Catholic neighbours, mindful of the French colonists' support of the French invasion in 1779. The British retaliated by adopting stronger anti-Catholic measures after the British reclaimed the colony in 1783. This was an oblique way to restrict French colonists, since officially the British colonial government was obliged to recognise tolerant policies. The coalescing of revolution with Catholicism in Fédon's revolution strengthened the British colonists' distrust of Catholicism, leading to a renewal of anti-Catholic strategies after the revolution.

3.4: Consequences of the revolution for free people of colour

The contemporary accounts of Fédon's revolution unanimously called the events an insurrection. This perspective reinforced the hierarchy of power at play in colonial Grenada. British colonists

[98] Anonymous, *A Brief Inquiry*, 1-15.

[99] Samuel Dent to Bishop of London, 22 October 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Archives, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155; Abraham Bishop to Pere Felicien, 11 May 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Archives, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff153.

Edward Mathew, 'Secretary of State's circular of 6 July about clergy of all denominations in Grenada shall be looked at immediately', 31 August 1789, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/29/26, ff198-207.

[100] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 38.

positioned themselves as the affronted party and Fédon the thankless villain.[101] Like their ancestors, Grenada's French free people of colour were residents in the colony at the king's pleasure. They were all 'new subjects' who swore loyalty to Britain.[102] Although one commentator on the revolution placed some of the blame on the British government for their treatment of free people of colour, each of the eight accounts conclude that Fédon and his revolutionaries committed treason. Fédon's motives for instigating the revolution were in response to the revolutionary fervour that gripped the Caribbean. He optimistically assumed that his revolution would win out over the British and initiate revolutionary equality and liberty in a deeply divided colony. Instead, his revolution met a bitter end in defeat, and he became entrenched in colonial memory as a traitor. This perspective heavily informed British reactions to the defeat of Fédon. The revolution's failure informed the British response to redefine the revolution as an uprising against British rule by the uneducated and easily swayed—a slur against free people of colour that persisted in every retelling of the events during British colonisation.

The trials began on 27 June 1796, several months after General Nicholls had led the defining attack on Fédon's camp. The Act of Attainder (August 1795) named 454 revolutionaries as traitors to the king and demanded they surrender themselves to the authorities.[103] In the hope that they would be shown mercy, 106 of those named gave themselves up. They were tried between 27 June and 17 November 1796. Many of these men denied they were the ones named in the Act of Attainder attempting to preserve their lives. Both William Ker and John Hay who had been held captive at Belvidere were called as witnesses and attested to the accused men's involvement.[104] By September, most revolutionaries admitted their involvement publicly by averring that their name in the Act of Attainder was correct. As the trials moved on, several men continued to contest that they were not those named in the Act. This shifting of their stated involvement can be explained by the severity of the sentence these men faced. Those who protested their involvement were not exonerated. The court countered that they were indeed involved. The same sentence was passed whether the men

[101] J. D. G. Garraway's poem is a paeon to the martyrs of the revolution. His sentiments are similarly expressed on the memorial to the British colonists killed in the revolution (Anthony Cardon, Sir Richard Westmacott. *[Monument to the Memory of the Inhabitants of Grenada Murdered at Mount Quaqua, 8th of April, 1795] / R. Westmacott Jun.r Invenit Et in Marmore Fecit. ; Anth.y Cardon Sculp.*, 1799. print reproduction King George III's Topographical Collection, British Library).

[102] 'States he is sorry to learn that the contest between old and new subjects is likely to continue with so much warmth', 22 May 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/30/5, ff12-13; Jessica Harland-Jacobs, 'Incorporating the King's New Subjects: Accommodation and Anti-Catholicism in the British Empire, 1763-1815', *Journal of Religious History* 39 (2015): 208-210.

[103] Act of Attainder, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff 2-20.

[104] Court of Oyer, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff23-25.

protested or not. Forty-six people were executed in early July.[105] Another execution took place in September. Most of the people who were executed later simply admitted their involvement, knowing that protesting in an attempt to get off the charge was ineffectual. French records attest that several of the executed were women and children. In September, a further twenty-six revolutionaries were executed. The last executions took place in October when five more people were executed. It is possible that twenty-six more people were executed between July and November; these twenty-six were recorded as having been sentenced to execution but without a definite execution date listed. In total, over one hundred indicted revolutionaries were executed. Only three men who were tried escaped execution. Two were acquitted of the charge and one was sentenced but not executed. The two acquitted were not free to live undisturbed in society, however. Possibly both were among those exiled to Honduras.[106]

The trials targeted these free people of colour almost exclusively. This points to the proportionally greater involvement of French free people of colour to French whites in the revolution and underscores the British belief that the real enemy was not white French colonists but French free people of colour. The way British officials treated accused white Frenchmen illustrates their attitude toward the revolutionaries. Out of 106 tried revolutionaries, only three or four were white. At least two white men who were accused of revolutionary involvement were acquitted of that charge based on 'extenuating circumstances'.[107] In his letter to the Duke of Portland, Governor Charles Green even added that perhaps these men should be allowed more than their lives, suggesting that they reclaim their forfeited lands. Green's only proviso was that they take up residence somewhere outwith British dominions. With only three exceptions, free people of colour similarly tried were not acquitted or allowed any special treatment by colonial officials in contrast to only one white person receiving a guilty sentence. The trials were not meant to try white colonists for revolutionary activity but free people of colour.

Despite accusing 463 participants, the British brought only a quarter of those to trial. The 106 revolutionaries tried for their involvement represented over 4,000 people who were directly

[105] 1 July and 9 July. Thirty-eight French citizens are listed, including several women and children who were executed as insurgents (Arnaud Vendryes, 'French Revolution in Grenada', David Watson and Ernest Wiltshire, trans., https://www.ghcaraibe.org/hist/grenada1.html)

[106] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 89.

[107] Charles Green, 'Refers to the Court of Oyer and Terminer held by his special commission for the trial of the remaining 'insurgents' in custody', 21 October 1797, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/35/31, ff120-4.

involved in the revolution. Many of the accused participants managed to escape capture.[108] When it was clear that the revolution had failed, many of the revolutionaries fled their camp in Belvidere. Some escaped to surrounding colonies, while others were killed in the final struggle against the British. Fédon himself escaped capture, allegedly fleeing to Carriacou or Tobago in a canoe.[109] Others took refuge in the near impenetrable interior of Grenada. Like many enslaved people who lived in the interior of the colony, Jacques Chadeau was intimately familiar with the mountains and forests around Grenada's extinct volcano, Mount St Catherine. He escaped capture by hiding out in the dense forest of the island's interior.[110] Chadeau and others like him were constantly at risk of capture by the colonial militia which hunted marooned revolutionaries. He was one of the last men brought to trial and had formerly been enslaved. Chadeau was brought to trial in 1807 for his role as a captain under Fédon. Chadeau's trial had the same characteristics of the earlier trials. The goal of the trials was not so much justice as it was revenge for the revolutionaries' 'total extirpation of His [Majesty's] Loyal Subjects of this Island'.[111]

3.4.1: Impact on free people of colour

The impact of the trials was keenly felt by free people of colour. The British opposition to free people of colour pervaded society from legislative measures to the colonial narratives about the revolution. Legislative measures were enacted to prevent immigration of free people of colour from other colonies. The Vagabond Act (1794) highlighted concerns about foreigners and free people of colour before the revolution. This act restricted the rights of immigrants who came to the island after the British recapitulation in 1783. As a result of the revolution, these measures were applied to all immigrants and all free people of colour regardless of their length of residence.[112] The new

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[108] Duke of Portland, 'Refers to trials of individuals from the Fédon Revolution', August 1796, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/34/49, ff238-42.

[109] Alexander Houston, 'States that since his letter of 30 July, 'the Insurgents have done no mischief whatever', 19 September 1796, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/34/54, ff264-6.

[110] Frederick Maitland, 'Reports capture of Jacques Chadeau, a person of African descent, who had been a captain under Fédon during the revolution', 14 June 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/5, ff16-7.

[111] Act of Attainder, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff 6.

[112] 'An act for better regulating the police in the island of Grenada and the Grenadines thereon dependent, and for preventing the introduction and residence of persons whose sentiments and conduct are inimical to the excellent constitution and government of Great Britain and may tend to endanger the security of this colony', 3 May 1798, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/10, ff42-47; An Act to continue in force 'An act for better regulating . . . this colony' for the space of two years from and after the time limited by the said act for the expiration thereof', 26 January 1803, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/10, ff168.

legislative measures inhibited free people of colour by restricting their property rights, their movement between colonies, and their freedom of worship.

Property rights were crucial to free people of colour as one of their only means to status in the colony. Owning property gave an individual economic stability. After the revolution, properties of known revolutionaries were seized along with any people enslaved on those estates. The forfeiture of estates reduced the number of plantations owned by free people of colour and shifted the plantocracy to an even more dominant white elite. Many of the estates forfeited in the 1790s were purchased by planters who already owned estates in the colony. The Duquesne estate was one. The large sugar estate was seized from the Clozier brothers, one of whom was executed after the revolution.[113] The property was taken over by David McEwan who administered and sold forfeited estates.[114] For the following decades, ownership of the estate was contested by heirs of revolutionaries, including James Gerbet Dumont. Gerbet Dumont eventually became a joint owner of the estate in 1834. Before the 1830s, however, free people of colour as plantation owners of any significant estate were few. With restricted property rights came diminished sources of revenue. This impacted networks of free people of colour which had formerly achieved their strength through advantageous business connections with similarly wealthy free people of colour. The network of free people of colour that had developed around landownership before Fédon's revolution was now compelled to find new ways of connecting as a community.

Movement between colonies also restricted the development of community for free people of colour. Before the revolution, the network of free people of colour extended beyond Grenada. Many of the revolutionaries had friends and family in other colonies. Those family members were immediately suspect and denied entry.[115] Free people of colour who had left the island during the revolution were also scrutinised before allowed entry. All foreigners, of any race, were obliged to identify themselves and to submit to questioning about their residence. This questioning would determine whether or not they lived according to the treaty stipulations of both 1763 and 1783. They had to prove that they were naturalised subjects. Anyone found outwith these conditions had ten days to leave the colony. Since by this point most white French colonists had departed, these

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[113] Court of Oyer, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff24-25, 67-68; Paterson, *Topographical Description*, 9. The Cloziers swore allegiance to Britain in 1765 (Hertford to Halifax, 'This letter is being delivered by a French subject owning an estate in Grenada and asking to take an oath of allegiance', 25 May 1765, Paris, The National Archives, Records of the State Paper Office, SP 78/266/59, ff160).

[114] David McEwan, 'No. 1759: Regarding the management of the forfeited estates in Grenada', 25 January 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 1/3807, ff1-9.

[115] Charles Green, 'Acknowledges receipt of letter transmitting extract of a letter from the Duke of Choisel to William Windham', 3 December 1797, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/35/38, ff146-7.

measures were adopted primarily to control the movements of free people of colour. All this was done to remove 'public trust and confidence of every Foreigner of every description'.[116]

3.4.2: Impact on the practice of Catholicism

The restrictions placed on free people of colour after the revolution impacted Catholic power. However, the people who practiced Catholicism during the early 1800s were people with little or no power at all. It is possible that with the execution of many Frenchmen and free men of colour after the revolution Catholicism remained in the colony as one of the religious identities of free women of colour. It seems too that many enslaved Africans also identified as Catholic. Catholicism diminished in power in part because Fédon's revolution resulted in a greater degree of intolerance as well as a stronger association with society's least powerful groups. Free women of colour practicing Catholicism preserved it as a religious expression on the island while inadvertently changing the basis of Catholicism's entire existence. How enslaved Catholicism became part of the colonial religious landscape is the subject of the next chapter.

In the aftermath of the trials, the society of free people of colour suffered a reduction in men. While the actual gender balance is unknown, the widows and free women of colour who owned slaves and small plots of land indicates a gender imbalance. Many women were listed as slave owners, largely in the towns in the first official slave register in 1817.[117] At the end of the trials, the Grand Jury recommended that all women 'who by any ties of blood or marriage are or have been attached in any manner to any person who has been concerned in the late dreadful insurrection' should be removed from the colony.[118] They were concerned that these women would spread revolutionary ideas and would inspire more rebellion against the British. Several of these women's names match the surnames of those men listed in the Act of Attainder. For example, Mary Cazeneuve is listed as a slave owner in St George's. She was illiterate. Mary owned fourteen slaves, three men and eleven women.[119] François Cazeneuve was indicted in 1797 and executed on 9 July. Similarly, Clovis Chantimel was executed along with François. The slave register of 1817 listed Sylvia Chantimel as a

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[116] Court of Oyer, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff70.

[117] For example, see 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/265 for St George's (town); and 'Grenada: St Andrew, St David, Carriacou and the Grenadines', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/267 for Sauteurs.

[118] Court of Oyer, 1796, Grenada, British Library, , Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6, ff70.

[119] 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/265, ff32.

resident of St George's who owned nineteen slaves.[120] In 1823, she was listed as a resident of Sauteurs, St Patrick.[121] These four represent over a dozen names that match in the surviving records. While this is not conclusive evidence of a link, this does point the fact that many French residents continued to live in the colony after the revolution, some of them likely related in some way to the revolutionaries.

It is difficult to determine how many practicing Catholics were female around the turn of the century. By then, free women of colour outstripped the male population two to one.[122] In 1783, French women of colour numbered 940 while the men were only 185.[123] Most, if not all French free people of colour, would have identified as Roman Catholics. By the turn of the century, free people of colour, both French and English, numbered only 813. This change in population was the result of 106 free people of colour being executed or exiled during the trials. A census describing the gender change in the free people of colour population after the trials did not come about until 1822, a decade later. That census listed 1,277 men and 2,041 women. The census does not mention religious identity, but the register of Roman Catholics in Grenada in 1830 shows a large congregation of free people of colour. In 1830, there were 4,033 free people of colour in Grenada, 2,358 of whom were female.[124] Around 3,007 free people of colour identified as Roman Catholic.[125] Since women made up more than half the island's population of free people of colour, it is very likely that most Catholic church attendees were female. While this population evidence cannot conclusively prove that women were primarily Catholic, the evidence does show a strong propensity to that conclusion.

A gendered practice of Catholicism was not the only inadvertent change to that denomination's presence in the island. The other important shift was that Catholicism was forced on the move. By the turn of the century, the Catholic churches and glebe lands were administered by the British colonial government on behalf of the Church of England. Several of them had been destroyed during

[120] 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/265, ff168.

[121] 'Grenada: all except St. George: increase and decrease', 1823, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/285, ff82; 'Grenada: Other districts', 1826, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/299, ff103.

[122] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 23.

[123] Edward Mathew, 'Transmits a copy of a statement of the inhabitants of Grenada at different periods signed by Arthur Leith', 12 April 1788, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/28/33, ff121-3.

[124] 'Blue books of statistics, etc.', 1834, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 106/28, ff59-60.

[125] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 119.

the revolution by Fédon's followers.[126] The Catholic church had no physical home in the island anymore. Nor was it likely that Catholicism would regain its former property. Between 1801-02, the Rev. Samuel Dent served as acting governor for the colony. Dent had been invaluable to the colony in the 1790s when he ensured that the glebe lands would be controlled by the colonial government and used for the Church of England.[127] By the turn of the century, then, the Church of England had a direct influence in the colonial government. Catholicism was forced on the move when the French Catholic priests were removed from their positions. Besides the revolutionary priest, Pascal Mardel, one of the other priests on the island was expelled for disloyalty in 1796. Felicien Gachier had an altercation with Dent in 1793 over glebe lands, a fight he lost along with his house and lands.[128] The French priests were replaced by Irish ones. Unfortunately for the new priest, Father O'Laughlin, the lack of glebe lands, a parsonage, or even a church forced Catholicism into itinerancy.

Fédon's revolution had a great effect on the development of the society of free people of colour. Briefly free people of colour were empowered by their bid for colonial power. A future of freedom and equality seemed wonderfully possible. That ended with the revolution's defeat and ignominious reduction in the colonial narrative as no more than a chaotic insurrection against the British. The revolution profoundly changed the position of free people of colour in the colony who were placed under greater restrictions than before. After the revolution, free people of colour were marginalised even more and their appearance in the colonial narrative was barely perceptible, even though the population of free people of colour continued to grow rapidly. The revolution brought a gender imbalance to the society of free people of colour and linked Frenchness and Catholicism with revolution and treachery. All this worked to reduce Catholicism in the colony. Stripped of its former place as a religion of power, Catholicism was linked with society's most powerless—enslaved Africans and free women of colour. Even with its French leadership removed, Catholicism's position in Grenada remained as ignominious as the Catholic revolutionaries who brought about this change.

Fédon's revolution was pivotal for religious experience of Catholicism and helped to redefine the religious landscape of the colony. The disestablishment of Roman Catholicism as a religion of power in Grenada meant that Catholic clergy no longer had a free congregation, nor did they have

[126] Frederick Maitland, 'Refers to churches and parsonage houses in Grenada', 7 August 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/3, ff8-13.

[127] Abraham Bishop and Pere Felicien, 11 May 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff153.

[128] Thomas May to Bishop of London, 1796, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff160-1.

churches for a congregation.[129] Few free Catholics were left on the island after the upheaval of Fédon's insurrection, so Catholic priests had to make direct contact with their congregation on the plantations they were enslaved in. No longer bound to the expectations of religion in power, Catholicism moved from regular to secular clergy and from a permanent position in colonial society to itinerancy. They provided regular contact with enslaved people and ensured that Catholicism and Catholic rites, especially baptism, remained a part of plantation life. Catholicism's continued access to plantations even after the upheaval of revolution helped strengthen Catholicism as a part of enslaved identity. Inadvertently, Fédon's revolution brought religious choice to the island's enslaved population.

[129] The British invaded Catholic churches in 1790, and Catholic clergy were forced to share their churches or hold services in their own homes.

Edward Mathew, 'Reference to 'new' subjects and letter reporting that a detachment of 50 Grenadiers with bayonets forcibly opened the Parish church at St. George's in Grenada', 30 October 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/30/57 on the invasion of churches.

Abraham Bishop and Pere Felicien, 11 May 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff153 for Pére Felicien Gachier's complaints on being turned out of his church in St George's.

Chapter 4

Religion in Bondage: Negotiating Enslaved Religious Identities Within the Plantation System

In the first few decades of the nineteenth century, enslaved Africans encountered significant challenges to the negotiation of their religious identities within the power structures of institutionalised slavery on plantations. There were few religious options. For young enslaved men like Louis Pierre, who was born into slavery sometime in 1803, those options were determined by what religious expressions a slaveowner allowed on his plantations. Louis Pierre was possibly born on Clarke's Court in St George's parish, the plantation where he would be enslaved for the rest of his life.[1] John Ross, owner of Clarke's Court and member of the Grenada legislature, particularly encouraged Methodism on his plantations. Ross's conversion to Methodism some years earlier led to his becoming one of the colony's primary supporters of Methodism. Ross patronised the Methodists in Grenada and regularly invited William Lill, one of the Methodist missionaries, to instruct his slaves directly on his plantation. Lill and other missionaries met with limited success in the numbers of conversions despite having greater access to plantations than their compatriots, the Anglican clergy. They preached directly on plantations and had unprecedented access to enslaved people, because Ross permitted them to engage in missionary activities on all plantations where he had influence. Louis Pierre converted to Methodism around 1815 through the missionary efforts of William Lill, partly the result of this joint effort between prominent colonial leaders and Methodist missionaries.[2] Louis Pierre's conversion took place during Methodism's expansion across Grenada. His conversion represented one of the many ways in which enslaved religious identities were shaped by the powerful institution of slavery.

Plantations were complex religious spaces. The Church of England had little influence in the colony until 1807, the year the slave trade was abolished, and did not establish a presence on plantations until the mid-1820s. It was through Methodist missionary efforts that Protestant Christianity

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[1] 'Grenada: St George (parish) list of slaves', 1825, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/294, ff159; see also 'Extract of a Letter from Mr Mortimer, dated March 1st, 1826', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, v 5 (1826): 567. *HathiTrust* https://babel.hathitrust.org.

[2] John Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history in Grenada with a list of missionaries who served there and a map of the island', n.p., n.d., microfiche, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MMS/17/01/01/067.

spread to plantations. Unlike Anglican clergy, Methodist missionaries had a greater impact on plantation religious life because they ventured beyond the town of St George's to evangelise directly to enslaved people. These missionary activities required the cooperation of planters, however. During the first decades of British colonisation, planters, not missionaries, were largely in control of the religious life of their plantations. Controlling religious life allowed Protestant planters to encourage or discourage religious activity as they pleased. Usually, Protestant planters did not encourage religious activity of any kind. Enslaved people had to negotiate their religious identities on plantations where spiritual neglect, not to mention every other sort of neglect, was common. On some plantations, planters' control of religious life allowed such traditions as French Catholicism to flourish in the colony, in spite of British rule. Plantations turned into contested religious spaces in the early 1800s as the dominance of Catholicism competed with the newly advancing Protestants through Methodist missionaries. Because fewer enslaved people could engage with their own African religious identities, Catholicism and its power to subvert the colonial order had attracted hundreds of enslaved communicants. As Catholicism waned in the public and, especially, the political sphere, its influence in the colony was limited to the oppressed and enslaved on plantations. The transatlantic slave trade effected a diverse plantation population, consisting of Ibo, Chamba, and Temné, among other groupings.[3] As a result, plantations became microcosms of creolised religious activity, where, depending on the amount of planter influence, the religious beliefs of enslaved Muslims, Protestant, and Catholic enslaved people merged with African religious beliefs.

The abolition of the slave trade had significant consequences on enslaved religious life. The vast influx of enslaved Africans between 1763 and 1809 added further complexity and diversity to plantation life.[4] Between 1783 and 1794 alone, more than 56,000 enslaved Africans were brought to Grenada. With these African people came increased religious diversity. Before British colonisation, the French 'Christianised' enslaved Africans through baptism, as required by the *Code Noir*. The rapid growth of enslaved Africans in the colony after 1763 ensured that Catholicism would by no means remain the only religious alternative on plantations. British slaveowners were less interested in the religious lives of the people they enslaved than the French. But when the slave trade was abolished in 1807, British planters became increasingly dismayed at the religious diversity on plantations. They were concerned about Catholic influence, still prevalent despite the expulsion of French Catholic priests after Fédon's revolution. The influence of French Catholics was

[3] Table 4:2 shows the diversity of enslaved Africans on Grenada's plantations. Table 4:2 Disembarked Enslaved Africans by Region of Purchase, 1784-1794.

[4] Table 4:1 Enslaved Africans Disembarked in Grenada by Decade and Year, 1763-1808.

still present on plantations, through the French pidgin many enslaved Africans still spoke.[5] Controlling the religious diversity on the plantations became a colonial priority and British planters began to increase their involvement in plantation religious activity.

Catholic influence was feared because of its association with France. In 1795-6, Fédon's revolution inspired hundreds of enslaved people to join in the fight for freedom, supported by French revolutionaries. British colonists were only too aware that the threat of slave rebellions was not merely local. The Haitian Revolution, which began in 1791, was still ongoing in 1800, becoming the first independent black republic in the Caribbean in 1804.[6] Enslaved people in the Dutch colony of Curaçao had also rebelled against colonial rule in 1795. In Jamaica, the Second Maroon War had broken out at the same time. Dominica's Colihault uprising had been supported by French revolutionaries just like Fédon's revolution. Nearer to Grenada, St Vincent's Second Carib War occupied the colony between 1795-97, also supported by French revolutionary, Victor Hugues. And in St Lucia, the conflict between enslaved and colonists would not end until the British's defeated the French revolutionary-supported indigenous Kalinago in 1803. Fear of another rebellion consumed white colonists. In Grenada, this fear consumed British planters, who took measures to suppress any and all real or perceived threats to the established colonial order. This meant that they wanted to suppress Catholicism, expressions of African identities, and, to some extent, Protestant Dissenters like the Methodists. The political climate shaped the ways in which enslaved Africans negotiated their religious identities on plantations.

Socially, missionaries had the greatest impact on enslaved Christianity in these first couple decades of the nineteenth century. Methodist missionaries had been resident in the colony as early as the 1790s and were even supported in their evangelistic efforts by Anglican clergy. Missionary activity was, however, concentrated primarily in St George's until the 1810s.[7] The rise of Methodism on plantations depended not only on the cooperation of plantation owners but also the leadership of enslaved converts. The few Methodist missionaries who took the gospel across plantation boundaries in the 1810s ensured that Methodism would take root by appointing enslaved leaders to conduct meetings. Enslaved Methodist converts like Louis Pierre joined in the spread of

[5] John Ross to Joseph Butterworth and Thomas Thompson, 13 November 1818, Clarke's Court, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff84.

[6] Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2004) and Julius S. Scott, *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution* (London: Verso, 2018).

[7] Thomas Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Late Rev. Thomas Coke* (Dublin: R. Napper, 1816): 144-45.

Methodism in Grenada by leading meetings and instructing fellow enslaved Africans in the gospel.[8] Catholic missionaries initially had less access to plantations than they were used to before Fédon's revolution. By the 1800s, only one French priest remained in the colony, residing away from the mainland in the island parish of Carriacou. Until the British allowed Irish Catholic priests to engage in missionary activity in Grenada, the mainland did not enjoy the ministry of Catholic priests. As enslaved Africans negotiated religious identities within the complex environs of these plantations, their religious identities were shaped by their own personal religious choices as well as the pattern of colonial exploitation, planter manipulation, missionary endeavours, and the vast influx of thousands of enslaved Africans as a result of the slave trade.

4.1: Enslaved religious experiences and the archive

Determining the extent of enslaved religious agency depends on an understanding of how enslaved people experienced religion. Studying religious experience is inherently difficult because religious experiences are highly personal and subjective. Stephen Bush argues that the 'rhetoric of experience' is the 'absolute private, subjective, indubitable (for the experiencer), and immediate experience of religion.[9] The way a person relates and describes their religious experience often determines how they experience it and, in turn, how researchers understand the varieties of religious experience. However, when studying the religious experiences of enslaved people, such narratives of religious experience are almost always absent from any record, making the study and understanding of these religious experiences all the more challenging.

The archives are largely silent on these experiences.[10] Records of Grenadian enslaved religious experiences are virtually non-existent in the archives. Catholic priests' records of religious activity in the island are almost completely absent between 1790-1828, after Fédon's failed revolution and

[8] John Parker narrates the history of Methodism in Grenada: *A Church in the Sun* (London: Cargate Press, 1959). Paula Aymer shows how Methodism was the precursor to religious autonomy of Pentecostals and Evangelicals in twentieth-century Grenada: *Evangelical Awakenings in the Anglophone Caribbean: Studies from Grenada and Barbados* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Missionary activity in other colonies helps to frame the study of missional impact on enslaved populations. John W. Catron, *Embracing Protestantism: Black Identities in the Atlantic World* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016); Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Dianne M. Stewart, *Three Eyes for the Journey: African Dimensions of the Jamaican Religious Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Maureen Warner-Lewis, *Archibald Monteath: Igbo, Jamaica, Moravian* (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2007).

[9] Stephen S. Bush, 'Are Religious Experiences Too Private to Study?', *The Journal of Religion* 92 (2012): 200-201.

[10] Brian Connolly and Marisa Fuentes,' Introduction: From Archives of Slavery to Liberated Futures?', *History of the Present* 6:2 (2018): 105-116.

before the reinstatement of the Catholic Church.[11] Knowledge of enslaved religious experiences is gleaned from records and surviving documents of colonial officials and white British colonists. Occasionally, these white people commented on or described the colony's religious landscape, including religion amongst enslaved populations. Their own biases and beliefs, as well as their decisions about what they deemed important enough to record, make it difficult to transcend the 'white gaze' and see the enslaved themselves. For example, the surviving records of Louis Pierre consist of a brief hagiographical account of his life found in the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, the Clarke's Court slave registers, and a few references to him in John Ross's correspondence to the Methodist Conference in London.[12] None of these sources include Louis Pierre's voice. The archives also do not have a record of any Grenadian enslaved person's religious experience to balance that elision. The powerful institutions of slavery and the plantation system that defined enslaved religious experiences have ignored enslaved religious experiences entirely.

Language also contributes to the absence of enslaved religious experiences from the archives. Language was especially an issue in the Ceded Islands: Tobago, St Vincent, Dominica, and Grenada. Before Fédon's revolution in 1795, most Grenadian planters spoke French. In this same period, Anglican clergy complained that they could not understand enslaved people of whom few spoke English.[13] Samuel Dent wrote to the Bishop of London in 1793 that 'most of the adult Negroes still retain the French language which some of us understand sufficiently and make it the medium of instruction'.[14] Not all clergy were able to overcome this difficulty and language continued to be an obstacle to Anglican ministry to enslaved people on plantations. One exception was Grenada's first Methodist superintendent, Abraham Bishop. In 1793, the French-speaking Jersey native briefly bridged the language barrier but died six months after his arrival in the colony.[15] By the 1820s and 1830s, British planters and clergy began their efforts to anglicise enslaved people, by converting enslaved Africans to Protestantism and by teaching them English.[16] However, the Catholic Church continued its influence on plantations. Even after the Catholic Church was uprooted from its home

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[11] The , Endangered Archives Programme (British Library) has digitised the only currently available records of the Catholic church in colonial Grenada.

[12] 'Extract of a Letter from Mr Mortimer, dated March 1st, 1826', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, v 5 (1826): 567; 'Grenada: St. George (parish): list of slaves', 1825, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/294, ff159.

[13] Anthony Keighley Thomas, 1795-6, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP Porteus 19, ff61.

[14] Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 22 October 1793, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155.

[15] Coke, 'Extracts', 130; Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history', MMS/17/01/01/067.

[16] Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, St George's, Grenada, 22 April 1800, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers. FP XX 27/6/18, ff173-74; and John Ross to Joseph Butterworth and Thomas Thompson, 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff84-85.

in St George's in 1794, French and Irish priests could still spread Catholicism across the island partly because they could more readily communicate with enslaved people. The inequalities of communication may have helped the Catholic Church thrive on many plantations, but the inability to communicate inevitably shaped what Anglican clergy recorded in their reports to their superiors. Enslaved religious experiences are absent from the archives partly because Anglican clergy could not hear about them from enslaved people.

The historical realities of slavery and the plantation system that undergirded colonial life also contributed to the absence of enslaved archival voices.[17] The plantation system and slavery formed the economic backbone of colonial society, structuring colonial social and racial hierarchies. The plantation systems' inordinate influence defined religious experience through the ruling, rich white planters who, along with judges and merchants, firmly controlled nearly every aspect of enslaved people's lives. Missionaries and clergy had little choice other than to show deference to the plantation system. Whatever missionaries preached to enslaved men and women was filtered through the powerful institution of the plantation system. Every aspect of life was in the hands of often fickle and always self-interested planters. The plantation system determined who had access to plantations, denying entrance to Catholic or Protestant depending on a planter's religious preferences. Enslaved people were denied the opportunity to record their own spiritual narratives. The very few narratives that survive in the British Caribbean are exceptions, not the norm, and none appear to have survived in Grenada. As a result, any records of enslaved religious experience that appear in the archives are layered with the biases and assumptions of slaveowners and colonial officials invested in chattel slavery. Deciphering enslaved voices in these records demands caution and a clear understanding of colonial hierarchies.

4:2: Religion, Fédon's revolution and the slave trade, 1763-1808

Undoubtedly, the transatlantic slave trade and Fédon's revolution irrevocably impacted enslaved African's religious identities and had a significant impact on the religious life of the colony in

[17] The plantation system is analysed in Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic history* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999);Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); and Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery : An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Eagle Hall: Caribbean Universities Press, 1974).

Jenny Shaw argues that the plantation system was more than economic, with social and religious overtones in *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013).

general. The composition of many plantation enslaved populations was a mixture of newly arrived enslaved Africans and a few enslaved Africans who had lived through a revolution if not two changes in colonial government. After Fédon's revolution, Catholicism had become coloured with the dangerous hues of freedom and liberty. One slaveowner estimated that around 6000 enslaved men and women had joined the revolution and represented around a quarter of the enslaved population.[18] Some of these rebellious slaves had been captured and sent to other colonies as convicts.[19] Others had eluded capture and fled to the dense tropical interior. These escaped revolutionaries embodied a threat to British control, especially since the British could not permeate the mountainous, densely foliaged interior to rout out the revolutionaries. The presence of Catholic plantations after the revolution and the lack of Anglican mission work added to British planters' concerns.[20] British officials and planters feared that Catholicism could unify the enslaved population and result in another disastrously expensive insurrection. Their fears were hardly assuaged when faced with the growing enslaved population, which continued to rise in the years after the revolution and reached its peak in 1805.

Slaveowners' wariness toward religious diversity was partly the result of an immense population shift which occurred between 1783 and 1800. Before the colony was ceded to Britain in 1763, around 12,000 enslaved Africans lived in the colony.[21] Because the British focussed on establishing sugar plantations, which demanded a large workforce, they increased the number of enslaved Africans transported to Grenada to meet that demand. By the end of the 1760s, after the British had been in control of Grenada for seven years, 22,572 enslaved Africans had disembarked in Grenada.[22] Between 1763 and 1800, only war with France and Fédon's revolution slowed the slave trade. Fewer than 400 enslaved people landed in Grenada in 1763 and fewer than 500 during

[18] Thomas Turner Wise, *A Review of the Events Which Have Happened in Grenada* (St George's: n.p., 1795): 54; and Edward Cox, *Free Coloreds in the Slave Societies of St Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984): 14.

[19] A. C. Adye. Grenada, 'Reference to number of councillors in Grenada; encloses list of the Council of Grenada', 13 February 1805, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/42/1, ff3-5.

[20] For example, Rev. John Crawford Barker suggests nearly 90% of St George plantations are Catholic. 'Correspondence from the bishop of Barbados, William Harte Coleridge, Ecclesiastical Returns (St George)', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

[21] Cox, *Free Coloureds,* 20.

[22] Table 4:1 Enslaved Africans Disembarked in Grenada by Decade and Year, 1763-1808

Table 4:1 Enslaved Africans Disembarked in Grenada by Decade and Year, 1763-1808

Year	Total	Year	Total	Year	Total	Year	Total	Year	Total
1760	--	**1770**	6,263	**1780**	--	**1790**	4,543	**1800**	346
1761	--	**1771**	4,739	**1781**	--	**1791**	9,372	**1801**	764
1762	--	**1772**	4,751	**1782**	--	**1792**	9,292	**1802**	1,082
1763	1,034	**1773**	2,732	**1783**	328	**1793**	5,776	**1803**	1,112
1764	1,639	**1774**	2,171	**1784**	1,714	**1794**	2,282	**1804**	168
1765	2,255	**1775**	3,198	**1785**	3,266	**1795**	388	**1805**	--
1766	7,090	**1776**	3,124	**1786**	1,910	**1796**	--	**1806**	435
1767	4,172	**1777**	2,913	**1787**	4,130	**1797**	87	**1807**	578
1768	2,657	**1778**	1,619	**1788**	7,773	**1798**	1,424	**1808**	368
1769	3,725	**1779**	917	**1789**	6,491	**1799**	1,476	**1809**	--
TOTAL	**22,572**		**32,427**		**51,224**		**34,640**		**4,853**

Source: Trans-Atlantic Slave Voyages database, www.slavevoyages.org

Fédon's revolution in 1796-7. Overall, more than 110,000 people were transported to Grenada in these three decades. The greatest increase occurred between 1770 and 1790 with the greatest surge occurring between 1784 and 1794, a ten-year surge that accounted for 42,247 enslaved Africans. Unlike other colonies, such as Virginia, the enslaved population comprised the majority colonial population.[23] By 1800, Grenada was more African than any other point in its history as a result of the slave trade.

During the first few decades of the nineteenth century, planters felt the lack of Anglican clerical support to aid them in controlling this increasingly diverse enslaved population. Plantation owners had little contact with Anglican clergy, who rarely left the comforts of town to engage with plantation society unless they were specifically called out to a plantation to perform a burial. In clergy's reports back to their superiors, the clergy blamed the planters for this oversight, alleging that the planters did not call them out if their services were needed.[24] In the few instances where clergy were intentionally evangelising and taking an interest in enslaved populations, their efforts aroused suspicion among plantation owners.[25] William Nash, the Anglican clergyman in Carriacou,

[23] Brenda E. Stevenson, *Life in Black and White: Family and Community in the Slave South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): 24-28.

[24] 'Parish Returns of the Ecclesiastical Board', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/106, ff228-229.

[25] Frederick Maitland, 'Refers to absence of Mr Austin, Rector of parish of St George's [who is 'cultivating a Sugar Estate he possesses at Surinam']', 3 November 1805, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/42/40, ff167-168; H. Gordon Slade, 'Craigston and Meldrum Estates, Carriacou, 1769- 1841', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 114 (1984): 502.

was blamed for inciting 'dangerous opinions about liberty into the Negroes minds' in 1806.[26] The 'dangerous opinions about liberty' is an allusion to British planters' ongoing fear of enslaved uprisings, especially in a region where the first black republic had been formed just two years earlier. These fears would be echoed in the following decades, past the abolition of slavery, as planters used and abused religious education as a means of controlling Black Grenadians.[27]

Controlling religious diversity extended to regulating the influence of dissident groups, like the Methodists. When the Methodists first took up residence in Grenada, they were initially met with support, primarily from Samuel Dent, who was the St George's clergyman and acting governor of Grenada between 1801-2. Dent saw the arrival of the Methodists as an opportunity to provide religious instruction to the capital's enslaved people without having to involve Anglican clergy directly. His relationship with the Methodists ensured that the dissident group, so often perceived as a threat to the social order in other colonies as well as the British Isles, would be directly associated with the colonial government and the Anglican church. Because Dent was their primary supporter, few Methodist missionaries ventured to plantations around the towns, let alone any of the country parishes, where plantation owners were unwilling to offer support. The establishment of Methodism in the colony, given the distrust of religious diversity at the time, incited some colonial controversy. Dent's support for the Methodists did not dispel much of this distrust. The year after the missionaries first arrived, in 1793, the Assembly tried to prohibit the Methodists from working in the colony. Although the law was never passed, opposition to the Methodists continued. Much of this opposition arose from the Methodists' leader, Thomas Coke, who mandated that the missionaries should evangelise amongst the island's enslaved. Many plantation owners felt that this mandate directly endangered the institution of slavery.[28] In response to this opposition, early Methodist missionaries focussed their mission as evangelists to enslaved Africans and free people of colour in towns, where they could count on Dent's support and patronage. This was a far cry from than an island-wide revival that Thomas Coke had initially envisioned.

Plantation owners were particularly suspicious of mission-minded Catholic clergy, whom they blamed for the persistence of Catholicism. By the end of the American Revolution, controlling the Catholic Church became a colonial priority. The dominance of Catholicism had been evident for

[26] Frederick Maitland, 'Refers to enslaved persons; representation from two slave 'owners' from Carriacou, William Scott and McLean, made to Maitland', 12 September 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/18, ff79-80.

[27] More on this in the following chapter.

[28] Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*, 46-49.

decades. French Catholic clergy had maintained a steady presence in Grenada since the early 1700s. They were concentrated in St George's but by 1755 were active and ministering in all six parishes.[29] Between 1763 and 1800, the number of Catholic priests steadily declined. In 1763, priests were active in all six parishes. St George, St John, and Carriacou seem to have had a consistent presence of clergy in this period. By 1800, however, only one French Catholic priest remained in his post, Father Guis of Carriacou.[30] Other French Catholic priests had either died or been expelled from the island. One priest was killed in Gouyave during Fédon's revolution.[31] Of course, Pascal Mardel, the revolutionary priest, was executed after the revolution. With the decline of French Catholicism, Bishop Challoner of London seized the opportunity to encourage Irish secular priests, ordained for lay service to a parish rather than as part of a clerical order, to move to the colony. These priests were under the purview of colonial officials and brought Grenadian Catholicism more closely under the government's control.

4.3: Missions, movement and enslaved religious choices

Enslaved Africans were unable to make religious choices that were unaffected by powerful colonial hierarchies that underpinned their daily lives. The plantations created complex spaces where many religious identities could be expressed, but planters could not dispel their fears that any of these religious expressions could unify enslaved people against the white colonists and result in rebellion.[32] Enslaved Africans faced the challenge of negotiating their religious identities around the reaches of colonial power. Colonial power was centred in the capital. Unsurprisingly, negotiating the closely supervised religions in the capital made it much harder for enslaved Africans in St George's to express unsanctioned religious beliefs, such as Catholicism and African religions. The further enslaved people were from centralised colonial oversight, the better opportunities they had in expressing Catholicism or African religions.

[29] John Angus Martin shows the number of Catholic clergy grow from a single secular priest in 1651 to seven priests in 1755, three Capuchin, three Dominican, and one Jesuit. *Island Caribs and French Settlers in Grenada* (St George's: The Grenada National Museum Press, 2013): 383.

[30] William Nash, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff214-5; Raymond P. Devas, *Conception Island or the Troubled Story of the Catholic Church in Grenada* (London: Sands & Company, 1932): 25-26.

[31] [Anonymous], *A Brief Inquiry into the Causes of and Conduct Pursued by the Colonial Government* (London: R. Faulder, 1796): 18.

[32] Christa Dierksheide, 'Missionaries, Evangelical Identity, and the Religious Ecology of Early Nineteenth-Century South Carolina and the British Caribbean', *American Nineteenth Century History* 7 (2006): 63-88.

By 1800, Methodism and Catholicism were the most visible and active mission groups in the colony. The growth of Methodism in particular gave enslaved Africans opportunities to take leadership roles in providing spiritual care on the plantation. Catholicism continued to be an important religious experience too as a significant feature of enslaved cultural identity. Some of this cultural identity was part of the creolisation of Christianity that occurred when Christian beliefs were syncretised with African beliefs.[33] These beliefs had varying influence on the enslaved population. Some regions were more defined by one version of Christianity than another depending on their proximity to towns. This pattern suggests that the spread of Christianity was closely linked with the issue of colonial power. Plantations nearer to towns, particularly St George's, were more closely connected to the hubs of religious activity. Remote plantations, such as those located in Carriacou, were more likely to harbour syncretised forms of Christianity then plantations close to a major town. Geographical boundaries made travelling to these remote plantations difficult. The mountain ranges that surrounded St George's were almost entirely impassable. The mountains were notorious for housing runaway enslaved people and some of Fédon's former followers. The dense forest that covered the mountains on all sides made them impenetrable. Passage to the windward side of the island demanded a day or two of travel on the coastal roads. In rainy season, these were almost impossible to traverse. Heavy rain could turn the roads into thick swirling mud.[34] As a result, formal, organised religious activity of any denomination was heavily concentrated in towns, particularly in St George's, Grenville and Gouyave.[35] These towns became important hubs from where religion spread to surrounding plantations.

4.3.1: Enslaved Methodism and the influence of the plantation system

Methodism developed within the plantation system as a complex, negotiated enslaved religious choice. Enslaved Africans, like Louis Pierre, gained access to Methodism partly because Clarke's Court was within close range of town. John Ross, owner of Clarke's Court plantations, had an influential role in determining what types of religious choices Louis Pierre and his enslaved community could make.

[33] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982): 151-52.

See also Albert J, Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and John K. Thornton, 'On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas', *The Americas* 44 (1988):261-278.

[34] Parker, *A Church in the Sun*, 56.

[35] Map 4:1 Map of Religious Centres in Grenada, 1800-1838

Map 4:1 Map of Religious Centres in Grenada, 1800-1838

Sources: Map of the island of Grenada, for the History of the West Indies by Bryan Edwards Esqr, *in Bryan Edwards,* History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies, *vol 1 (London: J. Stockdale, 1794).Courtesy of The John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. John Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history in Grenada with a list of missionaries who served there and a map of the island', n.p., n.d., microfiche, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MMS/17/01/01/067; John Crawford Barker, 'Returns to Questions Addressed to Clergy', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22; 'Notice of Divine Service in Sauteurs', 9 August 1834,* The Grenada Chronicle, *The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff257; 'Notice of Divine Service in Gouyave and LaBaye', 16 August 1834,* The Grenada Chronicle, *The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff269; 'Notice of Divine Service in Corinth', 24 October 1835,* The Grenada Chronicle, *The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff346; 'Notice of Divine Service in L'Esperance', 17 September 1836,* The Grenada Chronicle, *The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff311; 'Notice of Divine Service in Belvue', 27 October 1838,* The Grenada Chronicle, *The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff342.*

Clarke's Court was only five kilometres away from the town St George's, where residences and merchant warehouses clustered near the Anglican church and Fort Royal on a promontory that jutted out over the harbour. One of the island's main roads directly connected the plantation to the town, cutting across the top eastern corner of the plantation before swerving off along the border of Morne Jaloux.[36] This road linked to the connecting road between St George's and Grenville, the two major ports in the colony. The plantation also abutted a small bay where people and produce could be moved with greater ease from plantation to port and back again. The plantation became part of the Methodist missionary movement in part because of this enviable position with direct access by land and sea to the rest of the colony. Within two hours, William Lill could travel from St George's to Clarke's Court where over two hundred enslaved people were granted access to a version of Christianity that few other enslaved people had contact with in 1816. Enslaved Africans and free people of colour had access to Methodism earlier, after the first Methodist chapel was built in April 1793 in St George's, and would have possibly even had the opportunity to attend the Methodist revival on Hospital Hill, right behind the Anglican church.[37] By the 1820s, however, Methodism had pushed further than Clarke's Court to neighbouring Calivigny and steadily progressed along the road toward Grenville. The Methodist mission reported their presence on thirteen plantations in 1818. Several of these were located along the road that linked Clarke's Court with Grenville: Baillie's Bacolet, Requin, and Sagesse in St David; Crochu, Grand Bras, Paradise, Mount Horne, and Soubise in St Andrew. The mission may have extended into St Patrick around 1818 to the Morne Fendue plantation, which was represented by Ross.[38] In 1821, the first chapel located on a plantation was first opened on Grand Bras. The following year, another chapel was built in neighbouring Grenville. In 1823, Clarke's Court and Calivigny boasted their own chapel. The Methodist mission was spreading across the island, keeping closely to the main roads that brought the missionaries to plantations and influenced in no small part by Ross's continued encouragement.

John Ross came to Grenada sometime around 1810, likely after his marriage to Helen Carnegie in 1807.[39] Originally from Aberdeen, Ross lived most of his life in Grenada, one of the rare planters

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[36] Thomas Jefferys, *The West-India atlas, or, A compendious description of the West-Indies* (London: Robert Sayer and John Bennett, 1775): 54. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/74175045/; and Hards, Vaughan, & Jenkinson, *Grenada, particulars of a valuable Sugar Estate: known as Clarke's Court,* map (London: Hards, Vaughan & Jenkinson, 1877): 3. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2016586624/ .

[37] John Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history in Grenada with a list of missionaries who served there and a map of the island', n.p., n.d., microfiche, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MMS/17/01/01/067

[38] 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/265, ff391-395.

[39] 'Aberdeen, Wednesday, November 4', *The Aberdeen Journal 3121* (1807): 4. The British Newspaper Archive, https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000031/18071104/014/0004 [accessed 12 August 2019];

who was not regularly absent. During the period of Methodism's growth in Grenada, Ross's family was also growing; and he and Helen welcomed four children between 1810 and 1821, all born in Grenada. His influence in the island was as a prominent planter who owned both the Clarke's Court and Calivigny plantations and co-owned the Granton estate.[40] He was also Speaker of the Council and a prominent attorney who represented fourteen estates in the colony and was the agent and trustee of another one.[41] Ross's encouragement of Methodism on his estates was evidence of the plantation system at work, the powerful hierarchy that placed even enslaved religious experience in the fickle hands of white plantation owners. One other planter had followed Ross's example in actively supporting Methodism on the Ile de Rhonde plantation.[42] Like Ross, the Honourable George Gun Munro was a member of the Council; he was also the assistant justice in the Supreme Court and colonial treasurer.[43] These two, with the added support of Sir Richard Ottley, Methodist convert and Chief Justice of Grenada, were the primary supporters of Methodism in the colony.[44] Ross's prominence in colonial society did not deter him from openly supporting the Methodists. His estate was the only Methodist estate in the colony. His influence extended across five parishes in ten plantations, three of which he owned himself. Much of Methodism's spread across the island was through Ross's influence on these plantations. Through his patronage, the Methodists found a home in Grenada and on Ross's estate. There they built a chapel and conducted regular classes in scripture knowledge. With such a patron, the Methodist mission spread from Ross's plantations in St George's and the mission base in the town to the mountainy interior toward Grenville and the coastal road toward Gouyave. The Methodists saw Ross as a patron sympathetic to their mission and a willing, cooperative partner in mission advancement.[45] Colonial support signified an

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'John Ross, Sr', Legacies of British Slave-ownership, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146630925 [accessed 10 August 2018]

[40] Clarke's Court was originally owned by New Englander Gedney Clarke between c1763-1773. S. D. Smith, 'Gedney Clarke of Salem and Barbados: Transatlantic Super-Merchant', *The New England Quarterly* 76 (2003): 547.

'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/265, ff162-67; 'Grenada: St George', 1832, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/318, ff349.

[41] John Ross to Butterworth and Thompson, 8 January 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff87; John Ross, *An Address to the Public of Grenada* (Grenada: n.p., 1822): 15.

[42] Ross to Butterworth and Thompson, 13 November 1818, Clarke's Court, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff86.

[43] John Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history in Grenada with a list of missionaries who served there and a map of the island', n.p., n.d., microfiche, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MMS/17/01/01/067.

Like Ross, Munro's position as attorney of several plantations solidified his influence. For a list of plantations, see 'Hon. George Gun Munro', Legacies of British Slave-ownership, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/10099 [accessed 10 July 2018].

[44] Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*, 19.

[45] Hugh Perry Keane, 'Letters Respecting the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries in the Colonies', 1818, London, microfiche, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff76.

important facet of enslaved Methodism. The few enslaved men and women who converted to Methodism did so under the direct influence of slave-owners and prominent colonial officials. The Methodist missionaries who gained access to Clarke's Court introduced Louis Pierre to the gospel and shaped his experience through regular interactions.[46]

Louis Pierre converted under the ministry of William Lill. By the time William Lill was sent out to Clarke's Court, the Methodists had been visibly present in the colony for a decade and were steadily advancing. Lill was the twentieth missionary sent out from the Methodist Conference and was based in the town of St George's, like his predecessors. The first missionary to the colony was Sam Painter, a free man of colour from Antigua, who led the first group of twenty Methodist converts in 1790.[47] That same year, Thomas Coke made his third visit to the West Indies where he found support for his mission from several prominent people, including Samuel Dent, rector of St George's and later acting governor of the colony.[48] The Methodists relied on the patronage and political support of prominent colonists and as a result did not begin their ministry to enslaved people until invited to do so by planters. For the first few years of Methodism's presence in Grenada, missionaries concentrated their work in the town where the first chapel was built in 1793. It was a small congregation of about thirty people, nearly all of whom were free people of colour.[49] William Lill was the first missionary sent to a plantation. His appointment filled a direct request by John Ross for spiritual instruction on his estates. Ross spoke highly of Lill's work, commenting that Lill found an apt and eager audience in the Clarke's Court enslaved community.[50] Louis Pierre was one of Lill's converts who was admitted to the society before Lill's untimely death of a fever in December 1816. The results of Lill's ministry had impressed Ross so much that he offered to pay all the expenses for a replacement.[51] During the early 1800s, Methodism had been steadily growing and was about to expand to the country parishes via Gouyave and Grenville. The role of enslaved Methodist leaders was crucial for Methodism to remain a viable religious choice on plantations.

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[46] Thomas Coke, 'Negative photostat copy of letter from T[homas] Coke, Hoxton [Middx], to the Directors of the [London] Missionary Society', 26 February 1798, SOAS, MMS/17/02/00/03/01/01/11, ff122-123; Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*, 17-23.

[47] Coke, 'Extracts', 122; Parker, *Church in the Sun*, 20.

[48] Coke, 'Negative photostat copy of letter from T[homas] Coke, Hoxton [Middx], to the Directors of the [London] Missionary Society', 26 February 1798, SOAS, MMS/17/02/00/03/01/01/11, ff122.

[49] Coke, 'Negative photostat copy of letter from T[homas] Coke, Hoxton [Middx], to the Directors of the [London] Missionary Society', 26 February 1798, London, SOAS, MMS/17/02/00/03/01/01/11, 178.

Parker, *Church in the Sun*, 20-22.

[50] Ross to Butterworth and Thompson, 8 January 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff83.

[51] Ross to Butterworth and Thompson, 13 November 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff84.

While the Methodists' access to Clarke's Court was due to Ross's encouragement, their access to that estate and others were also determined by the physical landscape of the colony. Like any other clergy or missionaries in the colony, Methodist missionaries were restricted to plantations they could access by horse or by foot that lay within easy reaches of their base in town. Having few patrons at the turn of the century, Methodists could not rely on the generous hospitality of a sympathetic planter for a bed and were thus restricted somewhat to plantations that could be reached in a couple hours. Even with support of patrons in other parishes located a day's journey away, the missionaries were faced with trekking across the dense interior or along the steep coast on roads that washed out in rainy season. John Parker suggests that these conditions are the reason why Methodist missionary activity was located largely on the plantations in and north of St George's.[52] Methodists missionaries decided that, faced with these obstacles, they would focus their work on plantations that could be reached easily and where their mission, often seen as destabilising to slavery and the plantation system, was encouraged and supported.[53]

Methodism was slow to grow in the colony in the late eighteenth century but was beginning to flourish by the early nineteenth century. The initial slow growth resulted from little encouragement from planters who viewed Methodism with suspicion as a potential disruptor of the social order.[54] When Ross wrote to Butterworth and Thompson in 1818, he opined that newly appointed missionaries ought to focus their efforts on morality, instead of doctrine; because he believed that enslaved people could only understand doctrines after they learned practical Christianity.[55] Joseph Butterworth and Thomas Thompson, MPs, instigated an inquiry into the conduct of Methodists in the West Indies in the early nineteenth century, because they had heard allegations that the Methodists' teaching was disruptive to the plantation system. Richard Ottley explained to Butterworth and Thompson that 'after having received instruction [some enslaved people] have fallen into the very common error of thinking too highly of themselves; this propensity however has been checked and I believe that the missionaries are well aware of the necessity of imposing such checks'.[56] The pressure to adapt the gospel message did not mean that missionaries never attempted to infuse their message with more than the superficial moral education planters demanded. Because of the plantation system, the Methodists' message was carefully curated to not

[52] Parker, *Church in the Sun*, 62.

[53] Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*, 19-21.

[54] Hugh Parry Keane, 'Letters Respecting the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries in the Colonies', 8 October 1817, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff77.

[55] Ross to Butterworth and Thompson, 13 November 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff87-88.

[56] Ottley to Butterworth and Thompson, 27 January 1818, Grenada, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff81.

upset the status quo.[57] Colonial officials as well as the Methodist Conference in England enjoined missionaries to not interfere in political matters or to cause discord on plantations.[58] Methodism was tolerated in the colony as long as missionaries fit their message into the mould expected of them. The gospel then was reduced to primarily moral instruction, a system of codes that emphasised submission and servility to masters. The idea that religious instruction encouraged good behaviour was a theme that would later be loudly echoed in Anglican sermons just before the abolition of slavery a few years later.[59] Planters could dictate missionary activity because they controlled both the content and the spread of the Methodists' message. The hundreds of enslaved people who interacted with Methodism in the early 1800s were introduced to a message that acquiesced to the racial and social hierarchies of colonial society often conflicting with missionaries' own personal beliefs.

Louis Pierre began his missionary activity on the Clarke's Court estate in 1822 at nineteen.[60] Joined by his mother and brother, he took a role as a class leader on the estate, leading discussions of scripture and instructing other enslaved members in practical teaching. His intelligence and ability were noted by the Methodist missionary who expressed his pleased surprise at Louis Pierre's retention of scriptures and his ability to interpret and teach those texts to others. As class leaders, Louis Pierre and his family had been chosen based on their piety and their commitment to their faith. As Paula Aymer pointed out in her study of Methodism in Grenada and Barbados, members regularly confirmed their faith and faithful living through testimonies presented at annual meetings.[61] Louis Pierre was chosen as a class leader based on his satisfactory testament of faith. His role signified that enslaved people in Grenada willingly and ably took control of their religious choices and actively engaged in missionary activity on the plantations they were enslaved in. His role also signified that actively participating in Christianity made it possible for enslaved people to

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[57] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaica Slave Society, 1787-1834* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982): 28-30. Although Turner's analysis examines Jamaica, the same themes are evident in Grenada.

[58] See Michael Craton, 'Christianity and Slavery in the British West Indies 1750-1865', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 5 (1978):147-8.

Anglican bishops instructed their clergy in much the same way: 'Instructions for Missionaries to the West India Islands', 1794, London, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff171-82; Samuel Dent, 'Observations on the conversion and religious education of Negro Slaves in the West India Islands in answer to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London's Letter to the Governors', 10 October 1794, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff183-98.

[59] For example, John Crawford Barker, *The Duty and Means of Promoting Christian Knowledge* (Grenada: Alexander McCombie, 1828) and Edward Eliot, *On the Importance of Giving Religious Instruction to the Slave Population in the West Indies* (Bridgetown: The Barbadian Office, 1827).

[60] 'Extract of a Letter from Mr Mortimer, dated March 1st, 1826', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, v 5 (1826): 567. *HathiTrust*.

[61] Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings*, 51-57.

exercise leadership despite enslavement. The work Louis Pierre and other class leaders undertook in these roles gave enslaved men and women access to Christianity from their own peers rather than white missionaries.[62] Missionary activity was a visible and noteworthy expression of religious agency and offered enslaved men and women a measure of power in their daily lives.

The message enslaved people encountered supported slavery while inherently containing the seeds for individual empowerment. Methodist missionaries differed from the Church of England in their belief that 'slaves were capable of choosing salvation and participating, like free citizens, in the mission churches'.[63] This assumption undercut the plantation system; planters across the British North American and Caribbean colonies openly opposed evangelical work amongst enslaved people, sure of 'of the revolutionary power of Christian worship'.[64] But with the Methodists' need to remain in the good graces of planters for any access to their targeted mission field, the evangelical message focussed heavily on duty and obedience as by-products of salvation. In Grenada, the complicated result of the Methodist message found little ground to grow on as few enslaved people who encountered Methodism converted.[65] The motives for enslaved conversions were likewise contradictory. On one hand, conversion could bestow enslaved men and women with a greater respectability or favour with slave owners. On the other, conversion illustrated the agency which individual enslaved people expressed when determining their own religious choices. Methodist missionaries lived and died to bring the liberating freedom of the Christian gospel to their enslaved mission field, but the power of that gospel was undermined by their injunctive to promote moralism and discourage insubordination.

Enslaved Methodism was caught between this tenuous agreement between planter and missionary. Conversion was an example of enslaved religious agency at work. Enslaved converts, like Louis Pierre, put their hope in a better world to come and longed for a world of comfort and joy.[66] It was painfully obvious that none of that comfort would come in the present life. Slave-owners used the gospel to reinforce the institution of slavery, putting their hope in the message of morals and duty to keep enslaved people subjugated. What enslaved Methodism represents then is the limits of religion. Methodism was irrevocably tied to the powerful institutions undergirding plantation life.

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[62] Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries*, 89.

[63] Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries,* 69.

[64] Nicholas M. Beasley, *Christian Ritual and the Creation of British Slave Societies, 1650-1780* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010): 140.

[65] Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries,* 75-81.

[66] Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries*, 71-73; M. K. Bacchus, *Utilization, Misuse, and Development of Human Resources in the Early West Indian Colonies* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1990): 208-9.

This alliance determined how far Methodism spread in the colony, who had access to Methodism, and what the content of the Methodists' message would be. Methodism could not circulate to plantations without patronage. Enslaved conversions resulted from the powerful influence of colonial power at work within the plantation system.

4.3.2: Enslaved Catholicism and the continuance of religious communities

Unlike the Methodist mission which derived much of its influence from the patronage of powerful planters, Catholic influence stemmed from two hundred years of activity in the colony. The St George's Anglican Church had originally been built by the French in 1700, and the church with its glebe lands would become the centre of a colonial controversy in the late eighteenth century. Originally centred in St George's, like the Methodists, the Catholic church had been much more successful in maintaining a formal, centralised presence in each parish. By the nineteenth century, much to the annoyance of Protestant planters and clergy, neither the Church of England or the Methodists had managed to maintain a similar presence, despite the Anglicans' taking ownership of the Catholic churches and glebe lands. Unanimously, planters and Protestant clergy bemoaned the Catholic presence amongst the colony's largest population—enslaved Africans.[67] The influence of Catholicism amongst enslaved people was certainly aided by that Church's long and generally well-supported presence in the colony. Catholicism retained its large following because French Catholic planters ensured Catholicism remained a part of their own lives. These descendants of planters who had lived in Grenada before the British capitulation in 1763 supported the Catholic church throughout British colonisation. The French Catholic culture that permeated the island for decades prevailed amongst enslaved people, who were primarily French patois speakers not English speakers. French planters aided by Catholic clergy helped continue this cultural distinction. Catholicism remained entrenched in enslaved society as a part of a creolised identity.

Bringing the Catholic glebe lands under the colonial government's control was part of the British strategy to disempower Catholicism in the colony, a strategy that consumed colonial politics for over twenty years. The glebe lands were first surveyed after Britain captured Grenada in 1762. At

[67] 'Thomas (Anthony Keighley), vicar of St. Patrick, Les Sauteurs, Grenada, and (1796) of Tobago', 1795-96, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP Porteus 19, ff61; Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, St George's, Grenada, 22 April 1800, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff174; Hugh Perry Keane, 'Letters Respecting the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries in the Colonies', 1818, microfiche, SOAS, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff77.

Little had changed by the 1820s. William Drake Sealy notes that language is still a barrier. Sealy to William Hart Coleridge, 'Correspondence from the bishop of Barbados, William Hart Coleridge', 1827, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff212-13; William Nash to William Hart Coleridge, 1827, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff215-17.

the time, none of the colonial officials could decide whether these lands became Crown property as a result of the conquest or whether they remained Catholic property. Through the following decades, colonial officials tried again and again to legislate the glebes into their control. The issue was political and financial; the glebe lands, as many British officials averred, were Crown property and its hefty rents the property of Crown coffers.[68] The Catholic priests heartily disagreed. The rents from the glebe lands totalled more than £300, not an insignificant sum for either the colonial legislature or the Church of England. The rents had provided Catholic clergy with a salary, especially needful since the colonial legislature did not provide the Catholic church with any funds. In 1785, the glebe land rents legally became the property of the Church of England, although the Catholic priests retained their residence.[69] British colonists perceived this as a great victory, but French residents saw this as yet another attempt to disempower French and Catholic religious rights in the colony.

The issue of the church buildings that dotted the colony furthered French resentment. After restoration to British rule in 1783, a surge of anti-Catholicism swept through the colony. The legislature ruled that the church buildings, which had previously only been used by Catholics, should be shared equally between the two denominations. Angrily, the Catholics refused on the grounds that doing so was a desecration. In response, frustrated Protestant zealots forced their way into the St John parish church in Gouyave.[70] In St George's, the fiery priest Felicien Gachier protested the legislation by holding mass in his own home. Later, French residents took revenge on this law during Fédon's revolution, targeting these desecrated. During the revolution, all of the parish churches were destroyed except for the church in St George's and the small wooden church in Hillsborough, Carriacou.[71] The reason these churches were exempt was because the revolutionaries did not capture and control either St George's or Carriacou. The damage to the churches was so severe that in most cases the buildings could not be repaired. St George's parish

[68] Devas, *Conception Island*, 21.

[69] Frederick Maitland, 'Transmits an application from the House of Assembly regarding appropriation by the legislature of the revenues from the Church lands', 24 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/2, ff4.

[70] Edward Mathew, 'Reference to 'new' subjects and letter reporting that a detachment of 50 Grenadiers with bayonets forcibly opened the Parish church at St. George's in Grenada', 30 October 1790, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/30/57, ff275-278.

Mathew denies anything happening, but the story is corroborated in other sources. See [Anonymous], *A Brief Inquiry into the Causes of and Conduct Pursued by the Colonial Government* (London: R. Faulder, 1796): ; and William Wyndham Grenville, 'Acknowledges receipt of letters; refers to representation made by the Marquis de Caseaux to the Lord President of the Council, regarding soldiers in one of the Catholic churches in Grenada', 7 January 1791, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/31/4, ff34-35.

[71] 'State of the clergy and churches in Grenada', 25 March 1796, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers FP XX 27/6/18, ff160.

church only remained operational because the revolutionaries did not capture that town. The remaining church buildings across the colony were not operational again until the mid-1820s. The clinching event came in 1793, when the Anglican clergyman of St George's became the president of the Council. Samuel Dent launched a campaign that year to finalise the disestablishment of Catholicism from public life.[72] At the time, Dent was renting accommodation in town and felt that he should live closer to the church. He first threatened Gachier with eviction. Gachier angrily responded that if he were put out of the rectory, he would 'put a Hammock between two Trees before the French Chapel and then how would such a thing appear in History'.[73] His protestations would go unheard—quite literally. Dent refused to meet with Gachier who was forced to complain to Dent's representative. The end of this encounter was inevitable. A few years later, the hot-tempered Gachier was expelled from Grenada after Fédon's revolution for 'disloyalty'.[74] By 1800, the Catholic church in Grenada was divested of the church, glebe lands and the accompanying rents, and even the presbytery.

Disempowering Catholicism also meant controlling the reach of its influence. Colonial officials prohibited marriages performed by Catholic priests and barred Catholics from sitting in the colonial legislature. They believed that Roman Catholicism, the religious identity of free people of colour, threatened the British colonial power, not least because of its association with Fédon's revolution.[75] British slaveowners feared Catholicism's continued practice in the island, especially because of its significant number of enslaved participants.[76] Remembering the thousands of enslaved, likely Catholic, participants in Fédon's revolution, British slaveowners feared the unifying effect religion might have on that rapidly growing population and sought to disempower Catholicism's place in colonial practice. Fédon's revolution of 1795 was still fresh in the colonial imagination in 1800, and British officials took measures to disempower religious practices other

[72] 'Minute of a conversation between Abraham John Bishop and Pere Felicien, the French priest', 11May 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers XX 27/6/18, ff153.

[73] 'Minute', 11 May 1793, Grenada, FP XX 27/6/18, ff153.

[74] Thomas May, 'State of churches in Grenada', 1796, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Archives, Fulham Papers, XX 27/6/18, ff160.

[75] Curtis Jacobs, 'Revolutionary Priest: Pascal Mardel of Grenada', *The Catholic Historical Review* 101 (2015): 317-341.

[76] Rev. John T. Harricharan examines enslaved Catholicism in Trinidad, which paralleled Grenada to some extent. After the abolition of the slave trade, a few thousand Grenadian enslaved people were illegally transported to Trinidad where they continued their Catholic practices along with Trinidadian enslaved people. *Church and Society in Trinidad* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2006): 66-81.

than British Protestantism.[77] Catholicism lost its position of visible dominance as Protestantism grew in strength.

Catholicism was not institutional in the early nineteenth century; there were no Catholic churches, glebe lands, or schools. Catholicism persisted only through inhabitants' choices as they negotiated their religious identities. Catholic influence did not have ties to legislative and ruling power the way Methodism did. While Methodism was concentrated in towns, supported by Anglican clergy and British planters, Catholicism was pushed to the outskirts of society, to plantations in remote areas. Catholicism derived its influence from tradition, in the late eighteenth century through makeshift churches and chapels its clergy cobbled together and, in the nineteenth century, through itinerant priests who carried their message across the colony after priests were allowed access to plantations by an act of legislature.[78] The growth of Catholicism in the nineteenth century was so great that in 1863 Catholics in Grenada outnumbered all other denominations: 19, 337 Catholic adherents to a combined total of 11, 518 adherents of other Christian denominations.[79] This development was possible because of the influence of Catholic plantation owners as well as enslaved adherents who played a significant part in maintaining these traditions.

In 1828, William Nash, the Anglican minister for Carriacou, reported that several plantations in the island were 'Romish'.[80] Not all the island parish's plantations were included in this report—notably missing were the largest and most significant Catholic plantations in the island. But of the four that were reported as Catholic, two were owned by James Gerbet Dumont.[81] The most significant Catholic plantations in Carriacou were owned by Judith Philip, a Catholic free woman of colour. The anti-Catholicism of Grenada's colonial government did not seem to curb either Judith's influence in Carriacou planter society or her dedication to her beliefs. In 1836, she was the only woman

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[77] 'Votes of the Honourable of the General Assembly', 6 and 7 February 1785, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 104/6, pp7-10.

[78] 'Minute of a conversation between Abraham John Bishop and Pere Felicien, the French priest', 11May 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers XX 27/6/18, ff153; Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 22 October 1793, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155.

[79] Papers relating to State of Religious Bodies in W. Indies, in Return to Circular issued to Governors of W. India Colonies, *House of Commons Papers* 49 (1864): 54. *ProQuest*. https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1867-043442?accountid=14540

[80] William Nash to William Hart Coleridge, 'Correspondence f rom the bishop of Barbados, William Hart Coleridge', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff216.

[81] Duquesne estate included several enslaved people (numbering 22 in 1817) and some of the machinery required for sugar production. All were sold upon forfeiture. 'Sales of forfeited slaves', 1797, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/1/1, ff11, 18; 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/265, ff346.

acknowledged as one of Carriacou's principal inhabitants.[82] Judith remained openly and unapologetically Catholic to her death. In her will, proved in 1849, Judith identified herself as a 'Christian of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church', and left twenty pounds to the Catholic Church for a mass after her death.[83] Some historically Catholic estates were left virtually intact after the revolution, the owners of the plantations themselves maintained their Catholic identity.[84] Catholicism as a religious identity for enslaved Africans would remain an option on these plantations because of the planter's religious identity.

Another Catholic plantation was Duquesne, located inland of St Patrick's north-western coast.[85] St Patrick, along with St Andrew, were known as country parishes due to their remoteness. Duquesne was owned by the Catholic Clozier brothers who infamously joined with Fédon during the revolution. The Duquesne plantation was historically French Catholic before the British capitulation in 1763. The plantation was a lucrative sugar estate with potential for more prosperity. Its fertile soil covered 296 acres, and two rivers watered the estate and a water mill provided the power for the sugar houses. However, as a result of the Cloziers' involvement in Fédon's revolution, the plantation was forfeited to the Crown. Later, the plantation became the focus of some controversy when the descendants of the Clozier brothers tried to reclaim the land, along with another old French-Grenadian family.[86] James Gerbet Dumont co-owned two estates in Grenada, the Duquesne and Bon Air plantations, as well as the Bellevue and Mt Desire plantations in Carriacou.[87] Dumont

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[82] 'Memorial from 'the principal' inhabitants of Carriacou relating to the route of the mail boats taking letters from England to Grenada', 29 April 1836, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/81/20, ff86-92.

[83] 'Will of Judith Philip of Island of Carriacou, Grenada', 26 December 1849, The National Archives, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PROB), PROB 11/2105/45, ff51-53.

[84] William Drake Sealy to Bishop Porteus, 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff53.

[85] Paterson, *Topographical Survey*, 9.

The returns for Duquesne show an enslaved population that was large enough to sustain sugar production throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century. 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817,Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/265, ff345-348; 'Grenada: St. Patrick: list of slaves', 1821, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/278, ff66-70; 'Grenada: St. Patrick: list of slaves', 1825, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/291, ff1-5; 'Grenada: St. Patrick: general registry', 1834, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/330, ff118-122.

[86] 'Opinion of Law Officers in a further case regarding the restoration of confiscated estates in Grenada to Maxime Clozier and others, and Louis Rene Passee and another, which were forfeited to the Crown on the attainder of their respective ancestors for high treason', 28 July 1827, Grenada, The National Archives, Treasury Solicitor and HM Procurator General's Department, TS 25/2040/61, ff366-372.

[87] 'Opinion of Law Officers as to a petition of Maria Francoise Duval Clozier, Rene Maxime Clozier, Francois Libera Octave Clozier, James Gerbet Dumont, Louis Rene Passee and Marie Francoise Elise Passee Clozier, all of Grenada, for restoring certain estates in the Island of Grenada, including the Duquesne Estate, the Bon Air Estate, and the Gross Point Estate, which were forfeited on the Attainder of their respective ancestors for High Treason', 3 February 1822, Grenada, The National Archives, Treasury Solicitor and HM Procurator General's Department, TS 25/2037/22, ff273-282.

was a descendant of Jean Jacques Lusanne Gerbet Dumont, who had owned Mt Desire before him.[88] Like the Cloziers, the Dumonts were Catholic and, as the controversy over the ownership of Duquesne demonstrated, the Dumonts were not exactly trusted members of society. The elder Dumont had been a participant in Fédon's revolution, one of the few participants who can be traced to Carriacou. Like many French-descended plantation owners in nineteenth-century Grenada, the Dumont plantations were Catholic. But the influence of Catholicism seemed to persist even after Crown forfeiture, as it did on the Duquesne plantation which retained a small enslaved population that had been baptised Catholic. Catholic religious identity on plantations like these was more likely the result of individual choices on the part of enslaved people and missionary activity than planter influence.

The end of Fédon's revolution initiated seismic change for Grenada's Catholic population. Carriacou's Roman Catholic priest was the only Catholic priest not embroiled in the upheaval of revolution. Father Guis was undisturbed by the upheaval in Grenada only 29 km away. Unlike Guis, the priests in Grenada did not escape the revolution. Pascal Mardel joined as the revolutionaries' priest, eschewing the garb of his profession in favour of short breeches and a national cockade.[89] Mardel was executed along with forty-five other revolutionaries on 9 July 1797.[90] Another priest was killed by the revolutionaries at Gouyave.[91] Felicien Gachier was expelled for disloyalty the same year the revolution took place.[92] British suspicions toward Catholicism hardly diminished when Irish Catholics were appointed in the place of disgraced French Catholic priests. Father O'Loughlin was the first Irish priest to take up residence in St George's. But unlike his predecessor, O'Loughlin had no claim to Felicien's house and land. When O'Loughlin arrived in the colony, he would have been obliged to rent accommodation. His ministry could not take place in a building, even a house as Felicien had done. O'Loughlin's arrival in Grenada signified the movement of Catholicism from a fixed base in town to itinerancy. His arrival also caused friction amongst free Catholics, white people and free people of colour. As a result, he also inherited a divided congregation and one that

[88] *Court of Oyer and Terminer for Trial of Attained Traitors* [1796], Grenada, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6/1, ff2.

[89] William S. Cormack, 'Communications, the State, and Revolution in the French Caribbean', *French Colonial History* 6 (2005): 39.

[90] *Court of Oyer and Terminer for Trial of Attained Traitors* , 1796, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP295/2/6/1, ff24-26.

Jacobs, 'Revolutionary Priest', 337-338.

[91] [Anonymous], *A Brief Inquiry into the Causes of and Conduct Pursued by the Colonial Government* (London: R. Faulder, 1796): 18.

[92] Thomas May to Bishop Porteus, 'State of the clergy and churches in Grenada', 25 March 1796, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff160-161.

could support him even less. And so his itinerant ministry began, criss-crossing the rough terrain of the island's interior to make his way north to the country parishes where a small assortment of coffee and cocoa plantations housed his primary communicants—enslaved Africans.

O'Loughlin's encounters with his new congregation were much more difficult than Father Guis' encounters with his congregation in Carriacou. Guis resided in that island parish for over twenty years. He lived, quite undisturbed, in a small house next to a wooden church located on a hill overlooking Hillsborough harbour.[93] He was unaffected by the glebe controversy that grew so heated in St George's between Father Felicien and Rev Samuel Dent. He posed no threat to Carriacou's Anglican minister, William Nash, except in one area. When enslaved Africans in Carriacou wanted their children baptised or wished to be married or needed a funeral officiant, they went to Guis.[94] As a result, enslaved people in Carriacou had more contact with a priest, if Guis did indeed, as Nash reported, attend the rituals of worship for enslaved people. O'Loughlin, however, could not have been as available as Guis. Enslaved Catholics in Grenada encountered a priest probably every two to three months.[95] The Catholic Church in Grenada had been disestablished by the time he arrived. O'Loughlin had no access to plantations without the permission of the plantation owners. He had no recourse to public funds, such as a clerical salary, and had to finance his own journeys around the island. This difficulty added another layer to enslaved Catholicism. Because the Irish priests had no salary distributed to them from the colonial treasury, enslaved people supported Catholic clergy for the administering of rites and paid them for these services as they could.[96]

Unlike the structures of leadership available to enslaved people on Methodist plantations, it is unlikely that enslaved Catholic leadership formed a large part of enslaved experience. William Nash reports on religious activity on Carriacou's plantations suggest that weekly, sometimes daily,

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[93] Guis lived where Christ the King Anglican Church presently stands. Raymond P. Devas, *Conception Island or the Troubled Story of the Catholic Church in Grenada* (London: Sands & Company, 1932): 26.

[94] Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 6 August 1802, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff181.

[95] O'Hannan's schedule, printed later, follows a two-month pattern, likely following an already established tradition. See 'Notice of Divine Service in Sauteurs', 9 August 1834, *The Grenada Chronicle*, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff257; 'Notice of Divine Service in Sauteurs', 6 September 1834, *The Grenada Chronicle*, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff286; 'Notice of Divine Service in Sauteurs', 18 October 1834, *The Grenada Chronicle*, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, 335; and 'Notice of Divine Service in Sauteurs', 1 November 1834, *The Grenada Chronicle*, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff350.

[96] Dent alleged that French priests took advantage of this by overcharging enslaved people. Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 'Observations on the conversion and religious education of Negro Slaves in the West India Islands', 10 October 1794, Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, 194.

prayers and catechising occurred on plantations.[97] Most of these activities were likely directed by overseers and managers. Samuel Dent reported that on Catholic plantations in Grenada enslaved people repeated the creed and sang hymns learned from the Catholic priests and that on these plantations enslaved men and women led their peers in singing every morning.[98] The degree of leadership enslaved Catholics had on their respective plantations was likely not the organised system particular to the Methodists, but was instead an informal worship that may or may not have been encouraged on the plantation, depending on the religious identity and religious fervour of the plantation owner. Discerning visible enslaved Catholic communicants is challenging because enslaved communicants lacked access to a formal system of worship and thus no record of enslaved Catholic activities exists. The glimpses into enslaved Catholicism before the abolition of slavery, however, explain the explosion of black Catholicism in Grenada after abolition when the Catholic Church grew to a congregation of over 21,000 in 1830.[99] The isolation of enslaved Catholicism from formal church organisation and worship would help to creolise Catholicism with African religious traditions.

4.3.3: Enslaved Africans and the development of creolised religious identities

As enslaved Africans negotiated Methodist and Catholic identities, they also acted on their own national and ethnic identities, expressed through cultural and religious rituals. Renegotiating African national and ethnic identities within the constraints of colonial plantations was incredibly challenging.[100] The imperial powers that forced African men, women and children to the West Indies were the same powers that regulated the expression of African identities on plantations. But most enslaved Africans spent the majority of their time in the company of other Africans and their descendants, not white people; and enslaved religious spaces were indelibly shaped by African

[97] William Nash to William Hart Coleridge, 'From the Lord Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands to the Secretary of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion of the Negro Slaves', 1 November 1833, Carriacou, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/112, ff270-277.

[98] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff29; 'Observations on the conversion and religious education of Negro Slaves in the West India Islands', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff194.

Sue Peabody analyses a similar development of enslaved Catholic identity in St Christopher, which had been captured and governed by the English in 1690. "'A Dangerous Zeal'': Catholic Missions to Slaves in the French Antilles, 1635–1800', *French Historical Studies* 25 (2002): 53-90.

[99] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 119.

[100] The challenge was made even more difficult as some of these enslaved Africans had been captured and sold as prisoners of war. As Stephanie Smallwood argues, 'theirs was a "social death", a form of exile to which no end was foreseeable. They inhabited a new category of marginalisation, one not of extreme alienation *within* the community, but rather of absolute exclusion from *any* community.' Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007):30.

culture, even as those spaces were defined within the powerful institutions of slavery and the plantation system. The abolition of the slave trade in 1807 helped to turn plantations into isolated, often densely populated communities where African cultural and religious traditions were crucial to the creation of creole Afro-Grenadian culture. Some of these traditions were religious practices, which were criminalised by white British planters as 'obeah'. The physical inscription of country marks on enslaved bodies were a reminder of their African communities; these symbols of identity became lost in enslaved culture as a creolised identities began to emerge.[101] The imprint of African heritage was evident even in the English and French patois which became the lingua franca of plantations, imbedded in the syntax and phonetics of their language.[102] For enslaved communities furthest from the seat of colonial power, African identities were preserved through Nation Dances, rituals, stories and songs.[103] The many ways in which African nationalities informed and shaped enslaved society would form the foundation of free Black Grenadian society after abolition in 1833.

Having a clear idea of how many enslaved Africans were resident in Grenada at the turn of the century is challenging. The Middle Passage brought enslaved Africans on ships from ports along the West African coast to Grenada, the first port of call for many of these ships. The number of enslaved people estimated to have disembarked in Grenada between 1784 and 1794 is significantly greater than the average number of enslaved people in the colony in any of these years. Between 1784 and 1794 alone, an estimated 62,387 enslaved people disembarked in Grenada. Records of the colony's enslaved population between 1763 and 1783 are incomplete, but from the available sources it seems that in 1763 enslaved people numbered around 12,000 of the colony's estimated 13,680 people. By 1783, that number had grown to 24,620, rising even more in the following thirty years to around 32,131 in 1807.[104] The staggering difference in the number who disembarked in Grenada and those who lived long enough to be counted in census can be partly accounted for by the intra-colonial slave trade. Grenadian slaveowners often held property in another colony and moved

[101] Michael A. Gomez analyses the importance of country marks for different African communities and the loss of this symbolism as creolised identities take over in the colonies. *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). As Lisa A. Lindsay points out, some people of African-descent who were not born in Africa themselves 'read' the country marks and used this knowledge to develop ancestry narratives. 'Remembering His Country Marks: A Nigerian Family and its "African" Ancestor, in *Biography and the Black Atlantic*, edited by Lisa A. Lindsay and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014): 192-206.

[102] Ronald F. Kephart, *"Broken English": The Creole Language of Carriacou* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

[103] Rebecca S. Miller, 'Performing Ambivalence: The Case of Quadrille Music and Dance in Carriacou, Grenada', *Ethnomusicology* 49 (2005): 403-440.

[104] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 14.

Table 4:2 Disembarked Enslaved Africans by Region of Purchase, 1784-1794

Place	1784	1785	1786	1787	1788	1789	1790	1791	1792	1793	1794	
Senegambia												**1,523**
Gambia					175			290	687	213	158	*1523*
Windward Coast												**5,346**
Bassa					670	633	736	80	238	302		*2659*
Cape Mount (Cape Grand Mount)						360	270	490	527			*1647*
Grand Bassam									101			*101*
Tabou						358						*358*
Windward Coast, port unspecified				225	356							*581*
Sierra Leone												**5,842**
Iles de Los					240		250	743		627		*1,860*
Sierra Leone estuary	197		326		681	1,576		408	383		411	*3,982*
Gold Coast												**7,897**
Anomabu			300	500		410		946				*2,156*
Cape Coast Castle					1,419				101	124	359	*2,003*
Gold Coast, port unspecified			450	354	1,346	473	586	239	290			*3,738*
Bight of Benin												**2,478**
Benin	162	214			238	125		122				*861*
Lagos, Onim					210							*210*
Legas									290			*290*
Popo								541				*541*
Bight of Benin, port unspecified								150	171		255	*576*

Place	1784	1785	1786	1787	1788	1789	1790	1791	1792	1793	1794	
Bight of Biafra												**24,975**
Bilbay								168				*168*
Bimbia	61			126								*187*
Bonny	448	824	437	837	446	545	785	604	931	275		*6,132*
Bundy							70					*70*
Calabar	483	1,573		843	640	634	1,100	1,981	910			*8,173*
Cameroons					113	233	285	904	382	233		*2,150*
Cap Lopez											229	*229*
Gabon								159	155	106		*420*
Loango											350	*350*
New Calabar	162	406	273	300		1,055	287	939	947			*4,369*
Bight of Biafra, port unspecified			298		105	206		265	1,569	284		*2,727*
West Central Africa and St. Helena												**9,415**
Ambriz							221	265	774			*1,260*
Congo River								135	818	154		*1,107*
Grenada Point								310				*310*
West Central Africa and St. Helena, port unspecified	374			121	987		357	902	811	2,887	299	*6,738*
Other African ports												**3,266**
Africa., port unspecified					879	777			210	1,041	359	*3,266*
TOTAL	*1,887*	*3,554*	*2,084*	*4,423*	*8,505*	*7,385*	*4,947*	*10,641*	*10,295*	*6,246*	*2,420*	**62,387**

Source: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, www.slavevoyages.com

enslaved people to these plantations after purchasing them in Grenada. But inter-colonial movement cannot alone account for this difference. Thousands, if not almost half, of the 62,387 Africans transported to Grenada perished in the colony between 1784 and 1794 alone. If knowing how many African people survived even for a year in the colony cannot be precise then neither can tracing African West Indian lineage.

Tracing Afro-Grenadian heritage to a specific nation is challenging, although understanding where the ships arrived from helps to pinpoint where Grenada's culture influences likely originated. In the late eighteenth century, the Biafran ports eclipsed other West African slave ports in popularity; because by the end of the eighteenth century, the northern ports in this region were open to all slave traders.[105] This change in slave trading networks accounted for the rise of enslaved Africans from the general regions of Biafra and West Central Africa across the British Caribbean. Biafra encompassed nearly 200 miles of coast and extended inland for 300 miles. West Central Africa stretched even further south, from Cape Lopez at the end of the Biafra to Benguela, for around 880 miles. This makes it likely that Grenada's African population at that time included Igbo, Yoruba, Ewe, Kongo, Chamba and Hausa.[106] Sometimes slave owners in Grenada indicated what nation a particular enslaved person was from in the slave registers. Most of these were taken twenty years after the huge upsurge of enslaved people landing in Grenada but still indicate, however limited, where individual enslaved people came from. The nations surrounding the ports of Iles de Los and Calabar in Sierra Leone and the Biafran Coast give some indication of what nationalities might have been represented amongst enslaved people. These include the Temné and Mende near Iles de Los and the Igbo near Calabar. Table 4:2 outlines the regions from where enslaved Africans came between 1784-94.[107] The principal place of purchase for most enslaved people disembarking in Grenada was Calabar, a port in the Bight of Biafra. Between 1784-1794, 8,164 enslaved people were purchased in Calabar and sent to Grenada. Together, with enslaved people purchased in Sierra Leone, the number of enslaved Africans disembarking in Grenada during those years totalled 31,838. In the first twenty years of British rule, transatlantic slavery more than doubled from around 12,000 in 1763 to 24,620 in 1783. This number continued to rise until 1805 when it reached its peak of 32,131 enslaved people, nearly the same number of enslaved Africans transported to Grenada between 1784 and 1794. Since there are no sources that describe where

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[105] Herbert Klein, *The Middle Passage: Comparative Studies in the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978: 147-148.

[106] 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of HM Treasury, T 71/265, ff84,96, 116, and 119.

[107] Table 4:2 Disembarked Enslaved Africans by Region of Purchase, 1784-1794

exactly each enslaved person was from or what their nationality was, it is a challenge to fully understand the national and ethnic demographics of disembarked enslaved Africans in Grenada and, by extension, the cultural beliefs and practices that infused plantation life.

The Middle Passage separated African people from their families, a crucial element of kinship that defined many African national identities. The break of these kinships and communities as a result of slavery led to a 'social death', in which the living enslaved person became like the ancestral spirits, occupying a liminal world apart from their own.[108] In some precolonial African societies, like the Imbangala, enslaved Africans ritually severed their ties to their own kin and took on the kinship networks of their enslaver. Centuries later, enslaved Africans in the West Indies were similarly faced with severed kinship networks, a type of severance that should have only occurred through death. As Smallwood goes on to elaborate

> Insofar as the captives siphoned into the Atlantic too were socially dead, their dilemma was the same as that of all who suffered the marginalization of enslavement: the alienation from their society of birth. In all the ways it robbed them of the markers of their social existence, the violence of commodification signaled to captives—stripped of material adornment, physically displaced, torn from the social embrace of kin and community—that they had been doomed to social annihilation.[109]

This resulted in kinlessness and had significant ramifications for their spirits after death, for after such dislocation many feared that they might not be reunified with the ancestral spirits. Finding and maintaining kinship and community aided captives 'in their efforts to retreat back into the protective web of kinship and community'; their only other choices were to retreat into the terror of the Middle Passage or die.[110] Establishing enslaved African plantation communities was not simply a way in which enslaved Africans maintained the cultural and national identities of the Old World but was a crucial, vital way in which they re-established a sense of kinship where the former had been violently ruptured through captivity and enslavement.[111] All enslaved people, regardless of their ethnic or religious identity, underwent the traumatic Middle Passage that distanced them psychologically, emotionally, and physically from others who spoke their language, followed their customs, and believed in their gods. Upon arrival in Grenada, those who survived the horrors of

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[108] Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 30.

Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

[109] Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery,* 60.

[110] Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery,* 64.

[111] Shantel George, 'Tracing the Ethnic Origins of Enslaved Africans in Grenada', *Atlantic Studies* (2018): 2-5.

passage were confronted with plantation life. Adjusting to the harsh changes was not possible the many enslaved people who did not survive long in bondage. Those already enslaved in Grenada were part of an immense transition themselves, as the communities formed after nearly a century of French occupation and Catholic control underwent a transformation that made unifying based on nation, language, and creed extremely difficult and perhaps even impossible.

By the early nineteenth century, the proportion of African-born people amongst the colony's enslaved population was steadily declining. Of course, the abolition of the slave trade accounted for much of this decrease, although the trade continued in a reduced and illegal manner for several years after 1807, with as many as 368-946 people trafficked between 1807 and 1809.[112] Population changes also coincided with changes occurring on Grenada's plantations. After 1807, Grenadian planters emphasised sugar to a much greater degree than they had before. With the abolition of the slave trade, they felt pressure to compete with the American sugar market and continue turning profits on sugar.[113] For enslaved people, the emphasis on planting sugar resulted in even more isolated communities populated by a growing number of creole-born to meet planters' demands for an enslaved workforce.[114] In turn, enslaved religious spaces on plantations became often isolated from the wider colonial community. The size of these plantation communities and their relative isolation from other enslaved communities 'increased cultural exchange, both between masters and slaves and within the slave population, thereby influencing the socialization of children, the institutionalization of religion, and the development of languages'.[115] We have already seen how cultural exchange between enslaved Africans and plantation owners influenced religion on the plantations. Within the 'crucible of the plantation system', the emergence of creolised Afro-Grenadian cultures 'took place on the margins of the units, in the space and time not devoted to the cultivation of export crops'.[116] In spite of a renewed emphasis on sugar cultivation, enslaved Africans used the contact time with each other to exchange cultures, traditions and beliefs. These vital encounters established the emergence of creole cultures.

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[112] Table 4:1 Enslaved Africans Disembarked in Grenada by Decade and Year, 1763-1808.

[113] Bernard Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean 1807-1834* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984): 85-86.

[114] Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (Kingston: Heinemann Publishers, 1990).

[115] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'Coffee Planters and Coffee Slaves in the Antilles: The Impact of a Secondary Crop', in *Cultivation and Culture: Labour and Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas*, edited by Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993): 132-133.

[116] Trouillot, 'Coffee Planters', 133.

For creole enslaved Africans, born in Grenada, kinship was cultivated through the plantation community. Perhaps it was with these enslaved generation that the forms of creolised culture began to be established within plantations. After the abolition of the slave trade, enslaved communities in Grenada were less likely to undergo a significant population transformation through the admittance of 'saltwater slaves'. As a result, there may have been a stronger development of religious identities amongst creole enslaved people. Research has not yet uncovered how many African-born enslaved people were Christian or Muslim or of another religious identity before arriving in the colony.[117] John K. Thornton suggests that Afro-Christian practice was either the failure of Christianization to fully convert enslaved Africans or was because creolised practices were resistance to imperialism.[118] Enslaved people in Grenada may have used Christianizing attempts by Protestant and Catholic missionaries to subvert Christianity, forging their own creolised versions, as part of their resistance to the imperializing—and enslaving—Europeans. Throughout the nineteenth century, creolised traditions became a part of the developing enslaved Grenadian cultural identity.

Some Grenadian creolised practices were rooted more in African cosmologies than European Christianity and were known as 'obeah'. Because British colonists widely considered these practices 'black magic' or 'heathen superstitions', these were often practiced in secret.[119] Few records exist detailing these practices and there are no records related to Grenada that explain the origin of these beliefs. 'Obeah' represented a common understanding of West African enslaved people that the spirit world was not only a part of everyday existence but that its forces could be used for good or evil.[120] The term itself represents 'the narrowing . . . of the terms through which African spiritual power was interpreted'.[121] Diana Paton traces the history of 'obeah' as a description of African spiritual practices and examines the semantic origin of the word. Unsurprisingly, the word 'obeah' can be linked to several African nations that would have been

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[117] Muhammed Abdul Jassan, 'Muslims' Struggle Against Slavery and their Efforts for Retention of Cultural Identity in the Caribbean Territories', *Hamdard Islamicus* 21 (1998): 76-81.

[118] John K. Thornton, "On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas", *The Americas* 44 (1988): 261.

[119] Angelina Pollack-Eltz, 'The Shango Cult and Other African Rituals in Trinidad, Grenada, and Carriacou and their Possible Influence on the Spiritual Baptist Faith', *Caribbean Quarterly* 39 (1993): 14.

Patrick Polk, 'African Religion and Christianity in Grenada', *Caribbean Quarterly* 39 (1993): 73-81.

See also Rosanne Marion Adderley, 'Orisha Worship and "Jesus Time": Rethinking African Religious Conversion in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean', *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 64 (1997): 183-206.

[120] Diana Paton, *The Cultural Politics of Obeah: Religion, Colonialism, and Modernity in the Caribbean World* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 25.

[121] Paton, *Cultural Politics,* 18.

represented in Grenadian plantation society.[122] Criminalising obeah was part of the British colonial efforts to control expressions of African identity, although the criminalised practices of obeah did not necessarily include all expressions of African identity.[123] The term 'obeah' itself could refer to almost anything and may have even entered common use with positive connotations and with integrated elements of Christianity, bringing vestiges of African religiosity into Christian practice. By the mid to late nineteenth century, the term had come to denote witchcraft and black magic, the use of spiritual powers for healing and protection. The British legislated against uses of obeah, whether in resistance to British authority or in the use of herbal medicines, because they 'could not abide sources of authority they did not wholly control'.[124] This represented not only British fear of rebellion against their rule but also a fear of the incomprehensibility of African spirituality.[125]

Only two cases referring explicitly to 'obeah' were tried in Grenada in the nineteenth century. One man was tried in 1806 and sentenced to death. The harsh sentence related partly to the accused crime—he was tried for poisoning—but was also related to the network this man was allegedly part of.[126] He was well-connected and practiced obeah, which was 'very dangerous to the safety of the colony' in part because obeah designated this man a leader among his peers.[127] British colonists feared rebellion and insurrection and believed, as was true of Jamaican Maroons, that obeah could unite black forces against the British.[128] Pierre, a free black man, was sentenced in 1833 to transportation for his 'evil disposed mind and pretending to have communication with the Devil and other evil spirits'.[129] The dates of these trials are significant. In the first case, the trial took place

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[122] See Paton, *Cultural Politics,* 21-24.

[123] Jerome S. Handler and Kenneth M. Bilby, *Enacting Power: The Criminalization of Obeah in the Anglophone Caribbean, 1760-2011* (Mona: University of West Indies Press, 2012): 1-18; Paton, *Cultural Politics*,17-42.

St. Vincent magistrate, John Anderson, alleged that 'obeah' in that colony was rare, but he corroborates the prevailing attitude of British planters that this was little more than 'superstition'. In *Between Slavery and Freedom: Special Magistrate John Anderson's Journal of St. Vincent during the Apprenticeship*, edited by Roderick McDonald (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2001): 156.

[124] Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008): 149.

[125] Bush, *Slave Women*, 75.

[126] Poisoning was European code for witchcraft. The poisonings which African spiritualists, mostly women, were accused of were physical substances used to generate 'harm to people through spiritual or occult means' but could just as easily have been used to protect or heal. Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 25, 101.

[127] 'Refers to importation of articles, with reference to salt fish; refers to an enslaved person of African descent who was convicted ten days previous of an attempt to poison the manager on the estate', 7 Dec 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/45, ff177-78.

[128] Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 37-40; Kamau Braithwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2005): 254-56.

[129] 'Transmits a petition from a 'free Black man' called Pierre', 1833, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/78/5, ff13-30.

the year before the slave trade was abolished. The second took place the year slavery was abolished. Paton notes that there were, in fact, far more practitioners of obeah than there were defendants.[130] So these trials were not necessarily prosecutions of the island's most notorious obeah men. The trials could instead have been a warning to people of African descent who practiced obeah. In 1806, the British were about to cease the (legal) slave trade and likely feared the growth of creolised African identities that would result from a growing creole-born enslaved population. Publicly hanging an obeah practitioner was supposed to instil fear in black people who would then be more reluctant to use obeah. Transporting Pierre in 1833 could be seen as a similar means of enforcing the white British colonial hierarchy on the eve of abolition when Grenada's free black population would grow instantly by thousands. While obeah represented the establishment of creolised African rituals, the trials represented British fear of the unifying, communal power of African spirituality.

'Obeah' may have been criminalised, but other elements of African culture and identity were part and parcel of enslaved plantation life. In the early nineteenth century, country marks adorned the bodies of the some of the island's oldest enslaved men and women—fifty or sixty years old. 'Country marks' were the British term for the ritual scarification common amongst people born in Africa, whose country marks signified that they had reached adulthood before being transported to the Americas. Country marks were made on foreheads, cheeks, arms or torsos. As inscriptions, these marks identified African men and women as originating from specific nations, although white planters might not have easily differentiated between them. Memory of Africa came with the visibility of their marks, symbols of old kinships and painful reminders of the violent disruption of those networks. Some slave-owners used these marks as identifiers of runaway slaves; some even knew their interpretation and listed individual slaves as belonging to a certain nation. Country marks used as identifiers in the slave registers present an archival paradox, for these very documents recording the violent inhumanity of slavery and in numerous slave adverts while simultaneously revealing details of individual enslaved Africans. It is possible to interpret this evidence as an example of knowledge exchange. Many of the recorded country marks and correlating nation of enslaved people in Grenada come from smaller households in the towns. Although white people could not tell a person's nation from their country marks, it is possible that in these smaller households as slaveowners communicated with enslaved people, they learned about African nations. Knowing both that person's nation and that they had country marks may indicate closer contact between enslaved and enslaver. Grace Rush of St George's, whose household

[130] Paton, *Cultural Politics* , 101.

numbered only two enslaved people, described an enslaved man as 'Chamba' with 'Country marks on each side of his face'.[131] Another possibility for enslavers having this information could be the type of acquaintanceship that took place between the enslaved person and the enslaver. Molly Ebo, enslaved on Dunfermline in St Andrew, is called after the region where she was originally from; her country marks were on her forehead.[132] On a plantation like that with an enslaved population of around 224, it is hard to imagine that the slaveowner acquired knowledge about nation or the presence of country marks without close contact—perhaps even intimate contact—with Molly. With the abolition of the slave trade, the meaning of these country marks slowly died out as a creolised enslaved generation defined their identities apart from African coming-of-age rituals. What did these country marks signify to that later generation whose bodies were scarred instead with brutality of enslavement? Ritual scarification served as a bitter reminder of destroyed families and incredible suffering; absence of these signified complete violent rupture of kinship.

Establishing kinship communities in light of this rupture was incredibly important for these enslaved people. One of the ways in which enslaved Africans in Grenada formed their own distinct communities was through language. As the plantation system and island geography largely isolated enslaved communities, language became a way in which enslaved Africans negotiated new identities and communities in stark contrast to British society. Carriacou was one of the most isolated parts of the colony, separated entirely from the mainland of Grenada and almost entirely inhabited by enslaved Africans. The creole language of Carriacou relies heavily on the syntax of West African languages, particularly Nupe, Ewe, and Temné.[133] Much of the vocabulary may have been English or French, but its core is African. Because the slave trade had brought such diverse languages to these isolated communities, it is very unlikely that the same West African languages were spoken by everyone, which might have happened in other colonies. As enslaved people developed creole languages, they were able to establish a means of communication for themselves, which, as we have already seen elsewhere in this study, many white colonists were unable to understand.

[131] 'Grenada: St George, St John and St Mark', 1817, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/265, f116.

[132] 'Grenada: St Andrew, St David, Carriacou and the Grenadines', 1817, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/267, f33.

[133] Kephart, *Carriacou Creole*, 22.

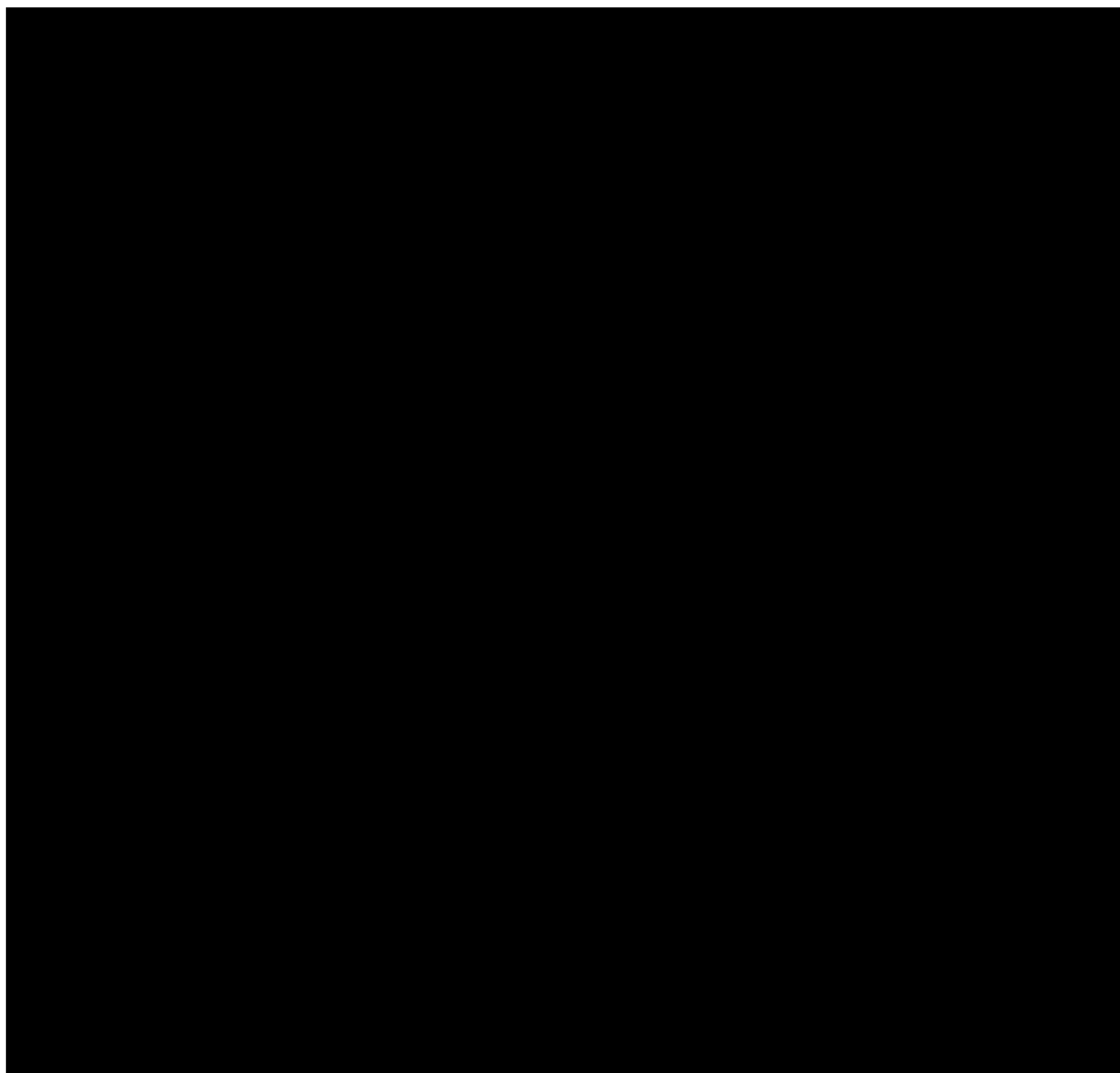

Figure 4:1 Big Drum Dance in Carriacou, W.I. *by Canute Caliste*
Source*: Canute Caliste,* Big Drum Dance in Carriacou, W.I.*, 1988, Carriacou, acrylic on masonite, 11 ½ x 13 3/8 in. Private collection.*

These linguistic communities helped enslaved Africans negotiate new kinship networks and establish distinct communities. Their language helped preserve West African practices for generations, and there is surviving West African vocabulary in Carriacou creole relate to African cosmology, beliefs and practices. 'Jombi', for example, refers to a spirit and is derived from Kikongo, reflecting the close kinship of the spiritual world in everyday life. Some rhetorical expressions were tied directly to the creolisation of enslaved African communities and their creolised religious practices. 'Saraka', a ritual feast, possibly originates semantically in Bambara and Yoruba or, as Sylviane Diouf argues, is actually a corruption of the Arabic *sadhaka*.[134] The ritual itself is both. In

[134] Kephart, *Carriacou Creole*, 23; Pollack-Eltz, 'Shango Cult', 14-15; Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 18. Diouf, *Servants of Allah,* 65, 180.

Grenada and Carriacou, saraka is traditionally a feast for the ancestors that consists of stewed meat, pigeon peas, coocoo (balls of cornmeal also called foofoo or funji in other parts of the West Indies), and balls of rice. The rice might originate partly from West African Muslims who gave out rice cakes as charity in the Islamic ritual of *sadhaka*. The word as well as part of that Islamic ritual may have creolised in the Grenadian ritual of saraka, often accompanied by the Nation Dance, where a the parent's plate is left for the ancestors' spirits.[135] This might seem a lot to read into one word and one ritual, but the fact that there are so many layers to even one word helps us understand how linguistics and rhetoric helped to forge creole kinships within plantation communities. Enslaved Africans re-negotiated and re-defined creolising identities not with the rituals, rhetoric and language of their enslavers but with a mixture of their own national, ethnic and religious identities.

Nation Dances were another way enslaved Africans created community in bondage. The dances also preserved elements of the ruptured kinship networks many had relied on before the brutality of the Middle Passage. Table 4:1 shows the general regions along the western coast of the continent where Grenada's enslaved population came from.[136] The table shows the number of enslaved people who were transported to Grenada between 1763-1840, the period of British colonisation during slavery. These regions of Africa were memorialised in the Nation Dances, which became a feature of enslaved communities in the peripheries of colonial society. These, like language, thrived in more isolated areas furthest away from the seat of colonial power. Carriacou again provides an exceptional example of these performative identities.

During slavery, drum dances were allowed in Carriacou and Grenada, unlike other parts of the colony. The dances likely became known as 'Nation Dances' at some point in the nineteenth century.[137] Lorna McDaniel calls the ensemble of song and dance that make up the Nation Dances 'invisible libretti', which were 'formed in the historical voice of the people and encompassing significant aspects of the people's social history'.[138] Some of the nations represented by dances are

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Peter F. Cohen, 'Orisha Journeys: The Role of Travel in the Birth of Yorùbá-Atlantic Religions', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 47 (2002): 17-36.

[135] Diouf, *Servants of Allah,* 191.

[136] Table 4:2 Disembarked Enslaved Africans by Region of Purchase, 1784-1794

[137] Pollack-Eltz, 'Shango Cult', 12.

The dances remain a fixed part of Carriacou culture, as illustrated in Canute Caliste's painting. For a description of mid-twentieth century dances, see May Fortune and Alan Lomax, 'Interview with May Fortune about the Saraca', track 24, *Saraca [sound recording]: Funerary Music of Carriacou* (1962).

[138] McDaniel, *In Rememory of Flight,* 17.

See also Danielle Dawn Sirek, 'Musicking and Identity in Grenada: Stories of Transmission, Memory and Loss', PhD diss. (Manchester Metropolitan University, 2013).

Igbo (Ebo), Temné, Chamba, Congo, Manding and Cromanti. Again a Muslim influence can be perceived in the accompanying song for a Cromanti dance, as the singers sing 'Anancy-o, Sari Baba'.[139] This may have originated from Asanti Muslim captives who were absorbed into the kinship networks of their captors, the Kumasi.[140] McDaniel suggests a few
possible origins for 'Sari Baba': the Muslim Dyula name *Osei Bamba* and the Hausa word for protection, *tsari*. As we saw with the ritual of *saraka*, the possible origins of the words themselves is only a piece of the rich heritage that accompanied enslaved Africans across the Atlantic. The songs related to the spirituality that permeated enslaved society, referencing deities and expressing prayers. The recreational nature of these dances meant that they were undertaken in the space and time where African people were not consumed with enforced cultivation. The dances then represented a community separate from commercialisation through exploited labour. It was a community spiritually, linguistically, visibly, and physically distinct from white colonial society. In 1798 and 1808, the colonial legislature attempted to ban the use of drums in fear of their being used as communication devices and unifying enslaved Africans against the British. Around that time, fiddles were added to the musical mix to make the sound more palatable to white ears. As a result, enslaved Africans composed new pieces of music to accompany new choreographed dances, a true creolisation. The Scotch Congo and Chamba along with the creole Nation Dances were added to the repertoire.[141] Although dances of this kind were looked down on by British authorities, enslaved men and women continued to dance in quest of good harvests, prosperity, and the ever-vital re-establishment of kinship and community. Creole identity in Grenada then was directly tied to a vital, visible past.

4:4 Negotiating religious identities in bondage

Expressing African national identities was important for enslaved people as they negotiated new creole identities through reforming kinship communities in plantation life. Catholicism helped to fill this need by allowing more flexibility in negotiating religious identities with the powerful structures of the colonial hierarchy. Accessing Christian denominations, such as Methodism and Catholicism, however, required the intervention of colonial power in order to flourish. Methodism for example flourished best on plantations surrounding St George's, the seat of colonial power. It was irrevocably linked with colonial power as an offshoot of Anglicanism. Unlike Anglican clergy,

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[139] McDaniel, *In Rememory of Flight,* 46-7.

[140] Smallwood. *Saltwater Slavery*, 20-29.

[141] Quadrille dancing is widely recognised as a remnant of French colonialism. McDaniel, *In Rememory of Flight,* 128. See Canute Caliste, Quadrille, where he pictures himself in the center of the musicians playing the violin.

however, Methodist missionaries were not an 'adjunct of the planter class'.[142] Associations with slaves were the very reason for their presence in the colony and were the reason they could not attain high positions in society. Their inability to join the ruling class necessitated an alliance with planter power. In Grenada, Methodism needed the approval and encouragement of colonial officials to venture out to plantations and even to rent a building for a chapel in St George's. Because of their close links to colonial power, Methodist missionaries did not advance very far beyond the reach of the colonial legislature. Enslaved converts to Methodism negotiated their chosen religious identity within the powerful influence of planters. Experiencing and expressing Methodism meant some acquiescence to the established colonial hierarchy while still providing enslaved people a way of expressing their own personal religious agency.

Negotiating Catholic identities also meant contending with planter influence. However, because Catholicism had been disestablished from its former position of political power, negotiating Catholic identity unlike Methodist identity allowed enslaved adherents to forge identities that could be more obviously used as resistance to British rule. Catholicism, already on the political margins of colonial society, had been re-defined from a religion associated with French imperial power to one associated with the marginalised and oppressed. Enslaved Catholicism would eventually come to define Black Grenadian religious life after abolition. Incorporating elements of African religious and national traditions, however, laid a much more indelible foundation for Black Grenadian culture. As enslaved Africans sought to establish networks of kinship and community on plantations, European Christianity fell short of the communal needs. Methodism required close access to colonial power, which was impossible for most enslaved people isolated on plantations miles away from St George's. Although not uncommon on isolated plantations, Catholicism still demanded planter influence or a priest's occasional presence to truly form a lasting, wholly Catholic community. In the peripheries of the colony, then, creolised forms of African religiosity and Catholicism emerged. These aided enslaved Africans in forming their own distinct communities and would remain a pervasive influence on the explosion of black Catholic identity in the era of abolition.

[142] Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries*, 66.

Chapter 5

A Religious Education: Abolition and the Mission to Educate the Poor

Sunday mornings in St George's were filled with movement and colour. Bright head ties and freshly washed 'Sunday best' clothes adorned entrepreneurial enslaved Africans on their one day free of labour heading for the market and community gathering in the town centre.[1] Most of these men and women came from local plantations, although a few trickled in from plantations further afield. The market was a welcome, if brief, reprieve from the hardships of daily life. Not all welcomed these Sunday gatherings. On the morning of 17 June 1827, John Crawford Barker made his way to St George's parish church lamenting the haunts of vice and profligacy these markets engendered. Invited from his country parishes of St John and St Mark to give the morning sermon in St George's, Barker used his observations to demonstrate the need for religious education amongst the town's enslaved population. His commemorative sermon marked the second anniversary of the establishment of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) of which he and fellow clergyman, William Nash, were secretaries. Since the establishment of a West Indian diocese in 1825, Anglican clergy had been urged to emphasise conversion and religious education in their parishes. As abolition became more certain, Barker and his fellow clergymen were concerned that freedom from slavery would usher in a new era of vice. They hoped that sermons of this kind would keep the island's young people from the vices of the Sunday markets and 'the poisonous influence of the practiced veteran in vice'.[2] British colonial officials believed that civilised, moral behaviour testified to a person's conversion, which resulted in peaceful colonies, an ordered society, and in safeguarded imperial profits.[3] This attitude permeated the period between abolition and the end of the apprenticeship scheme. Abolition did not immediately free enslaved Africans from bondage. The period of apprenticeship, which was finally abolished in 1838, was meant to prepare enslaved

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[1] William Harte Coleridge, 'Abstract of the Returns of the Diocese of Barbados', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/106, ff228. See John Crawford Barker, 'Returns to Questions Addressed to Clergy', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

Woodville K. Marshall, 'Provision Ground and Plantation Labour in Four Windward Islands: Competition for Resources During Slavery', *Slavery and Abolition* 12 (1991): 57-58; and Alfred Caldecott, *The Church in the West Indies* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1898; reprint, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1970): 45-46.

[2] John Crawford Barker, 'The Duty and Means of Promoting Christian Knowledge' (Grenada: Alexander McCombie, 1827): 11.

[3] John Crawford Barker, 'The Education of the Poor' (Grenada: Free Press Office, 1828): 5-6.

James Patterson Smith, 'Empire and Social Reform: British Liberals and the 'Civilising Mission' in the Sugar Colonies, 1868-1874', *Albion* 27 (1995): 253.

people for freedom. This period saw clergy and planters working together, their former tension over religious education abated in their common agreement that preparing enslaved people for freedom meant promoting 'civilised', moral behaviour through religious education. But conversion and religious education had another meaning for Grenada's formerly enslaved. During this period, Catholicism became undeniably the primary Christian religious identity for enslaved people. Freedom from slavery and from apprenticeship meant that Black Grenadians could express their religious beliefs more openly and freely than ever before through Catholic conversions and Catholic religious education.

The goal of Anglican clergy in Grenada was less an effort to convert the heathen and more of an attempt to convert enslaved people from one religion to another. At the beginning of British colonisation in Grenada, Anglican clergy were set the task of converting and instructing enslaved people. Their instructions on this matter focussed first on morals and second on religion, 'it being Necessary that [heathens] first be humanised, and reduced to live as Men before they can be rendered Christians; the Doctrine and precepts of the gospel being of so Refined a Nature, and so adapted to our most Improved Rational Faculties'.[4] Catholicism in Grenada was commonly referred to as 'superstition', often discussed simultaneously with 'heathenism'.[5] Defining Catholic practices this way allowed British colonial officials and clergy to counter Catholicism with the 'true and faithful doctrine' of the Church of England. Religious instruction and the establishment of schools had one ultimate purpose: to remove the obstructing 'ritual of popery' from the colony and especially from the newly freed black population, many of whom continued in Catholicism.

5.1: The civilising mission in the British Empire

The civilising mission characterised moderate evangelicalism in the nineteenth century, owing its development to the volunteer societies of the reform movements of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and Britain and the emerging middle class with its humanitarian impulses. Alison Twells defines the civilising mission in terms of its objectives: 'to produce men and women of Christian character; to infuse the English nation, its cultural life and its polity, with Christian principles and morals; and to extend a Christian moral system and community across the globe'.[6]

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[4] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff24.

[5] Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 22 October 1793, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155.

[6] Alison Twells, *The Civilising Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The 'Heathen' at Home and Overseas* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009): 5.

The humanitarian movements that were part of post-Restoration Church reform and the movements' late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century manifestations shaped the rise of religious education in Grenada.

The spread of Christianity to English early modern colonies resulted from Protestantism's evolution into a defining characteristic of Englishness, ensuring Christianity's spread even without the Church's support of any direct missionary evangelism.[7] As empire expansion infringed on indigenous lands and new imperial borders conflicted with other expanding European empires, Protestantism became cemented into the colonial enterprise of making new colonies English, Anglicanism becoming synonymous with Englishness. Seventeenth-century empire expansions were taking place 'within a context of religious divisions'; and British imperial competition with Spain—and, in the eighteenth century, with France—brought these European religious divisions to the Americas.[8] By the end of the eighteenth century, this religious and imperial competition coalesced with the immense influx of Catholic subjects into the British empire as a result of the Treaty of Paris. British officials in French Canada used conversion and religious education to Anglicise Native Americans who had converted to Catholicism.[9] Religious instruction worked simultaneously with the civilising mission: 'To be civilized was to be more human than a savage; to be Christian was to be superior to a civilized pagan; but to be English was to be the epitome of a civilized Christian human, and therefore the acme of God's will'.[10] This arrogant English self-confidence also stemmed from the belief that the Church of England, after surviving the Civil Wars and the Restoration through the centuries, had emerged pure and undefiled. 'To us has this blessed gift descended', John Crawford Barker stressed to his colonial congregation, a gift that the nineteenth-century church was finally positioned to advance amongst the poor and enslaved in the West Indian colonies.[11] War, indifference, and conflict with 'Romish doctrine' were surely opportunities for the expansion of Protestant doctrine.[12] But in spite of Protestant expansion's

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[7] The intrinsic position religion held in everyday life meant that even 'freebooting captains such as Drake and Sir John Hawkins' performed Christian rituals onboard their ships.

Rowan Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire, 1700-1850* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007): 2.

[8] Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009): 63, 64-5.

[9] Pestana, *Protestant Empire,* 222.

[10] Strong, *Anglicanism*, 58.

[11] Barker, 'Duty and Means', 3.

[12] From the beginning of evangelism in the British Empire, the North American colonies had more access to Protestantism than the West Indian islands, although Jamaica and Barbados were certainly better supplied with clergy than Grenada during the eighteenth century. See Strong, *Anglicanism*, 42-43, 63; and Travis Glasson, *Mastering Christianity: Missionary Anglicanism and Slavery in the Atlantic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 15-20.

influence in the Atlantic world, enslaved Africans and their descendants had been largely left behind in terms of conversion and religious education. Only now in the nineteenth century were enslaved people seen as targets for moral improvement and for conversion from Catholicism.

Such resolve resulted from decades of defining the church's mission by how much it could achieve in society, a mission clarified after the Glorious Revolution which re-asserted Protestantism in England. The political conflict of the seventeenth century disestablished the Church of England which then had to contend with the rising number of Dissenting congregations. Politically the Church of England's influence sustained a blow after the Civil Wars, although church officials welcomed the revival of some influence after the Restoration. Regaining some of their power after the Glorious Revolution, members of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Church reconsidered how they would influence the moral and spiritual character of English society. This was the context for the Church of England's focus on moral improvement societies.

Their mission began at home with the numerous social improvement causes led by lay Anglicans collectively known as the moral reform movement. These societies often followed the model of Wesleyans, who emphasised spiritual disciplines and strict regulations for holy living. The similarity of these groups across denominations attested to the renewed focus on individuals' private, personal relationship with God. Spiritually-minded people met together to discuss the Sunday sermon, to pray, and to generally discuss practical applications of Scripture.[13] Anglicans who attended groups like these saw themselves as individually impacting the moral tone of society by their careful application of biblical principles to their daily lives. It was only a matter of time before the Church officials seized control of this movement and turned it to their own advantage as they worked to regain control of England's spirituality and establish themselves as the national church.[14]

Three groups that developed from this national spiritual fervour exerted a strong influence in British society, at home and abroad: the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to Foreign Parts (SPG). The CMS began in 1799 and from its inception was associated with missionary

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[13] John Spurr, 'The Church, Societies and the Moral Revolution of 1688', *The Church of England, c1689-c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism*, ed. John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 135-143.

[14] They were unsuccessful in the latter but did maintain their position as established church. Craig Rose, 'The Origins of the SPCK, 1699-1716', in *The Church of England, c1689-c1833*, ed. John Walsh, et al., 177-179; and Spurr, 'Church, Societies and Moral Revolution', 127-131.

work in East Asia and Africa.[15] The other two strongly influenced the growth of Anglicanism in colonies across the empire, and their influence was keenly felt in the American and West Indian colonies. The SPCK was founded in 1699 as a voluntary society, modelled on the moral reform movements from earlier in the century. The SPG was the first society which was formally overseen by the Church of England rather than a group of volunteers. The SPG received its charter in 1701 from William III and immediately began its mission to the Americas. One of the founders, Thomas Bray (1656-1730), was a clergyman in Maryland where he helped establish the Anglican Church in what had been up until then a predominantly Catholic colony. As at home in Britain, the SPG promoted Anglicanism as the preferred form of Christianity and worked alongside other societies to educate the poor and relieve their condition. The SPG sent out missionaries and educators and funded projects across Britain and its empire. In the West Indies, their efforts culminated in the establishment of Codrington College.[16] The land for the college was donated by Christopher Codrington in 1710 for the express purpose of establishing a seminary to educate Caribbean-born Church of England ministers who would spread Anglicanism throughout the region. Although none of the clergymen in Grenada were educated at Codrington until after abolition, the SPG still influenced their ministry in the colony. Significantly, the SPG influenced the establishment of humanitarian societies in both the British Isles and Grenada. Religious men and women promoted abolitionism, alleviation of poverty, and prison reform in Britain, intrinsically entwining political reform with religion. That relationship continued in the efforts of the SPG and its sister organisation, the SPCK, through their determined promotion of morality and religious education. In Grenada, these efforts culminated in the establishment of societies concerned with the education and alleviation of Grenada's poor and enslaved. The rise in educational efforts in Grenada began the same year as William Harte Coleridge's appointment as Bishop of the diocese of Barbados in 1824 and marked a significant shift in the religious life of the colony.[17]

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[15] Started by Charles Grant and George Uday of the British East India Company and David Brown, a chaplain in Calcutta.

Bob Tennant, *Corporate Holiness: Pulpit Preaching and the Church of England Missionary Societies, 1760-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 1.

[16] Codrington College was first established as a grammar school in 1745 and gained collegiate status in 1824. The college is now affiliated with the University of the West Indies as Codrington Theological College and is the oldest theological college in the Americas.

See Chapter 5 of Glasson, *Mastering Christianity*, 141-171, for an analysis of the SPG's plantation at Codrington and the plantation's primary role in exemplifying the Society's collaboration with imperial goals through their use of enslaved labour as well as Chapter 6 of Katharine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

[17] The diocese of Barbados included all of the Windward Islands. See Map 1:1 Map of the Antilles, 1793. p 6.

5.2: Reform and the colonial church

The year 1824 was a momentous one in the religious history of the British Caribbean colonies. After years of religious direction stemming from the metropole and the Bishop of London, the Caribbean colonies were for the first time granted their own bishop within the diocese of Barbados.[18] William Hart Coleridge was chosen as the first Bishop, and he brought with him zeal and enthusiasm for church expansion in the West Indies, as well as a lifelong interest in education.[19] Coleridge grew up in Ottery St Mary, Devon, brought up by his uncle, George, at the same school where his grandfather was headmaster. Coleridge showed promise as a young man and left Devon for Oxford in 1807 to study at Christ Church College. He received his bachelor's degree in 1811, took orders in 1812 and then received a master's in 1814 and began work as a parish priest in Cowley. Coleridge moved to London in 1816 to take up the post of assistant curate at St Andrew's Holborn but a few years later left that position to become the secretary for the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK). His work in London and with the SPCK raised the minister's profile in the city. Zealous and relatively young, Coleridge was a good choice for the bishopric of Barbados.[20] His impact reverberated in Grenada in two ways. First, Coleridge's appointment centralised the Church's government in the West Indies, giving clergy more power than they had yet enjoyed. Before this point, the Church of England had been governed from abroad by the Bishop of London, and now for the first time the West Indian church was governed from within the Caribbean. Second, Coleridge's emphasis on education began with the clergy who would fill colonial pulpits and whose moral behaviour exemplified all that Coleridge envisioned for every member of colonial society.

The creation of the Barbados diocese offered further stability to Grenada, which had been ripped apart by factions and conflict. Coleridge's work with the SPCK closely aligned the Barbados See with the charitable societies and missionary work of the church. The diocese itself included the Windward and Leeward Islands, Trinidad and British Guiana, a significant seat populated by over one hundred thousand, most of whom were enslaved Africans.[21] Coleridge did not let the magnitude of his responsibility deter him from his mission of emphasising education. One of the first projects

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[18] Diocesan reform was part of the nineteenth century revival of the Church of England. According colonial churches their own See was part of the re-establishment of the Church's power. Arthur Burns, *The Diocesan Revival of the Church of England, c.1800-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), ch 8 particularly.

[19] Sehon S. Goodridge, *Facing the Challenge of Emancipation: A Study of the Ministry of William Hart Coleridge, First Bishop of Barbados, 1824-1842* (Bridgetown: Cedar Press, 1989).

[20] 'Memoir of the Late Bishop Coleridge', *The Colonial Church Chronicle* 4 (1850): 3-11.

[21] See Map 1:1 Map of the Antilles, 1793. p 6.

he undertook was to appoint the first principal of Codrington College, J. H. Pinder.[22] The number of clergy in the diocese grew too, after Coleridge's appointment; and in Grenada, as elsewhere, these clergymen were connected to the societies promoting religious education amongst all classes in society. Coleridge's efforts shaped the progress of religion in the colonies first, by consolidating ecclesiastical power; second, by creating a stable environment for local clergy with closer connections to their immediate superiors; and third, by continuing to encourage religious education amongst the colonies' poor, including aiding and financing the growth of schools and the number of schoolteachers and catechists resident in the colonies.[23] Before the creation of the West Indian dioceses, Grenada's clergy were concentrated in towns and rarely ventured to plantations. The installation of Coleridge as Bishop of Barbados symbolised the changing role of Anglican clergy and focused their mission of converting enslaved people on Grenada's plantations.

The creation of the diocese initiated important changes to the structure of Anglicanism as an institution in Grenada. Coleridge's arrival into his See in 1825 represented the establishment of centralised ecclesiastical power.[24] Before the diocese was formed, the colonies had been under the control of the Bishop of London. The distance between the parish and the Bishop of London was so vast and engaging in any communication or active leadership was so difficult that local parishes were dominated by planter influence. Planters had a significant influence on Grenada's religious life. They could control how religion spread; they dictated the extent of clerical influence; and the religious life on their plantations was at the mercy of their whims. Added to this influence was the overall neglect clergy faced. The lack of concerted legislative support and the distance between clergy and episcopal supervision led to years of malpractice. Joseph Hardwick suggests that nineteenth-century 'English churchmen worried that colonial churches looked more like the voluntary churches of republican America than the established Anglican churches in England and Ireland'.[25] Anthony Keighley Thomas, who was a minister in Grenada in the 1790s, blamed the situation on the colony's first colonists who were largely Scottish Presbyterian:

> The laws of this colony with regard to the Establishment of the Church and of Clergy were at first framed by Presbyterians in general who either were unacquainted with the ecclesiastical Laws of England or if some of them were

[22] James S. M. Anderson, *The History of the Church of England in the Colonies and Foreign Dependencies of the British Empire*, vol.3 (London: Rivingtons, 1856): 536.

[23] Goodridge, *Facing Emancipation*, 11-13.

[24] C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G.: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701-1900*, vol. 1 (London: SPG Office, 1901): 200

[25] Hardwick, *Anglican British World*, 8.

> acquainted with them, their own private Interest, or the Influence of the French, too much prevailed, at least at that time.[26]

Hardwick uses the term 'informal Presbyterianism' to describe this 'unique power relations that emerged between ministers and congregations in nineteenth-century colonial churches'.[27] This concerned church officials in Britain, who wanted greater control over the colonial church.

Attempting to consolidate what little oversight the few parish clergy had, the Grenada legislature combined some of the country parishes just before Coleridge took up residence in Barbados, uniting the four country parishes into two.[28] The united parishes of St John and St Mark were led from Charlottetown, St John; and the united parishes of St Patrick and St Andrew were led from Sauteurs, St Andrew. When Carriacou was without a resident clergyman, the St Andrew and St Patrick clergyman took responsibility. While the unification of the parishes relieved the immediate problem of episcopal supervision, the size of the united parishes made it difficult for clergy to perform all of the necessary services across broad geographic areas. The size of the unified parishes limited travel, and the number of parishioners spread clergy's ministrations thin. Also, to the Church's regret, travel difficulties were nothing compared to the lack of interest in Protestantism from Catholic plantations or from planters who were reluctant to encourage religious instruction on their plantations. Even after Coleridge's appointment and when the island had clergy regularly in residence, these clergymen still had to contend with these difficulties. A report of clerical activity from 1828 notes that access to plantations was still limited.[29] Clergy overseeing the unified parishes were also still reluctant to venture far beyond the towns, where services were held on rotation. In St Patrick and St David, services were held monthly rather than weekly. These parishes suffered from not having clergy regularly resident, an issue that persisted despite Coleridge's best efforts to appoint and maintain clergy. Nevertheless, the unification of the parishes helped to consolidate

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[26] Anthony Keighley Thomas, 1795-6, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP Porteus 19, ff6.

[27] Joseph Hardwick, *An Anglican British World: The Church of England and the Expansion of the Settler Empire, c.1790-1860* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2014): 8.

[28] St George. St John and St Mark were joined together in 1806, because the colony only had two clergymen. That was split in 1825 into the St George parish and the joint parishes of St John and St Mark.

Frederick Maitland, 'Clergymen in Grenada, reports that they find it difficult to procur clergymen 'of learning and Respectability'; suggests to keep one parish always vacant and divide the salaries of the three between the two clergymen', 11 March 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/43/12, ff57-8; 'An Act for separating the parishes of St John and St Mark', 1825, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/12, ff51-4.

[29] William Sealy, 'Returns to Questions Addressed to Clergy', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff53.

Table 5:1 Church of England Clergy in Grenada, 1764-1839

Name	Dates	Parish
George Bowdler	1764*	St George
John Cumming	1769	St George
John Findlater	1771-96	St George
Samuel Dent	1772-1805	St George
James McKenzie	1778-79	St George
Walter Carew	1780-93	St George
Rees Lewis	1785	Carriacou
John Wingate	1789	St George
Anthony Keighley Thomas	1795-98	St Patrick
Thomas May	1795-96	St David and St Andrew; St George
Francis McMahon	1784-1827	St John and St Mark
Joseph Dent Gilmore	1801	St George
John McTair	1798-1804	St John
David Ritchie	1800	St George
William Nash	1800-28	Carriacou
John Crawford Barker	1824-1888	St John and St Mark; St George
William Sealey	1828-1834	St John and St Mark; St Patrick
William Payne	1833-36	St Andrew
John Congdon Shapley	1834-46	Carriacou
Samuel Braithwaite	1834	St John and St Mark
John Pilgrim Wall	1839	St Andrew and St David

***Died before taking up the post**

Sources: ***Clergy of the Church of England Database, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk ;****'Blue books of statistics, etc.', 1834, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 106/28, ff****44-45; 'Volume XXXV', 1748-1811,*** *Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XXX****V, ff85, 91, 115, 15***[illegible] ***15-62, 164, 285, 292; 'Windward Islands',*** *Grenada, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX****XII, ff16, 31, 42-6, 93, 141;*** *William Harte Coleridge, 'Correspondence from the bishop of Barbados, William Ha*[illegible] *Coleridge, to the secretary of state mainly concerning ecclesiastical matters such as his visits to the various parts of his diocese and to England, the extent of the diocese', Grenada, The National Archives, Records of th*[illegible] *Colonial Office, CO 28/152, ff274****; Records of the Council of Grenada, 1766,*** *Grenada, The National Archiv*[illegible] *Records of the Colonial Office, CO* ***104/1, ff167.***

ecclesiastical control on a local level even as the same was happening through the creation of the diocese. Centralised local ecclesiastical oversight galvanised the Church of England's power as an institution in the West Indies.

Although Grenada's clergy were still relatively few after Coleridge's appointment, the state of Anglican clergy before 1824 had been even more uncertain. Grenada's parishes had often been

vacant. At the beginning of British colonial rule in 1763, colonial officials found it hard to retain clergy for long appointments.[30] Parishes were often vacant as a result of the unique challenges of the posting. The difficulties inherent in a colonial post became evident even before the clergy arrived. A journey to Grenada from Britain took several weeks and was rarely a direct trip. Clergymen made the lengthy and expensive journey to their new parishes, usually stopping first in Barbados before continuing to their impoverished parishes. Despite the wealth of some planters, most Grenadian parishioners earned very little, many owning a small single-crop farm. Clergy could not expect a sizeable income from their congregation. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, clergy in the colony could expect a small wooden church attached to slight glebes or freeholds. The glebes were used to plant small provision crops to feed the minister and his household with occasionally some spare produce to sell at market. Because their glebes were not extensive, clerical households were small, consisting of one or two enslaved people who were most likely a handyman and a housekeeper.[31] The glebes or freeholds were not large enough for most plantation crops (certainly not sugar) but were large enough to qualify the clergyman for a position on the legislature.[32] Parishes were rarely accompanied by a parsonage in the early nineteenth century, and clergymen were forced to rent accommodation.[33] Although challenging, the situation was much better than that of their predecessors. Clergymen like John McTair and Anthony Keighley Thomas lived on the former Roman Catholic glebes and used formerly Catholic churches during the 1790s.[34] Their ministries were plagued with controversy over their right to these lands and churches, which the colony's slowly diminishing French Catholic residents argued were rightfully theirs. In Carriacou, the situation was less contentious. Ursule Guis, the Catholic priest, lived in the

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[30] Frederick Maitland, 'Clergymen in Grenada, reports that they find it difficult to procure clergymen "of learning and Respectability"', 11 March 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/43/12, ff57-8.

[31] Ursule Guis, 'Grenada: Carriacou Island: list of slaves', 1821, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/275, ff65; William Nash, 'Grenada: Carriacou Island: general registry', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/304, ff97.

[32] White men who owned ten acres, had a capital worth of £20 Grenada currency, and had reached twenty-one years of age were eligible for election to the legislature. Most glebes were 12 acres, Carriacou's 22 acres.

'An ordinance regulating the elections for the General Assembly of Grenada', 14 February 1766, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/1, ff227-34; Dent to the Bishop of London, 22 October 1793, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155; Anthony Keighley Thomas, 1795-6, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP Porteus 19, ff63.

Samuel Dent was appointed acting governor between 1801-2. Frederick Maitland, 'Transmits an application from the House of Assembly regarding appropriation by the legislature of the revenues from the Church lands', 24 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/2, ff4.

[33] Samuel Dent to the Bishop of London, 6 August 1802, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff181; Edward Eliot to W. H. Coleridge, 13 April 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff56.

[34] Frederick Maitland, 'Reports appointment to the Council of George Smith, the Chief Judge', 20 June 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/9, ff267; 'Anthony Keighley Thomas', *Clergy of the Church of England Database* (CCEd), no. 40724.

parsonage; and William Nash, the Anglican cleric, lived in rented accommodation. A parsonage was built for Nash near Hillsborough in the 1830s, and his lack of a parsonage earlier did not seem to have caused a problem between the two men. On the mainland, McTair's and Thomas's difficulties were not limited to the state of their appointed parish and poorly attended services. The unpredictability of colonial life added stress to an already difficult posting. The ongoing conflict between Britain and France created instability in the colony, especially when France captured Grenada in 1779 during the American Revolution. After the colony was restored to British rule in 1783, the conflict took on a new form and culminated in Fédon's revolution during 1795-6. Caught in the middle of the 1795-6 revolution, one clergyman, Francis McMahon, was captured and held prisoner in the French colony of Guadeloupe.[35] The harshness of colonial life, not least the debilitating disease environment, presented difficulties for the clergyman's family. John McTair died suddenly in 1807 after becoming ill and left his wife and children stranded in the colony without a home and in financial difficulties.[36] Clergy and their families faced the same diseases that killed so many white colonists in the first few months of arrival. Even adapting to the new environment would have been difficult for clergy and their families. The burning heat, unfamiliar scenery, an African creolised society and the presence of dangerous tropical diseases all discouraged and weakened clergymen. Those who survived often left after a short time to take another precarious journey back home.

Clergy also faced difficulties in the ambivalence of planters, merchants and other free men and women along with religious and linguistic barriers that together limited their pursuit of a fruitful ministry amongst the island's enslaved people. Filling positions for all parish churches was virtually impossible due to a lack of personnel and was financially impractical for anyone who attempted it. During the first few years under British rule, clerical posts were rarely filled at all. When George Bowdler, the only clergyman specifically appointed to Grenada by the Bishop of London in 1764, died before he could take up his post, another clergyman was not appointed in his place until five years later.[37] Most of the clergy who came after him stayed no more than a few years. Colonial officials regularly wrote in frustration to their London superiors at the lack of a settled resident

[35] Thomas May, 'State of Grenada churches', 1796, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff160-1. Francis McMahon, *A Narrative of the Insurrection in the Island of Grenada* (St George's: John Spahn, 1823).

[36] Frederick Maitland, 'Refers to case of 'an Orphan left destitute' as a result of the death of Reverend McFair, Rector of St Johns and St Marks, and of his wife who died a few days later', 19 December 1805, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/42/45, ff192-3; Frederick Maitland, 'Reports appointment to the Council of George Smith, the Chief Judge', 20 June 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/9, ff26-7.

[37] 'George Bowdler', *Clergy of the Church of England Database* (CCEd), no. 161197.

clergyman. Between 1764 and 1800, nine of the fourteen clergymen who took a post in Grenada resided in St George's, where the majority of the colony's free population lived. Neglect of the rural parishes remained a significant concern for clergymen and, to some extent, colonial officials. This neglect had far-reaching ramifications, beginning with many white and Black Grenadians having limited access to both clergymen and the rituals of worship. Without clergy, the weekly Eucharist could not be observed in all parishes and infants went unbaptised. The sacrament of the Eucharist was an important means of remaining in communion with God; without it, Protestant colonists were denied the 'effectual signs of grace'.[38] Considering the high infant mortality rate of this period, the absence of clergy was a matter of real concern for parents of faith.[39] Roman Catholic families did not have the same problem at least until the 1790s, because Catholic priests continued to perform Catholic rites for their parishioners. It is likely that in the absence of Protestant clergy, a military chaplain may have performed the necessary services for parishioners near the forts of St George's.[40]

Filling vacancies seemed the obvious solution for this neglect but finding clergy willing to take up one of these posts proved difficult. Preventing, or at least mitigating, spiritual neglect was a primary concern for Grenadian clergy in the early nineteenth century. In the early 1800s, colonial life was still unpredictable and unstable as much as any other plantation colony; but the cessation of conflict between Britain and France brought a greater sense of security in the nineteenth century. The political stability allowed the Grenada legislature to take greater interest in the religious life of the colony. The legislature initiated a two-part solution for filling the posts with the sanction of the bishop of London, and later the Bishop of Barbados. The legislature filled vacant posts by unifying the country parishes. Colonial officials also believed that in order to attract moral, educated men to fill those posts, they needed to also raise the living of these posts. By 1807, the Grenada legislature was prepared to increase the living for the combined parish of St John and St Mark from £200 to £350.[41] Frederick Maitland, the governor, noted that an increase to the living of St George's was unnecessary because of the fees and rents attached to that living.[42]

[38] 'Article XXV, Of Sacraments', *The Book of Common Prayer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, reprint 1969): 703-704.

[39] *Registers of Baptisms for St George's, St John and St Mark*, 1762-1785, British Library, Endangered Archives Programme, EAP 295/2/1-3.

[40] Similarly when the chaplaincy fell vacant, the St George's parish priest would perform the necessary duties. Edward Mathew, 'Reference to regulations for carrying on the trade between His Majesty's Dominions and the United States of America', 22 June 1784, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/25/29, ff154-5.

[41] Frederick Maitland, 'Clergymen in Grenada, reports that they find it difficult to procure clergymen "of learning and Respectability"', 11 March 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/43/12, ff57-8.

[42] Charles Green, 'Encloses copy of the Supplement to the St. George's Chronicle and Grenada Gazette, dated 17 October 1800', 25 October 1800, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/37/33, ff110-11.

The physical size of the united parishes and their significant population made ministry particularly challenging.[43] Sauteurs, St Andrew was a day's journey by road from St George's; the distance from the capital to Charlotte Town, St John was not much less. The towns were connected to the capital by a single coastal road. The poor state these roads were often in and the lengthy travel time forced many colonists to travel between towns by boat. Travelling inland to plantations was even more challenging. Plantations were less well connected to the main road, usually accessed by dirt tracks that washed out and became nearly impassable during rainy season. Plantations in the country parishes were densely populated, and their poor accessibility was a significant concern for clergymen. When John Crawford Barker was first appointed to Grenada, he took up the post as rector of the united parishes of St John and St Mark.[44] When he arrived, the post had been vacant for seventeen years, the year the most recent incumbent died. He was faced not only with inaccessible plantations but also a parish full of people, black and white, who were unused to resident Protestant clergy and certainly unused to Protestant clerical efforts to convert and educate. Across all parishes, the population consisted primarily of enslaved people. Barker's unified parishes of St John and St Mark were populated by 3,009 enslaved people in 1826; the neighbouring unified parishes of St Patrick and St Andrew were populated by 9,023 enslaved people.[45] St Patrick had one of the highest densities of enslaved people per mile of the entire colony.[46] The unified parishes were so large in physical size and population that consistent religious oversight would have been difficult even without lack of interest, language barriers and the institution of slavery. With such a responsibility, clergy confined much of their ministry to towns and left plantation religious instruction to managers and missionaries.[47]

Most planters shared little concern for immortal souls. When it did take place on the few plantations that offered any religious instruction, Protestant religious instruction took the form of catechising and reciting the Lord's Prayer. Efforts by clergy and missionaries to educate and instruct enslaved men and women in the articles of faith were met with planter resistance. Planters resisted education primarily because many believed that education would make enslaved people

[43] See Map 1:2 Map of Grenada, 1780. p 7.

[44] Barker, 'Duty and Means', 1; John Crawford Barker, 'A Memoir of the Life and Character of the Revd William Higgs Barker, M. A.', 1838, Grenada, National Library of Wales, Barker Family MSS, NLW MS 23188C, ff22.

[45] 'Grenada: Other districts', 1826, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Treasury, T 71/299.

[46] At more than 300 enslaved people per square mile matched only by Carriacou. Higman, *Slave Populations*, 89.

[47] William Nash, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff214.

harder to control and make them 'greater Rogues than they were before'.[48] They were especially resistant to any attempt to teach enslaved children to read, fearing that children would then become rebellious and might even be able to read the 'pernicious publications' of the French which could incite rebellion.[49] Slave-owners in town as well as on remote plantations prevented enslaved people from attending Sunday services, and few Protestant enslaved converts could attend services at all. The impassable roads that prevented clergy from accessing plantations also prevented white parishioners from further afield ready access to clerical services. Clergy's limited access to plantations meant that thousands of enslaved people had little interaction with Anglicanism. Because some of these parishes were so remote and so heavily populated by enslaved people, colonial officials and clergy were concerned that without the spread of religious education Roman Catholicism would grow. The focus on religious instruction was intended to counteract the influence of Catholicism, but without a change in planters' attitudes toward religious education or a change in accessing plantations that religious instruction was impossible. As a result, very little religious instruction took place on plantations before 1825. The disconnect between planters and clergy was the result of both planter fear of large enslaved populations and the influence planters had in religious matters because of the distance between the Bishop of London, then head of the West Indian church.[50] The lack of centralised ecclesiastical power in the Caribbean left clergy at the mercy of planters, whom they could not afford to anger since the planter class controlled the legislature which funded the clergy. These tensions dominated Anglican clergy's attempts to convert and provide religious instruction to enslaved Africans.

Colonial legislative officials' involvement in religious affairs arose from interest in personal gain rather than concern for the religious life of the colony. Legislative precedent set in motion by the Grenada Assembly and Council before Coleridge was appointed bishop concerned the control of glebes and distribution of salaries. It was customary for the legislature to decide the salaries of clergy on the island. When the country parishes were united in 1806, the legislative assembly increased the annual salary for Grenada clerics from £200 to £350 per annum.[51] Part of the salary

[48] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff29.

[49] 'Instructions for Missionaries to the West India Islands', 1794, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff177.

[50] Katharine Gerbner ties planter resistance to enslaved conversion with the idea of 'Protestant Supremacy', a precursor to white supremacy. She argues that where large enslaved populations existed, the greater planter resistance to conversion. See Gerbner, *Christian Slavery,* 46-7, 164-88.

[51] Frederick Maitland, 'Clergymen in Grenada, reports that they find it difficult to procure clergymen "of learning and Respectability"', 11 March 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/43/12, ff57-8.

was financed by revenue gleaned from glebe lands, originally the property of the Roman Catholic Church but now Crown property.[52] Part of the plan to reduce the number of parishes included bringing these glebes under the management of the legislature as freeholds, allowing the assembly to disperse revenue as salary to clergy. Protestant clergy also took ownership of church buildings and rectories. All but one of the churches had been damaged during Fédon's revolution. The legislature planned to use the surplus revenue from the glebes for repairs and upkeep, which they failed to do.[53] Twenty years after coming under the legislature's control, the church buildings were still in disrepair.[54] Taking control of the glebe lands and administering clerical salaries consolidated legislative power over the clergy and caused relatively little change in Grenada's religious life. The slave-owning planters who made up the legislature still dictated clergymen's access to plantations.

Even after the Anglican Church centralised under William Harte Coleridge in 1825, the colonial legislature still exercised a strong control over the appointment and salary of the clergy. But after 1825, the colonial legislature began to align their influence with the dicta of the newly centralised ecclesiastical government. Coleridge desired well-educated clergy who could establish his vision for educational initiatives across the island. Colonial legislators intended to leverage an increase in the united parishes' salary to attract well-educated men to the vacant posts. By 1825 in the British Isles, "well-educated clergy" meant men educated at Oxford or Cambridge.[55] Degrees from institutions such as the University of Aberdeen were acceptable but were not as highly regarded. Clergymen with these degrees were included with clergymen without bachelor's degrees who had been ordained on the basis of an interview with their parochial bishop. These were all described as 'literate'. Clergymen with degrees from Oxford or Cambridge could look forward to more respectable livings in Great Britain than those who were merely literate. As a result, these "well-educated clergy" rarely took a post in a remote provincial colony like Grenada, and these posts were more likely to be filled by the lesser clergy deemed 'literate'. In the first fifty years of British rule in Grenada, only four out of fifteen clergymen had degrees from British universities at all—

'An Act to alter and amend an act intitled "An act to repeal an act for providing support for clergy of these islands', 7 December 1827, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/12, ff265-7.

[52] Duke of Portland, 'Transmits a copy of a letter he received from the Bishop of London, enclosing a petition to 'His Majesty in Council', from the Reverend J Dent, on behalf of himself and protestant clergy incumbents of parishes in Grenada', 20 December 1797, Whitehall, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/35/32, ff125-30.

[53] Frederick Maitland, 'Transmits an application from the House of Assembly regarding appropriation by the legislature of the revenues from the Church lands', 24 May 1807, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/46/2, ff4-7.

[54] George Munro, 23 February 1827, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff108.

[55] Sara Slinn, *The Education of the Anglican Clergy, 1780-1839* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2017), chapters 3 and 4.

three of which were awarded by either Oxford or Cambridge. The Episcopal Acts dictated the acceptable curriculum for Anglican clergy, which is why only degrees from Oxford or Cambridge were recorded. What the Episcopal Acts fail to communicate is how many men designated literate in fact had university degrees (or at least some university education) that went unrecognised by the Church of England. Prominently absent from these acts of ordination were the Scottish universities. For instance, John Findlater, a clergyman who lived on the island in the 1770s attended Marischall College at the University of Aberdeen but was listed only as 'literate' at his ordination.[56] Other clergymen, like William Nash of Carriacou, appear not to have attended university at all and were ordained after a successful interview assessing their scriptural knowledge. However, after Coleridge's appointment all new clerical appointments to Grenadian parishes were university graduates. This was both an outcome of the Church's reform movements in the early nineteenth century and a reflection of the Church's growing emphasis on educational initiatives within the colony. Educated clergy would certainly be better able to carry out those initiatives and establish some educational initiatives of their own, as was the case with John Crawford Barker.

After 1825, the measures the colonial legislature enacted, uniting the parishes and increasing rectors' salaries, merged with Coleridge's vision for the Church of England in Grenada. By then, for the first time in the colony's history, Grenada finally had an Anglican clergyman resident in each parish.[57] This significant change encouraged a redefinition of the role of Anglicanism in the colony as clergy, some planters and legislative officials worked together to promote religious instruction for all classes, whether enslaved or free. William Harte Coleridge also made several important changes to the structure of colonial churches. Coleridge encouraged clergy to establish local chapters of the SPG. The size of parishes still prevented some clergy from maintaining regular contact with even white parishioners in the towns not to mention their new targeted mission-field of enslaved people. Local chapters of the SPG and their supporters in Britain funded missionaries, schoolteachers and catechists who visited outlying plantations and provided religious instruction. The glebe lands were now under Coleridge's control, which removed those revenues from the planter-dominated legislature. Coleridge also appointed clergy for vacant parishes.[58] His relatively close proximity and oversight strengthened these and other aspects of support for the clergy, especially against the power of the legislature and planters, and thus strengthened Anglicanism's

[56] 'John Findlater', Clergy of the Church of England Database, CCEd, no. 52474, www.theclergydatabase.org.uk.

[57] One clergyman for each of the united parishes as per the reorganisation of 1806. Frederick Maitland, 'Clergymen in Grenada, reports that they find it difficult to procure clergymen "of learning and Respectability"', 11 March 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/43/12, ff57-8.

[58] See Goodridge, *Facing Emancipation*, chapter 4.

position as a colonial institution. This was one of the most significant shifts directing religion in Grenadian society.

Centralising the power of the Church of England within Grenada emboldened clergy to follow the dictates of their bishop, rather than succumbing to the pressures of slave-owning planters. But by 1825, Coleridge's goals were increasingly aligned with those of the planters. In Grenada, churches and public buildings still bore the marks of Fédon's revolution of 1795-6, still vivid and frightening in the collective memory of white Protestants on the island. Planters worried that another uprising might occur, and they began to accept that British Protestantism might help prevent this.[59] Both planters and clergy worried that the continued spread of French Catholicism might encourage anti-British rebellion. Both planters and clergy were suspicious of the colony's thousands of enslaved people who would soon be freed after the Abolition Act was passed. Their concern brought planters and clergy together. As abolition became a surer reality, planters and clergy supported each other in the establishment of educational initiatives. Noel Leo Erskine summarised the collusion of planter and clergy:

> It is quite clear here that from the eighteenth century on the Catholic and Anglican churches in the Caribbean took sides: they sided with the master class against the enslaved population. Enslaved persons were taught that their masters were their fathers to whom they owed respect, obedience, and love.[60]

The legislature's newfound interest in the moral tone of the colony resulted in another significant change. The Sunday markets were banned in 1824 because of the pervasive belief in the colony that they contributed to popular moral degradation.[61] This change had its greatest impact on the enslaved population, who had used their day off to socialise and make a little money. Colonial officials enacted this law ostensibly to improve the moral tone of the colony but also to minimise enslaved gatherings. Understandably, enslaved men and women protested the change of market day from Sunday to Thursday. The gap between official legislation and enforcement resulted in the continuation of numerous unofficial Sunday gatherings in town. These markets persisted until 1829

[59] Frederick Maitland, 'Representation from two slave 'owners' from Carriacou, William Scott and McLean, made to Maitland', 12 September 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/18, ff79-80; Frederick Maitland, 'States that he thinks there is no evidence for the view of the two Carriacou planters who thought there was appearance of ideas of resistance among enslaved persons of African descent', 13 October 1806, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/44/25, ff103-4.

[60] Noel Leo Erskine, *Plantation Church: How African American Religion was Born in Caribbean Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 55.

[61] 'An Act to prevent the holding of markets on the Sabbath day and appointing Thursdays and Saturdays to be public market days', 26 November 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 103/12, ff218-221.

when new legislation strengthened the campaign against them.[62] This legislation illustrated the collaborative efforts of the colonial government and the newly centralised Church of England to curtail any type of enslaved social activity other than approved churchgoing. Legislating the extent of Sunday activity was part of colonial efforts to anglicise and civilise the soon-to-be-freed enslaved. Focussed on religious instruction, these initiatives sought to anglicise a population that planters had long feared, misunderstood and maltreated. Clergy and planters believed that educating enslaved people, especially children, would produce a moral, malleable Black population who would tacitly assent to the colonial hierarchy after abolition.

5.3: The education of the poor

In 1827, the year before abolition, Grenada housed four clergymen and one parochial school.[63] The parochial school had been established by John Crawford Barker, who directed the educational movement in Grenada. He was exactly the type of clergyman Coleridge hoped for, an educated, moral man with a strong interest in education. Barker had moved to Grenada in 1820 to take up the post of rector in the united parishes of St John and St Mark. The youngest son of educator and minister, William Higgs Barker, Barker grew up in Carmarthen, Wales, where his father headed a grammar school.[64] Barker took his bachelor's from Jesus College, Oxford in 1820. His first posting was in Bishop's Hull, Taunton, where he met and married Ann Stuckey Trenchard. Their first son was born the following year, when Barker was a curate in South Petherton.[65] By 1824, Barker and his family had settled in Charlotte Town, St John, Grenada and had welcomed their second son into the family. Barker's appointment demonstrated Coleridge's fervent desire to see educated men overseeing the spiritual life and education of the colony. More educated clergy would soon follow. By 1828, Barker had moved from the combined parishes of St Mark and St John to the parish of St George. Although because of this move he had given up a slightly larger living, his move symbolised his ascent in the colonial hierarchy from country pastor to metropolitan clergyman. St George's was the seat of religious and political activity in the colony, and the clergyman who held that living became the de facto head of island religious activity. Barker used his position to bring colonists together in support of educational initiatives across the island. His gravitas and education inspired

[62] 'Abstract from the returns in answer to questions addressed to the resident and officiating clergy', 1829, Barbados, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office CO 28/106, ff228.

[63] 'A tabular statement of the present ecclesiastical establishment in the dioceses of Barbados and the Leeward Islands', 1824-26, Barbados, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/146, ff253.

[64] 'A Memoir of the Life and Character of the Revd William Higgs Barker, M. A.', 1838, Grenada, National Library of Wales, Barker Family MSS, NLW MS 23188C, ff1.

[65] 'John Crawford Barker', Clergy of the Church of England Database, CCEd, no. 41806, www.theclergydatabase.org.uk.

the confidence of supporters for the SPCK and the Society for the Education of the Poor, supporters which included many prominent members of the colonial elite across the island, region and the British Isles.

When John Crawford Barker appealed to planters to provide religious instruction on their plantations, he elucidated a shift in the role of Grenadian colonial clergy. No longer dissociated from the religious life of their poorer parishioners, Grenada's clergy showed a strong active interest in the religious practices of the poor and enslaved. But their interest was tainted with colonial concerns. Like the Methodists, Anglican clergymen were still influenced by the planters' concerns. In this situation, as it was with the Methodists, clergy's message focussed first and foremost on the supposed moral paucity of Grenada's poor and people of colour rather than the gospel. Barker, along with his peers, interpreted enslaved peoples' supposed moral failures as evidence of a life unchanged by 'the saving knowledge of the Christian Faith'.[66] These moral failings were, in their opinion, related to domestic and family arrangements within the enslaved community. Clergymen believed that enslaved people should be monogamous and married. They interpreted working hard and contentment in a lower social status as evidence of moral Christianity. Teaching these morals and so-called Christian behaviours would be the first step towards ensuring enslaved people's access to Protestantism as well as the means of enslaved people's righteous standing before God. After improving the moral lives of the enslaved, religious instruction would be a necessity, without which no enslaved person could hope to live a righteous, godly life. That attitude permeated clergy's correspondence and sermons and was echoed in the white colonial assumption that religious instruction brought about a civilised, orderly society. Colonial officials in Grenada and in the metropole believed that the basis for a well-regulated society was the 'religious instruction for all classes within the Colony'.[67] White colonists believed that a civilised society was one led by educated men and women who could responsibly perform the functions required of them as members of that society. In his sermon commemorating the fourth anniversary of the Society for the Education of the Poor, Barker wondered how all could be partners in a civilised society if part of that society was denied access to the means of civilisation. Education of the poor entailed more than reading, writing, and arithmetic, Barker reiterated; the body of society, he argued, is made up of separate parts and to neglect one part would be to the detriment of the whole.

> [T]he health and strength of the Community depends upon the perfection of the separate parts. If the inferior elements of society are ignorant, corrupt, and

[66] Barker, 'Duty and Means', 8.

[67] Barker, *The Education of the Poor: A Religious Duty* (Grenada: Free Press Office, 1828), iii.

> undisciplined, the entire frame wants its requisite and attainable degree of unity, compactness, and strength. To give it this, we must all be actuated by one and the same purpose. A principle sufficiently strong and universal to effect this, is to be found only, through a religious education in the early discipline of the mind to fear God and to obey him.[68]

This principle lay at the foundation of educational efforts in Grenada, especially those directed at the religious education of enslaved children. As the colony moved slowly toward abolition, efforts to use religious education to 'civilise' enslaved men and women became one of the white colonists' most urgent concerns. White colonists imagined the coming of abolition with fear. For centuries they had understood and justified racial slavery by constructing Africans and their descendants as primitive, anarchic and naturally amoral and violent. What kind of society would Grenada be should it suddenly be filled with thousands of free black men and women? White colonists imagined streets riddled with crime, their world descending into chaos. Suddenly, educational efforts usually headed by clergy and members of the SPG saw a rise in planters' involvement. Education for the enslaved provided these planters with a sense of security. If the planters provided opportunities for religious education, they reasoned, then the men and women enslaved for decades under the planters' harsh and unfair rule would surely be grateful to their former owners and would maintain the standard of civilisation achieved in Grenadian society.

5.3.1: Religious and moral education from the pulpit

The illusion that religious instruction was a necessary foundation of civilised society pervaded the mindset of white colonists. Christopher Lipscomb, the Bishop of Jamaica, echoed this attitude in a letter written to the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Education of the Negro Slaves. Lipscomb asserted that the enslaved population's 'advances in civilisation have invariably been in proportion to the degree in which the blessings of Morality and Religious Education have been extended to them'.[69] This period of apprenticeship after the abolition of slavery provided clergy and planters to cooperate together in preparing enslaved people for freedom. This period helped facilitate a change in how white colonists defined themselves in relation to enslaved Africans. Facing the 'great civil change' of abolition, white colonists recast themselves as benevolent

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[68] Barker, 'Education of the Poor', 10.

[69] Christopher Lipscomb, 19 April 1828, quoted in *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of Negro Slaves in the British West India Islands*, (London: R. Gilbert, 1828): 6.

William Sealey, who took over the united parishes of St John and St Andrew from Barker, echoed this sentiment in a letter to William Hart, in 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 6 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff213.

benefactors for enslaved people.[70] This would guide the ideology behind the civilising mission, along with the belief that enslaved people were not capable of understanding 'the Doctrine and precepts of the gospel', which were thought best left to the 'most Improved Rational Faculties' of the white colonist.[71] Instructions to Anglican missionaries in the early nineteenth century articulated this attitude: 'it [is] Necessary that [the enslaved] first be humanised, and reduced to live as Men before they can be rendered Christians'.[72] By repositioning themselves as benevolent educators looking after the welfare of the poor and helpless, British colonists could shape abolition to their own advantage and sidestep the blame for the institution of slavery which had created the educational gap in the first place. Slavery had dehumanised Black Africans in the minds of British planters and, as enslaved people were recast as actual humans capable of instruction, only now was education a priority.

This belief that enslaved people were not capable of understanding Christian doctrine undergirded the publication of a 'Slave Bible' in 1807 and the distribution of Bibles after abolition. The 1807 edited version of the Bible was published in London 'for the use of the Negro Slaves in the British West Indies'.[73] The edited version contained only those passages that explained how Christians ought to live, a practical Christianity. The impetus for such a life—a Christian's new identity in Christ and thankfulness for salvation—were removed, as well as sections that related historical details thought inappropriate for enslaved people. Most of the Pauline epistles were entirely removed, with only two or three chapters left per epistle. Sections of the Pauline epistles that emphasised the kind of life Anglican clergy enjoined their enslaved parishioners to perform in their day-to-day life were left intact, but the sections which focussed on the liberating freedom of the gospel were removed. These deleted sections of the epistles explicitly referred to identity in Christ and the adoption as sons and heirs of Christ. The reason for this elision is not only that slaveowners wanted to be sure their slaves did not inculcate any ideas of freedom, as enslaved Americans did with their songs of deliverance from Egypt.[74] In fact, the Slave Bible removed Exodus almost entirely, beginning with the Israelites' entry into the Promised Land rather than with the mass

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[70] Coleridge to the Society for the Education of Negro Slaves, 1 November 1833, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/112, ff274.

[71] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff24.

[72] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff24.

[73] *Select parts of the Holy Bible, for the use of the Negro slaves, in the British West-India Islands* (London: Law and Gilbert, 1807).

[74] Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998): 114-6.

exodus with God's blessing in defiance against the Egyptians. Slaveowners also omitted the doctrinal portions of scripture because they did not believe enslaved people had enough intelligence to understand them. Why teach doctrines of adoption and justification when all the 'poor ignorant, perishing souls' needed was a handbook on moral living?[75] It is impossible to know how commonly used this Bible might have been in the West Indies, but this version powerfully reflected how British imperialists weaponised the gospel for their own ends. Nor did this infantilisation end with abolition. In 1834, the Grenada Auxiliary Bible Society distributed New Testaments and the Psalms to every formerly enslaved person 'who [could] read; or who, thought not able to read, [was] the head of a family in which there [were] readers, or children learning to read'.[76] The absence of the Old Testament reflected the same belief that a belief that Black Grenadians were unable to understand it. Again, this omission resulted from the idea that practical Christianity found in the New Testament was all Black Grenadians needed to live morally upright lives. Even if the Slave Bible was not in wide circulation at any point in Caribbean history, the same undergirding philosophy was still in place. For Black Grenadians, the indignity of being denied religious freedom was mingled with the enforcing of British ideas of social morality.

Clergy openly espoused the necessity of teaching Black Grenadians practical Christianity rather than doctrine. In his 1834 sermon marking the end of slavery, John Congdon Shapley explicated the duties expected of newly freed people in society.[77] Shapley's appeal to Black Grenadians is fraught with tension. Some of this tension was due to changes that resulted from abolition. The end of slavery doomed sugar production in Grenada as well as the end of the planter class as it had come to be known. Shapley felt this end keenly. He had been appointed as Carriacou's clergyman in 1834. He had married Mary Jane Milne, the daughter of Alexander George Milne, who owned the Beausejour, Limlair, Brunswick and Prospect Hall estates in Carriacou. The Milnes' significant property was worked by thousands of enslaved men and women. Mary Jane Milne was also related to Patrick and William Bartlet and George McLean, who were some of the most prominent men in Carriacou because of their own large plantations and their role as agents for many others. Most planters in Carriacou had done business with the Bartlets and McLeans at one time or other.[78] Shapley preached his 1834 sermon, 'Freedom and Slavery', the year after slavery was abolished and

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[75] George Bilby to J. M. Trew, 24 April 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff31.

[76] 'Notice', *The St George Chronicle and Grenada Gazette*, 20 December 1834, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff413.

[77] John Congdon Shapley, *Freedom and Slavery* (Grenada: Free Press, 1834)..

[78] Mark Quintanilla, 'Mercantile Communities in the Ceded Islands: The Alexander Bartlet and George Campbell Company', *International Science Review* 79 (2004): 14-26.

the year before his father-in-law received over £16,000 in compensation for the people freed on his estates.[79] The end of the apprenticeship scheme inspired another sermon that echoed the same sentiments of Shapley's earlier sermon. His 1838 sermon on 'The Duties of Freemen' promoted the same idea that Black Grenadians were fit only for practical Christianity.[80]

Together, Shapley's sermons specifically targeted the new free black population in Grenada in both phases, first after the Act of Abolition (1833) and second at the end of the apprenticeship scheme (1838). The difference between these sermons and that of Barker's is subtle. In contrast to Barker's sermons, whose intended audience was a largely white slave-owning congregation, Shapley's sermons were intended for a black congregation. One reason for this was demographics. Barker's sermons were preached in St George's where 260 white people lived in 1830 compared to 3,669 people of colour.[81] Shapley preached in Carriacou where white people numbered only forty-nine and people of colour numbered 3,653. Shapley was thus far more likely to deliver a sermon to a predominantly black congregation. While the message of these clergymen's sermons remained largely the same, Shapley's sermons explicitly include black people as active participants in their own religious education. Barker's sermons had alluded to enslaved people as passive agents whose moral education was the responsibility of slave-owners. Now because of abolition, Black Grenadians were no longer considered heathens in need of deliverance from savagery or enslaved people in need of Christian charity. Black Grenadians were now, in the eyes of white colonists, active participants in their own spiritual journey from pagan superstition to Christianity and civilisation, whose lives were also interspersed with the condescending benevolence of humanitarian elites. White colonists were aware of formerly enslaved people's shifting worldviews, including a discernible moral code.[82] What white people could not reconcile, however, was the difference between their own ideas of morality and anyone else's. For example, Shapley focussed part of his sermon on the importance of a family unit and marriage, not because Black Grenadians did not marry and form families but that they did so in line with the kinship communities they had

[79] 'Alexander George Milne, Sr', *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership* https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146634724 [accessed 9 April 2018]

'Dorothea Milne was Span (née Munro)', *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership* https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146633203> [accessed 9 April 2018]

[80] John Congdon Shapley, *The Duties of Freemen* (Grenada: Free Press, 1838)..

[81] Edward L. Cox, *Free Coloureds in the Slave Societies of St Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984): 30-31.

[82] Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labour and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992): 168-76.

formed within the plantation system. The message from Anglican clergy focussed on conformity to British mores and targeted the newly freed congregations.

5.2.2: Establishing schools in the age of abolition

With the support of planters and British-based benefactors, clergy focussed their anglicising efforts on educating children, promoting English, and teaching simplified doctrine. At the time of John Crawford Barker's sermon celebrating the first anniversary of the SPCK in Grenada, very little effort had been made to educate enslaved children. However, by 1833, with slavery abolished, the efforts of colonial officials, clergy and planters had resulted in rapid growth of the number of school buildings, teachers, and schoolchildren of all classes.[83] The British government had decided in 1833 to subsidise the establishment of schools in the West Indies. This change was coupled with a change in planters' attitudes, who were now concerned that society might descend into chaos after former slaves were freed. They prioritised education as a means to maintain control over freed slaves, whom they believed would be less likely to rise up in revolt if they were educated to live 'a Life Moral and Spiritual'.[84] These educational efforts echoed years of legislating to control the movement of free people of colour everywhere in Grenada. Before the abolition of slavery, free people of colour in Grenada were usually the mixed-race descendants of French colonists.[85] They had been marginalised in society for decades, snubbed for positions of power they were more than qualified for and encumbered with unjust laws and regulations not levelled against white colonists.[86] The law regulated who people associated with and assumed that two people of colour speaking or walking together in public must be planning some crime.[87] Significantly, many of these laws regulated the movements of Protestant, English-speaking people of colour. When faced with the prospect of a majority population of Catholic, French-speaking freed slaves, slaveowners

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[83] 'Copy of a letter from the Lord Bishop of Barbados and the Leeward Islands to the secretary of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves', 1 November 1833, Barbados, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/112, ff270-277.

[84] 'A Memorial Concerning the Instruction of the Heathen Negroes in the British Colonies in the Principles of the Christian Religion', n.d., Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society , CFS F/3, ff24.

[85] British colonists were against miscegenation and levied further restrictions on free people of colour in order to preserve the hard line between white and black. Daniel Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733–1833* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018) and Rex Nettleford, 'Freedom of Thought and Expression: Nineteenth Century West Indian Creole Experience', *Caribbean Quarterly* 36 (1990): 16-45.

[86] 'Commissioners of Legal Enquiry in the West Indies: Free People of Colour Disabilities and Grievances', 1822-1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 318/76, ff38-45.

[87] Called the Police Act and was liberally implemented. 'Commissioners of Legal Enquiry in the West Indies: Free People of Colour Disabilities and Grievances', 1822-1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 318/76, ff41.

quickly began collaborating with clergy to encourage Protestantism on their plantations. Children were their primary targets. As a result, the channel for regulating enslaved people shifted from the legislature to the schoolhouse. Children, they argued, were malleable and could be taught submission unlike their elders.[88] White colonists believed that emphasising the education of children would ensure that future generations of free Black Grenadians remained content and productive within their lowly social class.

The first schools in Grenada were established with funding from religious societies and with the primary goal of providing religious instruction.[89] The first schools in Grenada were established in the 1820s. They were reportedly intended for children of all classes and races.[90] However, none of these schools provided education for enslaved children until the 1830s when children under the age of six were excepted from the apprenticeship scheme. Some of the students were white, children of poorer families who could not afford to send their children abroad for education. Free children of colour also joined, although their attendance in these schools was not consistently reported. By 1827, the Central School located in St George's taught five white children, 106 children of colour (of mixed parentage) and forty-four Black children (children of free people of colour).[91] The official record for the school in St George's presented the institution as a school of mostly white and children of colour, eliding the presence of Black children.[92] The discrepancy in how children's attendance was reported illustrates the level of involvement funding bodies had with their charity schools. The report to the Society for the Education of Poor, which showed a large number of non-white children in attendance, demonstrated that the mission of the society was flourishing in the island.[93] The Society for the Education of the Poor was a local society with supporters who were resident in Grenada. The supporters could visit the school and observe its progress; if they believed their donations were achieving the goals of the society, they would be more likely to continue donating. Reports made by the Barbados diocese, however, reported in one statement to the Bishop of London that the Central School in St George's was a school for white children. The seat of

[88] 'Instructions for Missionaries to the West India Islands', 1794, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff194.

[89] Carl Campbell, 'British Aid and West Indian Education, 1835-45', in *In the Shadow of the Plantation: Caribbean History and Legacy*, edited by Alvin O. Thompson (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2002): 283-96.

[90] John Crawford Barker, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

[91] *Third Annual Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor* (Grenada: W. E. Baker, 1827). The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff136.

[92] 'A tabular statement of the present ecclesiastical establishment in the dioceses of Barbados and the Leeward Islands', 1824-26, Barbados, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/146, ff253, 342.

[93] *Third Annual Report of the Society for the Education of the Poor* (Grenada: W. E. Baker, 1827). The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff135-6.

the diocese in Barbados was too distant from Grenada for officials to care too much about accurate reporting and, indeed, the school populations fluctuated greatly over the decade. The same report accurately detailed the state of schools in Barbados, however. Reports like these demonstrate that education in the colonies was primarily local and could not be effectively controlled by funding bodies in Britain or even in Barbados. This also meant that the funding bodies had little to no oversight from the diocese or from Britain and that the funding fluctuated with the prosperity of the colony itself. The schools reached their height in 1828, reporting excellent progress and high numbers of pupils. By 1829, six of the initial schools had been shut due to lack of funds and only two remained open, one in St George's and one in Carriacou.[94]

The colony's first school was funded by the SPCK and reportedly taught 138 children of the 'poor of all classes'.[95] John Crawford Barker headed this school. His life-long interest in education helped Bishop Coleridge's vision flourish, and his own reputation was further enhanced when he was elected a member of the Royal Society of Literature in London in 1829.[96] The 'Bishop's schools', as these SPCK-funded schools were known, had been established in all parishes overseen by a clergyman by 1829.[97] The parishes still faced a lack of ecclesiastical oversight and engagement; St Andrew and St David had neither clergy in residence nor schools. Moreover, the fluctuating availability of schoolteachers threatened the schools already established. In 1828, William Sealy reported from Charlotte Town, St John, that the schoolmaster and his wife, who taught the girls, had moved to St George's to conduct the school there. The Charlotte Town school relied on a single parishioner whose catechising of the children during the week was the only education available in the parish.[98] William Nash in Carriacou reported the establishment of a school in Hillsborough attended by eighty-two children who also attended a Sunday school.[99] No enslaved children attended either school in Carriacou. John Crawford Barker reported the most progress. In December 1828, the St George's school reported that the daily school, which taught both boys and

[94] George Bilby to J. M. Trew, 24 April 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff31; John Crawford Barker, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

[95] *First Annual Report for the Society of the Propagation of Christian Knowledge* (Grenada: John Spahn, 1826). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford University: ff43.

[96] 'A Memoir of the Life and Character of the Revd William Higgs Barker, M. A.', 1838, Grenada, National Library of Wales, Barker Family MSS, NLW MS 23188C, ff11.

[97] 'Abstract of the Returns of the Diocese of Barbados', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/106, ff229.

[98] William Sealey, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff53.

[99] William Nash, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff215.

girls, was attended by 121 children. A Sunday school was formed to teach enslaved children and free children of colour how to read and was attended by ninety-six pupils. The difference in numbers of children attending these schools, especially of enslaved children, was a direct result of the relatively low levels of engagement and support from local planters.

Local planter influence was evident in the curriculum. As has already been shown, the attitudes of planters and clergy toward free people of colour and enslaved people powerfully shaped religious instruction on the island. That influence was felt too in the rest of the schools' curriculum, which covered the basics—reading, writing, and arithmetic in addition to religion.[100] Not all the schools on the National System taught reading, however, and these tended to focus more assiduously on religious instruction. In 1829, the three resident clergymen in Grenada reported on the state of their schools. William Sealey, who oversaw the parishes of St John, St Mark and St Patrick, reported that enslaved children were brought to church for religious instruction. The two schools in his parishes, one in St John and the other most likely in St Patrick, used the National System but did not teach children how to read.[101] William Nash reported from Carriacou that a Sunday School and a daily school were in operation for free children of all races but that the daily school did not follow the National System at all nor were children taught to read. John Crawford Barker reported that St George's boasted six schools altogether, one of which was the Central School funded by the Society for the Education of the Poor and the other five were private schools. Unlike the schools in the other parishes, the St George's Central School both taught on the National System and taught children how to read. Historically, planters had been against children learning how to read because they feared revolt.[102] They likely opposed teaching literacy in the abolition era in fear that black children might become discontented with their station and seek to leave it. The reason for the discrepancy in teaching literacy lies with the population demographics of these parishes. St George's had the largest free population in the entire colony, which suggests that it also had the largest group of free children. Carriacou and the parishes of St John, St Mark and St Patrick (the so-called country parishes) housed the largest enslaved populations of the entire colony. Teaching children to read could be perceived as a threat to the established order. In 1830, Carriacou had only

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[100] John Crawford Barker, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

See P. N. Farrar and Audrey E. Richardson, 'American Influence on the Movement for a National System of Elementary Education in England and Wales, 1830-1870', *British Journal of Educational Studies* 14 (1965): 36-8.

[101] 'Abstract of the Returns of the Diocese of Barbados', 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/106, ff229.

[102] 'Instructions for Missionaries to the West India Islands', 1794, Lambeth Palace Library, Christian Faith Society, CFS F/3, ff177.

forty-nine white residents, St John seventy-one, St Mark thirty-six and St Patrick eighty-one.[103] Compared to this was a much larger population of enslaved and free people of colour, thousands of people of colour in distant parishes where the ruling white elite often maintained an uneasy control. The lack of literacy education taking place in these distant parishes suggests that white planters and slave-owners had a heavy influence on the curriculum in the schools they helped to fund. This type of control over the curriculum would diminish later after abolition and in the schools funded by non-denominational charities.

Clergy and schoolmasters believed that the education of children would have a ripple effect on plantation society. In 1838, J. M. Trew who oversaw the Mico Charity schools, wrote that 'in some exceptional circumstances', the religious education of children could inspire adults to piety by observing the moral behaviour of the young.[104] Even 'the heart of the most unenlightened is the welfare and prosperity of his child', Samuel Braithwaite admonished his slave-owning planter congregation in 1835, so educating enslaved children would inspire their parents to work harder and more loyally.[105] These virtues could only improve the moral tone of the plantations, planters agreed. The only obstacle, it seemed, that barred slaveowners from ruling their tiny utopias was a language barrier. In order to educate enslaved children, schoolmasters and clergy needed to first teach them English. English was still not commonly spoken in the country parishes, other than perhaps some broken English. As late as 1825, clergy had found it difficult to converse with enslaved people in the country parishes without an interpreter because they could not understand the 'broken and corrupt French' (likely a French patois).[106]

Anglican clergy argued that teaching English was a necessary part of colonial educational initiatives. Creole French was still a dominant language of enslaved people in Grenada. After decades of trying to stamp out French Catholic influence on plantations, educating enslaved children in English was white colonists' final plan for ridding the colony of the pernicious 'ritual of

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[103] Cox, *Free Coloureds*, 30-31.

[104] J. M. Trew, 1 November 1838, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff25.

[105] Samuel Braithwaite, 'Eleventh annual report of the Society for the Education of the Poor and anniversary sermon', 1835, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, G.Pamph. 2696, no.13, ff18.

[106] *First Annual Report for the Society of the Propagation of Christian Knowledge* (Grenada: John Spahn, 1826). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford University: ff7.

Marise La Grenade-Lashley, *Mwen Ka Alé: The French-Lexicon Creole of Grenada: History, Language and Culture* (Chula Vista, CA: Aventine Press, 2016).

popery'.[107] In his sermon on the 'Duty and Means of Promoting Christian Knowledge', Barker urged his planter congregation to consider 'that the children on many—if not most—estates have perhaps never been required to utter one single sentence in the English language'.[108] This was probably an exaggeration, although the children who had come into contact with English would be the children closer to towns and on smaller, British-owned plantations. For some of the plantations in St Andrews or St Patrick, however, where enslaved people would have numbered upwards of 300, it is entirely possible that enslaved people used a creole French to communicate with each other since they would have had little need to know English. Teaching enslaved people English, Barker reasoned, must surely precede any instruction in moral education. He urged his congregation to encourage children in church attendance, learning the catechism and praying; perhaps then they would be able to resist 'Pomp and Forms, the Festivals and Indulgences of the Roman Catholic Religion' in favour of 'the plain, wholesome and practical truths of Christianity'.[109] The clerical emphasis on teaching children English resulted in a programme of anglicising children into Protestantism and imposing English Protestantism into enslaved households where French Catholicism or 'superstition'—as the British termed it—had long held sway.[110]

In the years leading up to abolition, colonial officials and clergy looked with growing anxiety on a still 'chiefly Roman Catholic', French-speaking enslaved population.[111] William Harte Coleridge, bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Barbados, defined the mission of Anglican clergy under his care. Enslaved people, he noted 'are about to undergo a great civil change, in which every thing will depend on the advance they have or will have made in sound and practical Religion'.[112] This population, from the British perspective, was less heathen than other parts of the empire but was still 'full of superstition, prone to Idolatry and witchcraft'.[113] Coleridge emphasised education for those who would soon be freed. What would become of the colony if thousands of Catholics were raised out of bondage? The anxiety that white British colonists felt resulted in a strong emphasis on

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[107] William Sealy, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 6 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff214.

[108] Barker, 'Duty and Means', 24.

[109] *First Annual Report for the Society of the Propagation of Christian Knowledge* (Grenada: John Spahn, 1826). Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford University: ff7.

[110] Samuel Dent to Bishop Porteus, 22 October 1793, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP XX 27/6/18, ff155.

[111] William Harte Coleridge, 'Correspondence from the bishop of Barbados, William Hart Coleridge, to the secretary of state mainly concerning ecclesiastical matters such as his visits to the various parts of his diocese and to England, the extent of the diocese', Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/152, ff273.

[112] William Harte Coleridge, 'Correspondence from the bishop of Barbados, William Hart Coleridge, to the secretary of state mainly concerning ecclesiastical matters such as his visits to the various parts of his diocese and to England, the extent of the diocese', Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/152, ff274.

[113] Anthony Keighley Thomas, 1795-6, Lambeth Palace Library, Fulham Papers, FP Porteus 19, ff61.

Protestant religious and moral education. They hoped that through education the French language would finally be stamped out in favour of English and that the 'ritual of popery' would become extinct.[114]

The establishment of a Catholic school in 1828 refuted the British belief that Catholicism's influence was dying out in the colony. In his report to Bishop Coleridge, Barker noted a decrease in pupils at the St George's Central School. He stated that, in December 1828, 121 pupils attended the school but just that summer the pupils had numbered more than 150.[115] The decrease in attendance, he continued, was due to the establishment of a Roman Catholic school. Some parents had removed their children from the Central School and had enrolled them in the Catholic school instead. This school was run by an Irish Catholic priest, Antony O'Hannan. The school remained open until 1838, when O'Hannan left the colony to take up a position elsewhere. O'Hannan succeeded Denis O'Callaghan who was expelled from the island after a controversy with the colonial legislature which attempted to regulate the presence of Catholicism in Grenada by making the priest register for a ministerial license. O'Callaghan refused to do this, because doing so would acknowledge a higher authority than the pope.[116] The appearance of a Catholic school during that decade is significant. There were clearly Catholics in the colony who were collectively responsible for at least thirty children. The school was in St George's as well where the island's largest population of free people of colour lived. It is likely that most of these thirty children were from those families. Apparently, the parents valued a Catholic education over the Anglican-dominated curriculum of the Central Schools. In 1838, a schoolteacher who ran one of the private schools in St George's complained to his superior about O'Hannan's absence in the colony. O'Hannan was sorely missed, he regretfully noted, since he had such influence with the formerly enslaved. 'The great bulk of the black population is Roman Catholic', he went on, '[they] are attentive to their religion and . . . will not send their children to the schools on Bell's system (the Central Schools).'[117] This was not a new problem that arose from abolition, however. As early as 1829, parents who were Catholic black and free people of colour refused to send their children to the Protestant schools. Catholicism was not diminishing after all; and, as Grenadian Catholics had more freedom to express their religious

[114] William Nash, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff215.

[115] John Crawford Barker, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

[116] *Récit des troubles, survenus a la Grenade* (St George's: n.p, n.d). London, British Library.

[117] Doyle to Lord Glenelg, 1 July 1838, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff4.

beliefs, the presence of Catholicism in the colony was more and more visible to colonial officials and in colonial records.

Abolition created the educational movement in Grenada. Until this point, education for enslaved people had largely consisted of daily prayers on individual plantations or Sunday schools conducted in the daily schoolhouses. One of William Nash's reports of the religious education in Carriacou lists the plantations that carried out some form of religious instruction, usually consisting of teaching the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and catechisms. The effectiveness of these efforts was determined by the 'declining, and almost extinct, ritual of popery' amongst enslaved Grenadians.[118] This type of instruction also occurred in the main towns where enslaved children were invited to Sunday schools to learn catechisms. Children on plantations further afield were occasionally taught by a travelling catechist. In some cases, the Sunday schools provided an opportunity for enslaved children to learn to read, but only 'those who are sufficiently advanced'.[119] The reports from 1828 may have exaggerated how much education enslaved children had access to, since according to the archdeacon of Barbados, Edward Eliot, clergy and planters did not encourage education for that class.[120] This quandary resulted from the continued reluctance of planters to fully perform their religious duty toward their enslaved, choosing to hide behind the moral façade of supporting the educational societies and positively reporting on the religious instruction on their estates. Their attitude was one of maintaining the status quo rather than showing true Christian charity. As Rowan Strong put it, 'civilising' measures or religious education deferred to the mores of commerce.[121] Supporting black education only became a priority as a means of maintaining the old order after abolition, one where black people were forced to submit to the dictates of white authorities, whether that was bonded labour or charitable programmes. That said, religious education expanded the religious space of free and unfree men and women, although the effects of that reclaimed space were not fully realised before the abolition of slavery.[122]

Abolition came into effect on 1 August 1833. Between 1833 and 1838 when the apprenticeship scheme was abolished, over seven schools were established. Charities other than the Church of

[118] William Nash, 'Catechetical Returns for the Diocese of Barbados', 3 May 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/148, ff215.

[119] John Crawford Barker, 'Returns of Questions Addressed to the Diocese', 31 December 1828, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff22.

[120] Edward Eliot to W. H. Coleridge, 13 April 1829, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 28/149, ff57.

[121] Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire,* 102-103.

[122] Paula Aymer, *Evangelical Awakenings in the Anglophone Caribbean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016): 175-196.

England societies funded many of these. The Methodists, who had established their first school in Grenada in 1824, opened two new ones during this period.[123] The Constantine day school was opened in 1835 on the estate for which it was named. The Methodists had always enjoyed the patronage of sympathetic planters, and it seems that the establishment of schools was no different. The Constantine school opened on land in St Andrew formerly owned by George Gun Munro, who had converted to Methodism in the early nineteenth century and who had promoted Methodism on his estates.[124] Another Methodist school opened in Woburn, which replaced the old Clarke's Court and Calivigny Methodist chapels. These were first established through the influence of John Ross, who was the first planter to grant Methodists access to his plantations in the early 1800s.

During this period, the Mico charity schools were opened. These were nondenominational schools funded by the Lady Mico Charity, which was in turn subsidised by the imperial government.[125] Lady Mico had bequeathed funds in 1670 for the redemption of Englishmen captured in the Barbary states.[126] These funds had accrued interest over the years and in 1833 and 1837 were diverted to establishing schools in Britain, British Guiana, Mauritius, and the West Indies.[127] The Mico charity schools provided an alternative to the denominational schools already in operation. Their appeal was in their non-sectarian pedagogy that contrasted with the Church of England's heavily religious curriculum. When Grenadian Catholic families refused to send their children to school's on 'Bell's system' or National System, they were refusing to put their children into a system where catechising often outweighed the three R's in importance. The Mico charity schools, however, operated on the British system that contrasted with the National System on the emphasis it gave religious instruction. The Mico schools taught a much more extensive curriculum than the Central schools, covering the Bible, natural history, geography of the Bible, spelling, reading, writing,

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[123] John Parker, 'Chronology of Methodist history in Grenada with a list of missionaries who served there and a map of the island', n.p., n.d., microfiche, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MMS/17/01/01/067.

[124] John Ross to Joseph Butterworth and Thomas Thompson, 13 November 1818, Clarke's Court, Methodist Missionary Society Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, MMS/17/02/02/01, ff86.

[125] Frank J. Klingberg, 'The Lady Mico Charity Schools in the British West Indies,1835-1842', *The Journal of Negro History* 24 (1939): 294.

Patricia T. Rooke, 'Papists and Proselytisers: Non-Denominational Education in the British Caribbean after Emancipation', *History of Education* 23 (1994): 257-73.

[126] Klingberg, 'Mico Charity Schools', 295; Inge Dornan, '"Book don't feed our children": Nonconformist Missionaries and the British and Foreign School Society in the Development of Elementary Education in the British West Indies Before and After Emancipation', *Slavery and Abolition* 40 (2019): 112.

[127] Carl Campbell, 'Denominationalism and the Mico Charity schools in Jamaica, 1835-1842', *Caribbean Studies* 10 (1971): 152-72.

arithmetic, and English grammar.[128] The National system, taught in the Central schools, emphasised catechism and religious instruction. Like the Central schools, girls were also taught needlework with the intention that when they left school, they could find employment as seamstresses. Inge Dornan explains that the British system appealed to Dissenters and non-Anglicans because, while it was 'religious in ethos' it was 'unsectarian in practice'.[129] Catholic parents may have chosen to enrol their children in these schools to give them a more well-rounded as well as unsectarian education.

Both the Central Schools and the Mico charity schools operated on a monitorial system. In this system, older pupils would help instruct younger and less literate pupils. This allowed more pupils to be educated with fewer teachers needed and was a system used in both Britain and the United States well into the nineteenth century.[130] The Mico trust funded four schools in Grenada, two of which were in St George's. Another was located in River Antoine, St Patrick and the other in Grand Bacolet, St Andrew. The schools were divided into an infants school for children aged 2-8 years old, separate boys and girls schools for children aged 8-16, and an adults school which met two evenings a week in St George's.[131] The inclusion of an adults school distinguished the Mico charity schools amongst the others. The adult school was free, unlike the daily school, which cost 3*d* per week.[132] By June 1839, a year after the Mico school was established, over 120 adults attended the evening schools. These were most likely formerly enslaved people accessing literacy education for the first time. Unlike the Central, Catholic and Methodist schools, however, the Mico charity operated under the direction of the imperial government. If the goal of the denominational schools was to 'civilise' through religious instruction, the Mico charity schools were mandated to make 'the Negro into a free peasant, proprietor of his own land, and educated by the same method employed for the lower classes in England'.[133] Their imperial funding and mandate complicated the schools' presence in the island. The fact that their funding and their curriculum were not directly tied to religious instruction did not detract from the cohesion of educational goals of denominational and nondenominational schools. The establishment of Grenadian schools between 1833 and 1838 all

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[128] 'Advert for the opening of the Mico Charity school', 6 June 1838, Grenada. Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff3.

[129] Dornan, 'Book don't feed our children', 112.

[130] Farrar and Richardson, 'American Influence on the Movement for a National System', 36-47.

[131] George Bilby to J. M. Trew, 24 April 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff31; George Grant to J. M. Trew, 26 June 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff43.

[132] 'A new advert of schools', 29 April 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff35.

[133] Klingberg, 'Mico Charity Schools', 293.

shared the same mission—education would transform 'poor ignorant, superstitious, perishing souls' into respectable peasant farmers.[134]

5.4: The consequences of the education movement

The educational movement illustrated the redefinition of Black Grenadians' place in colonial society. The flurry of educational activity that took place, with varying degrees of intensity, between 1825 and 1838 was rooted in white British rhetoric around the 'civilising mission', which had shaped colonial religious encounters for decades. From the clergy who advocated religious instruction from the pulpit to the schoolteachers who taught literacy, the British colonists who flocked to Grenada during the age of abolition assented to this mindset. Education, whether religious or secular, was targeted toward the goal of making a clean and tidy transition from enslaved communities to peasant communities. Education was largely targeted toward children rather than adults because children were more malleable and more likely to accept the dictates handed to them by their still domineering white masters. The 'civilising mission' indelibly shaped the educational movements.

Black Grenadians also renegotiated their political position in colonial society. While the motivations of the educational movement were rooted in a racial and class hierarchy, the movement provided access to literacy that illustrated the beginnings of new opportunities in the colony. Unlike some of the larger colonies in the British Caribbean, such as Jamaica or Barbados, in 1838 Grenada's colonial legislature was on the brink of becoming controlled largely by people of colour.[135] The failure of many plantations post-abolition forced many white colonists out, which left a vacuum in both the political and religious spheres. In 1838, Louis la Grenade, Jr. took his seat as appointed councilman in the colonial legislature.[136] He was the first person of colour to sit on the Council. Ambrose Hayling, another person of colour, was the Lieutenant Colonel of the militia and was one

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[134] Doyle to Lord Glenelg, 1 July 1838, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff4; Shapley, 'The Duties of Freemen', 11.

Sidney W. Mintz, 'Reflections on Caribbean Peasantries', *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids / New West Indian Guide* 57 (1983): 1-17.

[135] Disabilities in regard to voting and sitting on the Council were removed from free people of colour in Grenada in 1832. 'An Act for the Relief of Certain Classes of His Majesty's Subjects within this Government with Respect to Certain Disabilities under which They Labour', 30 January 1832, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/13, ff101-11.

[136] Matthew Davies, 'Encloses return of all appointments from January 1838 to January 1841, distinguishing 'Europeans' and 'natives' and stating if individuals are "coloured" or "Black"', 25 February 1841, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/91/4, ff26-35; Carlo Joseph Doyle, 'Appointment to the council of Louis La Grenade [son of Louis La Grenade who was an officer during the 1790s]', 24 May 1838, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/85/15, ff59-60.

of the directors of the Colony Hospital. These men provided examples to the young children attending school during the 1830s. The widening access to education provided by the parochial and charity schools offered them new opportunities to advance in the colony, opportunities they would have been denied a decade before. These opportunities to have a stake in the colony's political sphere was, however, limited to free people of colour who had both European and African heritage. The same opportunities were not exactly extended to formerly enslaved Black Grenadians. For Black Grenadians, the educational movement brought only a modicum of additional agency, which was more often religious rather than political. One black young man began his career as a teacher in 1839 after accompanying some of the Mico charity teachers to Grenada from Trinidad.[137] His parents consented to let him stay on in Grenada to become an assistant teacher. Opportunities like these grew as more schools were established and fewer white people remained in the colony to run them. By 1882, D. G. Garraway, a Black Grenadian, was the acting treasurer of the colony.[138] Garraway had been trained as a solicitor and later became the treasurer of St. Vincent. He also wrote an account of Fédon's insurrection, emphasising Louis la Grenade's role as a free black man in quelling the revolution.[139] These examples show the importance of the educational movement not only in terms of Black Grenadians redefining and renegotiating their religious identities but also in negotiating a political identity. The educational movement brought the promise of greater opportunities.

But most importantly, the educational movement gave Black Grenadians the opportunity to openly and visibly define themselves as Catholics. This was visible in the hundreds of Black Grenadians attending mass as O'Hannan completed his circuit of the island. One reason for hundreds of Black Grenadians migrating either permanently or seasonally to Trinidad rather than St Vincent after abolition was likely also another visible expression of Catholic identity. Black Catholic Grenadians likely found Trinidad more welcoming because of its vibrant Catholic community where 'mass was celebrated with even more European pomp'.[140] Another way that Black Grenadians defined and

[137] George Bilby to J. M. Trew, 24 April 1839, Grenada, Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Archive of the Anti-Slavery Society, MSS Brit Emp s.20/E1/14, ff31.

[138] 'Financial Condition of the Colony: Remarks upon and gives reasons for the succession of Captain Irwin Charles Maling, Administrator by Mr Robert Luckford Goldsworthy, Administrator of St Lucia, reports from Mr D G Garraway, Acting Treasurer and extracts from "the St George's Chronicle"', 5 December 1882, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 321/55/6, ff109-136; 'Appointment of Mr D G Garraway for Treasurer of St Vincent', 24 May 1883, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 321/67/9, ff42-52.

[139] J. D. Garraway, *A Short Account of the Insurrection* (St. George's: C. Wells and Son, 1877).

The rise of black and brown people in government was not unique to Grenada. See Gad J. Heuman, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and Free Coloureds in Jamaica, 1792-1865* (Oxford: Clio Press, 1981).

[140] William Law Mathieson, *British Slave Emancipation, 1838-1849* (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1967): 86.

negotiated their identity as Catholics was through enrolling their children in Catholic schools. The education movement also highlighted the denominational competition that was already common in Grenada. Catholic schools gave parents the option to have their children educated according to their own conscience. Besides the thirty or so children who left the Anglican parochial school for the Catholic school in 1828, many more must have joined in when the school first opened. Over 1000 Catholic free people of colour lived in Grenada at that time.[141] Many parents had refused to send their children to schools run by the parish; these children would have attended the new Catholic school if they lived near enough to St George's. By refusing to send their children to schools that taught beliefs against their conscience, Black Grenadian Catholics were negotiating their religious identity on their own terms. Their negotiation of their own religious identity undermined British clergy's attempts to Anglicise Black Grenadians. The continued presence of Catholicism represented the importance of Catholic identity for many Black Grenadians and illustrated the redefinition of black religious identity post-abolition.

S. Karly Kehoe, 'Colonial collaborators: Britain and the Catholic Church in Trinidad, c. 1820–1840', *Slavery and Abolition* 40 (2019): 130-146.

[141] 'Petition of Roman Catholic about right of Roman Catholics in Grenada signed by 1,210 people', 1833, Grenada, The National Archives, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 101/77, ff409-15.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

It was no accident that Catholic priest Maurice O'Connor chose the sixth anniversary of the abolition of slavery and the first anniversary of the end of the apprenticeship scheme as the day on which the cornerstone was laid for the new St George's Catholic Church. A procession gathered on the corner of Church and St John's Streets that bright Thursday afternoon on 1 August 1839.[1] At the head of the procession, Father Maurice O'Connor and the Governor of Grenada, Carlo Joseph Doyle, walked side by side down the steep narrow street, an uncommon demonstration of civil cooperation between Grenada's Catholics and the Protestant colonial government. Black Grenadians composed most of the crowd that gathered to watch the exciting procession of a blaring brass band and chattering children from the Catholic schools. After decades of negotiating religious identities against the powerful influence of British Protestant colonial rule, this coming together of all races and classes and religions indicated a change in how Grenadians negotiated their religious identities. Catholicism was now tied once again to free Grenadians and as a result could be freely and openly expressed in the colony, similar to the way it had formerly been openly expressed by French Catholics at the end of the eighteenth century. The decades of religious struggle and the constant negotiation of Catholic identity had resulted in Black Grenadians openly practicing Catholicism with the tacit approval of British colonial authorities who cooperated in preserving Catholic religious identity in the colony. As the social status of Grenada's Catholics changed, so did the status of Catholicism.

In this thesis, I have argued that Catholicism in Grenada was closely intertwined with the colony's marginalised people. As French Catholics, free people of colour, and enslaved Africans negotiated and renegotiated their religious identities within the structures of British colonialism, they redefined Catholicism's relationship to British colonial power. French Catholics debated the terms of their political status, arguing that religious identity was secondary to their rights as new British subjects. As Chapter 2 elaborates, in agreeing to temporarily tolerate and accommodate French Catholics, the British sought to control the ethnic and religious diversity of the colony and hoped that accommodation would encourage French colonial loyalty to Britain. British colonists in the

[1] 'New Catholic Church', 3 August 1839, The Saint George's Chronicle. The National Archive, Records of the Colonial Office, CO 105/1, ff249.

legislature did not support the idea that Catholics would remain in a position of legislative power throughout British colonisation and expected either the eventual Protestant conversion of French Catholic legislators or an increased number of British Protestant colonists. Toleration and political accommodation defined Catholicism as subservient to British Protestant colonial rule. This definition of the relationship between Catholicism and colonial power implicated all further renegotiations of Catholic identity in the colony.

As Catholicism was pushed to the margins of politics, it also became more closely attached to the marginalised people in colonial society. Chapter 3 argues that Catholicism was the primary religious identity of Grenada's free people of colour, many of whom were descendants of French Catholic colonists. Free people of colour used the revolution to negotiate their own political rights in the colony and with it their religious rights. Although Julien Fédon's revolution was not Catholic-centred, the many Catholic revolutionaries, including the revolutionary priest Pascal Mardel, aligned Catholic identity with the liberating dogma of the French Revolution. Intolerance of Catholicism and discrimination against free people of colour followed the revolution. As free people of colour were tried, executed or exiled for their role in the revolution, Catholicism in Grenada lost hundreds of free adherents. As British legislative officials defined Catholicism with revolution, they pushed Catholicism even further into the colonial peripheries where it became closely associated with enslaved Africans.

Plantations became contested religious spaces, as British legislative officials and Anglican clergy attempted to control enslaved religious diversity. Negotiating any religious identities within the plantation system and in spite of institutionalised slavery was extremely difficult for enslaved Africans. Chapter 4 demonstrates the complexities of negotiating religious identities for enslaved Protestants and Catholics, as well as maintaining African religious identities ruptured by the Middle Passage. The varied influence of British colonial authorities defined the extent to which religious multiplicity could flourish on the plantations. Authoritative influence took the form of missionaries as well as religious slaveowners. Multiplicity flourished best on plantations furthest removed from colonial power in any form, whether physically distant from the ruling legislature in St George's or religiously removed from the commanding presence of missionaries or religious slaveowners. Creolised religious identities emerged, as enslaved Africans negotiated the terms of their religious identities in spite of bondage. Catholicism was only one of the religious identities enslaved Africans struggled to negotiate, but the struggle for communal religious identity would later prove the foundation for Black Grenadians' negotiations of religious identities after abolition.

Religious identities in slavery were always defined by British attempts to control enslaved Africans. As Chapter 5 argues, the British used religious education to try and control expressions of enslaved African religions and Catholicism. The British feared a reprisal of black revolution after the abolition of slavery, so they began coordinated efforts to anglicise enslaved people. Their efforts to create a subservient, religiously homogenous free black population backfired as Catholic education offered black Catholics the opportunity to express their chosen religious identities. Black Catholic parents enrolled their children in Catholic schools, where they could, and the number of Catholics openly attending mass grew to thousands. Abolition gave Black Grenadians religious freedom. But those religious choices were not made in a vacuum. The decades of negotiating Catholic identity against British colonialism laid the foundation for the strong visible presence and expression of black Catholic identity after abolition.

Framing this analysis around Catholicism has enabled me to emphasise what Allan Greer and Kenneth Mills defined as the viewpoint of the 'Christianized' rather than the 'Christianizer'.[2] Reorienting an analysis of Atlantic Catholicism to examine the contributions of Catholic adherents of colour rather than white Catholic colonisers allows me to illuminate the role Black Grenadians played in sustaining Catholic identity. Emphasising the contributions of Grenada's marginalised Catholics is especially useful to my analysis as it allows me to think through the significant repercussions of constant religious negotiations against British rule which culminated in a strong Catholic identity after abolition. To this end, the religious histories of enslaved Africans are helpful in understanding the complexities of enslaved religious identity on plantations. Noel Erskine's study on plantation religion, for example, conceptualises a framework in which enslaved Africans 'adapt[ed] their religious practices and beliefs to a Christian frame of reference without losing the essentials of their native beliefs'.[3] In the contact culture of colonial society, religion acted as an agent in shaping a new creolised religious culture.[4] This religious creolisation was prominent in enslaved and free black society. Between 1763 and 1838, Catholicism developed from a religion aligned with white French political power to one almost entirely associated with the creolising culture of 'Christianized' Black Grenadians.

[2] Allan Greer and Kenneth Mills, 'A Catholic Atlantic', in *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*, edited by Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman (New York: Routledge, 2017): 3-19.

[3] Noel Leo Erskine, *Plantation Church: How African-American Religion Was Born in Caribbean Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014): 117-18.

[4] Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997): 42.

The thesis builds on and contributes to work in the field of Atlantic history. Although a number of studies have examined religion in the Atlantic world, there has not been a strong focus on either religion in the early nineteenth-century Atlantic world or the impact of Atlantic Catholicism in local colonial context. As a result, this study provides additional insights about the role marginalised Catholics had in shaping colonial religious identity and the impact enslaved Africans had on sustaining Catholic identity. This research identifies marginalised people as the primary negotiators of Catholicism and in doing so draws strongly on the work of Jenny Shaw and Paula Aymer. This thesis owes a factual and interpretative debt to Shaw's treatment of enslaved Catholicism as an everyday experience that both worked within the confines of colonial rule and challenged the limits of colonial power.[5] In Aymer's study on evangelicalism in Grenada and Barbados, she elucidates the significant impact enslaved religious negotiations had on modern Grenadian religious agency. She concludes her study with the powerful reminder that, even though Black Grenadians were limited in achieving leadership roles in their denominations until the twentieth century, it was their enslaved ancestors who first fought to claim colonial religious spaces for themselves. In the wider framework of Atlantic religious, this thesis benefits from Carla Gardina Pestana's treatment of early modern British Atlantic Protestantism, in which Britons conflated their religious and national identities. This thesis also benefits from the work of Aaron Spencer Fogleman, Kristen Block and John W. Catron, whose treatment of black Atlantic religious identities provides a framework for understanding the differences negotiated religious identities across the Atlantic world as well as within different colonial contexts.[6] These writings center around descriptions and analyses of transatlantic connections which this thesis does not intend to match. What this thesis does rather is to extend our perspective of Atlantic religious identity beyond the early modern era, with a more consistently maintained focus on a single colony, a greater attention to the interactions between marginalised people and British colonial officials, and a fuller sense of the range of religious identity within a colonial framework. This thesis contributes to a growing body of research on Atlantic Catholicism by focusing on the development of Catholicism in a British colony previously not studied in that context. I hope that further studies will continue to challenge our understanding of the complexities of Atlantic religion, especially Catholicism. I believe that there is especially value in examining Catholicism in the Ceded Islands of Dominica, St Vincent, Grenada and Tobago as a group, because of their collective position as former

[5] Jenny Shaw, *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean: Irish, Africans, and the Construction of Difference* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013).

[6] Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Two Troubled Souls: An Eighteenth-Century Couple's Spiritual Journey in the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Kristen Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean: Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012); John W. Catron, *Embracing Protestantism: Black Identities in the Atlantic World* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016).

French Catholic colonies under Protestant British rule. The themes of this thesis could be expanded upon in light of a wider geographical research area and perhaps even inform a new framework for understanding Catholicism in the British Caribbean.

Negotiating religious identities in a society defined by institutionalised slavery was no easy task. The social standing of Grenada's marginalised Catholics often hindered their ability to both experience and express their chosen religious identity. Experiences were limited by the plantation system, which was often a channel for British-sanctioned Protestantism. Prejudice and discrimination against Catholics of any race, but especially Black Grenadians, limited the extent to which Catholics could openly express their religious identities. Yet in the midst of the powerful structures of British colonialism, Grenada's marginalised people—French, free people of colour, and enslaved Africans—negotiated and renegotiated the terms of their religious identities.

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