THE ANGLICAN CHURCH AND BAHAMIAN CULTURAL IDENTITY

The Role of Church-sponsored Education, Prayer Book Liturgy and Anglo-Catholic Rituals in the Development of Bahamian Culture

1784-1900

by

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ABSTRACT

The arrival and settlement of the Loyalists and their slaves in The Bahamas in 1784 effected a social, economic, and cultural revolution in this British Colony.

With the establishment of the Dioceses of Barbados and Jamaica in 1824, there dawned in The Bahamas, a part of the Diocese of Jamaica until 1861, a process of Anglicisation hitherto unknown. As the *raison d'être* of its established Episcopal form of Church Government and in anticipation of slave emancipation in 1834, the Anglican Church was charged with the responsibility of preparing slaves in the British West Indies for responsible citizenship. The method employed was a process of civilisation and conversion. The means were the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and Church-sponsored English education.

Through its educational system, however, the Church launched an assault on the culture and the identity of the Bahamian masses. By means of this system, the hierarchically structured world view of the English was substituted for the slaves' traditional West African world view. This initiated a process of *destabilisation* and *trivialisation* which could not but undermine Bahamian cultural identity.

Yet, the meeting of the Evangelical and the Tractarian traditions in the Anglican Church in The Bahamas, and the Anglo-Catholic rituals which followed in the wake of the Tractarian Movement and climaxed by 1900 were able to accommodate powerful religious symbols originating in the African past.

Through its education, liturgy and Anglo-Catholic rituals, therefore, the Anglican Church facilitated and nurtured a Bahamian cultural identity which was consistent with both traditional West African religious culture and the evolving tradition of Bahamian Anglicanism.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, and constitutes the results of my research on the subject. I also declare that it has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree, and that all quotations have been distinguished and the sources of information acknowledged.

Signe

26 June 1997

To my wife Muriel,
and
our four children
Tonia, Bridget, Kirk and Karen

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Introduction

1. The Thesis and its Key Concepts

The Treaty of Versailles 1783/4 marked the formal end of the American Revolutionary War. The principal participants in this war were Britain and the United States. Spain and France later entered the war as allies of the United States. The implications of this treaty for The Bahamas were basically twofold. One, Britain ceded East Florida to Spain in return for Spain's acknowledgment of Britain's sovereignty over The Bahamas. Two, the largest single number of Loyalists who were obliged to leave the United States and who did not settle in Nova Scotia migrated with their families and slaves to The Bahamas. This influx of people had a trebling effect on the population of The Bahamas which, with their arrival, was fully inhabited for the first time since the extermination of the Lucayan Indians by the year 1513.

The year 1900 marked the end of Edward T. Churton's episcopate as fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Nassau.[1] By this time, the Anglican Church's involvement in education had reached an all-time high and the embellishment of the 1662 Prayer Book Liturgy[2] with Anglo-Catholic rituals and ceremonial,[3] which began during the

[1] Churton resigned as Bishop of Nassau in August, 1900, as a result of ill health.

[2] Gk. *leitourgia,* from *leos,* 'people' and *ergon,* 'work,' was used in Hellenistic Greek of an act of public service. By the time of the LXX it had come to be applied, in Judaism, to the services of the Temple. For its Pauline usage, see Philippians 2:30 and Romans 15:16. Eventually, in Christian usage, it was confined to the idea of service to God and to Christian worship, particularly the Eucharist, as the supreme service to God. Its English translation is also used in reference to all the prescribed services of the Church and this is the sense in which it is used in this Thesis. Cf. F. L. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of The Christian Church,* OUP 1958, p. 815; and J. G. Davies (ed.), *A Dictionary of Liturgy & Worship,* SCM 1972, p. 222.

[3] According to J. G. Davies, ed. *A Dictionary of Liturgy & Worship,* SCM Press Ltd 1972, p. 336, "Ritual refers to the prescribed form of words which constitute an act of worship, ... to the collect, the Lord's Prayer, the preface etc. It is therefore not identical with ceremonial which relates to actions. Nevertheless in common usage the two are treated as synonymous." Cf. F. L. Cross ed. *The Oxford*

administration of Bishop Addington R P Venables 1863-1876, had become practically ubiquitous in the diocese.

Up to 1841, Anglican liturgical practice in The Bahamas was mainly 'high and dry.' It was expressive of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century High Church tradition which clung tenaciously to the 1662 Prayer Book, was concerned with sound doctrine and averse to dissent. Its ethical expression was guided by *The Whole Duty of Man;* and its piety tended to be sober, earnest, dutiful, austere and prosaic.

In 1841, the Colonial and Continental Church Society was invited by Aubrey George Spencer, Bishop of Jamaica, to engage in missionary work in four of The Bahamas' thirteen parishes. The CCCS's involvement in The Bahamas brought with it elements of the Church's Evangelical tradition which seem to have greatly influenced William Kelsall Duncombe, the colony's first priest, and the Bahamian catechists and ordinands whom he trained. Stressing personal conversion and salvation by faith in the atoning death of Christ, the Evangelical tradition, probably because of its emotional appeal and its readiness to accommodate overt expressions of emotionalism, proved attractive to both Negroes and Caucasians in Duncombe's parish.[4]

Dictionary of the Christian Church, London OUP 1971, p. 1168; and Alan Richardson and John Bowden eds. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology,* The Westminster Press Philadelphia 1983, p. 509f. In this Thesis, the term is used within the context of its usage by 19th century Anglo-Catholic priests who adopted the liturgical practices of the pre-Reformation Church in England and, in some cases, the extra-liturgical devotions of the post-Tridentine Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe.

[4]Duncombe was Rector of St. John's Parish from 1838 to 1862. Geographically, this parish included Harbour Island which was predominantly Caucasian, Current Island which was racially mixed, Spanish Wells which was exclusively Caucasian and North Eleuthera which was largely Negro.

During Venables' episcopate, traditional High Church and Evangelical Anglicanism progressively gave way to Tractarianism and Anglo-Catholic rituals and ceremonial which followed in its wake. The appeal of this development in Anglicanism to the Bahamian masses was helped by elements of sensitivity which both Venables and Churton, especially the latter, displayed towards the West African cultural background of Afro-Bahamians.

The aim of this thesis is to tell the story of Bahamian settlement, to highlight the West African contribution to Bahamian society and to describe in an holistic way the cultural development of The Bahamas as a biracial -Anglo-Bahamian and Afro-Bahamian- society. The goals of the writer's research are basically fourfold. One, to show that, as of the 18th century, the civil history of The Bahamas was inseparably related to the history of the Anglican Church whose mission and ministry were largely concerned with civilising the Bahamian people and transforming them into a godly kingdom and a Christian society. Two, to highlight the Anglican contribution to education in The Bahamas. Three, to show that principally through education and the 1662 Prayer Book liturgy, particularly after the latter was embellished with Anglo-Catholic rituals and ceremonial, Anglicanism was able to make significant inroads into the Native Baptist community. Four, to show, against the background of education and liturgy, how the emerging Anglo-Catholic tradition had become progressively inculturated into the Afro-Bahamian community.

The writer will advance his argument from the theological perspective that the traditional West African religious culture of Afro-Bahamians constituted a

praeparatio evangelica. In the process of developing his case, he will employ four hypotheses, viz.

1. that Afro-Bahamian "dormant subconsciousness" preserved its original West African religious culture through the Middle Passage;

2. that the Anglican policy of educating black as well as white sections of the population resulted in the effective evangelisation and Anglicisation of a large percentage of the Afro-Bahamian community;

3. that Afro-Bahamian Junkanoo rituals contained messianic elements which were fertile ground for Christian evangelisation; and

4. that the development of Anglo-Catholic rituals enabled the rebirth of West African spirituality in the new liturgical environment of late 19th Anglicanism in The Bahamas.

1. The writer is using the term "dormant subconsciousness" synonymously with what, in Jungian analytical psychology, is called "collective unconsciousness." Carl Jung distinguished between "personal unconsciousness" which involves forgotten, repressed or subliminally perceived matter related to the individual's personal life experience and "collective unconsciousness" which he said contains

> the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual.[5]

According to Jung, "the collective unconscious" is the source of consciousness, the psyche/soul and its instinctual forces, the forms or archetypes which regulate these

[5]Carl G. Jung, *Collected Works,* VIII, p. 158, cited by Wallace B. Clift, *Jung and Christianity: The Challenge of Reconciliation,* Crossroad, New York, 1982, p. 18. Cf. Robert Audi (general editor) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy,* CUP 1995, p. 393.

forces, symbols, and the world's religions. The role of symbols within the context of religious celebrations is of special relevance to the writer's Thesis.

Symbols, here understood in their etymological sense of "to throw together,"[6] are identified in Jungian psychology as the channelisers of psychic energy and a bridge between the unconscious and the *ego* -the centre of one's self-consciousness. As such, they enable mediation between the conscious and the unconscious. Jung identified two basic aspects of symbols *qua* symbols. One, the local, this world, conscious aspect which binds the individual to the historically conditioned sentiments, activities, values, and beliefs of his family, tribe or ethnic group. Two, the 'other' or 'beyond' to which symbols point and in which they, somehow, participate and make present. According to Jung, and of special relevance to the fourth of our hypotheses, many of the symbols originating in the unconscious have taken the form of circles.

From a Jungian perspective, therefore, Afro-Bahamian "dormant subconsciousness" can be said to have been basically religious in character, geographically unrestricted, accessible by means of symbols, and essentially West African in its cultural expression.

2. As a British colony, The Bahamas shared Britain's vision and ideal of forming itself into a godly kingdom and a Christian society. This was especially the case between the years 1729 and 1869 when the Anglican Church was respectively established and disestablished by Acts of the Bahamian Parliament. Indeed, the

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[6]From the Gk. preposition *sun* and the infinitive *ballein*.

Church concerned itself with the evangelisation of Bahamian slaves as early as 1725. Being, therefore, a 'religion with letters' as well as wholly committed to mission and evangelisation, it was practically inevitable that the Church would become directly involved in the education of the children of both blacks and whites, slave and free, in Bahamian society. However, it was not until 1824, the beginning of the decade immediately preceding slave emancipation and the year when two Episcopal Sees were established in the British West Indies, that church-sponsored education for black as well as white Bahamians progressively moved apace and continued unabated well beyond our period.

Anglicanism maintained, against Dissent, that education and liturgy were necessarily intertwined. Understanding the primary objective of education to be civilisation through a knowledge of the truth as attested by Holy Scripture, the Church perceived education to be unintelligible apart from church membership and corporate worship, and a practical prerequisite for liturgy and worship as prescribed by the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. The introduction of Anglo-Catholic rituals during the latter part of our period effected a heightened relationship between education and worship, as they served among other purposes that of visually and effectively imparting orthodox teaching to the faithful, particularly the less educated members of the Church. Like the traditional and conventional teaching ministry of the Church, rituals were considered integral to the cure of souls.[7] They included sacramental confession (to increase the number of penitents, and effect what Keble called 'severity'[8] in religion),

[7]According to Jung, rituals have the same two basic aspects which are characteristic of symbols.
[8]J. T. Coleridge, *A Memoir to John Keble,* 1843, p. 302, cited by S. C. Carpenter, *Church and People, 1789-1889: A History of the Church of England from William Wilberforce to "Lux Mundi,"* SPCK London, 1933, p. 230.

frequent and worthy reception of the sacramental presence of Christ in the Holy Communion, the presiding priest facing eastward as opposed to southward during the celebration of Holy Communion, reservation and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, vestments, incense, the decoration of the Communion Table with fine linen, lighted candles, flowers and crosses, genuflections, making signs of the cross on one's upper body by the faithful and by the celebrant when pronouncing benedictions, chanting and intoning, the devout observance of fasts and festivals, and a preference for Gothic architectural design in the structure of church buildings.

As of 1864, the Church began to experience unprecedented numerical growth among Afro-Bahamians. This was due to four principal factors, viz. a shift in Venables' policy regarding the establishment of mission stations only in island communities where the people were sufficiently intelligent to participate in the Church's liturgy, and suitably educated persons could be found among them to serve as catechists; the increasing number of church schools on the inhabited islands of The Bahamas; the appeal of Anglo-Catholic rituals and ceremonial to Afro-Bahamians; and the ease with which both Afro-Bahamians and Anglo-Bahamians were made to feel at home in the Anglican Church. During Churton's episcopate, however, numerical growth was gradually de-emphasised in favour of the Church's growth in holiness.

3. Afro-Bahamian Junkanoo is an expression of Bahamian slave spirituality. Several theories have been advanced in an attempt to explain its origin. This writer contends that it originated from an annual West African agricultural (yam) festival. Initially it was celebrated in quarantine and invariably at night. However, due to certain social,

economic and religious circumstances, its rituals were later performed publicly and at Christmas time.

Socially, racism was rife, and though its practice was sometimes blatant, there were times when it was rather subtle. This was particularly true of post-1784 Bahamian society. For with the arrival of the Loyalists and their slaves, there came certain Bahamian adaptations of Southern United States racial practices which, in many instances, were prescribed by Bahamian law.

By 1832, The Bahamas' cotton industry, introduced by the Loyalists, had fallen into irreversible decline, and the commercial harvesting of salt, turtle and sponge fishing, and the cultivation of pineapples gradually became The Bahamas' economic mainstay. The vast majority of employees in these industries were Afro-Bahamians. Their employers were wealthy Anglo-Bahamian merchants whose businesses were located on Bay Street in downtown Nassau, The Bahamas' capital.

During this period of economic development, a credit system known as the *Truck System* was introduced by the merchants and sanctioned by Bahamian law. It permeated practically the whole of the colony's land and marine-based industries and was rather complex in its operation. In the case of agriculture, it involved land tenure while seaman's articles *vis-à-vis* fishing expeditions obtained in respect of turtle and sponge fishing. In both instances the system involved the substitution of payment in kind for payment in cash. The fishermen, for example, who would spent from six to twelve weeks at sea, were extended lines of credit to meet certain daily needs of their

wives and children at home and of themselves while at sea. When paid in kind, these men invariably received a poor quality of merchandise which they then had to market for themselves in order to get funds with which to settle their debts. The meagre proceeds which accrued from these sales were never sufficient to meet their financial commitments. As a result, a form of economic bondage ensued.[9]

Religiously, Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists competed keenly for black converts. The Presbyterians kept very much to themselves, and there was no Roman Catholic presence of note until 1886.

With the singular exception of the Anglican Church -the most racially integrated of all churches then ministering in The Bahamas, organised Christianity seems not to have deliberately concerned itself with the dismantlement of institutionalised racism and the Truck System in Bahamian society. Even the Anglican Church's approach to economic empowerment through education was more long-term than immediate.

During slavery, it was relatively easy for evangelised blacks to identify themselves with the Christians' suffering Messiah and crucified Lord. It would appear, however, that after emancipation they regarded Bahamian society thus torn by social ills religiously intolerable. Psychologically unable to dissociate themselves from their traditionally holistic and sacred world view and unwilling to abandon their new-found faith, many blacks began to experience what R. F. Baumeister calls *identity conflict.*[10]

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[9]For a critical account of the *Truck System* see L D Powles, *The Land of The Pink Pearl or Recollections of Life in The Bahamas,* Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, London, 1888, pp. 85-98.
[10]Vide Introduction 3 of this Thesis.

This consequently impelled Afro-Bahamian Junkanoo from quarantine into public view where its rituals displayed hitherto unpublicised messianic elements.

4. This hypothesis is advanced in the light of the findings of contemporary psychology as those findings relate to *identity*[11] and the role of symbols in the functioning of the human subconscious.

Symbols featured prominently in Anglo-Catholic rituals. Among the most powerful of them was the use of incense during celebrations of Holy Communion on Sundays and major festivals, and at Funeral Eucharists or Masses of the Resurrection. What was of particular significance during these celebrations was the anti-clockwise circular motion employed by the priest during the incensing of the elements of bread and wine on the Communion Table (now called the Altar), the Altar itself and, in the case of funerals, the coffin. This had a profound psychological effect on the subconscious of Afro-Bahamian Anglicans, for there an association was made between this anti-clockwise circular movement and the circle which symbolically embodied their traditional West African ontology.[12]

This association of symbols in an Anglo-Catholic liturgical environment enabled the rebirth of West African spirituality.

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[11]Ibid.

[12]Vide Introduction 3 and chapter 2 (g) of this Thesis.

2. Culture

Culture is a complex, empirical and social concept expressive of man's engagement with life from the perspectives of: (i) his interaction with his fellow man and with nature, and (ii) his experience of God -whatever *God* represents in his religious culture. It is a creature[13] and a primary programming instrument of the human mind which is itself coloured by one's relationships and by one's past.[14] It contains a dynamic of stability and change, sameness and development, continuity and adaptation. It is especially susceptible to crisis, forcible demographic translocation, and a people's geopolitical circumstance.

This "horizontal" and "vertical" referent in human consciousness places culture within the ambit of revelation, and gives it a character which is basically religious.[15] This is true of Primal Religions where revelation is of a general or natural kind.[16] It is also true of Christianity which lays claim to particular or supernatural revelation.

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[13]In the sense of H.R. Niebuhr's "artificial, secondary environment." Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture,* Faber and Faber, 1952, p. 46.

[14]Vide A.F. Walls' lecture *The Gospel and Culture in Christian History,* New College, 29/10/91; and A.F. Walls, *The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture,* in *Missionalia 10(3),* 1982, p. 97. cf. T.S. Eliot's *Critical Essays,* London: Faber & Faber, 1932, pp. 14-15, and 115, 116. Here Eliot speaks about the poet and the tradition within which the poet works, and the family as the principal medium of cultural transmission. In both cases Eliot stresses the importance of a consciousness of one's past. In the case of the family he goes even further by commending not only "a piety towards the dead" but also "a solicitude for the unborn." Eliot is obviously writing from a British perspective. Yet what he says about culture (especially when he speaks of culture as the "incarnation" of a people's religion [*Christianity and Culture,* HB 32 A Harvest Book, 1949, p. 101]) and the family's role in cultural transmission is so very true of West African culture and the African concept of family that it speaks true of the two dominant strands in nineteenth century Bahamian culture -the African and the British.

[15]cf. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy, 1869,* in *Selected Prose,* ed. P.J. Keating, London: Penguin Classics, 1987, p. 205.

[16]Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:19-20a; Acts14:17; cf. 17:22-28.

The supreme and final act of revelation occurred in the Incarnate Logos,[17] at a given time and in a particular place in history.[18] Yet, there was never a time when the Logos was not active in the world. For creation, reconciliation and consummation are not three successive activities of the Triune God, the narrative presentation of the Christian faith notwithstanding. They are but distinguishable aspects, in time, of the one awe-inspiring work of the Lord God.[19] This is implicit in Justin Martyr's proleptic refutation of those who argued that the Logos had been made flesh in Jesus only one hundred and fifty years before Justin's time, and who demanded to know whether all who lived before then were irresponsible. Justin maintained that the Logos was always in the world, that the providential acts described in the Old Testament were to be ascribed to the agency of the Logos "of whom every race of men were partakers," and that Socrates and all those who lived "reasonably" were Christians before Christ.[20] This makes the difference between general or natural revelation and particular or supernatural revelation one of degree rather than kind. For in both cases it is the same Triune God who is personal and who, in his openness in Creation and Redemption, takes the initiative in revealing himself, and likewise graces man to make the appropriate faith-obedience response to his divine self-disclosure.[21]

This augurs well for the ancient tradition of "continuity" between the non-Christian religions and the Christian religion itself. It is implicit, for example, in Luke's

[17]cf. II Corinthians 1:20; Hebrews 1:1-2.
[18]cf. A.F. Walls, *The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture,* p. 97.
[19]John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology,* SCM Press Ltd. London, 1966, p. 247.
[20]*The First Apology of Justin,* chap. xlvi.
[21]Vide Romans 2:14ff; John 11:52. cf. William Temple, *Nature, Man and God,* Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1951, pp. 306f.

genealogy of the Christ, where, consistent with the theology of Luke-Acts, "continuity" has ecclesiological and missiological implications. The church, which in Acts is the local eschatological community of faith, exists for mission. This mission is global in scope[22] -it is to *panta ta ethne.*[23]

Although Acts 2:5-11 is not concerned with *ta ethne* -Luke is here referring to the Diaspora Jews who "were dwelling" in Jerusalem[24]- there is evident in this pericope a dynamic which, over the centuries, has proven key to the success of Christianity across cultural lines. It is the "translatability" of the Christian Message[25] -"each one heard them speaking in his own language." This is highly consistent with, if not demanded by, the fact of the Incarnation.[26] For in taking "flesh" -human nature- the Incarnate Logos sanctified and glorified the same (with all of the implications of Genesis 2:7 for man's affinity with the natural order)[27] in his exaltation. Indeed, God's saving work in Christ is cosmic in scope, and that by virtue of the Incarnation.[28] Thus the mandate *matheteusate panta ta ethne* is inclusive of the culture of each and every *ethnos*. The acceptance of the one involves the acceptance of the other, and in Christ

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[22]*The Gospel according to Luke* 3:23-38. cf. *Luke* 24:46ff; *Acts* 1:8; 2; 17:16-34.

[23]*The Gospel according to Matthew* 28:19; *Luke* 24:47.

[24]cf. Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles,* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971, p. 175. This is consistent with the Pauline principle "to the Jew first and also to the Greek," *The Letter of Paul to the Romans,* ch. 1:16b. cf. *The Revelation to John,* ch. 7:1-12.

[25]Vide Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message,* Orbis Books 1989, ch. 2; and A.F. Walls, *Culture and Coherence in Christian History,* in *The Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology, Vol. 3, No. 1,* Spring 1985, p. 7. Here Professor Walls speaks of "the **infinite** translatability of the Christian faith."

[26]NB the imperative nature of the Great Commission -*matheteusate panta ta ethne* in *Matthew* 28:19f. cf. *Luke* 24:47 where the Strong Aorits Infinitive Passive *keruchthenai* has the force of a duty or an obligation, if not in fact of a command.

[27]cf. *The Gospel according to John* 20:22; *The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* 5:17; *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians* 4:10.

[28]*II Corinthians* 5:18-19; *Romans* 5:10; *The Letter of Paul to the Colossians* 1:20. cf. *The Incarnation and Development* in *Lux Mundi,* Charles Gore ed., 1889, p. 186 where J R Illingworth, citing Aquinas, speaks of the Incarnation as "the exaltation of human nature and the consummation of the Universe."

God has accepted both -the peoples and their cultures.[29] This obtains even more especially when a people, or any group thereof, hears and accepts the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A process of assimilation is set in motion and a culture church[30] emerges, though not in isolation. For this nexus of Gospel and culture effects the *kaine ktisis* of which Paul speaks.[31] It makes the culture church a pilgrim church with an adoptive past which stretches all the way back to the patriarch Abraham, and a future which is nothing short of the eschatological goal of the Gospel.[32]

This process of translation and assimilation facilitated the diffusion of Christianity across cultural lines in all formative periods of Church history, including the English Reformation. For instance, William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament in 1525, Henry VIII's Primer of 1545, Edward VI's Primer of 1553, the English Prayer Books from 1549 to 1662, and the Authorized Version of the Scriptures in 1611, all of which were in the English vernacular. However, with the discovery of the New World and the secularization of Christendom, this process was halted, and tragically so for the Lucayan Indians of The Bahamas.

In May 1493, the year following Columbus' arrival in The Bahamas, Pope Alexander VI, himself a Spaniard, in his endeavour to avoid rivalry between Portugal and

[29]cf. A.F. Walls, *The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture,* in *Missionalia 10(3),* 1982, pp. 97f; *Africa and Christian Identity,* in *Mission Focus Current Issues,* W.R. Shenk, ed., Herald Press 1980, pp. 217f.

[30]A.F. Walls, *Africa and Christian Identity,* in *Mission Focus Current Issues,* W.R. Shenk, ed., Herald Press 1980, p. 216. Compare the decision of the Apostolic Council at Jerusalem, *Acts* ch. 15.

[31]*The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians,* ch. 5:17.

[32]A.F. Walls, *The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture,* pp. 98-99; and John S. Mbiti, *Christianity and African Culture* in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa,* September 1977, No. 20, p. 39.

Spain,[33] drew a line on the map from the North Pole to the South, 100 leagues west of the Azores. All lands to the west were given to Spain, and those to the east were deeded to Portugal. The Portuguese objected to the arrangement and refused to recognise Spain's jurisdiction in the New World until the line was moved 370 leagues west of the Azores. Spain relented, and by the Treaty of Tordesillas 1494, the line was moved 370 leagues to the west.[34] This had the effect of placing Brazil, after its discovery by Pedro Alvares Cabral in 1500, under Portuguese control. Alexander VI gave leave for the Monarchs of Portugal and Spain to explore and conquer these lands "for the service of Our Lord," and gave them oversight of the churches there.[35] This secular approach to Christian mission was basically one of cultural imperialism and Spanish nationalism.[36] That which was but one in an infinite series of translations of the Christian Message -the language and the religious culture of the conquerors- had become final and normative. The Spaniards destroyed the Indians' culture and traditional methods of worship, and initiated a process of cultural circumcision. Having destroyed the local methods of worship, it became difficult for them to understand the very people they wanted to convert. Consequently, an intellectual gap

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[33]In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Venice and Genoa were the great navigating powers of the world. From the middle of the fifteenth century, this role was taken over by Portugal, to which Spain later became a powerful competitor. A rivalry thus ensued between the two powers. Alexander VI was the umpire.

[34]No other European nation accepted Spain's claim to jurisdiction over all territories 370 leagues west of the Azores. In 1497, for example, a Genoese navigator named Giovanni Caboto landed in Newfoundland on behalf of Henry VII of England. In 1524, the King of France sponsored an expedition led by an Italian named Giovanni de Verrazano who mapped the North American coastline from Carolina to Nova Scotia.. In 1534, a Frenchman, Jacques Cartier, made the first of several journeys up the St. Lawrence River into the North American interior. But the English and the French were less interested in pioneering new discoveries and settlements than in sharing the spoils of the Spanish. The activities of their sailors introduced a new word into the English language *filibustering* -a term used to describe English piracy against Spanish treasure vessels in the Caribbean and American waters.

[35]Vide A.F. Walls, "Christianity in the Non-Western World: A Study in the Serial Nature of Christian Expansion" in *Studies in World Christianity* Vol. I Part I, James P. Mackey ed., 1995, p. 12.

emerged between Castilian Christianity and Spain's conquered territories. Enslavement and brutality ensued, thus giving rise to questions hitherto unasked. Initially these questions ranged from the juridical, e.g. the legitimacy of Spain's title to the Caribbean and North America, to the legal and political, e.g. the rights of the indigenous peoples as subjects to the Spanish Crown, and their capacity whether as *tabula rasa* or otherwise to receive the Castilian language and the Castilian expression of Catholic Christianity. With the emergence of the transatlantic slave trade and plantation slavery in the Caribbean and the Americas, certain philosophical, theological and moral questions also had to be addressed. These questions centred around man and society, the humanity of the Diaspora African, whether or not Christian Baptism should be extended to him and if so whether or not it affected his status as a slave, the morality of the slave trade and of chattel slavery.

Spain had an able apologist for the inhumane treatment of the Indians (and the actual extermination of the Bahamian Lucayans) in Fernando de Oviedo, an historian who spent twenty four years in the Caribbean. Las Casas championed the cause of the Indians. Portraying Taino/Lucayan society as an ordered one with its own structured hierarchy of priests/caciques and nobles, and having its own cultural and religious character, he argued strongly for the translatability of the Gospel and the integrity of the people's culture. He was ahead of his time in his understanding of the progress and development of culture. He saw all peoples from the ancient Greeks to the New World Taino, all of whom were susceptible to cultural advance and moral elevation, as occupying different rungs on the evolutionary ladder. On a principle of Natural

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[36]The surrender of the Muslim Kingdom of Grenada to Isabella I of Castile in 1492 and the

Law, he even rationalised, albeit hypothetically, the Taino's right to wage "just war" against their oppressors.[37]

Although the debate over slavery never developed into a debate over the nature of the Negro *per se,* the Jamaican planter and historian, Edward Long, claimed that, in the gradation of being, the Negro was little elevated above the oran outang. This contributed to a form of racism from which American society has never fully recovered. The Bahamas was also negatively affected. This was due to the fact that most of the people who migrated, or were brought, to The Bahamas -Negro and Caucasian, slave and free- entered via the United States after the American Revolutionary War. Philosophically, John Locke assumed that the Negro slave, like other members of society, was a free moral agent whose true humanity lay in his proprietorship of his own person.[38] The *Encyclopedie* was more forthright in claiming that the slave had a natural right to be declared free, and charged the judges in the West Indies with inhumanity for not instantly declaring him free, seeing that he was "their brother, having a soul like theirs."[39] The baton was taken by the Abbe Raynal whose *Histoire des deux Indes* reached Great Britain where it appeared in an English translation in 1777 and had a profound effect on humanitarian thought there.[40] This

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consequent expulsion of the Moors and the Jews coincided with Columbus' discovery of the New World.

[37]Vide Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias,* Bk. 3, Vol. 3, ch. 149, pp. 342-344, and Bk. 1, Vol. 1, ch. 46, p. 232f, cited by Gordon Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought,* Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983, pp. 52-54.

[38]Crawford B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke,* Oxford, 1962, pp. 263, 270. Cited by David B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture,* Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 412.

[39]*Encyclopedie,* XVI (Neuchatel, 1765), 532. Cited by David B. Davis, op. cit, p. 416.

[40]Davis, op. cit., p. 417. We are aware that the *Histoire des deux Indes* was the work of a large number of writers including Diderot, Dubreuil, Saint-Lambert, d'Holbach, and Jean de Pechmeja who was himself responsible for some of the sections on colonial slavery. It is for purposes of convenience that the Abbe Raynal is referred to as the author.

was but a short step to Evangelicals like William Wilberforce and T F Buxton, among others, whose conversion propelled them into the vanguard of the movement for the abolition of the British slave trade, the establishment of the free Christian settlement of Sierra Leone, and slave emancipation in the British West Indies. Presenting his case for the evangelization and inevitable emancipation of the Negro slave, James Stephen insisted that Christianity and slavery could not long exist together. Insisting that the more enlightened the slave became the more he would reprobate his slave condition, he cited the following lessons from history:

> The forms in which Christianity has been at different times disguised, have been often hostile to liberty. But wherever the spirit has surmounted the forms, -in France, during the wars of the Huguenots, ... -in Scotland, at the time of the Reformation, -in England, through the whole contest against the Stuarts, from their accession to their expulsion, ... -in every place, -in every age, -it has inspired a hatred of oppression, and a love of freedom! It would be thus in the West Indies.[41]

This was the principal reason why the planters were opposed to the evangelisation of the slaves.[42] One should be wary about generalisations, however, for the situation in The Bahamas was notably different from that in the rest of the British West Indies. This was due to three principal factors, viz. (i) the Parliamentary *Act of 1729* by which the Church of England was established and endowed as The Church of England in The Bahamas and which required, *inter alia,* the evangelisation of Bahamian slaves; (ii) the early destruction of The Bahamas' cotton plantations by soil erosion and the chenille bug, and the attendant peasant form of existence which Bahamian slaves lived practically unrestrained by their masters, all of whom, apart

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[41] ART IX. *The Slavery of the British West India Colonies delineated, as it exists both in Law and Practice, and compared with the Slavery of other Countries, Ancient and Modern.* By James Stephen, Esq. Vol. 1, being a Delineation of the State in point of Law. London, Butterworth, 1824. Printed in *The Edinburgh Review*, October 1824 - January 1825, Vol. XLI, p. 473.

[42] A.F. Walls, *Christianity and Culture,* a class lecture at New College, 3 December 1991.

from Lord Rolle, resided in The Bahamas;[43] and (iii) the benevolence of slave masters like William Wylly who provided chapel facilities and missionary assistance for his slaves,[44] and Denys Rolle who instructed his agent to have daily family worship among his slaves. William Gordon said that such family worship took place every evening.[45] Rolle also encouraged the baptism of his slaves.[46]

The Enlightenment also impacted upon the culture of the African Diaspora. Along with the scientific and technological advances which followed in its wake, the Enlightenment put the West and particularly Great Britain at an unparalleled advantage over the rest of the world. An air of superiority was an inescapable corollary, and Western Christianity was not unaffected. Indeed during our period, Western culture and Western Christianity were virtually synonymous. This was especially the case in the British West Indies subsequent to the erection of the Episcopal Sees of Barbados and Jamaica in 1824. With British possession and settlement came the English language and the English institutions of Church and State. As in the case of Castilian culture, so too with that of the English -what was but one in a series of translations of the Christian Message became final and normative. Calvin's doctrine of the total depravity of man as a consequence of the Fall -itself largely responsible for the Protestant tradition of "discontinuity"- did not help, as all other religious cultures with the possible exception of those of India and China, were considered pagan and of the devil. For the Church of England, however, it was more a

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[43]Vide Daniel McKinnen, *A Tour Through The British West Indies In The Years 1802 and 1803, Giving A Particular Account Of The Bahama Islands,* London, 1804, pp. 172-173.
[44]Vide *A Mission to the West India Islands: Dowson's Journal for 1810 - 1817,* ed. A. Deans Peggs, the Dean Peggs Research Fund, Nassau, Bahamas, 1960, p. 73.
[45]*William Gordon to Bp. Porteus, Sept. 7, 1792 [dated in "Notation"],* Lambeth Palace Library. Gordon served as S.P.G. missionary in Exuma 1789-1794.

matter of the conflation of culture and the gospel, and a sense of vocation to mission on the part of the English Church and the nation of Great Britain.[47] In either case, the African Diaspora had to be culturally circumcised in order fully to embrace the Message. On the face of it, there was a mitigating circumstance in respect of the British West Indies and British North America. The Africans who were sold into slavery were captured and translocated indiscriminately. After several generations they had lost their mother tongue. They had little alternative, therefore, but to become cultural pilgrims.[48]

For the Anglican Church during the greater part of our period, the tradition of "continuity" took a unique turn. This was due principally to the Tractarians. Consistent with the Enlightenment's emphasis on the human sensibility, they affirmed man's innate moral consciousness and his natural desire for truth.

The publication of the controversial *Essays and Reviews* and *Lux Mundi* in 1860 and 1889 respectively also advanced the cause of natural revelation. Frederick Temple, for example, described the cosmos as a "book" to be read alongside of the Scriptures; and in an article on the educational role of the Scriptures he claimed, "We use the Bible not to over-ride but to evoke the voice of conscience."[49] Similarly, Illingworth spoke of the history of pre-Christian religions as "a long preparation for the Gospel" -

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[46]Vide *Baptismal Register 1730-1791,* Christ Church Cathedral, Nassau, Bahamas.

[47]Vide Brooke Foss Westcott, *Lessons From Work,* London, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1901, p. 377f. NB the principle of separation between religion and political power, which emerged in British India, the Sudan and Nigeria did not obtain in The Bahamas and the rest of the British West Indies until, with the single exception of Barbados, the Church of England in these territories was disestablished in 1869 and a plan to phase out diseendowment was erected. Cf. A.F. Walls' lecture *Christianity and Culture,* delivered at New College 3 December, 1991.

praeparatio evangelica.[50] These Anglo-Catholics believed that Christianity summarily contained all of man's moral, religious and liturgical yearnings and thus validated Christianity's claim to be universal.[51] Man's innate moral consciousness was a kind of "good ground"[52] on which the "seed" of the gospel could to be sown -he has a natural capacity for the gospel.[53] This twin endowment of man -his innate moral consciousness and natural desire for the truth- was a basic assumption underlying the moral and religious education which the Anglican Church employed as a means of conversion in The Bahamas. It also undergirded the Tractarians' passion for orthodoxy as the way to personal holiness.

However, the Church of England, conscious of a vocation to mission on the part of both itself and the nation of Great Britain,[54] tended so to conflate English culture and the Christian gospel, that it practically made civilisation a precondition for the African Diaspora's full evangelisation. On the face of it, there was a mitigating circumstance in respect of the British West Indies and British North America. Africans who were sold into slavery there had been captured and translocated

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[48]The term "cultural pilgrims" is an adaptation of Mbiti's "cultural pilgrim" which he used to describe the Christian from an eschatological perspective. Vide Mbiti, *Christianity and African Culture,* .. p. 39.
[49]Frederick Temple, *The Education of the World,* in *ESSAYS AND REVIEWS,* London, 1860, p. 44.
[50]J.R. Illingworth, *The Incarnation and Development,* in *LUX MUNDI,* C. Gore ed., 1889, p. 205f. Cf. John S. Mbiti's *Eschatology. Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* Eds. Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, Lutterworth Press, USCL, London, 1969, p. 180.
[51]Illingworth, op. cit.
[52]*The Gospel According To Mark* 4:8, 20. NB the moral and teleological implications of *kalen* in the Greek Text of *Mark* 4:8, 20.
[53]It is reasonable to assume that the Great Commission -*Matthew* 28:19-20- presupposes such a capacity in man.
[54]Vide Brooke Foss Westcott, *Lessons From Work,* London, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1901, p. 377f. NB the principle of separation between religion and political power, which emerged in British India, the Sudan and Nigeria did not obtain in The Bahamas and the rest of the British West Indies until, with the single exception of Barbados, the Church of England in these territories was disestablished in 1869 and a plan to phase out diseendowment was erected.

indiscriminately. After several generations they had lost their mother tongue. They had little alternative, therefore, but to become cultural pilgrims.[55]

Any discussion of culture re the African Diaspora has to include the question of whether or not African traditions and practices survived the Middle Passage and took root in the New World. There have been two opposing schools of thought on this matter, represented by the two American scholars E. Franklin Frazier and Melville J. Herskovits respectively. Although the debate between Frazier and Herskovits had, as its focus, the African Diaspora in the United States, it is not without relevance to Afro-Bahamians the majority of whom entered The Bahamas via the United States.

Frazier claims that the manner in which Negro slaves were collected in Africa and disposed of after their arrival in America makes it improbable that their African traditions were preserved.[56] However, he does allow for African cultural retentions among the Negroes of the Sea Islands off the southeastern United States, and the West Indies.

In contradistinction to Frazier, Herskovits argues convincingly for African cultural retentions, particularly in the religion of the American Negro. In his book *The Myth of the Negro Past,*[57] he successfully demolishes five myths regarding the cultural

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[55]The term "cultural pilgrims" is an adaptation of Mbiti's "cultural pilgrim" which he used to describe the Christian from an eschatological perspective. Vide Mbiti, *Christianity and African Culture,* .. p. 39.
[56]E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Slave Family* in *The Journal of Negro History,* Carter G. Woodson ed., Vol. XV, 1930, p. 203. Frazier's position is further developed in his book *The Negro Church in America,* New York: Schocken Books, 1964.
[57]Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past,* Beacon Press Boston, 1958, re chs. I & IX.

heritage of the American Negro. He insists, *inter alia,* that the cultures of Africa, like those of Europe, have also contributed to the culture of continental USA.

This debate is not without its West Indian counterpart.[58] However, this author takes the position that the African Diaspora brought into the New World the faith and bonding which sustained them through the Middle Passage, an holistic world view, and a dynamic cultural memory. They did not suffer from cultural amnesia, though their religious culture, being dynamic, did undergo a process of adaptation and assimilation.

Closely associated with culture is *identity.*

[58]Vide Margaret E. Crahan & Franklyn W. Knight eds. *Africa and The Caribbean: The Legacies of a Link,* Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1979, re chs. 1 and 2.

3. Identity

The word *identity* has been central in psychological theory, clinical practice, and sociological studies since the second world war. Of late, it has been used by theologians, and especially by ecclesiologists and missiologists.[59] Given the fact of chattel slavery, and the ancient religious culture of the African Bahamian, a psycho-social perspective on *identity* might prove instructive for our purposes.

Like culture, identity contains a dynamic of stability and change, sameness and development, continuity and adaptation. It is a dynamic which is found in all organisms, societies, and individuals. It operates in the realm of symbols, which, in turn, are the product of the human imagination, the intuitive level of perception and creation.

W. McDougall has identified five principal conditions for sustaining group identity. The first condition is *continuity,* either of individuals or of office. The second is that each member of the group should have a definite *idea* of the nature, composition, functions, and capacities of the group. The third is *interaction,* in the form of rivalry or conflict, with other groups *animated by different ideas and purposes and swayed by different traditions and customs.* Fourth, the group needs *traditions,* customs or habits, which delineate the role of the individual in the group. Fifth, group identity

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[59]Vide: Stephen Sykes, *The Identity of Christianity;* Richard and Anthony Hanson, *The Identity of the Church;* Kwame Bediako, *Theology & Identity;* Hans Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ;* and Robert Jenson, *The Triune Identity.*

demands a definite *structure* expressed in *the differentiation and specialisation of the functions of its constituents.*[60]

McDougall also distinguished between *natural identity* and *artificial identity*. Natural identity is a genuine, given, spontaneous identity, such as the identity of class, nation or culture. Artificial identity is a contrived, defensive, reactionary, ideological identity, of which nationalism, racism, and class hatred are examples.[61]

R. F. Baumeister has identified three basic functions of identity. First, identity relates to the need to make *choices*. Identity concerns one's personal values and priorities. Second, identity has to do with *relationships*. Third, identity is a function of *character*. It refers to one's inner resources, one's potentiality, the ability to attain goals, and the ability to experience fulfilment.[62] These functions were often violated on the sugar plantations in the British West Indies, due to the rigid proscription of the slaves' daily routine and the virtual absence of stable family relationships. In The Bahamas, however, slave conditions were less severe; for here plantation slavery was short-lived, most slaves were Bahamian born and lived a peasant form of existence in nuclear family units, and all but one slave master resided permanently in The Bahamas. The threat to Bahamian identity began in 1824 when the Anglican Church became more intentional about evangelising Bahamian Negroes and competed vigorously against the Baptists for black conversions. It had as its main source the *destabilising* and *trivialising* effect which Anglican education had on the masses.

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[60]W. McDougall, *The Group Mind,* 2nd. edn., Cambridge, 1927, pp. 49f.
[61]Op. cit., pp. 89f.
[62]R. F. Baumeister, *Identity: Cultural Change and the Struggle for Self,* New York, 1986, p. 19.

Baumeister has identified *destabilisation* and *trivialisation* as two principal factors which can undermine identity. Destabilisation is caused by the failure of the unifying functions of the components of identity. It represents a weakening of continuity, and its source is change or the threat of change.

> Actual change separates the present and future self from the past self. Possible change ... separates the present and past self from the future self.[63]

Trivialisation, on the other hand, comes about through failure of the differentiating function of the components of identity, when there is a weakening or a breakdown of the distinction between the self and others, when people have ceased to regard some traditional point of differentiation as important.

According to Baumeister, destabilisation and trivialisation effect a disposition which he describes as *identity deficit,* the condition of the inadequately defined self with its lack of commitment to positive goals and values. Normally, this occurs during two critical stages in the individual's life, viz. adolescence and mid-life. Communities and societies are similarly affected, particularly during periods of vigorous growth, when they are finding their feet as it were and establishing their orientation; or when they have passed their peak of strength and success and the symptoms of decline begin to appear. When such crises set in, whether in the individual or in the community, identity has to be reborn: traditional values have to be reaffirmed, and new goals have to be set, new relationships have to be established, and fresh resources have to be discovered.

The rebirth of identity comes about through returning to one's "roots," one's origins, and applying the strength derived therefrom to the problems of the present. Many forms of psychotherapy can take one back to childhood, infancy, and even to the period of life within the womb, enabling one to see where one's later development went wrong and releasing hitherto unconscious resources which would help one to deal with the present situation constructively. The therapeutic application of LSD 45, e.g., can effect the recall of prenatal experiences. The return to origins and its consequences can be a painful process; but it is a necessary prerequisite of renewal and rebirth. The rebirth of identity comes through death and resurrection. Like all forms of identity, it is expressed in symbols, and its renewal depends on what Austin Farrer called "the rebirth of images."

Ironically, the panacea for the crisis which Anglican education unleashed among the masses was supplied by the ritual and ceremony of post-Tractarian Anglican worship. Through the ritual and ceremony of the Anglican Eucharist, the Bahamian Negro was empowered to return to his roots and simultaneously experience, though proleptically, the eschatological fulfilment of his ancestral religious promise. This did not happen, however, without the experience of conflict, a conflict of identity.

According to Baumeister, *identity conflict,*[64] the condition which arises when identity is strong and two or more of its components enter into conflict, is the opposite of identity deficit.

> The essential pre-requisite for identity conflict is a strong personal and emotional commitment to two distinct identity components that become incompatible.[65]

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[63]Ibid, p. 122.
[64]Ibid, p. 211.

Basically, these two 'distinct identity components' were, for the Bahamian Negro, the holistic and sacred world view of his West African ancestral faith, and the dichotomous, sacred/secular world view of English Christianity. Such conflict became most acute after emancipation. As the Negroes embraced the Church's message, their expectations for social and economic improvement in a colony torn by institutionalized racism and the diabolical *Truck System* increased. Their cultural memory had great difficulty entertaining a sacred/secular dichotomy and a stark indifference to the material plight of the poor. The appeal of the Christian message did not nullify their inherited sense of the sacredness of life in all of its dimensions. Indeed, it confirmed it. The conflict became open, though peaceful, when the slave religious festival called Junkanoo went public. Significantly, it did so at Christmas, and it had as its venue downtown Nassau, the colony's capitol and commercial centre.

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[65]Ibid.

Chapter One

The Geology and Geography of The Bahamas

The cultural development of The Bahamas has been shaped not only by the social history of these islands but also by the geology and geography of the Bahamian archipelago with which that history has been closely connected.

The Bahamian archipelago developed on a limestone platform which was created with the initial separation of the Continents and the opening of the North Atlantic Ocean, during the Cretaceous period.

During most of the roughly 200 million years that followed the creation of the North Atlantic Ocean, The Bahamas was a vast shallow platform on which marine sediments accumulated. The Earth's crust beneath the Bahamas' platform was stretched thin during the separations of the Continents. This thinning resulted in a kind of race between the rate at which new sediments could accumulate and the rate at which the weight of these sediments caused the platform to sink. Bore holes drilled deeply into this tectonically stable platform have indicated that at least 6,100 metres of limestone sediments had accumulated on the Bahamas' platform over the past 200 million years. All of this limestone was created in shallow water, with room for new sediments made available by the continuing subsidence of the Earth's crust.[1]

[1]D.K. Beach, and R.N. Ginsburg, Facies Succession of Pliocene-Pleistocene Carbonates, Northwestern Great Bahama Bank, *American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin* 64:1634-1642, 1980.

About 80 million years ago, a second major change occurred. At this time, deep troughs and channels were created within and between the Great Bahama Bank and the Little Bahama Bank. The Bahamas was separated from Cuba and Florida, and the South-eastern Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands broke into a series of small banks surrounded by deep troughs and basins. Each of the banks became an independent unit, with its surrounding coral reef acting as a trap for fine sediments.

The Islands of The Bahamas were products of the Pleistocene Ice Ages. For about two million years, a series of glacial advances and retreats occurred. This glacial activity exerted a profound influence on The Bahamas' platform even though glaciers did not reach these islands. During periods of glacial advance, much of the Earth's water was tied up in the ice caps and in glaciers. In The Bahamas, sea level fell by more than 120 metres during one glaciation and by just under 120 metres during the final glaciation. These drops in sea level exposed all of the Bahama banks. The exposure of this large landmass modified local climate and produced extreme seasonal variations in temperature and rainfall. The prevailing easterly trade winds were also amplified. These winds moved the fine marine sediments into a series of high sand dunes that run perpendicular to the wind direction. Also, very fine clays, silts and sands from the deserts of North Africa were carried to The Bahamas on the trade winds and deposited during rain showers. These fine Saharan sands were the primary components of the red, iron-rich soils used for the growing of pineapples.[2]

[2]Peter Garrett and Stephen J. Gould, Geology of New Providence Island, Bahamas, *Geological Society of America Bulletin* 95:209-220, 1984.

The high sand dunes which were formed by the trade winds later lithified into fossil sand dunes called eolianites. Today, these fossil dunes form the backbones of most of the islands. Almost all elevations greater than 3 metres were formed in this way. Small bays with sand beaches, large ponds and tidal creeks have developed behind these dunes.

Over the years, many tidal creeks became choked by rapidly accumulating sediments and eventually closed into ponds. Windblown sediments and evaporation then worked together to form periodically flooded swash channels and salinas which, in turn, gave rise to permanently dry land. Through these continuing processes of expansion, the lee shores have slowly emerged from behind the ridges to create the pattern of a high windward coast backed by a low leeward plain.

Although the wind played the dominant role in piling marine sediments into high dunes and in filling coastal ponds with sediments, the ocean was ultimately responsible for the creation of The Bahamas. Calcium carbonate in the forms of marine plants, animal structures and oolitic precipitates, is the product of shallow marine banks. These solid forms of calcium carbonate are the sediments that are naturally cemented into limestone. Waves were responsible for the movement and accretion of these sediments and were thus a creative force in the emergence of the Bahamian Archipelago.

In 1864, Governor Rawson W. Rawson commissioned an inventory of Bahamian land forms. A total of 29 islands, 661 cays and 2,387 rocks were counted. Islands and cays

have been distinguished primarily by their size, the word *cay* being applied to small islands or islets, following the Spanish vocalization of the Taino word *cairi* for island. It has been suggested that a minimal distance of 25 kilometres, in some direction, is sufficient to distinguish Islands from Cays. This distinction, however, is not rigidly maintained. The Island of Rum Cay is an example of this.

The Bahamian Archipelago extends over 1,000 kilometres in a south-easterly direction from Walker's Cay in the Abacos, 27 degrees north latitude, to within 150 kilometres of the Dominican Republic, 21 degrees north latitude, at Grand Turk, their extreme south-eastern end. The Islands are north and east of a line connecting Florida and the Dominican Republic between 71 degrees west longitude and 79 degrees west longitude. The Bahamas is separated from the North American Continent by about 100 kilometres, between Grand Bahama Island and West Palm Beach, Florida. The shortest distances between the Southern Bahamas and its immediate neighbours (Cuba and Haiti) are 90 kilometres and 110 kilometres, respectively. The Bahamas, with a total land area of 13,939 sq. km., is spread over 259,041 sq. km. of sea. The water passages within The Bahamas range from a few metres in the Caicos Islands to 120 kilometres between Great Inagua Island and Acklins Island. The average distance between islands is 48 kilometres.

The Islands of The Bahamas vary in size from 10 sq. km., the area of Conception Island, to 5,957 sq. km., the area of Andros Island; and they vary in elevation from 6 metres, being the highest peak on the Bimini Islands, to 63 metres, being the highest peak on Cat Island (also called San Salvador during our period).

The archipelago is divided into three sub-areas, viz. Northern, Central and Southern.

The Northern Sub-area: Subtropical Moist Forest

The Islands of Great and Little Abaco, Grand Bahama, the Bimini Islands, the Berry Islands, Eleuthera, North Andros, and New Providence are located in this area. Its southern boundary is marked by the rainfall isohyet of 1,200 millimetres and the limit of winter minimum temperatures at, or below, 8 degrees C. This minimum temperature places these Islands in the subtropics.

Yellow pine forests, with hardwood shrubs and trees as underbrush, dominate the interiors of these Northern Islands. For technological reasons, the agricultural potential of these islands remained unrealised until the mid-twentieth century when, e.g., on Great Abaco, 7,200 hectares of land yielded 19,000 tons of raw sugar in its second year.[3] In a 1783 report submitted to Sir Guy Carleton, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in New York, concerning prospective Loyalist settlement in Great Abaco during the summer of that year, a committee of four persons described the forestry and soil of that island as follows:

> The island abounds with Timber, Fir, Madeira Wood, Mahogany, Fustich, Lignum Vitae, Braseleto, Logwood, & Sundry Woods Fit for dying.[4]

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[3]In 1876, a sugar mill was introduced into The Bahamas on an experimental basis. It was located in New Providence. Prisoners were used as labourers in the cultivation of sugar cane. As a result of this experiment, three other mills were introduced in New Providence while others were set up in Abaco and Harbour Island. Plans were also afoot for the erection of a mill in the Biminis and one in Andros. The entire enterprise, however, was very short-lived. *The Sugar Industry 1876. Robinson to Carnarvon December 18th, 1876, CO 23/215/605-607,* and *The Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol. 21,* p. 375.

[4]*British Headquarters Papers,* or *Carleton Papers,* 8227 (2), 25th June, 1783, p. 105, Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas.

The Central Sub-area: Tropical Moist Forest

This sub-area comprises: Cat Island, South Andros, the Exuma Cays, Great and Little Exuma, Long Island, San Salvador, Rum Cay, Samana Cay, Long Cay, and Crooked Island. Rainfall decreases from north to south, 1,200 millimetres to 800 millimetres.

The major episode of plant and animal colonisation occurred when the archipelago's shallow banks were exposed during the Pleistocene glaciations. As a result, the floristic composition is fairly homogeneous, although every island has a different set of dominant species that reflects localised climatic differences and proximity to the source areas of Cuba, Hispaniola, Florida, Puerto Rico and the Yucatan Peninsula.

In the first written description of this sub-area, given by Christopher Columbus, the Islands were described as luxuriant with many groves. The Betsy Bay Settlement on Mayaguana, at the southern end of the central sub-area, was described in 1857 thus:

> The timber is of large size, and among the Varieties I saw, I may mention the tamarind, Madeira, horseflesh, green and black ebony, stopper, cassada and lignum vitae, and much ship timber, knees, etc. Where the settlers had cleared, the ground was literally covered with peas, potatoes, eddoes, corn, etc. and the produce is certainly as luxuriant as in any island in the Bahamas.[5]

This natural resource did not survive the full duration of our period. Commercial lumbering was initiated by the Eleutherian Adventurers. In 1650, for example, these impoverished pioneer colonists shipped ten tons of braziletto wood to Boston as an expression of their gratitude for a donation of eight hundred pounds sterling in goods by churches there.

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[5]Cited by Peter Dalleo, ed., Documents: A Look into the Past Maricuana, *Journal of The Bahamas Historical Society*, 1979, 1:17.

The felling of large trees and the export of timber were greatly increased during the Loyalist period. The Loyalists cleared extensive tracts of land for the purpose of growing cotton. Because these tracts exposed the soil to the direct effects of wind and rainfall, erosion removed much of the islands' topsoil. Eventually, when their cotton crop failed due to soil exhaustion and the attack of the chenille bug, they resorted to commercial lumbering, among other economic ventures.

The Southern Sub-area: Tropical Very Dry Forest

Acklins Island, Plana Cays, Mayaguana, Ragged Island, Little and Great Inagua, and the Turks and Caicos Islands[6] are situated in this sub-area. The boundary between this and the Central sub-area is along the 800-millimetre-rainfall isohyet.[7] In contrast to the Northern Islands, with their distinct wet and dry seasons, there is a pronounced drier break (July to August) in the rainy season which runs from about May to about November, with October as the wettest month.

In this sub-area, the constant trade winds exert a pervasive influence on life zones. The wind affects the environment by increasing evaporation and transpiration. The Bermudans who, in the seventeenth century, settled in the Turks and Caicos Islands recognised the significance of evaporation for the production of salt, and set about

[6]In 1848, the Turks & Caicos Islands were politically separated from The Bahamas. Ecclesiastically, however, these islands remained under the Archdeaconry of The Bahamas and the Diocese of Nassau respectively.
[7]B.G. Little *et alii* eds., *Land Resources of the Bahamas: A Summary.* Surrey, England: Ministry of Overseas Development, Land Resources Study no. 27, 1977.

denuding the land of all trees, with a view to increasing the yields from solar distillation.[8]

With the exception of Pine Cay, in the Caicos Islands, which has the only fresh water pond in this sub-area, all of the Southern Islands which, prior to human colonisation, probably had significant ground water levels, lack ground water resources. The agricultural potential of these islands is, therefore, minimal.

The Bahamas has a marine tropical climate characterised by persistent trade winds, with warm wetter summers and cool drier winters. The low elevations preclude orographic rainfall and no rain shadows occur. Summer convective rainfall is often localised, with wind direction and the configuration of the shallow banks causing higher levels of rainfall to the west and north-west. Winter rainfall is less localised and corresponds to atmospheric depressions associated with cold fronts.

The persistent trade winds exert a major influence on climate and vegetation. The winds are predominantly from the east, from the south-east and from the north-east. Wind speeds average 4-10 knots for about 50% of the year, and exceed 21 knots only 1% of the year. The entire archipelago lies within the North Atlantic hurricane belt, with a hurricane season between June and November. Hurricanes are particularly menacing during the months August to October. The frequency with which hurricanes cross an island increases from south to north.

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[8]Vide Gilbert Klingel, *The Ocean Island (Inagua)*. New York: Natural History Press, 1961.

Temperature, rainfall and potential evapotranspiration varies from south to north. Their inter-relationship produces recognisable ecological climatic "life-zones" that are roughly coterminous with the 800-millimetre and 1,200-millimetre rainfall isohyets.

Prior to European contact, the terrestrial fauna of The Bahamas was limited to an abundance of land crabs, hutia, bats, curly tail lizards, the pygmy boa, the rock iguana, dogs, flamingos and parrots. The European colonisers introduced cats, agoutis, goats, hogs, cattle, horses, donkeys and black rats.

In the nineteenth century, as in previous centuries, the Bahamian waters teemed with a wide and rich variety of marine life, including monk seals and various species of whale, the oil from which had a ready and growing market world-wide, before the exploration of mineral oils. The female monk seal, for example, which is recorded to have reached a weight of 270 kilograms, could produce up to 91 litres of oil. Oil was particularly in demand as fuel and as a lubricant for the sugar mills of Jamaica and Barbados. The sperm whale was also valued for its ambergris, 1 kilogram of which was worth about twelve pounds sterling on the European market. Molluscs, conch and lobster were also bountiful, as were innumerable and varying kinds of fish, such as the grouper, marlin, dolphin, amber jack, grunt and snapper, to name but a few. The leatherback, the loggerhead, the hawksbill and the green turtles were likewise in abundance. The leatherback was the largest of the lot, weighing as much as 907 kilograms. The green turtle and the hawksbill turtle were the most prized of all, the former, being herbivorous, for its tasty flesh, and the latter for the commercial value

of its shell. The shell of the hawksbill turtle was used for making combs, costume jewellery, and other luxury items.

This rich variety of marine life is due primarily to the marine environment of the Bahamian Archipelago, at once a fertile womb for innumerable fish etc. and a tomb for many a ship wrecked on its shoals and reefs.

From the shore, the marine environment follows a regular sequence of change in relation to depth. The near-shore zone is characterised by bare sand which is maintained by the action of the waves. A zone of marine spermatophytes stabilises the substrate beneath the sand. These sea grasses are the habitat for a rich variety of marine life.

As one progresses from the shore, the next major habitat is the patch-reef zone, which ends at the barrier coral reef. Shallow tidal flats along these shores can extend as huge banks for over 100 kilometres.

Along ocean-facing windward coasts, the reef flat grades through zones of mixed sea grass/coral rock/patch reef as water depth increases to over 10 metres at the fringing barrier reefs. The barrier coral reef is located at distances ranging from several kilometres from shore to contact with fossil reefs which now comprise portions of the shore. Reefs provide narrow barriers which protect the shore from ocean swells. They are highly productive of animal biomass and support dense populations of fish.

The sea floor drops to depths in excess of 200 metres beyond the reef. For the waters of The Bahamas, though predominantly shallow (one explanation of the islands' present name, from the Spanish *baja mar*), are split by several deep troughs and channels, such as that which divides the Great Bahama Bank from the Little Bahama Bank, and the Tongue of the Ocean which branches from it, curling around New Providence and touching the eastern reefs of Andros. Whales and pelagic fish migrate through these waters.

Because of their geographical location, the Bahama Islands were prized by Spain, France, and England, though the British were the first and only Europeans actually to colonise them after the extermination of the aboriginal Taino/Lucayan Indians.

In a report on the Bahama Islands in 1783, Lieutenant John Wilson, Acting Engineer in the British Army, St. Augustine, Florida, stated that 20% of the surface of the land consisted of bare rock. In the remaining 80% he identified three kinds of soil, viz. red, grey, and black. The maximum depth of soil was estimated at between 12 and 14 inches, and was found only in caves, holes, and valleys.[9] The report was optimistic about the agricultural potential of these islands, particularly the potential of the black soil for the commercial cultivation of cotton.

The implications of the geography of The Bahamas for the colony's cultural development during our period are fourfold. First, the islands' rocky terrain and shallow soil could not accommodate the kind of long-term plantation system which

characterised the Southern United States and the British Caribbean. Second, the sea to land ratio of roughly 19:1 could not but eventually foster a marine-oriented lifestyle which typified life in The Bahamas from the time of the Lucayan Indians. Third, the islands' health-affirming weather and the sea's abundant supply of protein facilitated the steady growth of a Creole Bahamian population by natural increase. Fourth, the scattered nature of the archipelago, while serving to isolate the various islands, also tended, with few exceptions, to liberate and to integrate the respective multiracial and slave/free island communities.

These factors contributed in no small measure to the development and the comparative uniqueness of nineteenth century Bahamian culture.

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[9] *Report of Lt. John Wilson, Acting Engineer in the British Army, on the Military State and Defenses of the Bahama Islands, made by order of the Commander in Chief of the British Forces in America, dated New York, July 14th 1783,* Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

Chapter Two

Pre-Loyalist Settlement in The Bahamas

2 (a) The Aboriginal Bahamians

According to William Keegan, the aboriginal peoples of the Caribbean can be classified as the Island Arawak and the Island Carib respectively.[1] Irving Rouse has suggested that the name *Arawak* be replaced with that of *Taino* when discussing the indigenous inhabitants of the Greater Antilles and The Bahamas.[2] The name *Taino,* which glosses as 'noble' or 'good' in the Taino language, was used by the Spanish to distinguish between the indigenous inhabitants of the Greater Antilles and the Island Carib. The Spanish made a further distinction among the Taino by referring to those of The Bahamas as *Lucayos* (hence the word *Lucayan*), from the Taino *Lukku-Cairi,* which glosses as 'island man.' For our purposes, therefore, the aboriginal inhabitants of The Bahamas will be referred to as Lucayans (or Lucayan Indians).

According to Rouse, the Taino originated around the banks of the Orinoco River in Venezuela.[3] As early as 2100 B.C. villages of horticulturalists who used pottery vessels to cook their food had been established along the Middle Orinoco. During the ensuing two millennia, their population increased and they expanded down river and outward along the Orinoco's tributaries.[4] One path of expansion led them to the coast

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[1]W.F. Keegan, *The People Who Discovered Columbus,* University Press of Florida, 1992, p. 7.

[2]I. Rouse, *Peoples and Cultures of the Saladoid Frontier in the Greater Antilles,* in *Early Ceramic Population Lifeways and Adaptive Strategies in the Caribbean,* ed. by P.E. Siegel, Oxford: BAR International Series, 1989, No. 506.

[3]Ibid.

[4]D.W. Lathrap, Our Father the Cayman, Our Mother the Gourd: Spinder Revisited, or a Unitary Model for the Emergence of Agriculture in the New World, in *Origins of Agriculture,* ed. by C.A. Reed, The Hague: Mouton, pp. 713-751.

of the Guianas, thence to Trinidad, Grenada, Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, The Bahamas, Cuba, and Jamaica. Whether the Taino migrated to The Bahamas via northwestern Hispaniola or southeastern (or eastern) Cuba is still debated by archaeologists and historians. By A.D. 800 (and possibly as early as A.D. 600), the Lucayans had settled in The Bahamas.

Lucayan Demography in 1492

Pietro Martire d'Anghiera reported that 40,000 Lucayans were captured and exported to Hispaniola at a rate that left The Bahamas depopulated by the time of Ponce de Leon's voyage in 1513.[5] Brian Edwards also estimated the Lucayan population at 40,000 "on the most moderate estimate." Keegan estimates the Lucayan population as being between 40,000 and 80,000, in 1492.

The earliest extant description of the Lucayans is that provided by Christopher Columbus, on his first voyage, 12th October, 1492. Columbus' initial encounter was with young men, probably warriors, on San Salvador. Concerning them, he wrote:

> They are fairly tall on the whole, very well built with fine bodies and handsome faces. Their hair is coarse, almost like that of a horse's tail, and short; they wear it down over their eyebrows except for a few strands at the back, which they wear long and never cut. They are the colour of the Canary Islander, neither black nor white, and are heavily painted. They should be good servants, and are very intelligent, for I have observed that they soon repeat anything that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for they appear to me to have no religion.[6]

We shall have cause to see that Columbus was mistaken about their apparent lack of religion.

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[5]P. Martyr, *De Orbe Novo [1493-1525].* Translated by F.A. MacNutt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1970, 1:170.

Las Casas agreed that the Taino and the Lucayan Indians were teachable. What is more, according to him, they were also amenable to the practice of good morals and the highest virtues. In contradistinction to Fernando de Oviedo who was not unmindful of Spain's wars against the Moors and who actually put the Taino and the Lucayans in the category of the wilful infidel and thus beyond the pale of Christian charity, Las Casas maintained:

> The people with whom the New World is swarming are not only capable of understanding the Christian religion, but are amenable, by reason and persuasion, to the practice of good morals and the highest virtues. Nature made them free, and they have their kings or rulers [caciques] to regulate their political life.[7]

Mindful of the translatability of the Christian message, Las Casas continued:

> Our holy religion adapts itself equally as well to all nations of the world; it embraces them all and deprives no human being of his natural liberty under pretext or colour that he or she is *servus a natura.*[8]

The Lucayan Way of Life

By the time of Columbus' landfall in the New World, the Lucayans, as also the Taino, lived in well organized and highly stratified agricultural and seafaring fishing communities, trading throughout The Bahamas and the Greater Antilles. Columbus reported that exchange was regularly conducted between the Lucayans of the Central Bahamas and the Taino of Cuba, and that he had observed dugout canoes which could carry 40 to 45 men. He also reported that the Central Bahamas was under the hegemony of a king (cacique) who resided on Acklins Island. The caciques were

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[6]Jane, Vigneras, and Skelton, *Journal of Columbus,* p. 23f.
[7]Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias,* Bk. 3, Vol. 3, ch. 149, p. 342f. Cited by Gordon K. Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought,* Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983, p. 52.
[8]Ibid.

followed, in descending order, by nitainos (nobles or clanlords) and naborias (commoners).

The Lucayans, like the Cuban Taino, are said to have had a matrilineal descent system, expressed in the inheritance of rank through the female line, with females sometimes inheriting chiefly positions. Zemis, the icons of the gods and representations of the lineage's ancestors, were also passed on through the female line.

Initially, children lived with their parents. Both boys and girls were initiated into sex at puberty. Girls were expected to have had considerable sexual experience before marriage. Incest was taboo. During adolescence, boys normally moved to their maternal uncle's house.

At marriage, nitainos and naborias are said to have provided bride service, as the patriarch Jacob did, as compensation to the lineage which provided the spouse. During this time, the couple resided matrilocally. Caciques apparently avoided doing bride service by paying movable property to the wife-giving lineage. The system of bride price among the Lucayans evolved from this practice. Caciques also practised polygamy and took their wives to live with them immediately after marriage.

A connubial cycle prevailed among the naborias. Sons reared in one family would join a second family upon marriage and move to a third on completion of bride service. Meanwhile, the original family would be collecting temporarily residing sons-in-law and older, permanently settled nephews, with the question of who went

where and when being determined by some mixture of political advantage, practical expedience, and personal preference.

Archaeological evidence for these developments has been observed in a cluster of sites on Acklins Island. One lineage at each village was probably dominant in the sense that the head of that lineage or clan was the chief of the village, i.e. the the clanlord. As Columbus observed in respect of Acklins Island, a district or region was headed by a cacique.

At an excavated site on Middle Caicos, in the Southern Bahamas, archaeologists have discovered a Lucayan plaza. There are two things in particular which are significant about this find:

(i) The plaza-type community is more typical of Taino society in the Greater Antilles than of the Lucayan communities in the rest of The Bahamas. It is likely, therefore, that some Taino from Hispaniola took up seasonal residence there for the purpose of collecting salt, as the Bermudians did from the middle of the seventeenth century.

(ii) The central court of this plaza has stones aligned to chart the summer solstice and the rising of certain stars. More will be said about this when we discuss the Lucayan agricultural practices.

Lucayan agricultural activity revolved around garden cycles. Garden plots as large as 2,471 acres were cleared at regular (probably annual) intervals. Clearing involved the use of stone axes and shell tools to slash bush, fell trees, and to girdle large trees.

After clearing, the bush was left to dry and was burned. The slash and burn method was also used by West African slaves in The Bahamas. It is still used in small scale farming today.

Planting was done with a sharpened digging stick. The Lucayans cultivated as many as fifty different crops, including several varieties of sweet and bitter manioc, sweet potatoes, cocoyams, beans, gourds, chili peppers, corn, cotton, tobacco, groundnuts, guavas, and papayas. After a few years of continuous use, the old garden was left to fallow until covered by at least secondary forest, and a new garden was prepared. The aforementioned astronomical chart which was discovered in the central court of the Taino plaza on Middle Caicos was, quite probably, designed with this cycle in view. Similar charts were utilized by North American Indians for the selfsame purposes.

In addition to garden plots, there were also house gardens containing varieties of herbs and spices, medicinal and narcotic plants, vegetable dyes, and fruit trees. Medicinal plants included fever grass and bay vine for fevers and colds, catnip for constipation and worms, soldier vine for skin eruptions, madeira or cascarilla bark (still used as the basis for Campari liqueur) as tonics, the aloe or agave plant the yellow sap of which serves as a shampoo and as an ointment for burns and cuts, and its leaves can be chewed to aid digestion as well as made into a bitter drink for colds and constipation. Love vine was considered an aphrodisiac, and a decotion of lignum vitae proved highly effective against the spirochaetes of syphilis.

Boiling was the usual method of cooking. Bitter manioc, so called because it contains toxic levels of cyanide, had to be grated and squeezed. The juice releases its toxins when cooked, and is used as a base for stews, pepper pot, and manioc beer. The pulp was dried for use as a starch (flour). Water was added to the starch to make cassava bread which was baked on large, round, pottery griddles.

Meat was also an important part of the Lucayan diet. Marine turtles, highly prized for their meat and eggs, were available seasonally. Hutia, iguana, and land crabs were also highly prized. The sea provided a variety of vertebrates and invertebrates. Grouper, snapper, bonefish, conch, urchins, chitons, and clams were all integral to the Lucayan diet. Meats were roasted on the fire or barbecued (*barbecue* is derived from a Taino word).

Lucayan skeletal remains indicate that the aboriginal Bahamian enjoyed good health and nutrition. Like the West African slaves who succeeded them in The Bahamas, the Lucayans did not suffer from the nutritional and diet-related disorders of the aboriginal horticulturalists (and the African slaves who succeeded them) in the rest of the Caribbean.

Lucayan Religion

Contrary to Columbus' impression that the Lucayans seemed to have had no religion, the Lucayans, like the Taino and the Island Carib, as indeed all other peoples, were

naturally religious. They were polytheists; but at the apex of their divine hierarchy was the immortal, invisible, benevolent, and omnipotent spirit named Jochu Vague Maorocon, also called Yocahu or Jocahuna. Yocahu's father's name is unknown. He had a maternal uncle called Guaca. His mother's name was Atabeyra or Atabei. She had four other names: Mamona, Iella, Guicarapita, and Guimoza. Atabeyra had a number of icons including simple representations of the female form in various degrees of abstraction. The most dominant of such icons was that of a crouching female figure with her hands under her chin, in the process of childbirth. Icons of Atabeyra also took the form of animals such as frogs.

Dale Bisnauth claims that Yocahu had no icon[9] but Fred Olsen, who did extensive archaeological research in Antigua, disagrees. According to Olsen, Yocahu was considered to be the fiery force within the universe, and the father-provider of manioc -the staff of life, and of narcotic snuff -the holy herb which permitted communication with the spirit world. Like Bisnauth, he maintains that the religion of Yocahu was the original and dominant one in the Caribbean, particularly in the Lesser Antilles. He contends, however, that Yocahu did have an icon and that it took the form of a triangular-shaped zemi with incised facial marks. Archaeological research has unearthed a number of zemis in The Bahamas. The zemi's triangular shape evoked the volcanoes in Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St Vincent. It also recalled the hand-held mealing stones or pestles which were essential for the preparation of manioc and narcotic snuff.[10]

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[9]Dale Bisnauth, *History of Religions in the Caribbean,* Kingston Publishers Ltd., 1989, pp. 1-10.

Besides the direct representations of Yocahu and Atabeyra, archaeologists have found representations of a Cerberus-like dog-deity called Opiyel-Guaobiran in Haiti. This icon depicts an upright figure with paws placed beneath its chin and a large and erect penis.

Olsen claims that the representations of Atabeyra and the dog-deity Opiyel-Guaobiran were more common in the Greater Antilles than in the Lesser Antilles where the triangular-form icon of Yocahu predominated. This for him signified a pattern of cultural adaptation on the part of the aborigines, with icons becoming more subtle, complex, and diverse, as they migrated from the south, where volcanic fires, earthquakes and the most destructive hurricanes more readily occured, to the north, where the environment was more gentle. Such adaptation is borne out by the zemis found in The Bahamas. These include recognizable images of Yocahu and Atabeyra in the forms of iguanas and turtles. Iguanas and turtles were revered by the Lucayans. The religion of Yocahu had faded, and the zemis suggest a marine and small-island variant of the religion of Atabeyra.

Archaeologists have discovered Lucayan petroglyphs in the Hartford Cave on Rum Cay. These petroglyphs include stylized representations of iguanas, turtles, and anthropomorphic forms. The predominant motifs are sexual in form. Other rock carvings appear to be simple geometric patterns. One such pattern appears to be a variant of one intermittently found in the Greater Antilles, viz. a phallic pillar surmounted by a representation of the sun. This would seem to be a recognition of the

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[10]Fred Olsen, *Trail of the Arawaks,* pp. 89-120, 215-224.

sources of life and regeneration in the sun and semen alike, a rather distant derivative of the worship of Yocahu, the source of fire and manioc. Another common motif is that of a pattern of concentric circles, representing the female genitalia. This would seem to be a recognition of the essential role of women in procreation, as symbolized elsewhere by the worship of Atabeyra. Alternatively, since the pattern of concentric circles is often pierced by a phallic upright, it could represent the necessary conjunction of male and female in the procreative process.

A number of four-legged duhos have also been discovered in various caves in The Bahamas. These finds shed further light on the religious culture of the Lucayans. Some of these duhos are simple stools, carved from hardwood with geometrical incised designs. They have indentations at each end for the insertion of poles for the purpose of converting the seat into a palaquin to transport the cacique owner from place to place. The most elaborate duhos were made in the form of either an iguana or a turtle especially the latter; for being amphibious, its spirit was believed to have been able to traverse land and sea. Olsen regards these latter duhos as more than stools. According to him, they represent altars for votive offerings. This is highly likely in view of the fact that caciques exercised priestly, as well as political and judicial, functions. As such, their stools served the purpose of both the altar and "the bench."

Like other ancient peoples, the Lucayans also had their myth of creation. Interestingly, their story of creation seems to have one or two parallels with both the Biblical myth of Creation and the Fall -Genesis 2:4-3, and Plato's Analogy of the Cave. As in the case of the Genesis stories, Man is the centre of Creation, and

disobedience, or the violation of taboo, has cosmic implications, though, for the Lucayans, the implications are not necessarily negative. As in Plato's Analogy of the Cave, light or enlightenment is associated with emerging from the cave.

In the Lucayan creation myth, the cave is the *terminus a quo* all things generate. While the gods who guarded the caves slept, the sun, moon, and stars escaped from one cave, and mankind escaped from another. For the first mortals, the sight of the sun was taboo, and all who gazed at it were turned into animals, birds, and trees, thus filling the land with living things. The leaders of the survivors were legendary giants. One hero, Guaguiona, carried off women and children to distant lands called Guanain and Matinino. The men left behind, needing female companionship, found sexless creatures hidden in a tree, and had woodpeckers, *inris,* provide them with female genitalia. Meanwhile, at Guanain, the abducted children turned into frogs and lizards for want of food, while, at Matinino, Guaguiona, in consequence of his sexual exploits, contracted, and therefore invented, venereal disease. Some time later, Caracaracol (the Scaly One) brought manioc -the Lucayan staple food, and tobacco - the holy herb. The creation of the sea and all marine life seems to have occured later in the creation process. According to a story relayed by Pedro Martir de Angleria (Peter Martyr), the sea and its inhabitants resulted from the accidental shattering of a gourd wherein they were contained, along with the remains of the dead son of a powerful cacique named Jaia.[11] As if to give a mythological explanation of the creation of the Bahamian and Caribbean archipelagos, the story went on to relate how

[11]P. Martyr, *De Orbe Novo [1493-1525],* translated by F.A. MacNutt, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970, 1:170. According to this story, Jaia buried his son in the gourd. This is interesting in view of the fact that Lucayan skeletal remains have been found in some of the Blue Holes on Andros Island. It was probably a Lucayan custom to bury their dead in watery graves.

the immense plain which was believed to have formed the universe was inundated, leaving only mountain peaks unsubmerged, thus forming the islands of The Bahamas and the Caribbean.[12]

The Lucayans had a world view which had much in common with that of their West African successors. For them, life was a unit, and the whole of life, being animated by spirit, was sacred. Religion involved communication and intercession with the spirit through the instrumentality of zemis and various kinds of sorcery. Dancing to the point of exhaustion, under the narcotic effect of tobacco and rhythmic music, was very much a part of worship and the process of communication with the spirit world.

Each Lucayan household had its own protective zemi, and every individual had his protective amulet. The principal zemi in each community would be kept in a shrine, under the guardianship of the cacique. The shrine would be the focus of religious ceremonies on such occasions as the phases of the moon, fishing, planting, reaping, and in times of emergency or crisis. The cacique would prepare himself for such ceremonies by having a ritual bath, and using narcotic snuff. The clan would assemble and be led in rituals aimed at consulting, imploring, and propitiating the gods through their common or principal zemi. Propitiation normally involved votive offerings of small stones or small wood carvings of specific animals such as agoutis, turtles, and mantees, or such fish as the grouper, the shark, or the whale. Propitiation rarely, if ever, took the form of bloody sacrifice, probably because the Lucayans were not herdsmen.

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[12]Quite probably Peter Martyr got this story from the Taino. The fact that both The Bahamas and the

The Lucayans believed in life beyond the grave. At death, the spirits of those who lived good and valiant lives went to a place, situated to the south and east of The Bahamas and the Greater Antille, (probably within the vicinity of the Orinoco basin), called *Coyaba.* In this Paradise, the spirits of the departed ancestors enjoyed plentious food and drink, sexual licence, and protection from harm and disease.

Las Casas' contention, therefore, that the peoples of the New World were no *tabula rasa* was as true of the Lucayans as it was of the Taino.

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islands of the Caribbean were archipelagos would indicate that the Lucayans also shared this story with little or no adaptation.

(b) The Spanish and The Bahamas

Notwithstanding Spain's claim to The Bahamas, a claim not formally abandoned until the Treaty of Versailles in 1783/4, the Spanish never established settlements on any of the hundreds of islands in the Bahamian archipelago. No record of Columbus' report to the royal sponsors of his voyage has survived to date. Extant are a post-voyage interview with Andres Bernaldez by Piertro Martire d'Anghiera, general histories by Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo and Francisco Lopez de Gomara, Fernando Columbus' discussion of his father's first voyage, and a third-hand transcription of Columbus' personal diary by Bartolome de Las Casas. Yet none of these sources helps us to know definitely whether or not Columbus recommended that such settlements be made in The Bahamas and why. According to Carl Sauer, however, the search for gold, among other riches, was integral to the purpose of Columbus' initial voyage.[1] Oliver Dunn and James Kelley are similarly persuaded.[2] According to a report in Columbus' diary for 17th October 1492, Columbus stated:

> I set sail with a south wind to strive to go around the whole island [of Fernandina, i.e. Long Island] and to keep trying until I find Samaot [a cacique village on Acklins Island], which is the island or city where the gold is; for so say all these men who come here in the ship, and so told us the men of the island of San Salvador and of Santa Maria [i.e. Rum Cay].[3]

During his second voyage to the New World in 1493, Columbus proposed effecting a trade in Taino and Lucayan Indians similar to the Portuguese trade in African slaves. No action was taken in this regard, however, until 1495 when he took 550 male and

[1]Carl O Sauer, *The Early Spanish Main,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.
[2]Oliver Dunn and James E Kelley Jr., eds., *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America 1492-1493,* abstracted by Bartolome de Las Casas, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

female Taino from Hispaniola to Spain.[4] Such action was frowned upon by Queen Isabella who refused to sanction the enslavement of her newly acquired American subjects, and forbade their large-scale and unrestricted importation. However, the recall of Columbus in 1500, and his replacement by Francisco de Bobadilla as governor "of all the islands and mainland of the Indies" and the appointment of Nicolas de Ovando as governor of Hispaniola, on the one hand, and the death of Isabella in 1504, on the other hand, had fatal consequences for the Lucayans in particular.

In 1509, Ovando complained to Ferdinand V that there was a shortage of native labour in Hispaniola. As a result, the king ordered Ovando to import Lucayans to make good the shortage. This was the beginning of Lucayan enslavement and their ultimate demise. According to Las Casas, the Lucayans were sold at a price of 100 and 150 gold pesos each. Thousands of them, being excellent swimmers, were transported to the Isle of Cubagua via Hispaniola.[5]

Amerigo Vespucci and Juan Ponce de Leon also traversed the Bahamian waters between 1499 and 1513 respectively. Again, no Spanish settlements were established.

In 1499, Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, archdeacon of Seville and manager of New World explorations, issued a licence to Vespucci authorising him to sail westward in search of a route to India via South America. Fonseca expressly forbade Vespucci to

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[3]Ibid, p. 87f.
[4]Carl O Sauer, op cit., pp. 77-88.
[5]Cited by Julian Granberry, Spanish Slave Trade in The Bahamas, 1509-1530: An Aspect of the Caribbean Pearl Industry, in *Journal of the Bahamas Historical Society,* 1, 2, and 3, 1979-81, p. 16.

trespass on any land discovered by Columbus. Nevertheless, Vespucci spent some four months in The Bahamian at the end of which he enslaved 232 Lucayans and took them to Cubagua.[6]

In 1513, Juan Ponce de Leon left Puerto Rico where he had enriched himself over the previous four years, and sailed towards the southern coast of Florida, then called the island of Bimini, on which he was licensed to settle. While en route to Florida, Ponce de Leon stopped off at the Caicos Islands, Rum Cay, San Salvador, Cat Island, Eleuthera and Grand Bahama. What is of special interest about Ponce de Leon's journey via these islands is that he encountered no Lucayans on any of them.

It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that by 1513 the entire Bahamian archipelago had become depopulated. The Bahamas, lacking the riches for which Columbus initially sailed westward, the Spanish refused to settle there. Consequently, the Lucayans were enslaved and transported to the mines of Hispaniola and Cuba, and to the pearl fisheries near the Isle of Cubagua off the north coast of Venezuela, where those of them who were not drowned en route were either worked to death or died from European borne diseases.

During the period of Proprietary Government 1670-1700, however, the Spanish were particularly hostile towards the islands of New Providence and Eleuthera. There were several reasons for this. First, the Proprietors were not successful in setting up plantations in The Bahamas principally because the

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[6]Frederick J Pohl, *Amerigo Vespucci, Pilot Major,* New York: Octagon Books, 1966.

Several People [who] went out from England and the other Colonies to settle there, living a lewd, licentious Life, were impatient under Government,[7]

and being seafarers they

looked upon every Thing they could get out of a Cast-away Ship as their own.[8]

This latter included the pillaging of Spanish wrecks. Buccaneering, the smuggling of goods to and from the nearby Spanish ports of Cuba and Santo Domingo, and piracy became a way of life for them. Uncooperative governors like Robert Clarke who even refused to swear allegiance to William III and Mary II did not help the situation any. Second, when Britain was at war with Spain or France or both, New Providence was often used as a base from which English buccaneers and Bahamian privateers attacked enemy ships sailing through the Florida Straits, the Bahama Channel and the Windward Passage, regular sea lanes for merchant ships. New Providence's sheltered harbour, accessible from both the northeastern and the northwestern ends of the island, proved a fitting base from which to operate.[9]

In 1684, a Jamaican by the name of Thomas Paine who was sailing under a commission from Governor Lynch of Jamaica to suppress piracy conspired with a French buccaneer to sack Spanish settlements around St Augustine, Florida. His base of operation was New Providence. There he took his booty, and was welcomed by

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[7]John Oldmixon, *The History of the Isle of Providence,* Purnell and Sons Ltd, Paulton (Somerset) and London, first published 1741, p. 12.
[8]Ibid.
[9]Prior to using The Bahamas, and particularly New Providence, as their base of operation, the English buccaneers had three principal havens, viz. Providence Island off the coast of Nicaragua, Tortuga off the northern coast of Hispaniola, and Port Royal opposite Kingston, Jamaica. In 1641, the Spanish devastated Providence Island. As a result of the Treaty of Madrid by which Spain acknowledged Britain's right to possess colonies in the West Indies, England agreed to suppress buccaneering by its nationals. Such a commitment was facilitated by the destruction of Port Royal by earthquake in 1692. By 1691, when the Anglo-French War 1689-1697 had spread to the West Indies, English buccaneers had to vacate Tortuga. From Tortuga they went to The Bahamas.

both Robert Clarke and the residents of the island. In retaliation, Spanish forces attacked and sacked both New Providence and Eleuthera.

During the War of the Spanish Succession 1702-1713, Bahamian seamen with ships of their own were issued with letters of marque and reprisal. These letters authorised them to plunder and destroy French and Spanish ships without cost to the Bahamian treasury. For a while, privateering flourished and New Providence became, as it were, a privateers' republic. It was not long, however, before France and Spain retaliated. In 1703 and 1704, their combined forces attacked, pillaged, and sacked New Providence and Eleuthera.

Thereafter and until 1718, The Bahamas became a pirates' haven. Britain considered the islands necessary for the security of its trade in the West Indies and in North America. Indeed, the objective of such London Companies as the Virginia Company and the Massachusetts Bay Company which financed and organised the emigration of Englishmen across the Atlantic was to create permanent markets for English goods in exchange for the products of the new world.

Both France and Spain were aware of the importance of the Bahama Islands to Britain's American and West Indian trade, and wanted to secure them as a base from which to disrupt this trade. In the interest of trade and commerce, therefore, England was obliged both to rid the islands of piracy and to defend them against the French and the Spaniards. To this end, the House of Lords entreated Queen Anne to take the necessary measures to effect The Bahamas' security as a British possession. No

action was taken, however, until the accession of George I whom the Lords immediately informed of the islands' neglect. The king responded by commissioning Captain Woodes Rogers to suppress piracy in the islands and to fortify them against foreign invasion.

Rogers arrived in New Providence on 27th July, 1718. By the end of that year, piracy was eliminated, and measures were taken to fortify New Providence and Eleuthera against enemy attack. But for a French invasion of the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1753, The Bahamas was free from foreign attack until France and Spain sided with the American rebels in the American Revolutionary War.

In May, 1782, a Spanish force of eighty two war ships and some 1,500 soldiers invaded The Bahamas and occupied New Providence for roughly a year. In April, 1783, however, Colonel Andrew Deveaux, a Loyalist of the South Carolina militia, took the initiative of sailing into Bahamian waters with a fleet of five privateers manned by a few militiamen. In The Bahamas, he raised a force of 235 men including 170 fishermen and farmers from Harbour Island and Eleuthera. With them, he defeated the Spaniards and liberated New Providence.

Major Deveaux's victory reinforced Britain's claim to The Bahamas, and facilitated both Spain's acknowledgement of that claim with the signing of the Treaty of Paris by Britain and Spain at Versailles on 3rd September, 1783, and the settlement in these islands of thousands of Loyalists and their slaves after the British evacuation of East Florida during the succeeding twenty two months.

(c) The French and The Bahamas

After the extermination of the Lucayan Indians, France was the first nation to attempt the erection of settlements in The Bahamas, but to no avail. French efforts to colonise The Bahamas were made in 1565, 1633, and 1783.

In 1562, the French Huguenot Gaspard de Coligny detailed Jean Ribaut to found a colony in Florida. Two years later, Rene Goulaine de Laudonniere, Ribaut's aide-de-camp, established a Huguenot settlement at Fort Caroline (in the vicinity of present-day Jacksonville) on the Saint John's River in Florida.

In 1565, however, Philip II of Spain sent a military expedition, under the command of Pedro Menendez de Aviles, to destroy the French settlement. Menendez erected a base of operation at St Augustine, immediately south-south-east of Jacksonville. From there he and his men advanced onto Fort Caroline by land, and destroyed the French settlement.

Fleeing Huguenots attempted to escape by sea and sail to Abaco in the northern Bahamas. Their attempt was thwarted, however, because the Straits of Florida and the Northwest Providence Channel -the sea lanes between South-East Florida and the Northern Bahamas- was heavily patrolled by Spanish galleons.

The second attempt at French settlement occurred in 1633 when Cardinal Richelieu made a grant of four Bahamian islands, viz. Abaco, Inagua, Mariguana (Mayaguana) and Guanahani (San Salvador), to the Huguenot Guillaume De Caen whom he named

Baron Des Bahamas. Richelieu, intending to have the islands fortified and settled by French Catholics, expressly forbade the erection of Protestant settlements there. As a result, no French settlement was established on any of these islands.[10]

In 1697, Spain formally ceded the western one-third of Hispaniola, Saint-Domingue, to France. Thereafter, the French developed an interest in the Turks and Caicos Islands because of these islands' salt potential and their strategic location in the Windward Passage between Cuba and Hispaniola. In 1764, for example, the French occupied Grand Turk, and vacated only after London had brought diplomatic pressure to bear on Paris.

Early in 1783, while New Providence was occupied by Spanish forces, the French again seized the Turks Islands, but returned them to the British after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles.

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[10]Vide Robert A. Curry, *Bahamian Lore,* first edition privately printed in Paris, 1928, p. 37.

(d) The Beginning of English Settlement in The Bahamas

Early English settlement in The Bahamas was a direct result of the Puritan struggle against King Charles I and Archbishop William Laud, a struggle which, though centred in England and Scotland, also affected life at the religious and political levels in Bermuda. It was effected by the desire of a group of religious Independents for a land in which they could enjoy freedom of religious expression under a democratic and republican form of government. However, according to G.M. Trevelyan,

> The settlers in Virginia, the West Indian Islands and to a large extent even in New England, had not emigrated for religious motives at all. The ordinary colonist had been drawn overseas by the Englishman's characteristic desire to 'better himself,' which in those days meant to obtain land. Free land, not free religion was the promise held out in the pamphlets issued by the companies promoting the emigration.[1]

But for one known exception, viz. an Englishman called Captain Butler, the motives of the Company of Adventurers for the Plantation of Eleuthera were "free religion" and "free land." The two were interconnected, and constitutionally guaranteed.

> WHEREAS experience hath shewed us the great inconveniences that have happened, both in this Kingdom of England, and other places, by a rigid imposing upon all an uniformity and conformity in matters of judgement and practice in the things of Religion, ... It is therefore ordered, That all such person and persons, who are so as aforesaid qualified, shall be received and accepted as Members of the said Company of Adventurers, and into the said Plantation, notwithstanding any other difference of judgement, under whatsoever other names conveyed, walking with justice and sobriety, in their particular conversations, and living peaceably and quietly as Members of the Republick.
>
> That every one of the number of the first Adventurers shall have three hundred Acres of Land laid out for him and his Heires for ever, ...[2]

In 1629, Charles I granted The Bahamas along with Carolina to Sir Robert Heath; but no English settlement was made in either place, probably because of the conflict

[1] G.M. Trevelyan, *English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries Chaucer to Queen Victoria*, Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., New York, 1942, p. 210.

[2] *ARTICLES and ORDERS, made and agreed upon the 9th Day of July, 1647, ... by the Company of ADVENTURERS for the PLANTATION of ELEUTHERA, ...* included in Robert A. Curry's *Bahamian Lore,* first edition privately printed in Paris, 1928, p. 115f.

between King Charles I and the English Parliament. By 1642, this conflict had deteriorated into civil war and the subsequent trial and execution of Charles I in 1649. Bermuda, first settled by the English in 1607, was not unaffected by this state of affairs. Indeed, loyal Bermudans, horrified by the news of the king's execution, forwarded a four-point proposition to the Governor and Council requesting that all in Bermuda acknowledge Prince Charles as the heir apparent to the British throne, swear allegiance to him and acknowledge his supremacy, that the government of the Church and the state conform to the patent which established the settlement of Bermuda, and that everyone be required to accede to the Episcopal government of the Church.[3] The Governor and Council readily accepted all but the fourth of those requests. The Independents obviously had powerful support.

Between 1644 and 1647, William Sayle, himself an Independent who had served as governor of Bermuda twice between 1640 and 1645, was often in England pursuing, initially, freedom of conscience and religious expression for Bermudans. When this proved unsuccessful, he set about promoting the erection of The Bahamas into a republic where he had hoped that such freedom could be found. Early in 1647, he caused a broadsheet advertising *Eleutheria and the Bahama Islands* to be circulated in England. It attracted twenty five shareholders who, along with himself, signed the Articles and Orders of the Company of Eleutherian Adventurers on 9th July, 1647.[4]

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[3]J.H. Lefroy, *Memorials of the Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas or Somers Islands 1515-1685,* vol. 1, The Bermuda Historical Society, The Bermuda National Trust, 1981, p. 650. 75.
[4]W H Miller, *The Colonisation of the Bahamas 1647-1670,* in the *William and Mary Quarterly,* January 1945: 33-46.

In 1648, a group of seventy Independents from England and Bermuda, under the leadership of Sayle, left Bermuda en route for the "Plantation of Eleutheria, formerly called Buhama in America"[5] where they landed on the island which the Lucayans called Segatoo. The intention of these Adventurers was to found a republic where democracy, freedom of religious expression, and industry would prevail. Believing that Segatoo would satisfy their political, religious, and economic aspirations, they renamed the island Eleuthera.[6]

The group included an aged man in Anglican orders named Patrick Copeland. No sooner had they arrived, however, than a faction ensued. The instigator was Captain Butler. His desire for free land having been satisfied, he not only had no time for religion, he was vociferously opposed to it. As a result, he and Sayle parted company.[7] Butler and his supporters remained at Governor's Harbour, in central Eleuthera, while Sayle and his group moved to the northern extremity of the island just east of Spanish Wells.

As Sayle was attempting to pull into harbour, his ship struck a reef. One life was lost as also were the Adventurers' goods and provisions. Great hardship ensued and lasted for several months. Sayle journeyed in a small boat of three tons first to Virginia where he obtained a pinnace of about 25 tons and later to Massachusetts in search of material assistance. Not only was he successful in obtaining relief, he and the other Adventurers were even encouraged to set up a colony in Maine, which some

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[5]The Company of Adventurers renamed the Bahama Islands the "Iflands of Eleutheria." Vide paragraph 1, *Articles and Orders ...* in Robert A. Curry, op. cit., p. 115.

[6] Cf. A. C. Hollis Hallet, *Chronicle of A Colonial Church 1612-1826: Bermuda,* Juniperhill Press, Bermuda, 1993, p. 53.

attempted. Within six months, however, and because of the weather conditions there, they returned to Eleuthera. Some later returned to Bermuda, so harsh were the economic conditions on Eleuthera.[8]

In 1649, the Bermudan government expelled sixty Independents to Eleuthera for non-compliance with the popular four-point proposition in its entirety. Included among these were two Anglican priests, Stephen Painter and Nathaniel White.[9]

It was not long before the settlers discovered that, unlike that of Bermuda, the soil in Eleuthera was rather shallow. Progressively, therefore, they turned to the sea for their livelihood. Eventually boat-building and seafaring became their preferred way of life.

Seafaring continued as a way of life for most Bahamians throughout our period and beyond. Such a means of livelihood often involved the colony's youth. This could not but have negative consequences for worship, as it later did for education. Indeed, as the history of much of our period will show, neither parents nor children saw the need for schooling. Fortuitously, however, seafaring afforded the slaves in The Bahamas a relative amount of freedom and independence.

By 1666, Bermuda was on the verge of becoming over-populated. As a result, a number of poor Bermudan families, some three hundred persons, migrated to New

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[7]J. H. Lefroy, op. cit., p. 11. 4.

[8]In 1992, a team of archaeologists from the University of Florida unearthed two graves in Preacher's Cave, the original domicile and place of worship of the Eleutherian Adventurers. In the one grave were the remains of a two year old girl, and in the other were the remains of a twenty one year old woman. In both cases the cause of death was attributed to malnutrition.

Providence (then called Sayle's Island). The cost of their passage was paid by John Dorrell who had set up a plantation there and Hugh Wentworth both of whom often fished for whales in Bahamian waters.[10]

In November 1670, The Bahamas became administratively connected with Carolina when, at the request of John Dorrell and Hugh Wentworth, Charles II gave a patent for the islands to six of the eight Lords Proprietor of Carolina, their heirs, and assigns.[11] The Proprietors were Christopher Duke of Albermarle, William Earl of Craven, John Lord Berkeley, Anthony Lord Ashley (later Earl of Shaftesbury), Sir George Carteret, and Sir Peter Colleton.[12] The patent declared, *inter alia:*

> Said islands not to be subject to or depending on any other Government or Colony, but immediately upon the Crown of England; with power to the grantees to grant indulgences and dispensations with regard to religious worship.[13]

Thus any loyal British subject desiring to live in The Bahamas was at liberty to do so and to enjoy freedom of religious expression.

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[9]Vide James K. Hosmer, ed., *Winthrop's Journal 'History of New England' 1630-1749,* vol. 2, New York: Barnes and Noble, 1946, p. 352f.

[10]Vide Letter of John Dorrell and Hugh Wentworth to Lord Ashley Feb. 17, 1670, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1669-1674,* edited by W. Noel Sainsbury, first published by HMS Office London, 1889, 153, p. 56. Dorrell and Wentworth also occasionally sailed the triangular route from Bermuda to Barbados and, via Abaco, to Carolina, then back to Bermuda. These journeys were designed to assist with the transportation of whites from Barbados, and their resettlement in Carolina. The exodus of whites from Barbados was occasioned by two principal factors, viz. the growth of large sugar plantations at the expense of small landholders and the concomitant dimming of economic opportunity for most whites (there were 37,000 whites in Barbados in 1643), and the periodic outbreak of yellow fever as of 1647. In 1655, for example, 6,000 whites died from yellow fever. Vide Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: the Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies 1624-1713,* Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972, p. 103.

[11]*Calendar of State Papers,* Feb. 17, 1670, 153, p. 56. See too the letter of Lord Ashley to John Dorrell and Hugh Wentworth Oct. 29, 1670, 308, page 119. On 24 March, 1663, Charles II gave a patent for Carolina to eight Lords Proprietor, viz. George, Duke of Albermarle; William, Lord Craven; Edward, Lord Clarendon; John, Lord Berkeley; Anthony, Lord Ashley; Sir George Carteret; Sir John Colleton; and Sir William Berkeley.

[12]*Calendar of State Papers 1669-1674,* Nov. 1, 1670, 311, p. 122. Cf. John Oldmixon, *History of the Isle of Providence,* Purnell & Sons Ltd., Paulton (Somerset) and London, first published in 1741, page 12.

None of the Proprietors ever visited The Bahamas. Their Bahamian interests were looked after by personally appointed Deputies. For example, John Robinson, Richard Jones, one Captain David, and Jarvis Ingolsby represented Lord Ashley, Sir George Carteret, Lord Craven, and Sir Peter Colleton respectively.

In 1670, the Proprietors appointed Hugh Wentworth as their first governor of The Bahamas. In April, 1671, they dispatched instructions in the form of sixteen articles detailing the way in which the islands were to be governed. The instructions included the appointment of a parliament comprising a Grand Council of five freeholders and five deputies, and a twenty-member elective Legislative Assembly. The governor, with the consent of at least six members of the council not less than half of whom had to be personal deputies of the Proprietors, was empowered "to lett, sett, convey, and assure lands"[14] as follows: 20% of all lands was to be reserved for the Proprietors, 20% for the nobility, and the remaining 60% was to be distributed among the free inhabitants. From that 60%, a square of 1,200 acres was to be set apart for the governor's use in perpetuity, each free person settling before 26th March, 1672, was entitled to 50 acres plus a further 50 acres for each dependent. Subsequently, the grants would be reduced to 30 acres. After the expiration of their period of service, even indentured servants were to be granted 30 acres of land each. Effective 1690, an annual peppercorn rent of one penny per acre was to be levied on all such acreage forever.[15]

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[13]*Calendar of State Papers,* Nov. 1, 1670, 311, p. 123.
[14]Ibid, Apr. 24, 1671, 509, p. 206.
[15]Ibid, Apr. 24, 1671, 510, p. 207.

At the time of his appointment to the governorship of The Bahamas, Hugh Wentworth was in Barbados where he died before he was able to assume his new duties. John Wentworth, Hugh's brother and the colonists' choice, was next appointed governor. New Providence then had a population of 500 persons. The Proprietors wanted the islands to be governed after the manner of Carolina,[16] but did very little to effect such government. It could be that the Earl of Shaftesbury was representing the Proprietors when, in a letter to John Wentworth dated 10th April, 1674,[17] he suggested that Wentworth stood to benefit personally in the amount of 10% of the returns from an incursion into Spanish trade by Bahamian seafarers, thereby implying that the cost of governing the Bahama Islands could be met through such trade. However, although Bahamians invariably benefited from privateering particularly when England was at war with either France or Spain, or both, the war between England and France, 1672-1674,[18] caused the Bahamian government, then without arms and ammunition, to be fearful about a rumoured enemy attack. Such was the fear that on 23rd August, 1672, John Wentworth and twenty four other colonists petitioned the Governor of Jamaica, Thomas Lynch, for arms and ammunition, complaining that their colony had been neglected by the Proprietors over the previous two years.[19] Such neglect only abetted the average Bahamian's predilection for seafaring as opposed to land cultivation. It also contributed to his proclivity towards lawlessness. According to Oldmixon who was describing life in The Bahamas during the governorship of Wentworth's successor, Charles Chillingworth, 1676-1680,

[16]Ibid, Oct. 29, 1670, 308, p. 119.
[17]Ibid, Apr. 10, 1674, 1262, p. 574.
[18]This was during the Third Dutch War, 1672-1678, which was divided between the periods 1672-1674 when England fought the French on the one hand and the Dutch on the other, and 1674-1678 when the French and the Dutch were at war.
[19]*Calendar of State Papers 1669-1674*, Aug. 23, 1672, 916, p. 403.

Several People went from England and the other Colonies to settle there, and living a lewd, licentious Sort of Life, they were impatient under Government. Mr. Chillingworth could not bring them to Reason: They assembled tumultuously, seized him, shipped him off to Jamaica, and lived every Man as he thought best for his Pleasure and Interest.[20]

Whenever, during peacetime between England and her European neighbours, wrecks were few and pirates did not take their booty to New Providence, Bahamian colonists became ungovernable, and even governors tended to be corrupt. Such were the tyrannical and republican-minded Robert Clarke who was eventually executed by the Spaniards; and Elias Haskett whom the colonists confined in chains for six weeks before shipping him off to England, because he allegedly dealt harshly with piratical accomplices. The colonists replaced him with a man of their choice, Ellis Lightwood.

A semblance of government was brought to the islands during the governorship of Nicholas Trott 1693-7. During his tenure of office, a town comprising 160 houses and a new church were built; and a fort with 28 cannons was erected as a means of defence against external attack.[21] The town was named *Nassau* in honour of Prince William of Orange Nassau. William of Orange became King William III of England in 1689.

The end of the Anglo-French War 1689-1697 was not without its economic challenge to The Bahamas. Privateering having been curbed, wrecking and piracy were resorted to as a principal means of livelihood, though some of the colonists traded in brasiletto wood and salt with Carolina.

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[20]John Oldmixon, op. cit., p. 12f.

England's involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession 1702-1713 made The Bahamas the object of reprisal by the French and the Spaniards acting conjointly. There were two enemy attacks between 1703 and 1704. Had it not been for a few persons who hid themselves in the woods, these attacks would have resulted in the islands' being depopulated again. Lightwood and the others, including a number of Negroes, were taken to Cuba where the Negroes were probably used as slaves. Lightwood was later released and went to Carolina.

The Proprietors' last appointee was Edward Birch who went to take up office in 1704. On his arrival, he found that New Providence had been deserted. As a result of the 1704 invasion, the few surviving colonists left. Some went to Carolina, and others went to Virginia and New England.[22] After about two months of trying to survive in the woods, Birch left. With his departure, Proprietary government had practically come to an end. The islands then became a haven for pirates.

In 1718, King George I appointed Captain Woodes Rogers to the governorship of The Bahamas. As a result the islands became a Crown Colony. Rogers' mission was to suppress piracy, establish settlements, and fortify New Providence, Eleuthera, and Harbour Island. Rogers and a naval force with about 100 soldiers left England in April, 1718. Meanwhile, the Governor of Bermuda, Colonel Bennet, cognisant of the king's action, sent a sloop to New Providence with a view to getting the pirates there to surrender. Some 144 pirates heeded Bennet's proclamation, leaving several hundred more to be subdued.

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[21]Ibid, p. 18.
[22]Ibid, p. 22.

Rogers and his forces arrived at New Providence on 27th July, 1718. They found that the island then had a population of about 300 people. As governor, Rogers swore in a Legislative Council of twelve men, six of whom were chosen from the host colonists, and six from among those who had accompanied him. He also made appointments of a Judge of the Admiralty Court, Collector of Customs, Secretary to the Governor, Chief Justice, Registrar, Provost Marshall, and Chief Naval Officer.[23] Deputy Governors were selected from the members of the Council and assigned to Eleuthera and Harbour Island.

Following the establishment of the Council, about 200 pirates surrendered and swore allegiance to the king. Those who did not surrender or escape were hanged. Yet piracy persisted, for a number of pirates who had been pardoned reverted to their former way of life. By the end of 1720, however, and at great financial and physical cost to himself, Rogers had succeeded in suppressing piracy in The Bahamas. Early the following year he returned to England for reasons of health. He was succeeded as governor by George Phenney.

In 1729, Rogers returned to The Bahamas with his family. He erected a bicameral parliament, modelled after the House of Lords and the House of Commons in England. Actually, the English parliament, judicial system, and common law were all replicated in The Bahamas. However, the Bahamian legislature was able to enact

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[23]Ibid, p. 25. Cf. A. Deans Peggs, ed., *Woodes Rogers,* Nassau Bahamas, 1957, p. 31.

supplementary statutes to meet local needs.[24] That year too the colony adopted as its motto *Expulsis Piratis Restituta Commercia.*

One of the initial acts of the new parliament effected the establishment and endowment of the Church of England in The Bahamas. Letters patent were issued by George II.

With its establishment, the Church in The Bahamas was placed under the Episcopal jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, and the 1559 Act of Supremacy formally obtained throughout the colony. Thus the role of the English Monarch in the Church of England was executed by the Governor whose duty it was to "take notice of religion and the exercise of it," and "truly and indifferently minister justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of true religion and virtue."

The purpose of the Church's establishment and endowment was basically twofold, viz. to minister to the spiritual needs of English colonists, and to assist the government with the formation of a Christian society. An implication of this for the African Diaspora in these islands was that, long before Robert Raikes initiated the Sunday School movement in 1780, slave owners were mandated to see to the moral and religious instruction of their slaves with a view to them being baptised and

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[24]The celebrated Mansfield Judgement regarding the Somerset Case in 1772, and the free status which the Bermudan/Bahamian slave, Mary Prince, enjoyed while she was in England in 1828, alike show the disparity which occasionally occurred between the Common Law in England and the Common Law in a British Colony like The Bahamas. Vide Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave, Related by Herself,* London and Edinburgh, 1831. Cf. Vincent Bakpetu Thompson, *The Making of the AFRICAN DIASPORA IN THE AMERICAS 1441-1900,* Longman, 1987, p. 361.

becoming regular worshipping members of the Anglican Church. Anglicanism being a religion with letters, it meant, furthermore, that the slaves were also taught to read and write.

Shortly after his arrival in 1729, Rogers' health obliged him to repair to South Carolina. As subsequent events had proved, this visit was beneficial not only to Rogers personally but also to the ministry of the Church in The Bahamas as a whole.

(e) Early English Christianity in The Bahamas

The earliest date of an Anglican presence in The Bahamas is 1648 when Patrick Copeland accompanied the group of Eleutherian Adventurers to the island of Segatoo. While in Bermuda, Copeland operated a free school for children. He was a member of the Sayle's faction which settled on the northern extremity of Segatoo. The following year they were joined by Stephen Painter, Nathaniel White, and a number of White's parishioners. Initially, they all worshipped in a cave which is known today as Preacher's Cave.

Preacher's Cave is 140 feet wide and 85 feet deep. It is ventilated and illuminated by a number of chimney-type holes in its roof. Archaeological evidence shows that it was used for several purposes including that of a burial site. In this regard the Adventurers were probably following the Anglican practice, then current in England, of interring corpses in churches and cathedrals.

During the Cromwellian period, Sayle and many of his fellow Independents returned to Bermuda. Others went to Massachusetts. After Cromwell seized Jamaica in 1655, a few migrated there. Sayle assumed the governorship of Bermuda for the third time between 1658 and 1662.

In a letter to Lord Ashley dated 17th February, 1670, John Dorrell senior and Hugh Wentworth included the want of "a godly minister"[25] on their list of the needs of New Providence at that time. Quite probably Copeland, who was eighty years old when he

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[25]*Calendar of State Papers 1669-1674,* Feb. 17, 1670, 153, p. 56

was expelled from Bermuda, had died by that time. It is difficult to say what had become of White and Painter. They could have returned to Bermuda along with Sayle.

Shortly after assuming office in 1671, John Wentworth had a church built in New Providence; but it was destroyed by the Spaniards in the invasion of 1684.

A new church was built in 1695. It complemented Governor Trott's newly built town of Nassau. It was destroyed along with the rest of the town by the invading forces of the French and the Spaniards in 1703.[26]

On 20th March, 1721, the Legislative Council resolved to erect a new church structure. The frame for the church was prefabricated in England. It arrived in Nassau two years later at a cost of 450 Pieces of Eight.[27]

On 28th July, 1723, the first vestry, comprising 12 men, was elected. Their initial task was to appoint two wardens whose duty it was to provide the Governor and Council with an estimate of the cost of completing the church structure and an equitable scheme of taxing the inhabitants for the twofold purpose of meeting the cost of completing the church building and providing a stipend for the incumbent, Thomas Curphey, who was then chaplain to the garrison.[28]

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[26]John Oldmixon, op. cit., p. 18.
[27]CO 23/12, 81. (1 *Piece of Eight* was the equivalent of 1 Spanish gold dollar.)
[28]Minutes of the Governor in Council, 28 July, 1723. Archives Department, Nassau Bahamas.

The wardens presented the Governor and Council with an assessment list containing the names of 119 parishioners -107 men and 12 women- and submitted an estimate of 361 Pieces of Eight as the cost of completing the church. Governor Phenney suggested that the estimate be raised to 500 Pieces of Eight. Accepting the governor's recommendation, the Council decided that the difference between the two figures be made up from a tariff to be levied on certain import and export items. The wardens also recommended that Rev. Curphey be paid 88 Pieces of Eight and 3 Ryals[29] every three months, and that, as an additional means of revenue, a fee of 2 Pieces of Eight be charged for weddings, christenings, and burials, respectively.[30] The church building was completed in 1724 and named *Christ Church.*

In 1724, the Governor and Council passed the following resolution:

> That the public Worship of Almighty God be solemnly performed according to the Liturgy of the Church of England whereat each Person be required to attend that can conveniently travel, on penalty of two Rials for every Default each Lord's Day, Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide or Feast of Pentecost, except such Persons of tender Consciences being Protestants as dissent from the Church of England.[31]

This resolution reflects the 1559 Act of Uniformity and the Toleration Act of 1689.[32] It was designed to promote the formation of a united Christian society.

In 1725, the Governor in Council passed a resolution which required all slave owners living within two miles of Nassau to send their Indian and Negro slaves to Rev. Curphey every Saturday and Sunday afternoon to be instructed in the principles of the

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[29]1 *Ryal* or *Rial* was the equivalent of 9 pence.

[30]Minutes of the Governor in Council, 28 July, 1723.

[31]CO 23/13, Council Minutes 1724.

[32]The 1559 Act of Uniformity imposed a fine of 12d for absence from church. The exception here made could also reflect *5 Geo. I, c. 4* of 1719 which repealed the *Occasional Conformity Act* of 1711.

Christian religion.[33] Consistent with the provision made in the 1662 Prayer Book for *The Public Baptism of such as are of Riper Years,*[34] the resolution stated:

That every Master or Mistress of a family having Indian and Negro slaves living in the Town and within two miles of the same do send them every Saturday about 4 o'clock in the afternoon to the Reverend Mr. Curphey, and Sundays also in the afternoon in order to receive such instructions as they are capable of, in the Principles of the Christian Religion. And also that when the Minister finds a capacity in the Indians and Negroes, they be brought to be baptised, and that after such baptism the Masters and Mistresses to take care they be constant at Church on Sundays and at other times.[35]

The process of Anglicisation and evangelisation was taken a step further with Rogers' return to The Bahamas in 1729. In that year, George II issued a mandate to Woodes Rogers, which read, in part:

You shall take special care that God Almighty be devoutly and duly served throughout your government, the Book of Common Prayer, as by Law established, be read each Sunday and Holy Day, and the Blessed Sacrament administered according to the rites of the Church of England.[36]

In making the 1662 Prayer Book form of worship normative throughout the colony, it was inevitable that provision should be made for the erection and maintenance of schools, and the conversion of slaves. To this end, the mandate continued:

And it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that you recommend to the [House of] Assembly to enter upon proper methods for the erecting and maintaining of schools, in order to the training up of youth to reading, and to a necessary knowledge of the principles of religion. You are also, with the Assistance of His Majesty's Council and Assembly, to find out the best means to facilitate and encourage the conversion of the Negroes and other slaves to the Christian religion.[37]

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[33]CO 23/13, Council Minutes, 7 February, 1725/6. Normally the Convocations of Canterbury and York were the agencies through which the Church of England initially discussed matters of pastoral concern in England and in the colonies. But for a formal session in 1741, the Convocation of Canterbury did not meet during the period 1717-1854. The Convocation of York did not meet at all between 1717 and 1861. Quite probably the concern here expressed for Indian and Negro slaves was due to the oversight of Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London 1713-1748, one of the few notable exceptions among the bishops of his day. At that time, and until 1824, the Bishop of London was responsible for the oversight of the Church in The Bahamas.

[34]This provision was made as a result of the growth of Anabaptism, and the need of those who had grown up unchristened during the period of the Commonwealth. It also met the need of converts in English plantations overseas. Vide F. Procter and W. H. Frere, *A History of The Book of Common Prayer,* Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1911, p. 595; and J.R.H. Moorman, *A History of The Church in England,* London: A & C. Black, 1953, p. 251.

[35]CO 23/13, Council Minutes, 7 February, 1725/6.

[36]CO 24/1/165 (83) 170, p. 30.

[37]Ibid.

It is obvious, therefore, that the type of society envisioned by Rogers' orders was a Christian and an hierarchically structured one, *Societas Christiana.*[38] This was the ideal which English Prayer Books from 1549 to 1662 were concerned to realise. In the pursuit of this ideal, church and government functioned as partners, and education and worship were correlative instruments.

While in South Carolina, Woodes Rogers invited William Guy, SPG missionary at St Andrew's, to visit The Bahamas. According to Rogers, the colony had been without a clergyman for a number of years. Guy accepted Rogers' invitation and visited the islands of New Providence, Eleuthera, and Harbour Island in 1731. During his two months' stay, he found that the three islands had a combined population of 200 families -120 in New Providence and 40 each on Eleuthera and Harbour Island- all of whom claimed to have been members of the Church of England. Of these he baptised 89 children and three adults in New Providence, 13 children in Eleuthera, and 23 children in Harbour Island.[39]

On Guy's recommendation and with due representation from Governor Fitzwilliam, the Legislative Council and the leading residents of New Providence, SPG formally adopted The Bahamas as one of its mission fields in 1733, and in April of that year appointed William Smith as its first missionary.

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[38]T.F. Torrance uses this term to describe the character of the Church when, in its proclamation of the Word of God to the State, it enjoys the protection of the State. Vide Torrance's *Kingdom and Church: A Study in the Theology of the Reformation,* Fair Lawn, New Jersey: Essential Books, 1956, page 87.

In 1734, the entire Bahamas was erected into the *Parish of Christ Church.* The parish was mandated to care for the poor, and to register births, marriages, and deaths. The Governor endeavoured to engage the services of a schoolmaster, but he had some difficulty with the Legislature which refused to provide the necessary funding. He, therefore, made representation to SPG regarding the depraved state of the colony's youth and the dire need for the establishment of schools as a corrective measure.[40] In 1735, SPG established a free primary school in New Providence, but difficulty in finding a local schoolmaster delayed the opening of the school until 1738. In 1764, the Society sponsored two more schools, one in Eleuthera and the other in Harbour Island.

By the beginning of our period, SPG had sponsored a total of six missionaries in The Bahamas. The Society discontinued its services in 1808, and did not re-engage itself until 1835 when, through its participation in the management of the Negro Education Fund, it embarked upon a joint venture with the British Government in ministering to the educational needs of the emancipated Negroes.

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[39]*Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* Second Edition, London 1893, p. 216.
[40]*SPG Journal,* vol. 6, pp. 260-262.

(f) Early African Arrivals in The Bahamas

The first Africans to have arrived in The Bahamas came via Bermuda, and seem all to have been free.

The proposed constitution of the Eleutherian Adventurers was silent on the issue of slavery. Quite probably these seekers of religious freedom did not envision slavery as a tier in their new social structure. Paul Albury claims that the adventurer who had drowned when Sayle's ship was wrecked off the northern end of North Eleuthera was a Negro. Albury does not rule out the probability of other Negroes, including one Abraham Sands, having been among the first English settlers.[1]

In 1656, there was an abortive attempt by nine slaves to stage a revolt in Bermuda. As a result, the Bermudan government had two of them executed, and banished the other seven along with all of Bermuda's free Negroes and mulattoes, male and female, to Eleuthera.[2] The exact number of banished persons is uncertain, but there could not have been very many of them. According to John Dorrell, there were only about twenty families living on Eleuthera and Harbour Island in 1670.[3]

The first importation of Africans into The Bahamas directly from Africa occurred in 1721 when an unspecified number of slaves arrived from Guinea. Determining the

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[1]Paul Albury, *The Story of The Bahamas,* Macmillan Education Ltd. 1975, p. 123.
[2]John H. Lefroy, *Memorials of Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas or Somers Islands, 1511-1687,* vol. II, 1650-1687, The Bermuda Historical Society, The Bermuda National Trust, 1981, pp. 94-96. 66 (2), (3). 67 (2), (3).
[3]*The Calendar of State Papers Colonial Series, America and the West Indies,* vol. VII (1669-1674) London, p. 153.

exact number of slaves imported is further complicated by the fact that the census of 1721 did not distinguish between free Negroes and slaves. For example, Governor Phenney listed the Bahamian population in 1721 as follows:[4]

Island	Whites	Blacks	Totals
New Providence	470	233	703
Harbour Island	124	5	129
Ilathera (Eleuthera)	150	34	184
Cat Island	12	3	15
Total	756	275	1,031

Between 1721 and 1727 other importations of slaves were made from Jamaica and Barbados.[5] It was not until 1734, however, that the census distinguished slaves from other non-whites.

In 1734, Governor Fitzwilliam listed the population as follows:[6]

Island	Whites	Mulatto & Free	Slaves	Total
New Providence	461	77	443	981
Eleuthera	198	-	38	236
Harbour Island	151	-	10	161
Total	810	77	491	1,378

The absence of free non-whites from the listings for Eleuthera and Harbour Island seems to indicate that the distinction between slaves and non-whites was made progressively, beginning with New Providence where the majority of inhabitants lived.

The 1734 census also provides insight into the family patterns of free Coloureds and slaves. Of the 77 free Coloureds living in New Providence, 66 lived in 16 nuclear

[4]CO 23/1, 54 iii.
[5]Queries from the Board of Trade answered for 1727. CO 23/12/95.
[6]Enclosure in Fitzwilliam's letter of 11 March 1734/5. List of inhabitants of the Bahamas, 25 December 1734. CO 23/3/129-132.

family households. In ten of these households, all members were non-white. In the other six, one of two parents was white. In four cases, white women were married to, and had children for, free mulatto and black husbands. What is also remarkable is that four mulattoes owned a total of sixteen slaves.

It would appear from the 1734 census that slaves were encouraged to live in family units. Only 19 slaves were listed as living singly. Family patterns among slaves tended to reflect those of whites, free blacks, and mulattoes for whom the nuclear family was the norm.

In 1773, ten years prior to the arrival of the first group of Loyalists and their slaves, Governor Thomas Shirley listed the population of The Bahamas as follows:[7]

Island	White	Black
New Providence	1,024	1,800
Harbour Island	410	90
Eleuthera	509	237
Exuma	6	24
Cat Island	3	40
Turks & Caicos Islands	(whites and blacks) 150	

There was a total population, therefore, of 4,293. Again we see that no distinction was made between persons of colour and slaves. However, even without knowing the number of blacks in the Turks and Caicos Islands we see that in 1773 non-whites constituted 51% of the Bahamian population. This was the result not of the regular importation of slaves but of increase by natural means.

[7]Thomas Shirley to Dartmouth, November 28, 1773. CO 23/22/82.

A distinction between slaves and other people of colour throughout The Bahamas was first made by Lieutenant John Wilson in July, 1783, when he was detailed by Sir Guy Carleton through Lieutenant Colonel Robert Morse, Chief Engineer to the British Army, to report on the military state and defences of the Bahama Islands.[8] Wilson reported that in May, 1782, the total population comprised 4,002 persons as follows:

Islands	White Taxables	Free-born Mulattoes	Manu-mitted	Slaves	Total Taxables	Inhabitants not Taxable	Total Inhab-itants	Able to bear Arms
New Providence	229	75	15	642	961	1,789	2,750	270
Harbour Is.	97	2	0	80	179	321	500	90
Eleuthera	102	25	0	23	150	300	450	120
Long Is., Exuma, Cat Island	24	1	1	35	61	189	250	25
Turks Islands	12	0	0	20	29	20	52	18
Totals	464	103	16	800	1,380	2,619	4,002	523

He noted, however, that there was a difficulty in ascertaining the exact population of the Turks Islands because several families spent the summer months, i.e. the salt-raking season, in the Turks Islands, and the remainder of the year in Bermuda.

There were two statistical listings of the Bahamian population in 1784. One was provided by William Wylly, a Loyalist from Georgia, who migrated to The Bahamas in 1787 and became the colony's Attorney General ten years later. The other was included in the report of a Committee of the House of Assembly in April 1789.

Wylly's estimated the entire population to have numbered 4,055 persons as follows: 1,722 whites, and 2,333 people of colour, representing roughly 42.47% and 57.58%

[8] *The Wilson Report,* July 14th, 1783, Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

of the population respectively.[9] Without being specific, Wylly noted that many of the people of colour were free.

According to the Committee's report, The Bahamas had a total population of 4,000 as follows: 1,700 whites, or 42.5% of the population, and 2,300 blacks, or 57.5% of the population.[10]

While this general lack of a distinction between free people of colour and slaves in Bahamian statistics prior to the beginning of our period could reflect negatively on how the former were perceived in Bahamian society at that time, it could also reflect positively on how Bahamian society viewed slaves prior to the influx of the Loyalists and their thousands of slaves.

At the time of the Loyalists' arrival, there were no plantations in The Bahamas, and economic activities were largely extractive and primarily for subsistence. These activities included fishing, turtling, whaling, wrecking, and wood cutting. Concerning the Bahamian economy prior to the coming of the Loyalists, William Wylly said:

> The inhabitants were poor, and by no means numerous, their only property consisted of a few small vessels, and some Negroes. Their occupations were confined to fishing, wrecking and wood cutting. Agriculture they had none, nor did they conceive the country capable of it. Their only produce was a little fruit, with some yams, cassada and potatoes. They raised no sheep nor horned cattle. Their diet was fish and even vegetables were unknown among them.[11]

[9]William Wylly, *A Short Account of the Bahama Islands,* London, 1789, p. 5.
[10]Report of the Committee of the House of Assembly appointed to take into consideration the state of the Bahama Islands, *Votes of The House of Assembly 1787-1798,* 28 April, 1789, p. 125.
[11]William Wylly, op. cit., p. 5.

Goods procured from wrecks, several varieties of wood, oil from monk seals and whales, ambergris, turtle shells, and salt were the principal exports, prior to the Loyalists' introduction of cotton plantations.

Very often slaves were allowed to seek their own employment, either on land or at sea, in return for a mutually agreed sum between themselves and their masters, which was paid at regular intervals. This was acknowledged by Governor John Carmichael Smyth in 1832 when he said:

> ... it has long been a custom in this Colony to permit the more intelligent of the Slaves, & more particularly Artificers, to find employment for themselves & to pay to their owners either the whole or such a portion of what they may gain as may be agreed upon between the Parties.[12]

Two years previously he noted:

> The greater part of the slave population here are seafaring people. The crews in the wrecking vessels are in a great measure composed of slaves - these people are paid in shares, & they almost all invariably work out their freedom.[13]

It would appear, therefore, that prior to 1784 Bahamian slaves lived somewhat like peasants. Furthermore, apart from the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century when plantation slavery was eventually established and Bahamian-grown sea-island cotton competed favourably on the international market, this semi-peasantry, and the family structure of Bahamian slaves obtained throughout the period of slavery in The Bahamas.

The implication of this for the slaves' cultural memory was twofold, viz. the slaves' religious culture could be passed on to their children within the context of home and

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[12]Cited by Howard Johnson, *The Bahamas in Slavery and Freedom,* IRP, Kingston Jamaica, 1991, page 5.
[13]*Carmichael Smyth to Sir George Murray,* March 8, 1830, *CO 23/82/30.*

family; and the interaction between slaves and free persons, and between persons of colour and whites facilitated a gradual merging of West African and English cultures eventuating in a Bahamian culture which was unique in the British West Indies.

(g) Bahamian Slave Spirituality

Spirituality may be defined as "the personal relation of man to God."[1] It is an ontological phenomenon by means of which communities and peoples can purposefully relate to God and relate to, and interact with, man and nature. As such, it can be used interchangeably with "religion."

Bahamian slave spirituality was essentially West African spirituality adapted to the conditions of chattel slavery in The Bahamas. During our period, a certain amount of adaptation would have occurred in Britain's former American colonies, particularly the South, where thousands of slaves were born before they were brought to The Bahamas.

The slaves' ancestral ontology was essentially religious, hierarchical, dynamic, unified, and anthropocentric. It can be classified in the following descending order: God,[2] ancestors (ancestral spirits),[3] chiefs, commoners, the animal world, and the inanimate world.[4] John Mbiti, according to whom African ontology can be variously categorised, classifies it as follows:

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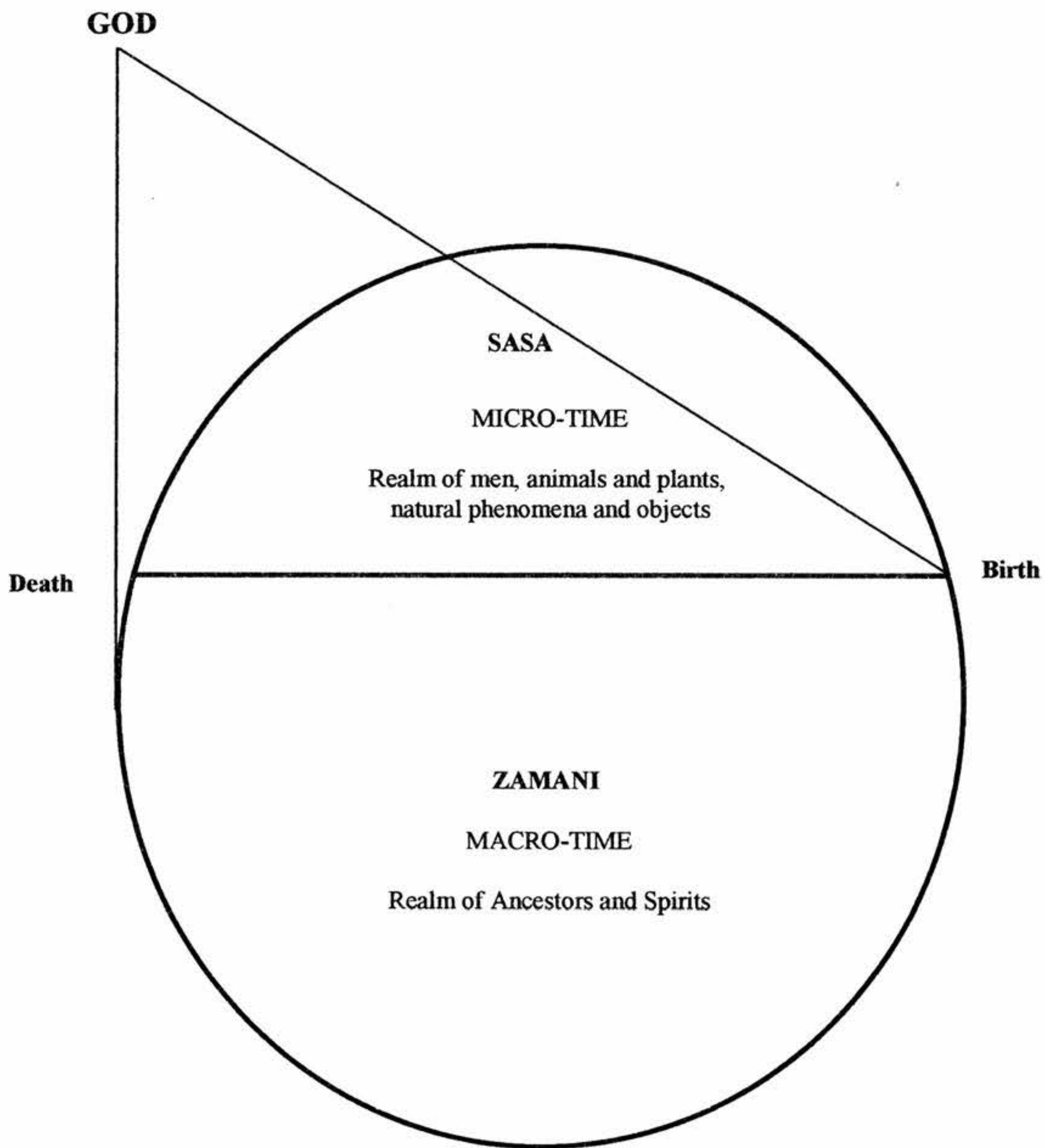
[1]J. Sudbrack, "Spirituality" cited by J.S. Pobee, "African Spirituality" in Gordon S. Wakefield, ed. *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, SCM Press Ltd., 1983, p. 5.

[2]According to Bolaji Idowu, God was variously known as *Chukwu* (Immense or Overflowing Source of Being), *Odomankoma* (Creator), *Olodumare, Onyame, 'Nyame, Nyambe,* or *Ndyambi.* Vide *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* eds. Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, Lutterworth Press, 1969, pp. 17-29.

[3]These were in the category of such supernatural beings -all spirits- as *Ikenga, Ekwensu,* and *Ana/Ale/Ala* and were alike considered to be benevolent. *Eshu,* the trickster, was also a supernatural being. Vide Stephen N. Ezeanya, *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* eds. Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, Lutterworth Press, 1969, pp. 30-45.

[4]Vide Dr. John Parratt's lecture *Primal Religions* delivered at New College on 14th October, 1991. Cf. John Mbiti's "Categories of African ontology" in his "African Concept of Time," *African Theological Journal,* Makumira, No. 1, February 1968, p. 9.



A Design of a Category of

AFRICAN ONTOLOGY

Based on

AFRICAN CONCEPT OF TIME

by

John Mbiti

Africa Theological Journal

Makumira

No. 1. February 1968

1. *God* - the Supreme Being from Whom all things derive their existence, and Who preserves all things.
2. *Spirits* - supernatural beings and spirits of the dead.
3. *Man* - including people who have died recently, those who are now alive and those about to be born.
4. *Animals and plants* - the rest of biological life.
5. *Natural phenomena and objects* without biological life.[5]

Traditional West African ontology knew no sacred/secular dichotomy. It knew only a religious universe, a sacred cosmos, which was permeated by an invisible force or power which had God as its source and its ultimate master.[6] This invisible force held all things in an ordered balance, and was accessible only by the spirits. Priests, rain-makers, and magicians, however, were able to tap into, manipulate, and use it. It could be manipulated for good or evil purposes.

This universe was characterised by a two-dimensional time-frame which moved in an anticlockwise direction. Basically, time was either present or past. It had no future as such -it moved "backwards" not "forwards." Diagrammatically, its movement formed a circle which, in Bahamian slave spirituality, became its symbol. In his discussion of the African concept of time, Mbiti uses two Swahili words, *sasa* and *zamani,*[7]to describe what is meant by 'present' and 'past.' *Sasa,* or *micro-time,* refers to a time-frame spanning a period between, at most, six months prior to something happening and the day following the event. *Zamani,* or *macro-time,* refers to a period between the day before an event took place and the indefinite past.[8] *Zamani* time merges into *Sasa* time and envelops it. In so doing, *Zamani* becomes coterminous with, and the ultimate purpose of, the universe.

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[5]John Mbiti, op. cit.
[6]Anthropologists have used the Melanesian word *mana* to describe this force.
[7]John Mbiti, op. cit., p. 15f.
[8]Ibid, pp. 11, 15.

In this universe all created entities are indissolubly united and mutually interdependent. Accordingly, the life of the community was a continuation of the life of the ancestors in *sasa* time, and the life of the individual was inextricably bound up with that of the community. The well-being of both the community and the individual, therefore, was contingent upon an holistic interaction on their part with the cosmos as a unit.

Such interaction was given ritual expression during the celebration of the *Rites of Passage,* viz. birth, name-giving, initiation (of which there were various kinds, viz. puberty, secret societies, and religious vocations, the purpose of which was to alter the world view and behaviour patterns of the initiated), marriage, and funeral rites.[9] In this way, cosmic order and community well-being were renewed and reinforced, and the ancestors were reborn into the fellowship of the living in *sasa* time. With the ancestors' presence came the wisdom, knowledge and the social mores by which society was co-ordinated, its well-being was ordered, and its destiny was shaped.[10]

The trauma of the Middle Passage aggravated by exile in a land which was alien to themselves and to their ancestors must have had the effect of turning the slaves' world upside down if not actually tearing it apart. Their concern to restructure community and renew and reinforce the cosmos must have been matters of extreme urgency. In that kind of situation their spirituality, particularly prayer -the very core of their

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[9]Without specifying, Mbiti states that in many African societies a person is not regarded as a full human being before he will have undergone the process of birth, name-giving, puberty, initiation, and marriage. Mbiti, op. cit., p. 18.
[10]Cf. Dr. John Parratt's lecture *Primal Religions* delivered at New College on 21st. October, 1991.

religion and a rich and an ancient African spiritual resource-[11] would have been the only tried and proven resource which was readily available to them.

The intensity of such prayer -whether by a priest or priestess, a diviner, a medicine man or medicine woman, or someone else- would have given rise to a degree of mysticism and self-transcendence which would have empowered the slaves so to fantasise that they would have envisioned an integrated cosmos, and an alternative society wherein their "Babel" would have been transformed into "Creole" and their crowds into families, kinship groups and communities.[12]

What Albert J. Raboteau says of the slaves who had been evangelised is no less true of them prior to their encounter with the Christian proclamation. Demonstrating how prayer became a powerful symbol of resistance for slaves, he argues that prayer not only gave them the inner strength to face the brutality of slavery, it also gave them access to an "inner" world of meaning:

> In prayer, religious slaves kept in touch with what Paul Radin has described as "an inner world" where they could develop a scale of values and fixed points of vantage from which to judge the world around them and themselves. In this inner, religious world the primary value and fixed point was the will of God. And in opposition to the slave holder's belief, the slave believed that slavery was surely contrary to the will of God.[13]

Out of such activity, leaders whose role would be spiritual and/or political would eventually emerge. They would organise, with the necessary adjustments, the rituals,

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[11]John S. Mbiti, *The Prayers of African Religion,* London, SPCK, p. 2.
[12]Cf. Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *An Anthropological Approach to The Afro-American Past: A Caribbean Perspective,* A Publication of the Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia, pp. 9-10, 12 where Mintz and Price, distinguishing between 'crowds' and 'groups/communities,' theorize about the evolution of Diaspora African communities and institutions.
[13]Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion,* New York, 1978, p. 309.

among other things, which they deemed necessary for the realisation of the envisioned alternative community.

The dynamic of these rituals was augmented by songs many of which later came to be known as *Negro Spirituals.* A marked feature of some of these songs was their preoccupied with *the four last things,* viz. death, judgement, heaven and hell,[14] the latter three betraying Christian influence. The first systematic collection of these songs was made by William Francis Allen, Charles P. Ware and Lucy McKim Garrison, and published, in 1867, under the title *Slave Songs of the United States.* They were popularised in 1871 by a group of Fisk University students under the leadership of George White. Since then, the music of these songs has been hotly debated by musicologists, beginning with Richard Wallaschek who, in his *Primitive Music* (1893), described them as "mere imitations of European compositions which Negroes have picked up and served again with slight variations."[15] Joining in the debate were such critics of Wallaschek as Henry Krehbiel, John W. Work, James Weldon Johnson (whose mother was a Bahamian), and Alain Locke. Work's thesis, corroborated by that of Johnson, is convincing when he argues that the similarity between the music of the American Negro and that of the Anglo was the result not of imitation but of "the oneness of human nature" and the creativity of the Negro.[16]

The first significant interpretation of these songs was made by W E B DuBois (whose father was a Bahamian) in his essay *Of The Sorrow Songs.* DuBois was fascinated by

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[14]Vide Benjamin Mays, *The Negro's God,* New York: Atheneum, 1968.
[15]Cited by James H. Cone, *The Spirituals And The Blues: An Interpretation,* The Seabury Press, New York.

the tension in the spirituals between hope and despair, joy and sorrow, death and life, and the ability of the slaves to embrace these polarities in their music. He called the spirituals *sorrow songs* because they were:

> the music of an unhappy people, of the children of disappointment; they tell of death and suffering and unvoiced longing toward a truer world, of misty wanderings and hidden ways.[17]

If the dynamic of these songs is to be fully appreciated, they must be viewed from the perspective of the slaves' African ontology, with particular reference to *zamani* or macro-time "the storehouse for all phenomena and events, a vast ocean of time where everything gets absorbed into an aspect of reality which is neither after nor before,"[18] the period of the "Golden Age."[19] They, therefore, constitute no opiate, as Benjamin Mays would have us believe.[20] They are more of a sigh, a sigh of the oppressed[21] exiled in a world which, having fallen apart, is in need of re-structuring, renewing, and reinforcing. One is thus inclined to agree with John Lovell (the very title of whose article *The Social Implications of the Negro Spiritual,* by the use of the adjective *Social,* implying that these Spirituals are multifaceted and inclusive in scope) that these songs were "the slave's description and criticism of his environment," and that in the spirituals *I Got Shoes, When I Get to Heaven, Swing Low,* and *My Lord Delibered Daniel,* the slave was "tearing down a wreck and

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[16]Vide John W. Work, *The Folk Song of American Negro Spirituals,* Nashville: Fisk University Press, 1915, pp. 29-30, as discussed by James Cone, Op. Cit.
[17]W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk.* New York: Faucett Publications, 1961, p. 183. Cited by Cone, op. cit.
[18]John S. Mbiti, *Eschatology. Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* eds. Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth. Lutterworth Press, USCL, London, p. 161.
[19]Ibid.
[20]Benjamin Mays, Op. cit., p. 21. *N.B.* The writer is not attributing the use of the word *opiate* to Mays. He is aware that Mays uses the word *compensatory.*
[21]*cf.* Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion.* New York: Schocken Books, 1964, p. 42.

building a new, solid world, and all along we thought he was romanticising."[22] James Cone is also right when he says:

> So far from being songs of passive resignation, the spirituals are black freedom songs which emphasise black liberation as consistent with divine revelation.[23]

For slave spirituality, being essentially African spirituality, searched for deliverance capable of transforming the slaves' terrestrial condition.[24]

Thus, slave spirituality did not only initiate slave society/community, it also impregnated it. Alien to a sacred/secular, body/soul dichotomy, the slaves' spirituality was carried over into their daily lives and activities through song, dance, drumming, folk tales, a sense of humour, and the practice of rituals, all of which had a dynamic for self-transcendence and fantasy.

Much of Bahamian slaves' spirituality has been preserved symbolically in the circle as well as in song, dance and drumming etc. Here a citation from the journal of Edward T. Churton, Bishop of Nassau 1886-1900, is instructive. He wrote, concerning a visit to Cat Island:

> Coasting along eastwards, we called next day at Bennett's Harbour where Mr. [F. B.] Matthews had opened a Church school in a purely Baptist settlement. Fifty or more little creatures, all for the present unbaptized, gave their recitations and sang their carols for our benefit; then came a distribution of prizes, concluding with some of the old "anthems" of slavery days sung by the children marching round and round.[25]

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[22]John Lovell, *The Social Implications of the Negro Spiritual,* in Bernard Katz (ed.), *The Social Implications of Early Negro Music in the United States.* New York: Arno Press, 1969, pp. 132, 136.
[23]Cone, Op. cit., p. 38.
[24]J. S. Pobee, op. cit., p. 6.
[25]Cited in the *Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper, No. 8,* March 1888.

The family structure of Bahamian slaves, itself a powerful expression of African religiosity,[26] facilitated the impartation of certain aspects of the slaves' religious culture, especially the circle, to their children. As traditional African practices, branded as 'heathen' by most professing Christians, became suppressed, many of them went underground though only to resurface in less socially unacceptable forms. The circle was undoubtedly one such form. Dancing, particularly among Anabaptists during our period, was another. It was to the circle that Bishop Churton inadvertently referred when he described the children as "marching round and round" while singing slave "anthems" -*spirituals*. No doubt the circular movement was in an anticlockwise direction. The bishop not only identified two of these anthems, viz. *Let my people go* and *Swing low, sweet chariot,* which he described as "songs of deliverance ... plaintively worded,"[27] but also commented on them respectively as "an allusion to Egyptian bondage" and a reference to "Elijah's emancipation and triumph." Whether or not the children knew the significance of these songs and the direction in which they were moving while singing them, the anthems and the anticlockwise circular movement undoubtedly informed their subconscious where they lay dormant until their rebirth in a new liturgical and educational environment. This new environment would appear when, in the words of Bishop Churton, the children's "by-gone traditions" would have given place to,

> the happier doctrines of the Church, more congenial to an age of freedom, enlightenment, and progress.[28]

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[26]According to Mbiti, the family and their memory of deceased relatives were vital to the *personal immortality* of such deceased relatives. Mbiti, op. cit., p. 18.
[27]Cited in the *Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper, No. 8,* March 1888.
[28]ibid.

Fortuitously, it was during Churton's episcopate more so than that of any other Bishop of Nassau during our period, when "the happier doctrines of the Church" were embellished with Anglo-Catholic ritual, that such rebirth occurred.

The survival of West African religious activities, adapted though they were to the conditions of New World chattel slavery, was inadvertently assisted by the 1662 Prayer Book rites of baptism and marriage. Instructions in the Prayer Book Catechism, for example, could have enabled the slaves to make a psychological transference of their name-giving ceremony[29] (an important stage in the process of becoming a full human being[30]) onto the Anglican rites of baptism, themselves associated with the giving of a name *in* baptism, a new status and identity,[31] a new world view and a new way of life.[32] This would have obtained especially in the case of slaves of "riper years" who, as a result of having been catechised, would have been enabled to make that transference not only from the perspective of their name-giving ceremony but also from the point of view of whatever initiation rites they may have undergone. In spite of this probable psychological transference, however, there were certain traditional African religious practices which persisted beyond our period. An example of this was the tying of charms around a child's neck and wrists as a means

[29]According to Mbiti, most African names have religious meaning. See John Mbiti, "Christianity and East African Culture and Religion" in *Dini Na Mila* Vol. 3, No. 1, May 1968, p. 1.
[30]John Mbiti, "African Concept of Time," p. 18. Beginning with birth, Mbiti includes puberty, initiation and marriage in this process. Marriage and the offspring thereof completed this process.
[31]Vide *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church according to the Use of the Church of England* re Public Baptism of Infants, Private Baptism of Infants, and Baptism of such as are of Riper Years. Note too the following questions and answers in A Catechism:
Question. What is your Name? *Answer.* N. or M. *Question.* Who gave you this Name? *Answer.* My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.
[32]Ibid re *Question.* What is the inward and spiritual grace [in Baptism]? *Answer.* A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. Cf. *The Letter of Paul to the Romans,* 6:3-11.

of ensuring the child's safety.[33] In 1893, Bishop Churton complained in his Synod Charge of that year:

> The superstitions of the natives must be combated firmly, though always kindly. If, as my friend Sir Henry Blake once declared to me, there is hardly a sailor in the Bahamas who goes to sea without putting on an Obeah-string for his protection, this cannot be a laughing matter by any of us who reflect on what that custom would seem to mean, viz. that our people are under the sway of malignant evil spirits, and not protected from them unless they resort to charms and incantations.[34]

Churton had already begun to address this matter when, in April 1892, he invited the residents of Harbour Island to witness and participate in a ceremony for the blessing of a new schooner, and expressed the hope that similar blessings would take place throughout the diocese. Around that same time, he considered the desirability of setting apart, each year, a day of intercession for all who "go down to the sea in ships," and a day of thanksgiving for their return and for the harvest they brought.[35]

By the time of Synod, 1893, he was ready to introduce services for the blessing of boats and mariners. His purpose in designing these services was to encourage Bahamian seamen to become more assured and trusting of the saving presence of God

> Who blesses His children's going out and coming in, and Who gives His Angels charge over them, to keep them in all their ways.[36]

The slaves' acceptance of the Anglican rite of marriage, with its emphasis on the procreation of children as the primary purpose of marriage, would have facilitated a psychological transference of meaning similar to that of baptism. They would have

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[33]The author recalls having seen, on many occasions during his childhood, a black piece of cloth tied around one of the wrists of his baby brothers and sisters. The explanation given was that it protected them from evil spirits.

[34]E.T. Churton, *The Last Seven Years: A Charge delivered to the Synod of the Diocese of Nassau, June 13th, 1893,* London: J. Masters and Co, p. 18.

[35]Ibid, p. 13.

[36]Ibid, p. 18.

been able to see, for example, that Christian marriage was compatible with their ideal of family and *personal immortality.*[37]

Unlike their baptism and marriage ceremonies, the slaves' funeral ceremonies were not readily transferable to the Prayer Book Burial Office. Nevertheless, the slaves' beliefs about name-giving, initiation, and marriage, which, *prima facie,* were compatible with the Anglican rites of baptism and marriage and were inadvertently accommodated by them, had implications for the practices associated with their funeral ceremonies. This was inevitable, given the unity of the slaves' religious universe. Examples of these beliefs and practices are found in a report by F.B. Matthews, SPG missionary to The Bahamas 1884-1892. What he wrote concerning the funeral ceremonies of the people of San Salvador [Cat Island], who were predominantly black and descendants of slaves, quite probably obtained in respect of their slave forebears, and was likely to have been typical of such ceremonies among blacks throughout The Bahamas. He wrote:

Of course everyone believes in spirits, manifestations, signs, tokens, and omens. [38]

Not unrelated to such belief, especially as far as spirits were concerned, was the fear which caused parents to tie charms around the wrists (and perhaps the neck too) of their babies as a security measure, and caused mariners to wear an "Obeah-string," quite probably an extension of those charms, for their protection. This fear could have resulted from either belief in evil spirits *per se,* or the occasional appearance of

[37]Vide *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church according to the Use of the Church of England* re the Solemnization of Matrimony. For the concept of *personal immortality* see John Mbiti, "African Concept of Time," p. 18.

nameless spirits including those of the slaves' distant relatives who died in Africa unbeknown to, and hence unable to be remembered by, them. The unremembered would have been practically "excommunicated" from the fellowship of their surviving relatives in exile, and consequently would be believed to be angry with them. It was believed that sickness or some other misfortune may befall some members of the living as a result.[39] Conscious of the unity of their religious universe in which they, a religious people, were immersed, the slaves could not respond to their New World life situation but through religious activities centred around their relationship with the dead.[40]

"Wakes" afforded the slaves an opportunity to celebrate the passage of the dead from Sasa time to Zamani time. This took the form of a fellowship meal in which the deceased person was believed to have participated. A light meal of the deceased's earthly liking was placed beside the corpse. A similar meal was placed on the grave two weeks after the body's interment. Matthews explained the celebration and the reason for it as follows:

> A corpse must never be left alone until it is buried; so "wakes" are a great institution, and I am obliged to say that the people thoroughly enjoy them. Whilst the singing is going on and rum freely disposed of, a cup of coffee and a slice of bread will be put beside the corpse for the spirit's benefit; and, fourteen days afterwards, a plate of food, whatever in life the departed one most enjoyed, is placed on the grave.[41]

The meticulous reverence with which the slaves ministered to their dead is evidenced not only by the rituals of wakes and burials and their massive attendance at funerals but also by their formation of Burial Societies and the accumulation of personal

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[38]*Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper, vol. XI, No. 41,* June 1896.
[39]Vide John Mbiti, *African Concept of Time,* p. 19f.
[40]Cf. Mbiti, *African Concept of time,* p. 19.

savings to ensure the "proper" burial of their dead. These Burial Societies were the precursors of the Afro-Bahamian Friendly Societies which proliferated during the decades after Emancipation.[42]

Bahamian slave spirituality was anthropocentric and communal, existential and practical, holistic and inclusive. As such, it was a fitting preparation for the gospel of the one "who fills the universe in all its parts."[43]

[41]*Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper, vol. XI, No. 41,* June 1896.
[42]For a discussion of Afro-Bahamian Friendly Societies, see chapter 8 of this Thesis.
[43]An alternative translation of *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians,* 1:23b, NEB with the Apocrypha, Oxford Study Edition, OUP, 1976.

(h) The Church and Education 1729-1784

During this period, education in The Bahamas was initiated from within the colony itself, and was concerned primarily with poor white and free black children. The education of slave children was the responsibility of their masters. The Bahamas' first two Education Acts were also passed during this period. However, few children had the benefit of a basic education at this time largely because of the Government's lack of sufficient funds, the preoccupation of parents and children with their own economic survival, and a shortage of Anglican clergymen.

A directive which George II gave to Woodes Rogers regarding the functioning of schoolmasters in The Bahamas implies that there was at least one school in the colony when the Church of England was established there in 1729. A minute of the SPG Standing Committee dated 17th March, 1722, stated that one Mr. Isaac was the only schoolmaster in The Bahamas at that time.[1]

In 1725, Governor Phenney reported to the Bishop of London that a Mr. Flavel conducted day classes in Anglican doctrine and the Catechism for children at Harbour Island.[2]

In his initial report to the Society in 1733, William Smith, a former Irish schoolteacher, said that he had found no schoolmaster at New Providence when he

[1] *SPCK Standing Committee Minutes, vol. 4,* p. 95f.
[2] *Lambeth Palace MSS.*, Fulham 5, Bahamas, No. 13.

arrived. He did report, however, that there was a schoolteacher (quite probably Flavel) who read prayers and a sermon at Harbour Island every Sunday.

In 1738, a Bermudan teacher by the name of Botham Squire was given charge of the school which SPG had founded in New Providence in 1735. The school opened with an enrolment of "eight poor children." Its curriculum included the Catechism, the three Rs, and the Casting of Accounts all of which Squire taught "gratis."[3] Impressed with Squire's ability, Governor Fitzwilliam reported to SPG,

> He is well qualified to teach Navigation, Surveying, and Book-keeping which will be of infinite use to the Youth of these islands.[4]

If Squire did teach all of these courses it would indicate an early attempt on the part of the Bahamian government to make education relevant to the economic as well as the spiritual and social needs of the colony, and to bring courses of study which appeared to be of a 'secular' nature into the ambit of religion. The latter was of great concern to the Church during our period. In the late 1880s, for example, Bishop Churton issued the following warning to his clergy:

> It will be your own fault if a child, taught divers matters by his parish priest, should lose reverence for Creed and Catechism, and not rather carry away impressions of sacredness, common both to those and to the so-called purely secular subjects.[5]

Here we see not only the role of the Anglican priest in education but also the church's concern for the educated to view life from the perspective of the sacred. This would not have been without its appeal to the religiously-oriented psyche of Bahamian blacks, the economic realities of Bahamian life notwithstanding, and it probably

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[3] *SPG Report 1738/9,* p. 63.
[4] Ibid.

explains why, traditionally, blacks have always had a higher regard for education than whites. In 1834, for example, John Wood, Principal of the Free School of St. Thomas' Parish, Turks Islands, remarked,

> The white Children upon the establishment amount to only ten in number; the coloured to forty-eight. And here it must be a subject of deep regret to every feeling and reflective mind, to every one who has the welfare of his fellow creatures and the best interests of society at heart, that the parents and guardians of white Children in the more humble sphere of life should, with few exceptions, display so great an apathy and unconcern with respect to their moral and religious improvement.[6]

The outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession 1739-1748 impacted negatively on The Bahamas' only school. Privateering was the economic order of the time, and parents and children alike gravitated towards the sea. Indeed even the schoolmaster, one Mr. Mitchell, the successor of Botham Squire who left The Bahamas in 1740, on learning of the lucrative potential of privateering, abandoned the school and went "a privateering."[7]

Another free school for poor white and free black children was set up sometime between 1741 and 1743 by Governor Tinker's secretary, John Snow. This happened as a result of the death of William Smith in 1741. Smith's successor, Nathaniel Hodges, was not appointed until 1743, and within six months of his arrival in Nassau he too had died. Between Smith's death and Hodges' appointment, Governor Tinker allowed John Snow to assume the duties of catechist. It was during this period that

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[5]Edward T. Churton, *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas: A Manual of Instruction and Routine, in Ten Practical Addresses,* second edition, enlarged, London: J. Masters and Co., 1888, p. 74.
[6]The *Royal Gazette,* January 15th, 1834.
[7]*Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* second edition, London, 1893, p. 217. The SPG report stated that Mitchell was induced by the success of one Captain Hall of Rhode Island who, in December 1739, pulled into Nassau's harbour with a Spanish prize valued at between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds.

this second free school was established. It was set up by Snow at his personal expense.

In 1746 the Governor sent Snow to London to be ordained. Snow did not return to The Bahamas until 1747. It would appear that he served a brief curacy in London immediately after his ordination. Meanwhile, SPG assigned Richard St. John as *locum tenens* for Snow. St. John assumed his duties in 1746.

After an initial tour of the three inhabited islands of New Providence, Eleuthera and Harbour Island in 1746, St. John complained to the Society that barely 2% of the Bahamian population could read.[8] St. John's expressed concern was timely because the population was growing. Between 1734 and 1744, for example, the population had increased by 59.83%, a rate of roughly 6% per annum;[9] and apart from the Society's school in New Providence, which then had no teacher, nothing was being done about the education of the youth. Snow's school did not continue in his absence. It so happened, however, that later that same year the Bahamian Government passed its first Education Act. It could be that this educational milestone was influenced either by St. John himself or by SPG in the light of St. John's report. That being the case, it signalled the beginning of a century-old partnership in education between the church and the government. In this relationship, the Established Church was the dominant partner. The church was, therefore, well positioned to demand that its

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[8]*SPG MSS B14/255.*

[9]In 1734, the Bahamian population was 1,378. Vide p. 61 of this Thesis. In 1744, it was 2,303 according to Peter Henry Bruce, Engineer to The Bahamas during the governorship of John Tinker. Vide Peter Henry Bruce, *Memoirs,* London, 1782, p. 395.

Catechism be included in the public schools' curricula, and that the schools' staff include someone who was qualified to teach it.

This Act levied a poll tax of one shilling and six pence *per capita*

> For every White Man, Mustee, Mulatto, Indian or Negro Man or Woman of the Age of sixteen to sixty years.[10]

for the purpose of erecting a schoolhouse and paying the salary of a schoolmaster. The school was for whites and free Negroes, and its curriculum included the three Rs, Latin, and Navigation. The inclusion of Latin on the curriculum at a time when the colony had but one school was indicative of the government's concern to involve the free children of all classes in New Providence in a programme of quality education. Pupils were to pay a fee of nine pence per week. Provision was made for twenty five poor children to be educated free of cost. A Presbyterian named Kenneth McKenzie from South Carolina was appointed schoolmaster and was paid by the Government.[11] McKenzie's appointment, however, was not without "some Cavils and objections" which were abated only after he had promised "in everything to conform exactly to the rules of the Established Church."[12]

John Snow returned to New Providence in 1747, but he died the following year. He was succeeded by Robert Carter whom SPG sent to The Bahamas in 1749. Carter, who was accompanied by his mother, served the inhabitants of New Providence, Eleuthera, and Harbour Island for sixteen years. With the assistance of Mrs Carter, he opened a free school in New Providence with thirty six children in 1750. Sometime

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[10]CO 25/2.
[11]CO 23/5, Financial statements for 1745-51.
[12]*SPG MSS B15/188.*

later, Mrs Carter took charge of a similar school in Savannah Sound, Eleuthera, but she died within a few months of arriving there.[13]

As the Bahamian population increased and the economic circumstances permitted, the government endeavoured to provide additional educational opportunities for the colony's youth. In 1763, therefore, a second Education Act was passed. It had the effect of temporarily suspending the poll tax levied by the Education Act of 1746. It could do this because 1763, marking the end of the Seven Years' War 1756-63, was a time of relative prosperity for The Bahamas. In all other respects the two Education Acts were similar, even to the point of focusing exclusively on New Providence. Eleuthera and Harbour Island were not affected. An attempt was made to do something about the educational neglect of these latter two islands when, in 1764 and at the request of Governor William Shirley,[14] SPG sponsored a school on each of them.

In the case of Harbour Island, Carter prevailed upon the people there to erect a dual purpose building to serve as a church and as a school. SPG approved the appointment of Benjamin Russell as the schoolmaster, and within six months the school had an enrolment of forty children.[15]

Initial efforts at Eleuthera were not as successful as those at Harbour Island. This was probably due to the length of Eleuthera, being 110 miles long, and the scattered

[13]*SPG Journal,* vol. 12, p. 29.
[14]*SPG MSS. B6/9,* William Shirley's letter of 1 June, 1763. The magistrate at Harbour Island, Captain James Roberts who himself learned how to read at age twenty years, informed Governor Shirley that there were more than 100 boys and girls at Harbour Island who could not read.

nature of its settlements. In a complaint of 1746, St. John commented as follows about the educational promise of Eleuthera:

> The people are miserably ignorant. ... Nor do I well see how this Misfortune can be obviated. Their Poverty will not allow them to send their Children for instruction to Providence; and the distance between their settlements leaves no man the least Room to hope for a Competency by setting up a School among them.[16]

Apart from Mrs. Carter's effort at Savannah Sound in about 1750, very little seems to have happened to advance the cause of education at Eleuthera between the mid 1740s and the late 1760s. Reporting to SPG in 1769, Richard Moss commented:

> Both men, women, and children, magistrates not excepted, are profane in their conversation; ... and many other sinful habits and heathenish practices are in use among them.[17]

The period 1768-1772 proved challenging for the government as it endeavoured to address the educational demands of a growing New Providence population. The challenge was both political and religious.

Politically, the 1763 Education Act expired in 1768, when it was extended for an additional two years. With its renewal, however, came the reintroduction of the poll tax which, this time, applied to slaves of all ages.[18] Members of the Executive Council deemed this objectionable, and rejected the entire Bill. After a series of rejections by the Executive Council, the Bill was amended. It was signed into law in 1772.

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[15]*Classified Digest of the Records of the SPG,* p. 218.
[16]*SPG MSS. B14/255.* Letter from Rev. St. John dated Sept. 16, 1746.
[17]*Classified Digest of the Records of the SPG,* p. 219.
[18]CO 26/7, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1768-72, Meeting of 11 February, 1771.

Religiously, there were certain Dissenters in New Providence who wanted to be involved in the selection of a schoolmaster for the government school. Richard Kennedy, an ex-privateer, was headmaster from 1767. The Dissenters wanted Belchor Noyes, a Harvard graduate, to be headmaster. Although Kennedy was sponsored by SPG and also served as Clerk of Christ Church, Governor Shirley was prepared to replace him with Noyes. SPG protested and refused to transfer the allowance which it had given Kennedy to Noyes. As a result, the Bahamian Legislature approved funds for the erection of another school in New Providence, and placed Noyes in charge of it. SPG responded by withdrawing its educational allowance altogether and refused to renew it until 1786.

The church's partnership with the government in education, and the friction between Dissenters and Anglicans were all carried over into our period.

Chapter Three

Loyalist Settlement in The Bahamas

3 (a) White Loyalist Settlement

The white Loyalists who settled in The Bahamas were from among the roughly 500,000 colonists in Britain's thirteen American colonies, particularly in New York, the Mid-Atlantic states and in the South. They represented about 20% of the American white population, or 16% of the total population, who had actively opposed American independence, and had refused to renounce their allegiance to King George III after the American Declaration of Independence on 4th July, 1776.[1] It is believed that there were equally as many passive Loyalists.

Loyalism was particularly strong among British Crown officials, military officers and Church of England clergymen, all of whom had sworn allegiance to the Crown. Many professionals were also loyal, though few of them, compared with Anglican clergymen, were exiled.[2] Ethnically, the Scots were one of the largest groups of European settlers in British North America. J.P. MacLean estimates that there were about 800,000 of them, or 25% of the total population, by 1775,[3] and Wallace Brown claims that they were among the most loyal of the colonists.[4] Unlike Brown, however, MacLean argues that, with the possible exception of the New England Puritans, the

[1]Paul H. Smith, "The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 3rd series, XXV, No. 2, 1968, pp. 259-277.
[2]Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution,* in two vols., vol. 1, Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1864, p. 60f.
[3]J.P. MacLean, *An Historical Account of the Settlement of Scotch Highlanders in America Prior to the Peace of 1783,* Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Co., 1968, p. 43.
[4]Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution,* William Morrow & Co. Inc., New York, 1969, p. 46.

Scots were more pro-independence than any other ethnic group of colonists.[5] Whatever stance the majority of Scots may have taken during the American Revolution, we know that oaths were taken seriously in those days, and that the Highlanders who had been exiled to America after the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 had first sworn allegiance to King George I and King George II respectively. We know too that most of the Loyalists who had settled in The Bahamas were Scottish either by birth or by descent.[6]

According to G.M. Trevelyan, the early colonists who had migrated to North America could be put into two categories. One consisted of those who had been dissatisfied with the extent to which the English Reformation had gone, and also disappointed with James I's decision to side with the English bishops against the Puritans at the Hampton Court Conference of 1604. Their motive for emigrating was primarily religious. The second group were those who had been motivated by the promise of free land and an opportunity to better themselves. In both cases the majority of them were poor and industrious townsfolk and villagers when they left England and (after the Act of Union between Scotland and England in 1707) Scotland. While cherishing their cultural ties with the then most powerful and civilized nation in the world, they must have been quite proud of the element of freedom and the level of self-sufficiency which they had enjoyed by the end of the Seven Years' War 1756-1763.

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[5]J.P. MacLean, op. cit., p. 43.
[6]*Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* second edition, London, 1893, p. 221. Cf. Charles Stuart Rae, *A Short History of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Nassau Bahamas,* City Press, 1910, pp. 9-10.

For the educated Anglo-American patriot, John Locke's three *Letters on Toleration* and two *Treatises on Government* provided the philosophical rationale for the building of a free and democratic society without the oversight of Anglican prelacy and the control of the English King and Parliament. However, because of the Stamp Act 1764, the Boston Massacre 1770, the Tea Act 1773, the Intolerable Acts 1774, and the stationing of 3,000 British army regulars in Boston in 1775, the patriots could not but feel that their freedom and democratic right to self-determination were being eroded. The fact that 80% of the active Loyalists remained in the United States after the Treaty of Paris 1783 was itself indicative of the esteem with which even they held the American pursuit of freedom and democracy. Even for many of those who had been exiled it must have been more a matter of the way in which American independence had been achieved than the fact of independence *per se,* which caused them to oppose it to the end. In view of the subsequent course of events in The Bahamas, it would appear that they wanted to have the best of both worlds, viz. religious freedom and the right to self-determination remotely linked to the British Crown.

Through the agency of the SPG, the Anglican Church in America became indirectly involved in the defence of British policies in North America from the early decades of the eighteenth century. At about that time, too, the Church began to make inroads into the conservative elements of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, particularly in some Northern and Middle Colonies. In the early 1720s, for example, Timothy Cutler and a part of the Yale faculty defected to the Anglican Church. Also, by the middle of the eighteenth century, membership in the Anglican Church was becoming

fashionable in Boston, and desirable in some Middle Colonies. This was a result of the Great Awakening which actually drove Anglicans and the conservative Presbyterians into an alliance. The College of Philadelphia where the provost and the vice-provost were an Anglican and a Presbyterian respectively was a classic example of this.[7] A primary concern of the Anglicans, however, was the establishment of bishoprics in America. The Church's mission and growth among the colonists could not but be stifled by confirmands and ordinands having to go to London in order to be confirmed and ordained.

Presbyterians and Congregationalists were averse to the establishment of an American episcopate which they were inclined to associate with Laudianism and Church establishment, the principal causes of Puritan immigration to America in 1620 and the 1630s. In defence of freedom of religious expression, therefore, they ageed to co-operate in opposing the establishment of bishoprics in America. Thereafter it was difficult for the antagonistic church groups to separate matters of church government from matters of state politics. The issue came to a head in 1766 when the Presbyterian Synod, espousing freedom for Americans, passed a resolution approving the repeal of the Stamp Act of 1764.[8] The Anglican response was conservative, and defensive of British policies.

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[7]L.J. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition,* Philadelphia, 1949, p. 229.

[8]The Stamp Act, imposed on the American colonies by the British Parliament as a revenue-producing measure for England after the Seven Years' War, was passed in 1764; but it was resented by patriotic Americans who regarded "taxation without representation" as a grave threat to their freedom as individuals and colonies with their own Legislative Assemblies. The Stamp Act was repealed in 1765, but only to be followed by a series of Townshend Acts, culminating with the Intolerable Acts of 1774, and the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War in 1775.

Political warfare erupted in the wake of the Boston Tea Party in 1773. It became feverish when, in 1774, the English Parliament passed a number of Intolerable Acts which closed the port of Boston, altered town and provincial governments, permitted royal officials and functionaries to have law suits brought against them heard in English courts, and provided for the stationing of English troops in Boston. The patriots reacted by calling a Continental Congress which met in Philadelphia in 1774. When, on 19th April, 1775, 3,000 British army regulars arrived in Boston and put it under siege, a second Continental Congress was convened. This time it formed a Continental Army and placed it under the command of George Washington. Hostilities broke out between the two forces, resulting in the evacuation of English forces from Boston in March of 1776. Retreating English forces, numbering about 1,000, moved into Halifax, Nova Scotia.[9]

Anglicans joined the fray by publishing a series of pamphlets. Their most able writers included Samuel Seabury and Charles Inglis, later consecrated bishops of the Anglican Church in the United States (Connecticut) and Nova Scotia respectively.[10]

Between November 1774 and January 1775, Samuel Seabury, an SPG missionary who served in New Jersey and Long Island before taking a cure in Westchester

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[9]By the Treaty of Utrecht which ended the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, France ceded Acadia (which the British renamed Nova Scotia), Hudson's Bay, Newfoundland, and St. Kitts to Britain.

[10]It was alleged that one J. Talbot and Robert Welton were consecrated by nonjuring bishops in England in 1722 and 1723/4 respectively for service in America. Their consecrations were, therefore, irregular. Talbot died in 1727, and Welton was recalled to England by order from the Privy Council that same year. Vide *Classified Digest of the Records of the SPG ...,* p. 745. After the Treaty of Paris 1783, opposition to the introduction of Anglican bishops in America gradually disappeared. Seabury was consecrated by three Scottish Bishops in Aberdeen on 14th November, 1784, and Inglis was consecrated at Lambeth on 12th August, 1787. Seabury's consecration set the pace for the eventual selection and consecration of missionary bishops throughout the British Empire.

County, New York, engaged Alexander Hamilton in debate by publishing three pamphlets entitled *The Letters of a Westchester Farmer.* Seabury was opposed to the Continental Congress. Accusing it of setting itself up as a government instead of formulating some "reasonable and probable scheme" for settling the dispute with Britain, he branded it an illegal body.[11] He was very critical of deism, and the enthusiasm of itinerant preachers associated with George Whitefield and the first Great Awakening. For him, the patriots' reaction to Britain's American policies was but a fusion of the spirit of deism and the fanaticism of religious itinerants.

Alexander Hamilton disagreed with Seabury and branded his attack on the Continental Congress as presumptuous. Pressing the issue of taxation, Hamilton questioned the legitimacy of the English Parliament's enactment of tax legislation for America,[12] its colonial status notwithstanding.

For Seabury the crisis had an ethical dimension which appeared to have been overlooked. It centred around the use of violence as a means to a political end. Apparently not opposed to the use of force as a last resort, he deemed it morally wrong for anyone to condone acts of violence before all legal and moderate measures had been exhausted. He, therefore, vainly urged the New York Assembly to renounce the Continental Congress, and to appeal to the English King and Parliament for a "solid American constitution." He pleaded:

[11]Samuel Seabury, *The Letters of a Westchester Farmer,* ed. C.H. Vance, White Plains, 1930, pp. 69ff. Congress was actually an extra-legal body, existing at the pleasure of the states until the Articles of Confederation were ratified in 1781.
[12]Alexander Hamilton, *A Full Vindication of the Measures of the Congress,* New York, 1774.

If the people of New England will kindle a fire and then rush into it, have we no way to shew our regard and affection, but to jump in after them? Let us rather keep out, that we may have it in our power to pull them out, before they are burnt to death.[13]

Charles Inglis, an SPG missionary who had served in Pennsylvania before assuming the rectorship of Trinity Church, New York, adopted a more philosophical approach to the crisis than Seabury did. In his pamphlet *The True Interest of America Impartially Stated,* Inglis responded to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense,* a pamphlet by which Paine, a deist, had popularised his argument for American independence. The basis of his argument was that, in a state of nature, man was free, rational, and individual. From this he inferred that society was a voluntary union of convenience, and that government was, at best, a necessary evil. He wrote:

Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness. ... Government .. like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of Kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of Paradise.[14]

For him, the upheaval which came in the wake of the American Revolution was, as it were, a happy fault, because it afforded America an opportunity to become free.

In contradistinction to Paine's individualism, Inglis stressed the social character of human nature, the essential corporateness of human society, and the necessary goodness of government. He argued that society, like the individual, was divinely ordained, and that government was as necessary to law as law was to society. He maintained, furthermore, that government had to be legitimately constituted.[15]

Seabury and Inglis were notable examples of the dynamic role which the Anglican Church played in the Loyalist cause during the American Revolution. By the same

[13]Samuel Seabury, op. cit., pp. 153-62.
[14]Thomas Paine, *Common Sense,* Philadelphia, 1776, *passim.*
[15]Charles Inglis, *The True Interest of America Impartially Stated,* Philadelphia, 1776, *passim.*

token, however, they represented the ecclesiastical and political realities which the early Puritan settlers had left England to shun, and the majority of Americans had obviously rejected. Ultimately, Seabury and the majority of Loyalists were able to acquiesce to the reality of the Republic of the United States of America, while Inglis, his 2,000 parishioners, and roughly 100,000 other Loyalists were sent into exile. For on 3rd September, 1783, Britain, Britain's former American Colonies, France, and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris at Versailles, formally ending the American War of Independence, and marking Britain's first major colonial loss. Britain recognised the independence of the United States, and gave the Americans fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland. Among the other terms of the treaty, Britain also ceded Florida to Spain in exchange for Spain's recognition of Britain's sovereignty over The Bahamas.

By September 1783, the conscientiously active Loyalists who had not left between 1776 (when 1,000 of them evacuated Massachusetts and moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia) and 1782 (when another 5,000 left Savannah and Charleston and settled in East Florida) were concentrated mainly in New York and East Florida. Those in Florida[16] had the option of remaining there under Spanish rule, but they declined. Consequently they were given a total of twenty two months in which to leave. Those in New York had to leave forthwith.

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[16]The whole of Florida had been ceded to Britain by Spain with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 10th February, 1763, and it remained in British hands throughout most of the American Revolution. In July, 1775, Lord Dartmouth designated West Florida a Loyalist haven. But it fell to the Spaniards in May, 1781. Britain retained control of East Florida where, after the evacuation of Savannah and Charleston in 1782, about 5,000 white Loyalists had settled and remained until 3rd September, 1783.

In September 1783, between 30,000 and 35,000 Loyalists moved to Nova Scotia, and 6,000 to 7,000 migrated to Quebec.[17] Later another 470 went to Halifax, while 324 went to England, and 1,850 settled on the islands of Bermuda, Jamaica, Dominica, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia.[18] It is difficult to determine exactly how many of the 1,850 Loyalists settled on each of the said islands. However, L.J. Ragatz's claim that about 900 adult whites, and 378 white children had settled in Jamaica in 1783[19] indicates that the majority of them migrated to Jamaica.

Of all of Britain's West Indian colonies, the Bahama Islands were host to the largest number of white Loyalists. Between 1783 and 1785, a total of about 5,150 had settled on these islands. In 1789, an additional 50 arrived from Nova Scotia. Sir Guy Carleton, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in New York, recommended to the British Government that Loyalists who had lost their property in America because of their allegiance to the Crown be given ungranted or escheated land in The Bahamas without cost to themselves. As a result, Lieutenant-Governor Powell was instructed on 10th September, 1784, to issue unoccupied land in The Bahamas to the Loyalists rent-free for a period of ten years.[20]

In 1784, the only islands of The Bahamas which had been inhabited were New Providence, Eleuthera, Harbour Island, Spanish Wells, Exuma, Cat Island, and the

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[17]Wallace Brown, op. cit., p. 192.
[18]*South Carolina Historical Magazine,* January, 1910, p. 26. Cited by Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Legacy of the American Revolution to the British West Indies and Bahamas: A Chapter out of the History of the American Loyalists,* published by the Ohio State University, Columbus, 1913, p. 15.
[19]L.J. Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean 1763-1832,* New York, 1928, page 194.
[20]Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Legacy of the American Revolution to the British West Indies and Bahamas: A Chapter out of the History of the American Loyalists,* published by the Ohio State University, Columbus, 1913, p. 20.

Turks Islands. They had a total white population of about 1,700 persons,[21] a decrease of 14.7% of the estimated white population of 1773. This decrease was probably due to the number of Bahamians who had joined the rebels during the Revolutionary War. Of the 5,150 white Loyalists who had migrated to The Bahamas directly from the United States, 1,458 went to Abaco from New York between August and October, 1783. Another 1,500 embarked for Abaco during the evacuation of East Florida in 1784. Those who settled in New Providence and the other islands also came from East Florida.[22]

With the arrival of the Loyalists, therefore, the white population of The Bahamas more than trebled and the number of permanently inhabited islands increased by sixteen, viz. Abaco (and several of its cays), Grand Bahama, the Bimini Islands, the Berry Islands, Andros, Long Island, San Salvador, Rum Cay, Crooked Island, Long Cay, Acklins Island, Ragged Island, Mayaguana, Inagua, Grand Turk, and Salt Cay.

In 1784, Governor John Maxwell identified four classes of Loyalists in The Bahamas, viz. farmers, officers, merchants, and professionals (whom he referred to as "people who hope to return to the continent after the peace there").[23] According to a report in the *Classified Digest of SPG Records,* at the beginning of 1790 there were "127 planters, 29 merchants, 17 men of learned professions, and three clergymen."[24]

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[21]Report of the Committee of the House of Assembly appointed to take into consideration the state of the Bahama Islands, *Votes of the House of Assembly 1787-1794,* 28 April, 1789, p. 125.
[22]Vide Wilbur H. Siebert, op. cit., pp. 18-22.
[23]*Maxwell to Sydney,* May 17th, 1784, *CO 23/25* pp. 104-105.
[24]*Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* second edition, London, 1893, p. 221.

The merchants and professionals settled mainly in New Providence. The officers and some of the farmers settled in the Northern Bahamas. The rest of the farmers inhabited the islands in the Central and Southern Bahamas. However, the Loyalists were not readily welcomed by their host settlers. Perhaps Governor Maxwell himself was not particularly hospitable to this unprecedented influx of colonists. His opinion of the second of the two groups into which he had conveniently divided the Loyalists betrays an element of aggressiveness on their part which probably accounted for the inhospitableness of the older settlers. Governor Maxwell categorised them and commented as follows:

> (a) Farmers who have set themselves down on the out Islands with large families and from 10 to 100 slaves each. These merit particular attention. (b) Officers, merchants and people who hope to return to the continent after peace there -nothing can satisfy this lot-. They demand everything immediately - land, stores and employment, in fact they almost wish to take over the government. These are the most tormenting, Dissatisfied people on earth.[25]

Probably as a result of the inhospitable reception which the Loyalists had been given in Nova Scotia under Governor Parr in 1782,[26] and with a view to softening the attitudes of the older Bahamian settlers, Lieutenant-General Powel of East Florida was further instructed to give,

> To every head of a family, forty acres, and to every white or black man, woman or child in a family, twenty acres, at an annual quit rent of two shillings per hundred acres,[27]

Such generosity, however, was not immediately forthcoming, for by November, 1785, only 2,476 acres of agricultural land had been granted. As a result, only some Loyalists had benefited. The administration of land grants was slow primarily because the Lords Proprietor of the Carolinas still held legal title to unoccupied land in the

[25]*Maxwell to Sydney,* May 17th, 1784, *CO 23/25* pp. 104-105.
[26]Wallace Brown, op. cit. p. 209f.
[27]Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Legacy of the American Revolution to the British West Indies and Bahamas: A Chapter out of the History of the American Loyalists,* published by the Ohio State University, Columbus, 1913, p. 20.

Bahama Islands. This land was purchased by the British Government on a piecemeal basis between 1784 and 1787 at a total cost of twenty six thousand, two hundred and six pounds sterling.[28] Meanwhile the Loyalists continued to complain even about the local statutes, alleging that they were repugnant to the laws of England. Under the leadership of James Hepburn, a former Attorney-General of East Florida, they formed a "Board of Loyalists" to "preserve and maintain these Rights and Liberties for which they have left their Homes and their Possessions."[29]

In view of the number of inhabited islands, Governor Maxwell caused the electoral boundaries to be redrawn. Heretofore the only islands which were represented in the House of Assembly were New Providence, Eleuthera, and Harbour Island. In 1784, the twenty four seats of the Assembly were redistributed to allow the newly inhabited islands a total of eleven seats. A general election was held between December 1784 and February 1785, and nine Loyalists, including James Hepburn and a few members of the "Board," were among those elected. Dissatisfied with the number of Loyalists elected, Hepburn questioned the validity of the elections, and petitioned Governor Maxwell to prorogue the Assembly, but the Governor refused. Hepburn and his supporters further protested by absenting themselves continuously from sessions of the Assembly. In September 1785, therefore, the protesters' seats were declared

[28]Between 1784 and 1786 the House of Commons paid the six heirs to the Bahamian property of the Lords Proprietor a total of fourteen thousand, two hundred and six pounds. In 1786 the Commons made a final payment of twelve thousand pounds. Vide Wilbur H. Siebert, op. cit., p. 28; Michael Craton, *A History of The Bahamas,* third edition, San Salvador Press, 1986, p. 156f.
[29]*Miscellaneous Papers,* CO 23/26.

vacant, and a by-election was held. The seats were won by moderate Loyalists, and the House of Assembly remained in session until 1794.[30]

In the general election of 1795, the Loyalists won the majority of seats. The new Assembly immediately set about enacting social legislation. It also enacted legislation limiting its lifespan to seven years.

Within the first ten years of their arrival, therefore, the white Loyalists had taken charge of both the political and the economic course of events in The Bahamas, and had set about steering a mean between the sovereignty of American Republicanism and the direct control of England's King and Parliament. This process was assisted by the Anglican Church which, aided by the SPG, applied itself assiduously to the creation of a godly kingdom and a Christian society.

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[30]Vide Michael Craton and Gail Saunders, *Islands in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People,* vol. one, the University of Georgia Press, 1992, p. 191.

Table 2
Slave Occupations by Ages, 1834

Occupation	0-10	11-15	16-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Over 60	Unknown
None	2,420	15	2	2	2	2	14	76	0
Domestic Worker	450	402	440	141	231	162	109	66	2
Field Worker	368	536	758	292	543	410	319	273	1
Mariner	9	58	219	85	94	79	30	11	0
Salt Worker	15	85	309	97	190	131	59	28	2
Driver/overseer	1	0	4	10	20	23	13	9	0
Nurse/midwife	54	13	0	0	1	6	10	10	0
Trade/craftsman	2	15	57	33	53	48	27	30	0
Sundry	1	0	1	1	1	3	3	1	0
Unknown	3	0	2	1	5	2	1	0	1
Total	3,323	1,124	1,792	662	1,141	866	584	504	6

Age

Sources: *Register of Slave Returns, 1834,* Bahamas Archives; Gail Saunders, *Slave Population of the Bahamas,* p. 259.

Table 3
Bahamas Slave Population, 1822-34

	1822			*1825*			*1828*			*1831*	
Island	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
New Providence	1,453	1,482	2,935	1,122	1,270	2,392	1,192	1,270	2,462	1,224	1,266
Eleuthera	627	614	1,241	614	609	1,223	579	579	1,158	617	635
Harbour Island	234	224	458	207	207	414	202	224	426	220	247
Turks and Caicos	1,074	872	1,946	719	682	1,401	750	661	1,411	716	727
Long Island	304	314	618	274	289	563	272	272	544	323	294
Cat Island	334	379	713	344	292	636	221	261	482	262	293
San Salvador	197	158	355	142	146	288	156	186	342	165	164
Rum Cay	102	127	229	251	218	469	266	264	530	286	282
Exumas	353	348	701	402	334	736	349	357	706	398	382
Crooked and Acklin's Islands	494	423	917	326	211	537	284	204	488	231	223
Inagua	25	26	51	26	26	52	25	14	39	29	20
Abaco	124	93	217	153	131	284	170	145	315	197	169
Andros and Berry Islands	108	65	173	81	49	130	92	57	149	70	50
Grand Bahama	21	12	33	15	14	29	51	32	83	63	68
Spanish Wells	18	20	38	16	12	28	27	18	45	21	13
Ragged Island	43	37	80	23	28	51	41	33	74	54	59
Total	5,511	5,194	10,705	4,715	4,518	9,233	4,677	4,577	9,254	4,876	4,892

Sources: *Register*

of Returns of Slaves, 1822-34, Bahamas Archives; Gail Saunders, *Slave Population of the Bahamas,* p. 97.

(b) White Loyalist Impact on Bahamian Society

The impact of these Loyalists on Bahamian society was nothing short of a cultural revolution.

The 2,476 acres of agricultural land which had been given to the Loyalists within the first two years of their arrival were spread over New Providence, Exuma, and Cat Island, and were used for the cultivation of cotton. In November, 1785, this acerage produced 124 tons of cotton.[1] In 1786 and 1787, 150 tons and 219 tons of cotton were produced from 3,050 acres and 4,500 acres respectively.[2] In 1790, an estimated 18,000 acres were under cultivation, with an additional 20,000 acres under location by grants.[3]

In 1793, a versatile Loyalist by the name of Joseph Eve invented The Bahamas' first cotton gin. It was operated by the wind, and was capable of ginning upwards of 360 lb of cotton *per diem.* He advertised in the *Bahama Gazette* of 28th November, 1793, that he could make a gin to be turned by cattle or even by water power, given the inlet, and that he would completely insure the machine and put it into annual repair, at an a rate of four guineas *per annum.* Formerly, cotton was ginned by a simple instrument composed of two parallel rollers which were spiked by nails and turned in opposite directions, either by hand or by a foot-operated crank.

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[1] *An Account of all Cotton Plantations in the Bahama Islands,* November 1st, 1785, *CO 23/37/335.*
[2] D. Gail Saunders, *Slavery in the Bahamas 1648-1838,* 1985, p. 23.
[3] Seymour Drescher, *Econocide, British Slavery in the Era of Abolition,* University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977, p. 64.

Cotton peaked in 1809 and 1810[4] but by 1832 a massive decline had set in, due to soil exhaustion and the attack of the chenille bug. Compared with the sugar colonies, plantation society in The Bahamas was short-lived. With the irretrievable decline of the cotton industry, many planters resorted to subsistence farming, stock raising, salt raking, and seafaring.

Farming was particularly bountiful in Eleuthera and Abaco. Indian corn, guinea corn, pineapples, pumpkins, citrus, cassava, arrow root, garlic, and onions thrived on Eleuthera, as did a wide variety of vegetables in Abaco. By 1851, Bahamian agriculture had become so successful that The Bahamas was able to participate in the Great Colonial Trade Exhibition in London 1851-1852. In 1853, The Bahamas began to export pineapples to Britain. The nett profit from the export of pineapples to England in 1858 was 13,415 pounds sterling.

By 1832, stock raising had become a profitable business on many of the islands, especially New Providence, Rum Cay, Long Island, San Salvador, Exuma, and Cat Island. Long Island was the largest producer of stock. More horses, horned cattle, goats, sheep and swine were produced there than on any of the other islands.

Statistics indicative of the extent of the diversification of Bahamian agriculture within the first three decades of the Loyalists' arrival has been provided by Robert Montgomery Martin.[5]

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[4]T.P. Peters, *The American Loyalists and the Plantation Period in the Bahama Islands,* PhD Thesis, University of Florida, 1960, p. 157. Michael Craton contends, however, that "the peak year for Bahamian cotton seems to have been in 1791, when it was reported locally that 1,292,348 lb. were exported." Hobbesian or Panglossian? The Two Extremes of Slave Conditions in the British Caribbean, 1783-1834, *The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. XXXV, Numbers 1-4,* p. 352, footnote 32.

[5]Vide Table (1). Robert Montgomery Martin, *Statistics of the Colonies of the British Empire,* London: W.H. Allen, 1839, p. 110.

Salt ponds were natural to The Bahamas, particularly in the central and southern islands (Ragged Island, or, at least, Duncan's Town, seems to have been an exception). After the arrival of the Eleutherian Adventurers in 1648, Bermudans had made quite a success of salt-raking in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The slave, Mary Prince, in her autobiography, recounted many a bitter experience in Turks Island:

> Sometimes we had to work all night, measuring salt to load a vessel; or turning a machine to draw water out of the sea for making salt. Then we had no sleep -no rest- but we were forced to work as fast as we could, and go on again all next day the same as usual. Work - work - work - Oh that Turks Island was a horrible place![6]

Some of the Loyalists employed their slaves in the salt ponds towards the end of April, after the cotton had been picked in the spring. After the decline of cotton, most planters tried to develop salt as a substitute. In Duncan's Town, Ragged Island, two planters, Duncan and Archibald Taylor, built a most productive salt pond. But the main salt ponds were to the south and east of Great Exuma, viz. on Little Exuma, Long Island, Rum Cay, Ragged Island, Long Cay, Great Inagua, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

From 1789, salt raking was regulated by law.[7] Salt commissioners were appointed by the Governor to serve for each island or group of islands, where there were salt ponds. A later Act[8] stipulated that only Bahamians were to rake salt and that no Negro could rake salt except under a white manager. Salt raked independently by a Negro was subject to confiscation and sale, with the proceeds going into the public treasury.

With an annual harvest in excess of five million bushels, The Bahamas was one of the largest producers of salt in the hemisphere.

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[6]Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince, A West Indian Slave, Related by Herself,* London and Edinburgh, 1831, p. 63.
[7]*Act to regulate the Raking of Salt,* April 22nd, 1789. Cited by Saunders, op. cit., p. 30.
[8]*Act to regulate the Raking of Salt,* December 23, 1795. Ibid.

Sponge was another of The Bahamas' exports during our period. The industry is believed to have been started by a Frenchman, Gustave Renouard, who was shipwrecked in Bahamian waters in 1841. *The Blue Book of Statistics 1843* is the earliest extant record relating to the sponge industry in The Bahamas. It indicates that in 1843, 132 bales of sponge were exported. Initially, Renouard exported sponges to Paris. In time, the market expanded to include Britain and the United States.

Before the Loyalists arrived, there was no police system of any kind in The Bahamas. On 23rd July, 1790, an *Act For The Formation of Militia* was passed. According to this Act, all white persons (inhabitants and transients), all free Negroes, mulattos, and the Creek Indians (who accompanied the Loyalists from Georgia in 1783-84), who were between the ages of fifteen years and sixty years, were required to serve or, alternatively, pay a fine. The fine for whites was thirty shillings sterling, and, for the others, three pounds sterling or, alternatively, a jail sentence of seven days. If a free Negro, mulatto, or an Indian repeatedly evaded Militia duty, he was subject to fifty lashes.

On 23rd December, 1795, and 30th November, 1798, *two Act for Regulating the Police of the Town of Nassau and the Suburbs thereof,* were passed by the Bahamian Legislature. The first of these Acts had, as its stated purpose, the prevention of all

> mischief by Fire, murders, burglaries, robberies, breaches of the King's Peace, riots, and other outrages and disorders and all tumultuous meetings of Negroes and People of Colour ...

The second Act demanded that all People of Colour be off the streets after 9.00 pm, at the sound of the Town Bell, unless such person(s) had a satisfactory reason for breaking the curfew. No slave was allowed out after this hour unless he had a pass from his owner, otherwise he was sent to the workhouse where he was confined until his owner paid a fine of ten shillings sterling plus a shilling and six pence daily for

the food which the slave consumed while in detention. A free Negro apprehended for breaking the curfew was detained in the workhouse until such time as he was able to raise the same amount of money. The reason given for this Act is found in its preamble:

> Whereas many slaves and other disorderly persons of colour meet and assemble together at improper and unreasonable hours in Negro houses, Negro yards, and other places in the said Town and Suburbs and beat drums, dance and otherwise make any tumultuous noise to the very great inconvenience and disturbance of the rest of the inhabitants of the said Town and Suburbs, and which meetings and assemblies tend very much to injure the health of such slaves ...

The Acts of 1795 and 1798 were enforced by the Militia. White militiamen were authorised to enter any Negro house or yard, regardless of whether or not the assembly was "civil or religious," and arrest anyone whom they considered disorderly. Free Persons of Colour were allowed to serve on day patrols, but had no authority to arrest a white person.

One offence for which any person, white or black, could be punished was that of firing a gun at night, unless in defence of self or property. Gunfire at night served as an alarm system the effectiveness of which would have been lessened by indiscriminate firing. A gun fired three times at intervals of one minute was indicative of an attack, a riot, or jailbreak. Anyone hearing the shot was expected to repeat the signal until the whole island was alerted. As in the case of penalties connected with the Militia, however, the law tended to discriminate in favour of whites. If a white person was convicted of such an offence, he was fined ten pounds sterling. A free person of colour, if convicted of the same offence, was fined twelve pounds. A slave was given fifty lashes if found guilty.

Similar discriminatory practices were enshrined in the Act which was designed to protect Bahamian turtles. Because these aquatic reptiles constituted a staple food

item, the Act forbade the destruction of their eggs. If a white person was found guilty of violating this act, he was fined three pounds sterling. Any person of colour who was convicted of the same offence was given fifty lashes.

Such inequality before the Law was but a symptom of the social stratification and racial segregation which the Loyalist elite introduced into Bahamian society. Prior to 1783, for example, free (and freed) black and white housing co-existed in the same areas of Nassau, and it was commonplace for some slaves to live either within or behind the large houses of their masters. By 1785, however, the Bahamian slave population had trebled. This fact coupled with the unwarranted fear which the Loyalist whites had of the black majority constituted the principal causes of racial segregation in The Bahamas during our period.

By 1789, the Loyalist white merchant class had taken control of both the political and the economic power in The Bahamas. Thus, as slave emancipation in the British West Indies became progressively inevitable, attempts to stratify The Bahamas along racial lines moved apace, albeit very subtly. This was particularly evident in the Consolidated Slave Act of 1826. The most important sections of this act were those which increased the number of freed coloureds and blacks while ensuring that freedom was granted only to those who were likely to sustain the social system. The old requirement of a bond of 90 pounds was replaced by a simple enrolment fee of eight shillings. The practice of slaves purchasing their freedom was legalised. However, there were difficulties. Manumission could be obtained only by the owner's will or deed, and the price paid by a slave for manumission had to be at a rate, and on terms, agreeable "between the parties." This meant, in practice, that only those slaves whom the masters deemed worthy of freedom, and who had sufficient means and incentive to enter the new buffer class of the black petty bourgeoisie, were given their

freedom.[9] This notwithstanding, many free coloureds and blacks sided with the slaves against the white elite.

On 27th September, 1833, the *Act of 4 William IV, c.1, To Relieve His Majesty's Free Coloured and Black Subjects of the Bahama Islands From All Civil Disabilities,* became law. By this Act, all freeborn coloureds and blacks were to

> have and enjoy all the rights, privileges and immunities whatsoever, to which they would have been entitled, if born of, and descended from, white ancestors.

No less interestingly, all persons

> who had been born slaves but had been manumitted through behalf of their owners, by deed, will, or otherwise, or by judgement of the General Court, or sentence, or order or decree in the Court of Vice-Admiralty,

and had been free for two years were to enjoy the same rights. However, an exception was made in respect of those who had been African-born. They had to have been free for six years.[10] In order to appreciate better the strategy employed, it might be pointed out that, in 1810, the free coloureds and blacks constituted less than 10% of the Bahamian population, compared with the slaves' 67%, and the whites' 27%. In 1833, however, the free coloureds and blacks made up 23% of the total population, compared with the whites' 26%, and the slaves' 50%.[11] In 1833, therefore, the white elite made a last desperate effort to separate from the mass of the slaves a section of the population which was then almost as numerous as the whites, in order to create an intermediate class which might help to sustain their hegemony when full emancipation became a reality. Thus, racial segregation became institutionalised in The Bahamas and was practised in several Bahamian communities up to the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century.

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[9] *7 Geo IV c. 1, 1826, 335-365.*

[10] *4 William IV c. 1, 1833, 3-5.*

[11] *Munnings to Peel, Dec. 12, 1810, July 16, 1812, CO 23/59, 37; Bahamas Blue Book, 1828-1834, CO 27/26-32.*

Architecturally, the Loyalists completely redesigned Nassau. Much of the architectural style of the Southern United States was transported there. By the time of the American Revolutionary War, American colonists had already established their own variations of Georgian architecture. Unlike in the American South, however, where wood was the main material used in building, in The Bahamas where both stone and wood were readily available, their buildings were constructed from stone and wood. Most of the houses were similar in design, being basically rectangular in shape, with two or three storeys and an attic. The ground floor was used as a basement to house storerooms and servants' quarters. The kitchens were, usually, built away from the main house, both as a precaution against fire and to avoid the heat and cooking smells. Some houses also had two-storied timber verandas and delicately designed hard wood railings in a variety of patterns. Other architectural characteristics included: high peaked roofs, dormer windows, brackets and lattice work, and, reflective of the shipbuilding industry, wooden knees or brackets which were used to support balconies.

The Loyalists also effected the erection of a number of Public Buildings, the Town Jail which latterly became the Nassau Public Library, Government House, St Matthew's Anglican Church, and St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, all of which exhibited Loyalist architectural influence.

The Public Buildings erected in Rawson Square -newly designed for that purpose- were based on Governor Tyron's Palace in New Bern, North Carolina. The octagonally designed Town jail was inspired by the Powder Magazine in Williamsburg, Virginia. St Matthew's Church and the Town jail were designed by Joseph Eve.

In Nassau, the Loyalists also undertook new road construction, enclosed the Town's cemeteries, introduced a building code with a view to preventing fires and made regulations to prevent animals from roaming about the Town.

This building activity of the Loyalists was augmented by that of John Murray, Lord Dunmore, a former Governor of Virginia, who became Governor of The Bahamas in October 1787. He displayed a passion for erecting buildings of various sorts, to the chagrin of the whites. He was disliked by the whites both because of his favourable disposition towards the blacks, particularly the Loyalist blacks, and because of the cost in taxes, to the whites, for his building programme. He had a mania for the erection of forts, constructed of cut limestone, which he built on various strategic sites in New Providence. He also laid out a town in Harbour Island and named it after himself.

John Wells, from Charleston, South Carolina, who ran a newspaper in East Florida before migrating with his press to Nassau, founded the *Bahama Gazette,* The Bahamas' first newspaper, on 7th August, 1784. It was a four-page newspaper, published twice weekly, of a high literary quality, and it included news from both Europe and America. Its circulation reached Charleston, Savannah, and Bermuda. With his demise on 29th October, 1799, at the age of 47 years, John Wells was eulogised by his successor, Joseph Eve, in the *Bahama Gazette* of the same date, as "popular, benevolent, and good-humoured." His writings were described as "energetic and forcible as well as correct and elegant," and his style was compared to that of "Gibbon the Historian." The eulogy continued:

> When, to these qualities which conciliated the kindness of all, we add that to a mind penetrating and energetic, every advantage of science, situation and the most persevering industry in the pursuit of knowledge were combined, we shall cease to wonder at the distinguished place he held in the minds of all who knew him.

John Wells also opened a book and stationery store, the only such store in Nassau. In the *Bahama Gazette* of 3rd June, 1786, he advertised the following, as among books recently received:

Haley's Essay on Old Maids, 3 Vols., Gibbon's Roman Empire, 6 Vols., Rousseau's Confessions, 2 Vols., Rousseau's Works, 10 Vols., and Sheridan's Rhetorical Dictionary.

In 1804, the white Loyalists set up a Public Library comprising five hundred books, mainly novels and plays, for lending purposes. Members of the Library were required to pay an annual fee of $26.00 which could be paid in quarterly instalments of $6.50.[12] Loyalists' literary interests kept pace with English literary publications. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice,* first published in 1813, is an example of this. For by December that year, copies had been made available in Nassau.[13]

Evidence of the literary interests of the Loyalist elite, at a deeper level, is provided by William Gordon, an SPG missionary, who wrote as follows concerning the religious situation in Long Island:

The "gentry" of the place employ their leisure hours "in reading the works of Mandeville, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau and Hume," by which some of them "acquired a great tincture of infidelity."[14]

Theatre also featured in the social life of the white elite. Such plays as *The Taming of the Shrew, The Deuce is in Him* and *Animal Magnetism* were performed at the Courthouse in Nassau. On Wednesday 14th January, 1824, Dr Townsend embraced the opportunity of participating in *Who Wants a Guinea.* Other participants included: the Speaker of the House of Assembly -the Hon. Lewis Kerr- who was stage manager,

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[12]*Royal Gazette, July 24, 1804.*

[13]*Henrietta Kelsall to Anne Lewin, December 4, 1813,* in *Henrietta, My Daughter,* ed. Mary K. Armbrister, pp. 132-133.

[14]*Classified Digest of the Records of the S.P.G. in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* London, published by the Society's Office, p. 220.

scene painter and make-up artist, Assistant Judge Lees who was scene shifter and prompter, and the schoolmaster, one Mr Malcolm, "on whom the interest of the play turned & who had most to say & oftenest to appear." The audience comprised 160 persons, including the Governor, and all "the first people in town (females in great abundance) each of whom paid an admission fee of one dollar."[15]

Nassau's commercial and professional life was not unaffected by the enterprising Loyalists particularly the doctors, lawyers, accountants, and merchants, who were determined to dominate Nassau's commercial life, rebuild their professions and businesses, and remake their fortunes. A number of companies, including Paton, Leslie and Company which traded successfully with the Indians in the Southern States, moved their headquarters to Nassau.

During the course of the Loyalists' cultural transformation of Bahamian society, however, there were processes of racial and social interaction and cultural adaptation at work which eventuated in a distinctly Bahamian culture.

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[15]Dr. P.S. Townsend, *Nassau, Bahamas, 1823-1824,* Bahamas Historical Society. Entries for January 1824.

(c) Black Loyalist Settlement

Although the majority of Loyalists who settled in The Bahamas were white, there were a few black Loyalists who resided there as well.

The exact number of American Negroes who served in the cause of England during the American Revolutionary War is unknown. It is estimated, however, that as many as 100,000, or 20% of the Negro American population, volunteered their services in return for a promise of freedom at the end of the war.[1]

Initially, senior British strategists were ambivalent about the enlistment of slaves in the cause of king and country. When, however, Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, had declared martial law in that colony in 1775, and had taken the initiative of appealing to all free Negroes, among others, capable of bearing arms to rally to the British cause in the subjugation of Virginia, a number of runaway slaves from the rebel side also resorted to the king's standard.[2] With the Continental Congress' approval of the Declaration of Independence on 4th July, 1776, and the formal outbreak of the American Revolutionary War, this initiative developed *de facto* into a British war policy.[3] During the war, both sides enlisted blacks, slave and free, in their respective causes. On the whole, however, rebel-owned slaves were more trusting of the British than they were of their Republican masters.

[1]Herbert Aptheker, *The Negro in the American Revolution,* New York, 1940, p. 20.
[2]Ibid., p. 6.

These blacks brought a variety of skills with them to the British lines. In a sample of 155 of them, 50 had occupations as blacksmiths, carpenters, coopers, tailors, et cetera, 58 served as soldiers in a number of British regiments, and 12 served as officers in the Royal Navy.[4] Blacks were also formed into Pioneer Corps.[5]

On 30th November, 1782, a Provisional Peace Agreement was entered into by Britain and the United States. The agreement required, *inter alia,* that British forces withdraw expeditiously from New York, and leave all American-claimed Negroes behind. This posed a great challenge to Britain's promise of freedom. A precedent had already been set with the settlement of the "Company of Negroes" in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1776. Britain, therefore, had to walk a tight rope between satisfying the demand of the victorious Republicans for the return of their slaves in whom they claimed property rights, and its promise of freedom to those of them who supported Britain in the war. The White Loyalists' concern about compensation for lands and goods which they had to leave behind made the matter even more complicated. As a result, Sir Guy Carleton set up a board of enquiry in New York to ascertain that all legitimate American claims were met. As far as slaves were concerned, those who had been behind British lines at least twelve months prior to the provisional agreement were free to leave on receipt of a certificate from Brigadier General Samuel Birch.

In Savannah, Georgia, Colonel Clarke maintained that Britain's word was its bond. In a communication to Lord Cornwallis, he pleaded:

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[3]Vide Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution,* Chapel Hill, 1961, pp. 21-31.
[4]*Carleton Papers,* 4331, Leslie to Clinton, March 1782, 9304, Peters to Carleton, 5th October 1783, Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.
[5]Ibid., 6480, "Pay Order for Black Pioneers," 23rd December, 1782.

However policy may interfere in favour of the Masters, an attention to Justice and good faith must plead strongly in behalf of the Negroes, many of whom have certificates of service performed.[6]

As a result, several thousand Black Loyalists were evacuated from Savannah, and settled in East Florida.[7]

The problem was more acute in Charleston, South Carolina, where the ratio of blacks to whites was 5:4, and delegations of Black Loyalists were petitioning General Alexander Leslie for assurance that the British promise of freedom would be kept. In his attempt to arbitrate, Leslie appointed a commission to deal with appeals from both masters and slaves. A compromise was reached when General Leslie, with the concurrence of Sir Guy Carleton, decided that sequestered and captured slaves should be returned to their Republican claimants, the value of those slaves who had met Carleton's qualification should be assessed and their owners compensated, and that Black Loyalists be settled elsewhere in the British Empire. Fortunately for many of the slaves, however, irreconcilable differences between the commissioners led to the dissolution of the commission. When, therefore, Charleston was evacuated in 1782, and as many as 4,000 Black Loyalists were allowed to evacuate, several thousand slaves managed to escape from their masters. Some went to New York, and others went to East Florida.

With the formal ending of the American Revolutionary War on 3rd September, 1783, and over a period of about six years, the Bahama Islands had become host to some

[6]Clarke to Cornwallis, 10th July, 1780, 30/11/2, Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.
[7]*Carleton Papers,* 5268, "Lists of Transports Gone from Savannah to St. Augustine," 10th August 1782, 6475, "A Return of Refugees and their Slaves," 23rd December, 1782.

381 Black Loyalists.[8] Ninety five of these went to Abaco from New York in August, 1783. These included Joseph Paul, his wife, and their three children. The majority of the other 286 arrived from East Florida, and settled mainly in New Providence. They included Amos Williams, his son Prince, and Sambo Scriven. Paul and Williams pioneered Methodism and Anabaptism respectively in The Bahamas.[9]

One of the problems which Black Loyalists encountered in The Bahamas, particularly in Abaco, was the readiness of White Loyalists to re-enslave them. In 1784, e.g., the Governor, John Maxwell, noted that White Loyalists were attempting to re-enslave Black Loyalists.[10] Two years later, one John Barry complained:

> It is with great Pain of Mind that I, every day, see the Negroes who came here from America, with the British General's Free Passes, treated with unheard of cruelty by Men who call themselves Loyalists. These unhappy People, after being drawn from their Masters by Promises of Freedom and the King's Protection, are every day stolen away.[11]

It was for this reason that Joseph Paul left Abaco and settled in New Providence where he also set up a school for the children of free Negroes and slaves.

The tendency of White Loyalists to re-enslave Black Loyalists probably explains why Cato Perkins[12] became a slave in Eleuthera. Cato was a Black Loyalist who had settled in Nova Scotia, and was later ordained a local preacher by John Marrant in Birchtown. He was probably among the 50 Nova Scotians who had migrated to The

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[8]This figure is based on a consideration of the *Wilson Report 1783,* the Report of the Committee of the House of Assembly appointed to take into consideration the state of the Bahama Islands, *Votes of the House of Assembly 1787-1794,* 28th April, 1789, p. 125, and a report by SPG, *Classified Digest of the Records of the SPG ...* p. 221, that there were 500 free Negroes in The Bahamas at the beginning of 1790.
[9]Vide chapter four (I) and (2) of this Thesis.
[10]CO 23/25, 197.
[11]CO 23/26, 225, June 30, 1786.
[12]Cf. James W. St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870,* University of Toronto Press Inc., 1992, p. 72.

Bahamas in 1789, but was himself re-enslaved at Eleuthera where, despite his bonds, he continued his ministry among the slaves there.[13]

[13]Vide chapter 4 (a) of this Thesis.

(d) Loyalists and Religious Pluralism

Prior to 1783, the Church of England was the only Christian presence in The Bahamas. When the Loyalists arrived, they brought with them pioneers of Wesleyan Methodism, Anabaptism, and Scottish Presbyterianism. From a practical point of view, Roman Catholicism had no adherents in The Bahamas until towards the end of our period. Two of these denominations, viz. the Methodists and the Baptists, were brought to The Bahamas by Negroes who had formerly been slaves. Except for Presbyterianism which was entirely white and the Baptists who were wholly black, all of these faiths were multiracial in their membership. Methodism, however, was racially segregated.

(1) The Methodists

Methodism in The Bahamas was pioneered by the African American Negro, Joseph Paul, a Loyalist who settled in Abaco in 1784. Two years later, however, Paul moved into New Providence. This move was the result of attempts by White Loyalists in Abaco to treat Black Loyalists as if they were slaves. In New Providence, Paul earned his living by operating a school for the children of free Negroes and slaves, and functioned as a Methodist local preacher among free and enslaved Blacks. He was ably assisted in his lay ministry by another Black Loyalist, Anthony Wallace. Between 1790 and 1793, they and a number of slaves, working in the evenings, built St. Paul's Methodist Chapel at the western extremity of the Town of Nassau, within the immediate vicinity of Christ Church. Paul also used the chapel as his schoolhouse. Ironically, Paul and Wallace appealed to William Hammett in Charleston, South

Carolina, for missionary assistance. Hammett commissioned one Mr. Johnson to New Providence; but no sooner had Johnson arrived than party factions centring around himself and Paul emerged. Paul and his supporters left the Methodists and joined the Anglican Church. If it was to Paul that William Gordon referred when he wrote:[1]

> This preacher does not baptize but brings Negroes to be baptized by the Church Minister, is a constant attendant at Church and takes the sacrament,[2]

it is not impossible for the differences between Paul and Johnson to have been exploited by John Richards, Rector of Christ Church. For by March 1793, the Anglicans had taken charge of the chapel and had begun using it as a chapel of ease to Christ Church and as a school (Bray's Associates' School) for Negroes with Paul as the school's headmaster.

Whether or not the dispute between Paul and Johnson was in any way reflective of that between Hammett and Thomas Coke is not easy to determine. In 1791, Hammett was taken from Jamaica to Charleston by Coke for health reasons. It was expected that Hammett would return to Jamaica on regaining his health. Instead, Hammett became a fierce opponent of Coke and set up his own Primitive Methodist Church.[3] Hammett was especially opposed to episcopacy and Coke's desire for re-unification with the Church of England.

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[1]The writer is of the opinion that Gordon was referring to Joseph Paul. Paul was probably adhering to the then official Methodist position that the Sacraments should always be administered in the church by Church-ordained ministers. American Methodism tended to take another view, partly through hostility to British official position and to Anglicanism.

[2]Gordon to Porteus, op. cit.

[3] Vide Norman W. Taggart, *The Irish in World Methodism 1760-1900,* Epworth Press, 1986, p. 11.

Wallace remained with the Johnson faction; and to replace Paul, Hammett sent out one Mr. Rushton. However, the Bahamian Methodist community was not much helped by Johnson and Rushton, the one because of his marital problems and the other because of his frequent intoxication. It was this situation, no doubt, which led the fledgling Methodist society to appeal to Thomas Coke for assistance. Dr. Coke caused the plight of the Bahamian Methodists to be brought before the Manchester Methodist Conference of 1799. This resulted in William Turton, a Barbadian Wesleyan Minister, being sent as a missionary to The Bahamas in 1800, and Bahamian Methodists being brought under the English Conference.

Turton arrived in Nassau on 22nd October, 1800. After obtaining a licence to preach from Governor Dowdeswell, he set about evangelizing slaves in the eastern district of New Providence. Within the first three years of his ministry, the professing Methodists had increased by c. 200, including Turton's first white convert who, in 1803, became his wife. His ministry among the slaves convinced him of the need for direct Methodist involvement in education, if only that slave converts might participate fully in Methodist worship which, from the liturgical perspectives of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, differed little from the 1662 Prayer Book services of the Anglican Church. Bahamian Methodism was a 'religion with letters.' By 1803, he had both a Sabbath School and a Day School. His wife was of great assistance to him in the establishment of the latter which he operated as a source of revenue both for himself personally and for the furtherance of the Methodist cause.

In 1804, Turton appealed to the Methodist Conference for a second missionary to be sent to The Bahamas. The Conference sent John Rutledge who arrived in November of that year. Leaving Rutledge in New Providence, Turton began to focus on Eleuthera, including Harbour Island, where the ratio of whites to blacks was 2:1. Under the Education Act of 1772, schools were established in Harbour Island and in Rock Sound, Eleuthera. This notwithstanding, Turton was able to establish a school at Rock Sound for the purpose of supplying himself with an income.

In March 1812, another Methodist Missionary, William Dowson, was sent to The Bahamas. By this time, there were some 505 Methodists in The Bahamas, of whom 360 were in Eleuthera; and the three missionaries were stationed as follows: Turton returned to New Providence, Rutledge was sent to Harbour Island with additional responsibility for North Eleuthera, and Dowson was sent to South Eleuthera with additional responsibility for Central Eleuthera. 1812 was also the year of The Bahamas' first Methodists Conference which was held in Rock Sound.

Rutledge's ministry occasioned both embarrassment and expansion for Methodism in The Bahamas. This was partially due to his wife who was an Eleutheran slave owner who refused to liberate her slaves. In 1807, the British Conference forbade preachers to marry women who owned slaves.[4]

As a result of the New Providence whites' response to his preaching, Rutledge formed an exclusively white Society Class. This was the genesis of racial segregation in

[4] Ibid., p. 157.

Bahamian Methodism, which lasted well into the twentieth century. It followed the Methodist advance in predominantly white communities such as those on Eleuthera, Harbour Island, and Abaco where blacks and whites not only sat in separate aisles during worship but also entered the church through racially designated doors. It also affected Methodist education, for the colony's only racially segregated schools during our period were Methodist.

Mrs. Rutledge had the support of her husband in her refusal to liberate her slaves. As a result, the British Conference eliminated Rutledge from its list of missionaries, and in 1815 replaced him with Joseph Ward. Ward was stationed in Green Turtle Cay, Abaco, a predominantly white community, at the invitation of some twenty four families.

Meanwhile the Methodists continued their ministry among the slaves, including those of William Wylly, in New Providence. They were sorely handicapped in 1816, however, as a result of the Barbadian slave rebellion. Practically all Colonial Legislatures reacted to this slave uprising. Regarding the evangelization of the slaves as a causative agent, the Bahamian Government enacted legislation forbidding Dissenters to conduct classes and engage in acts of worship between the hours of sunset and sunrise. Being obliged to discontinue their weekday services, the Methodists responded by beginning their Sunday with a 6:00 am Prayer Meeting and by ending at 4:00 p.m. with Worship Service and Sermon. Sabbath Schools were held on Sunday at 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. A notable response on the part of the Methodists, through the initiative of the Conference in 1817, was the introduction of

Sunday Schools into The Bahamas. This initiative was followed throughout the British West Indies.

In 1832, Rev. Charles Penny initiated a Methodist ministry among African recaptives and their descendants in Grant's Town, New Providence. Initially prayer meetings were held twice weekly in 'Brother Ward's house.' In 1839 Governor Cockburn granted a plot of land in Grant's Town for the erection of a Methodist Chapel which, from 1847, was called Wesley Methodist Chapel. During the same year, one Robert Bell deeded an adjacent piece of property to the Methodists for the erection of a schoolroom. What is particularly significant about this Chapel is that it was the second Negro Methodist Chapel in The Bahamas, and the first such under the English Conference of Methodists.

By 1834, the Methodists had a total of five Circuits, viz. New Providence, Harbour Island, Eleuthera, Abaco, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. It also had 18 Sabbath Schools, 38 teachers, and an enrollment of 573 children. Additionally, it had a Day School at Harbour Island for children.[5]

By 1870, the Methodists had begun to focus on higher education for the white elite. In January, 1871, they established the Bahama Collegiate Institution which had three departments, viz. Young Men's, Young Ladies' and Preparatory. The Young Men's Department had a most impressive curriculum which included:

Writing and English Composition, Elocution, Arithmetic, Bookkeeping, Algebra, Euclid, Trigonometry, English Language, French, Latin, Greek, German, Geography, Natural Philosophy,

[5]Colbert Williams, *The Methodist Contribution to Education in The Bahamas,* Alan Sutton, p. 148.

Optics, Astronomy, Elementary Chemistry, Botany and Physiology, Geology, Ancient and Modern History, Mental and Moral Science, including Logic and Political Economy.[6]

This educational programme was intended to prepare young men for commercial life in The Bahamas, and to obviate the necessity for any of them to go either to England or North America "in order to become eligible for Academic honours and Civil Service Competitive Examinations."[7]

The course of instruction for the young ladies more than adequately prepared them for their role in nineteenth century Bahamian society. Indeed it was progressive. It included:

English, French, Latin, Arithmetic, Elementary Euclid and Algebra, Ancient and Modern History, Writing and Composition, Elementary Chemistry, Botany, Geology and Animal Physiology, Drawing, and Music [for which latter there was an extra charge].[8]

The Preparatory Department was co-educational, and was intended to be a feeder for the Male and Female Departments.

In 1890, the Bahama Collegiate Institution was replaced by Queen's College, another exclusively white Methodist school, which was established in memory of the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Like its predecessor, it had three Departments -Young Men's, Young Ladies' and Preparatory. The curricula of the two Senior Departments included:

English in all its branches, Mathematics, the Classics, French, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Drawing, and Music.[9]

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[6]*The Nassau Guardian And Bahama Islands' Advocate And Intelligencer*, January 4, 1871.
[7]Ibid.
[8]Ibid.

Queen's College continued to function as a racially segregated institution until well into the second half of the twentieth century.

(2) The Baptists

During our period, there were two types of Baptists in The Bahamas, viz. the 'Native' Baptists and the 'Mission' Baptists. The former were pioneered by the Black Loyalists Amos Williams and Sharper Morris, the run away slave Sambo Scriven,[10] and the slave Frank Spence. The latter were associated with the Baptist Missionary Society which began its work in The Bahamas in 1833, under the leadership of Joseph Burton.

Initially there were two Baptist missions in New Providence -one under Williams and the other led by Spence. Morris went as far south as the Turks and Caicos Islands and started a mission there, after which he returned to New Providence. By 1791, Williams' group comprised three hundred members.[11]

Williams died in 1799, and was succeeded by his son Prince. In 1815, however, Prince went to Harbour Island to escape from his nagging wife, leaving Bethel Baptist Chapel in the care of Scriven. By this time Scriven was an old man whose health was failing. In 1816 the Society of Anabaptists asked Prince to return to Bethel. A few years after Prince had returned Scriven died, and a dispute occurred between Prince

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[9]*The Nassau Guardian And Bahama Islands' Advocate And Intelligencer,* January 4, 1890.
[10]cf. the advertisement in *The Bahama Gazette, August 6, 1785,* where a reward of $2.00 was offered for the apprehension of the Negro, Sambo [Scriven], who allegedly escaped from St. Augustine, some nine months previously. Scriven obtained his freedom in 1790.

and the trustees because the trustees had refused to pay Scriven's burial expenses. The dispute was further complicated when Prince was accused of adultery. Two factions resulted, viz. Prince and his followers who were obliged to leave Bethel, and the trustee Archibald Parker and his supporters who took charge of the Chapel. In 1832 the trustees of Bethel Chapel made a settlement of seventy pounds and sixteen shillings to Prince and his followers as compensation for their interest in the property of Bethel Chapel. Prince used the money to purchase a plot of land some three hundred yards west of Bethel, where he built St. John's Native Baptist Church.[12] Meanwhile the Bethel group made representation to BMS in Jamaica for pastoral assistance.

In January, 1833, BMS sent Joseph Burton to New Providence. In November 1833, BMS sent another missionary, Kilner Pearson, to The Bahamas. They attempted to reconcile the two Baptist groups by officiating at St. John's on Sunday mornings, at Bethel on Sunday afternoons, and in the Courthouse on Sunday evenings. In April 1834, they began reorganizing both groups along BMS lines. In July of that year the missionaries had become co-trustees as well as pastors of Bethel Baptist Chapel. Prince refused to allow them any such status in St. John's Native Baptist Chapel.

In 1835, Burton built Zion Baptist Chapel, after which Bethel and Zion were considered one congregation -the one being called the Old Chapel and the other the New Chapel. This did not preclude 'native' preachers from performing at Bethel,

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[11]Vide "Letters showing the Rise and Progress of the Early Negro Churches of Georgia and the West Indies" in *The Journal of Negro History,* Carter G. Woodson ed., Vol. I, 1916, The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., Lancaster, PA. and Washington, D. C., 1916, pp. 69-92.
[12]Vide Antonia Canzoneri, *The History of Bethel Baptist Church,* unpublished paper.

though they had no preaching privileges at Zion. Burton also opened an Infant School at Zion, and built a chapel in Grant's Town.

Between 1837 and 1839 BMS' work in The Bahamas encountered certain setbacks, due to the apparent lack of interest on the part of its missionaries T. Applegate and T. Leaver. The Infant School was discontinued, the chapel in Grant's Town was disbanded, and the Sunday attendance at Bethel and Zion began to fall off.

In 1840, BMS sent Henry Capern to The Bahamas where he ministered until 1857. Capern is most noted for his role, alongside of the Presbyterians and the Methodists, in challenging the Anglican control of public education, and his cooperation with the Presbyterians in *The Burial Ground Question.* How embarrassed he would have been, had he been pastor some two decades later when the Baptists were embroiled in a dispute among themselves over Zion members' burial rights in Bethel's burial ground!

Capern was succeeded by John Davey. It was during his pastorate that Bethel Baptist Chapel left BMS and allied itself with St. John's Native Baptists. The circumstances which gave rise to this came as a result of the hurricane of 1866 when Bethel Chapel was destroyed. Davey was on leave in England at the time, and the trustees made representation to the Bahamian Legislature for financial assistance with the rebuilding of their chapel. The Legislature was sympathetic and voted the sum of two hundred pounds for the cause. Davey was irate and refused to accept the money, quite probably because of the plight of the Bahamian economy, and because he was about to join the forces which were agitating for the disestablishment and disendowment of

the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches. The trustees, however, were more concerned with the rebuilding of their chapel and accepted the money. What started out as a conflict of principles between Davey and the trustees of Bethel had developed into a feud between the congregations of Bethel and Zion. The trustees of Bethel went so far as to forbid the burial of Zion's members in Bethel's cemetery. Davey took the matter to the law court and won. He went on to join the Presbyterians and the Methodists in agitating for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches. They were successful.

The Mission Baptists, though concerned about the Anglican monopoly on the colony's public education system, did not themselves engage in education to any appreciable degree. Had Burton's initiative in the formation of an Infant School been followed through by his successors, the story might have been different. This notwithstanding, both groups of Baptists made great strides in evangelizing the black masses. While no statistics are available for the Native Baptists, it is alleged that, in 1860, there were Mission Baptist Chapels on eighteen of the Bahamian Islands and that one third of the entire Bahamian population was Mission Baptist.[13] However, Burlingham's estimate regarding the membership of the Mission Baptists conflicts with statistics found in the BMS's centenary report which states that the membership numbered 2,743 in 1862, and 5,089 in 1888.[14]

(3) The Presbyterians

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[13]Vide A.H. Burlingham, *The Story of Baptist Missions in Foreign Lands,* St. Louis: Chancy R. Barns, 1885, p. 630.

[14] John Brown Myers ed., *The Centenary Volume of The Baptist Missionary Society 1792-1892,* second edition, published by The Baptist Missionary Society, 1892, p. 210.

There is no evidence of a Presbyterian presence in The Bahamas prior to 1783/4. With the arrival of the Loyalists, however, came a number of Scots. According to Patrick Fraser, an SPG Missionary who ministered on Long Island and Crooked Island 1793-1794, most of the Planters in The Bahamas were Scots. Fraser also reported that these Scots regularly attended Divine Worship in the Anglican Church. This was consistent with the sixteenth and seventeenth century custom of European Protestants, whether Lutheran or Calvinist, being allowed to communicate in Anglican churches in England, as of Anglicans being permitted to worship with Calvinists in France and Holland, and with Lutherans in Germany, doctrinal differences notwithstanding.

In 1798, 55 Scots organized the *St. Andrew's Society of The Bahamas* for the purpose of fostering good understanding and social intercourse among its members and relief for their indigent fellows. It was this Society, under the able leadership of Michael Malcolm who was Scottish born and only 29 years old when he migrated to The Bahamas as a Loyalist, which was responsible for the erection of the first and only Presbyterian Kirk in The Bahamas and the appointment of its first Minister, John Rae. The church's corner stone was laid on the 7th August, 1810, by which time the Society had a membership of 175 men, 125 of whom had Scottish names. While the building was under construction, Rev. Rae (who ministered during the period 1810-1815), conducted Services in the Court House in New Providence. The building was completed in 1812.

In 1824, the Kirk was established and endowed by the Bahamian Parliament, and placed under the Presbytery of Edinburgh for the purpose of obtaining ordained ministers from the Church of Scotland. In 1836, Edinburgh was unable to provide St. Andrew's with a minister, with the result that the House of Assembly passed an Act allowing ministers to be called from the Presbytery of Glasgow as well. By 1847, however, both Edinburgh and Glasgow had difficulty in supplying the Kirk with ministers; and in February of that year the Legislature passed another Act authorizing the Kirk to call ministers from any branch of the Presbyterian Church. This enabled St. Andrew's to have as one of its most able, civic and ecumenically minded ministers, Robert Dunlop, an Irishman from Belfast.

Dunlop continued as Minister of the Kirk until his death in 1891. Like his predecessors, he made no effort to evangelize the blacks. Being ecumenically minded, he did not deem it necessary to rival the Baptists, Anglicans, Methodists and the Roman Catholics (who only became active towards the end of our period) in this regard. Prior to his arrival in 1865, it was customary for white Methodist and Baptist Ministers to officiate and preach in the Kirk when it had no minister of its own. A notable opportunity for the Presbyterians to reciprocate occurred in 1869 when Dunlop officiated at the dedication ceremony of the new Bethel Baptist church, the original structure having been destroyed by the hurricane of 1866.

For Dunlop, people were more important than property, and satisfying the needs of the indigent took precedence over the adornment of church property. This was demonstrated in a convincing way in 1888 when he dissuaded his compatriot,

William Kirkwood, who was then ailing, from leaving in his will a large sum of money to the Kirk for the purpose of erecting a clock tower and clock as a gift to the city of Nassau. He convinced Kirkwood that he should set up a Trust Fund for indigent old ladies instead. The Fund was established under the trusteeship of the Minister of the Kirk, the Rector of Christ Church, and a layman of their choosing. When the it became operative, twenty five women were able to receive annuities in the amount of twenty four pounds each.

The Kirk operated no schools, but Dunlop worked tirelessly as a member of the Board of Education, as a trustee of the Nassau Public Library and Reading Room, and as President of the Bahamas Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Kirk's non-black membership during our period could be indicative of a racist posture on the part of the church. It could also bespeak the clannish nature of Scottish Bahamians. There can be no doubt, however, that it was genuinely interested in equality across denominational lines, quality education which was not encumbered by denominational teaching for all Bahamian children, and the separation of the powers of Church and State.

(4) The Roman Catholics

Although Roman Catholics can trace their involvement in The Bahamas to 1837 when Pope Gregory XVI divided the British West Indies into three vicariates apostolic and made The Bahamas a part of the vicariate apostolic of Jamaica, it was only with the transference of The Bahamas to the Diocese of Charleston in 1858 and to the Archdiocese of New York in 1885 that their ministry among Bahamians began

to germinate. The Royal Victoria Hotel, built by the Bahamian Government in 1861, was a timely venue. For the American Civil War had just started, and Roman Catholics were among the Southerners who flocked to The Bahamas between 1861 and 1865. Provision was made for Roman Catholic Masses to be celebrated in the Royal Victoria Hotel on a regular basis. The end of the American Civil War in 1865, the devastating hurricane of 1866, and the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church in 1869 proved most opportune for the Romans as The Bahamas was eventually transferred from the financially embarrassed Diocese of Charleston to the more affluent Archdiocese of New York. Material assistance in the form of foodstuff for the poor was a fitting precursor of Roman Catholic sponsored education. This was augmented by Catholic Ritual which was particularly appealing to the black masses. Furthermore, between 1873 and 1895, the Colony had two Governors who were Roman Catholic, viz. John Pope-Hennessy (1873-74) and Ambrose Shea (1887-95).

In November, 1886, the first Roman Catholic church structure, St. Francis Xavier, was consecrated. In October, 1889, the Sisters of Charity set up a Convent in Nassau and functioned as missionaries. On 4th November, 1889, they opened St. Francis Xavier parish school as a free school for poor children; and in January, 1890, they began using a part of their Convent as an Academy (the Academy of St. Francis Xavier). The Academy had three departments -Senior, Junior and Primary. It was primarily a school for young ladies, though separate classes were provided for boys

under the age of ten years; and its course of instruction included the various elementary courses and all the higher branches of a "finished education."[15]

In February, 1891, St. Francis got its first resident parish priest -Chrysostom Schreiner, O.S.B. At this time St. Francis had a membership of seventy persons. By 1906, Fr. Chrysostom reported that the Roman Catholic Mission in The Bahamas comprised three Benedictine Fathers, nine Sisters of Charity, one Academy, three free schools catering to 470 pupils, and a total Catholic population of 360 members.[16]

The establishment of a permanent Roman Catholic presence in The Bahamas was vigorously opposed by Robert Love, a black Anglican Bahamian priest from Grant's Town, who distinguished himself as an educator, a pastor, a medical doctor, a missionary, a journalist and a social activist. Although he never served as priest in The Bahamas, having migrated to Jacksonville in 1869, and having served in the U S, Haiti, and Jamaica, he loved his country. In his book, *Romanism Is Not Christianity* which he dedicated to his mentor, James H Fisher, Rector of St. Agnes' Parish, he complained:

> It is with pain and alarm that I learned, not long since, that an effort was being made to introduce Romanism into the colony, and that a church had even been erected on her sacred soil. Romanism is a danger of gigantic proportions.[17]

Love's anti-Roman Catholic stance was informed by his vast knowledge of Church history and his proficiency in New Testament studies. He considered the 1870 Roman definition of Papal Infallibility particularly objectionable.

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[15]*The Nassau Guardian And Bahama Islands' Advocate And Intelligencer,* January 4, 1890.
[16]Vide Patricia Glinton-Meicholas, *From The Void To The Wonderful,* Guanima Press, Nassau Bahamas, 1995, p. 30.

Through its nascent free elementary school system, the Romans began to emerge as a contender for the youth in New Providence. Stressing the role which the Woodcock Foundation Schools could play in staying this impending advance, Fisher said,

> It is of great importance that the Woodcock Foundation Schools should be carried on with as great efficiency as possible, as the Roman Catholics have established free schools, and are doing all they can, and offering every inducement, in the way of prizes, entertainment, and gifts, to entice the children into them.[18]

Commending the success of the Woodcock Schools a few years later, he said,

> The schools continue their work of usefulness. I find them a great help in keeping poor children who belong to the Church of England from straying away to the Roman Catholic free schools recently set up, to which they are enticed by frequent entertainment, prizes, gifts of clothing etc., and by the smiles of the nuns.[19]

What the Anglican leadership found especially objectionable was the Roman claim to be *the Catholic Church.* Responding to this claim, Edward T Churton said in a charge to Diocesan Synod,

> The Roman Catholics, the latest comers of all, and for the present a small body, are yet very powerfully supported from America, and are bound on principle to be aggressive. I would only say the fewest words about these new neighbours. First, then, let us always respect and love them for their goodness: and next, let us resist their claims to the utmost. They are active in all manner of good works, but we must regret that they have come, however conscientiously, to enter into conflict with what alone is, by right, the Catholic Church in the Bahamas.[20]

Cognizant of the Church's growth and development during the period from Bishop Venables' episcopate to that of his own, he continued,

> Thirty years after the consecration of Bishop Venables, we are not to be told that our mission to these islands is a sham, and that our work needs to be undone from the beginning.[21]

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[17]Joseph Robert Love, *Romanism Is Not Christianity,* Boston, 1892, Dedication page.
[18]*Annual Reports, Vol. XI, 1887-92, Ms. 15,718,* Colonial and Continental Church Society.
[19]Ibid.
[20]E T Churton, *The Last Seven Years,* London, J Masters and Co., 1893, p. 19.

Churton was satisfied that the Anglican Church was truly Catholic. He was also convinced of the Church's divine mandate to make disciples, baptise in God's name, and teach,[22] a commission which he himself had taken very seriously indeed.[23]

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[21]Ibid.
[22]Cf. Mtt. 28:19f.
[23]E T Churton, op. cit., p. 5.; and *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas,* London, J Masters and Co., 1888, p. 34f.

Chapter Four

Slavery in The Bahamas 1784-1834

Slave-owning Loyalists who migrated to The Bahamas took their slaves with them. However, the exact number of slaves, as distinct from Black Loyalists, is unknown, for no rigid distinction was then made between slaves and free Negroes. According to an estimate which was given by a Committee of the House of Assembly in April 1789, The Bahamas had a total population of 11,300 persons in 1787. There were 3,300 whites and 8,000 blacks. According to the same report, there were 2,300 blacks in 1784 (before the arrival of Loyalists' slaves).[1] This means, therefore, that the number of Negro immigrants (slaves and Black Loyalists) between 1784 and 1787 was 5,700. In view of the SPG report that there were 500 free Negroes in The Bahamas at the beginning of 1790,[2] the Loyalists could have brought some 5,300 to 5,400 slaves with them.

The Bahamian Negro population, slave and free, originated from the following West African groups: the Fulani, Hausa, "Congoes," Yoruba, Mandinka, "Koromantyn," and Igbo.[3]

There were five triennial slave registration returns made between 1822 and 1834, viz. 1822, 1825, 1828, 1831, and 1834.[4] A sixth complete slave census, made in July 1834

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[1]Report of the Committee of the House of Assembly appointed to take into consideration the state of the Bahama Islands. *Votes of the House of Assembly 1787-1794,* 28th April, 1789, p. 125.
[2]*Classified Digest of the Records of the SPG* ... p. 221.
[3]Vide: *CO 23/79/27-653; Living in the Sun, A Brief History of The African Tribes Who came to The Bahamas,* published by The Coloured League of Youth, American Book, Stratford Press, Inc., 1939; and Michael Craton, *A History of The Bahamas,* Collins, 1962, p. 178.

for the purpose of compensating slave owners, includes information about the slaves' employment.[5]

By 1822, Bahamian slaves had already exhibited most of the characteristics of a healthy and stable population. The overall birth rate of slaves in 1822 so exceeded the death rate as to ensure a population healthily expanding by natural increase. The crude annual birth rate seems to have been about 27 *per* 1,000, or 56 *per* 1,000 females, and 193 *per* 1,000 females aged between 15 and 45 years, compared with the natural decreases being as high as 25 *per* 1,000 in the sugar Colonies. It was more the comparatively low mortality rate in The Bahamas than the relatively healthy birth rate that led to this substantial natural increase. The mortality rates for Bahamian slaves in all age groups were lower than those for practically all other Caribbean slaves, except that the rate of survival beyond working age seems to have been little, if any, higher for The Bahamas than elsewhere. The rate of survival for Africans in The Bahamas in 1822 was notably higher than in the Southern Caribbean largely because so few had been imported in the years immediately preceding 1807, and those Africans who had already survived to the age of sixty had a greater life expectancy than had the Creoles of that age group. Overall, the life expectancy at birth for Bahamian slaves in 1822 was about 40 years, and on reaching the age of 5 it was about 50 years. These figures compared favourably with 25 and 35 years respectively in Jamaica around that time.

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[4]Slave registration was imposed on the Crown Colonies of Trinidad, British Guiana, and St. Lucia in 1812, and most self-legislating West Indian Colonies were pressured into passing their own slave registration laws by 1817. However, the Bahamian Legislature resisted the implementation of an effective system of slave registration until 1822.
[5]Vide Tables 2 & 3.

The balance of the Bahamian slave population between 1822 and 1834 was affected by four extraneous factors: the last wave of slave trans-shipment between 1822 and 1825, the crescendo of manumissions, exportation, and death (mainly among aged Africans).

Ninety seven slaves were imported into The Bahamas between March 1808 and January 1815, and twenty four were imported between January 1815 and March 1825.[6] Four slaves were imported between 1828 and 1834. These imports were for the purpose of salt-raking in the Turks and Caicos Islands, and constituted the last slave imports into The Bahamas.

Slaves in The Bahamas were manumitted as early as 1733.[7] Between 1774 and 1784, in excess of 600 slaves were manumitted. However, the rapid increase in the size of the black population resulting from the arrival of the Loyalists and their slaves was a matter of great concern to Governor Maxwell and the old minority white settlers. In 1784, therefore, an *Act for governing Negroes, Mulattoes, Mustees and Indians*[8] was passed requiring manumitters to pay a fee of ninety pounds *per* slave manumitted. Yet between 1807 and 1834 some 935 slaves were manumitted. This was facilitated by two principal factors, viz. the decline of cotton, and the passage of the Consolidated Slave Act of 1826 when the tax was replaced with an eight-shilling enrolment fee. With the decline of cotton in 1815, the cost of manumission was

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[6]D. Eltis, "The Traffic in Slaves between the British West Indian Colonies 1807-1833, *Economic History Review,* Series 2, XXV, No. 1, February 1972, pp. 55-64.
[7]*Register of Freed Slaves 18th and 19th Century,* Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas.
[8]24 Geo III c. 1. *Manuscript Laws 172901792,* pp. 115-117. Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas.

reduced to five shillings, i.e. the cost of recording the instrument of manumission.[9] In the case of the 1826 Act, 235 slaves were manumitted between 1827 and 1830; and 339 were manumitted between 1831 and 1834.[10]

The decline of the cotton industry also effected the exportation of slaves to other British West Indian Colonies. This was the principal cause of the decline in the slave population by 1823 when a total of 2,229 slaves were transported as follows:

Colony	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	Total
Jamaica									
Males	50	57	37	58	0	28	99	0	328
Females	45	48	34	56	1	16	121	0	321
St Vincent									
Males	0	280	3	0	0	2	0	0	285
Females	0	244	11	0	0	3	0	0	258
Trinidad									
Males	0	0	59	18	0	76	15	62	230
Females	0	0	77	14	0	106	20	61	278
Demerara									
Males	0	0	0	0	0	49	49	116	214
Females	0	0	0	0	0	53	51	113	217
Grenada									
Males	0	23	18	0	0	0	0	0	41
Females	0	35	13	0	0	0	0	0	48
Bermuda									
Males	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Females	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Antigua									
Males	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Females	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Barbados									
Males	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Females	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Males	50	360	124	76	0	155	163	178	1,106
Total Females	45	327	136	70	1	178	192	174	1,123
Total Slaves	95	687	260	146	1	333	355	352	2,229

Source: CO 23/72, 25, and 23/75, 50-52.

Between 1822 and 1825 there were 962 slave deaths in The Bahamas. These deaths occurred mainly among aging Africans the majority of whom were in the Turks and Caicos Islands, New Providence, Long Island, and Cat Island.

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[9]Grant to Bathurst, No. 6, February 1823, *CO 23/72.*

Because of these losses, the total Bahamian slave population fell from 10,705 in 1822 to 9,233 in 1825. Over the remaining nine years of the registration period when exportation was disallowed, it climbed again to a little more than 10,000, but at a rate increasingly slowed by manumissions.[11]

While the number of African slaves fell from 1,900 to 938, or from 20.7% of the total Bahamian slave population to 9.4%, the predominantly Creole slave population experienced a steadily rising crude birth rate: 27.3 *per* 1,000 between 1822 and 1824; 32.5 *per* 1,000 between 1825 and 1827; 37.3 *per* 1,000 between 1828 and 1830; and 44.6 *per* 1,000 between 1831 and 1834. With the crude death rate holding steadily at an average of about 13.4 *per* 1,000 between 1822 and 1834, this led to rates of natural increase rising steadily from 14 *per* 1,000 in 1822-24 to 19 *per* 1,000 in 1825-27, and from 24 *per* 1,000 in 1828-30 to 32 *per* 1,000 in 1831-34. Natural increase was aided both by comparatively low mortality rates among infants, children, and young adults, and by the highest fertility rates yet achieved. This, in turn, was aided by the general swing to a preponderance of females who, by that time, had outnumbered males by 103 to 100 overall, and by 110 to 100 in the age range between 15 and 45 years. Consequently, the annual birth rate was now roughly 35 *per* 1,000 for the entire slave population, 70 *per* 1,000 females, and 233 *per* 1,000 females aged 15 to 45 years.

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[10]*Register of Freed Slaves, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century, and Register of Return of Slaves, 1822-1834,* Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas.

[11]*Register of Freed Slaves, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century, and Register of Returns of Slaves, 1822-1834,* Department of Archives, Nassau, Bahamas. Also D. Gail Saunders, op. cit., pp. 68-76.

The overall Bahamian slave population at the time of emancipation was thus extremely stable, healthy and young, with no less than 40% being under the age of 13 years.

Compared with the Sugar Colonies, Bahamian slave holdings were nearly all of modest size, with even the largest of them being split between different locations. This reflected the eventual decline of the cotton plantations, which was due to soil exhaustion and the chenille bug. By 1834, there were only 24 Bahamian holdings of more than 50 slaves. These accounted for 25.6% of the total Bahamian slave population, compared with the 80% of Jamaican slaves in holdings of similar minimum size. There were only nine Bahamian holdings of more than 100 slaves in 1834, and only one equal in size to any of the top 100 Jamaican sugar plantations.[12] Lord Rolle had 330 slaves in Exuma in 1834, but they were divided among his five plantations.

There were 32 Bahamian holdings of between 31 and 50 slaves each in 1834, accounting for 11.8% of the slave total. But almost half of all Bahamian slaves (4,834, or 48.4%) were found in 402 holdings of from six to 30 slaves, with nearly 2,000 (19.1%) in 238 holdings of from six to ten slaves. Only the largest of these modest groupings constituted the labour force of what may be termed a true plantation. The majority were employed in smaller enterprises belonging to petty farmers, salt rakers, boat captains, shipbuilders, log cutters, or those who depended on their slaves' engagement in the self-hire system. The remaining 1,420 slaves (14.2%),

[12]Vide Saunders, *Slavery in The Bahamas*, p. 94.

in groups of five or fewer, were divided into no fewer than 710 holdings, averaging two slaves each. These, quite probably, were domestics.

There were 432 separate slave holdings in New Providence, of which 306 (some 43% of the Bahamian total) were in groups of five or fewer, most of whom were located in or about the town of Nassau. The slave population of New Providence was highly diversified. 75% of the New Providence slaves were found in holdings of more than five, and nearly 50% in units of more than 10. Some of the smaller units might have been families or labouring gangs working in the town, but most of the larger groups lived and worked on country plantations.

On all Bahamian Islands, some slaves were found in holdings of fewer than five, but it was on the older established islands that there was the highest proportion of smaller holdings, and on the most recently settled that the largest groups were found. While Eleuthera had attracted a few large holdings of slaves, on Harbour Island, though there were 104 separate slave holdings, there were none larger than 20, and an average of only 4.9 slaves *per* holding. By contrast, on Cat Island, there were only 27 slave holdings, but 14 of these were of more than 10 slaves, with an overall average of 24.2 slaves *per* holding.

In New Providence, Eleuthera, Harbour Island and Abaco combined, there were 4,470 slaves in 769 holdings averaging 5.8 slaves, whereas in the remainder of The Bahamas the 5,519 slaves were divided among only 389 holdings averaging 14.2 slaves each.

Slave registration returns recognised seven slave work categories besides the *nil* which designated slaves under the age of six years or too old or too sick to work, and the very small categories of *sundry* and *unknown.* The seven actual work categories were domestics, field labourers, mariners, salt labourers, drivers and overseers, nurses and midwives, and tradesmen and craftsmen. In order to place a more exact valuation on Bahamian slaves, the 1834 compensation computation refined the categories further by placing all slaves into three general categories, viz. praedial attached (for those agricultural and salt labourers directly attached to an estate), praedial unattached, and nonpraedial (many of whom, like the praedial unattached, might be hired out rather than directly employed by their owners), and by distinguishing between superior and inferior domestics, labourers, mariners and tradesmen/craftsmen.

Though a few of the wealthiest whites employed indentured white servants as butlers or ladies' maids, practically all Bahamian domestics were slaves, the vast majority of whom were black, unlike their domestic counterparts in the Sugar Colonies. Male domestics, who constituted less than 25% of all domestics, included butlers, waiters, coachmen, and grooms. Female domestics were waitresses, maids, laundresses, or cooks. Eight out of nine in the category of nurses and midwives were black rather than mulattoes. The returns listed fourteen males in this category. Nurses, apart from the few who had specific medical duties, included wet nurses and childminders some of whom were themselves very young.

Both the poorer Bahamian whites and the slaves were employed in marine activities and the crafts, though few whites were in subordinate positions. 'Tradesmen' included a large number of slave carpenters and boatbuilders. Also included in that category were blacksmiths, masons, sawyers, coopers, mechanics, basket makers, seamstresses, wine and liquor corker, and sugar makers. The eleven slaves listed in the 'sundry' category included watchmen and warehousemen. Those slaves who worked on the wharves were lumped together with actual mariners, and most slave mariners were generally engaged "in vessels wrecking, wood cutting, droughing (i.e. coastal and/or inter-Island transportation), fishing and turtleing."[13] Distinctions were sometimes made among ordinary sailors, fishermen, droughers, and the mariner elite - the pilots. Several mariners were also listed as shipbuilders, and on Cat Island slaves combined seagoing with specialised pigeon shooting.

All labourers were slaves, the overwhelming majority of whom were black. Males marginally outnumbered females (by 1,778 to 1,722, in 1834). Virtually all of the head labourers were black, and in 1834, all but one were males. Distinctions were rarely made among the agricultural labourers, though the returns did make a distinction between salt labourers and other rural labourers. Full-time work at the salt pans was both harder and less healthy than the normal type of Bahamian agricultural labour. This would explain the marked differences in demographic patterns and performance between the predominantly agricultural islands and those, like the Turks and Caicos, which were almost entirely devoted to salt production.

[13]Vide Saunders, *Slave Population in The Bahamas,* p. 254.

The slave population differing most from New Providence was that of the Turks and Caicos Islands where almost 50% of the population was listed as engaged in salt production. For example, whereas New Providence, Eleuthera and Exuma reflected annual gross birth and death rates which varied from 30.2 and 17.6 *per* 1,000 to 41.1 and 8.1 *per* 1,000, and 40.4 and 7.8 *per* 1,000 respectively over the registration period, the statistics for the Turks and Caicos Islands over the same period indicated an imbalance of sexes and ages, and annual gross birth and death rates of only 24 and 21.6 *per* 1,000. The annual net increase of 2.4 *per* 1,000 was 19.2 *per* 1,000 below the Bahamian average, and 37.5 *per* 1,000 below the rate for Abaco which was the island with the most rapidly rising rate of natural increase in The Bahamas during that period. With the exception of Barbados, however, the demographic performance even of the Turks and Caicos Island slaves was superior to that of any of the Sugar Colonies. Jamaica, e.g., which developed as a Sugar Colony several generations after Barbados, had only 60,000 Africans (or 20%) among its 311,000 slaves in 1834. Yet Jamaican slaves as a whole could achieve an annual birth rate of only 23.3 *per* 1,000, and suffered a gross death rate of 28.3 *per* 1,000, for a net annual decrease of 5 *per* 1,000. Aykroyd interprets the Jamaican situation as indicative of sugar slavery's wastefulness of human life both by shortening it, on the one hand, and by not encouraging births, on the other.[14] However, Barry Higman, who actually supplied the Jamaican statistics, cautions that they are reflective of registered births only, and that "there was a good deal of under-registration among children less than two months old."[15] Yet, as Craton argues, the general health factors that led to high general mortality, extremely high infant mortality, and a catastrophic level of miscarriages of

[14]W.R. Aykroyd, *Sweet Malefactor: Slavery and Human Society*, London, 1967, passim.

various kinds were among the chief reasons why it was so difficult for populations of sugar plantations such as Worthy Park [Jamaica] to increase naturally.[16]

The healthy demographic performance of the Bahamian slave population was due in no small measure to the geography and climate of the archipelago, and to the diet and lifestyle of the slaves. As the abolitionist, James Stephen, noted in 1824:

> The planters, unable for the most part to find any article of exportable produce, were obliged to employ their slaves in raising provisions and stock. What were the results? To the proprietors, distress enough I admit, and to many of them ruin; to the slaves, the effects have been ease, plenty, health, and the preservation and increase of their numbers by native means, all in a degree quite beyond example in any other part of the West Indies.[17]

The lifestyle of Bahamian slaves is best illustrated by reference to the plantations of Charles Farquharson, Denys Rolle, and William Wylly respectively.

Charles Farquharson's Plantation

The only original account of slave life written on a Bahamian plantation is that found in the journal of Charles Farquharson, a Loyalist of Scottish descent. The journal covers the period 1st January, 1831, to 31st December, 1832. It was edited by the Deans Peggs Research Fund in 1957 and entitled *A Relic of Slavery. Farquharson's Journal for 1831-1832.*

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[15]B.W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1834.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 116, 47-48.

[16]Michael Craton, Hobbesian or Panglossian? The Two Extremes of Slave Conditions in the British Caribbean, 1783-1834, *The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. XXXV, Numbers 1-4,* p. 345.

In 1803, Farquharson received an original Crown grant of 200 acres of land between the Great Lake and Pigeon Creek, San Salvador. He later obtained an additional 1,400 acres from the Crown. Either deserted by his wife or left a widower, he spent some thirty years in a common-law union with a coloured woman named Kitty Dixon. Locally, Kitty was referred to as Mrs. Farquharson. In his will, Farquharson referred to her as his "faithful companion." Kitty had a son, John Dixon, who was a planter. Additionally, she had five children for her common-law husband, one of whom, James, was Farquharson's chief assistant.

In 1822, Farquharson had 35 slaves of whom 13 were Africans and 22 were Creoles. Eight of the Africans were males and five were females. Among the Creoles, females outnumbered the males fourteen to eight. The average age of the Africans was 38.3 years. The average age of the Creoles was 10.9. Most of the slaves lived in nuclear family units. There was one slave, Alick [Alexander], who was polygamous. There were also a few unmarried slaves who lived alone or with friends. Some slaves had mates on other plantations. Diana, for example, was pregnant for a slave named Cuffy on John Dixon's estate. She was, therefore, allowed to marry Cuffy and live with him on Dixon's estate. A price for her sale to Dixon was to have been agreed upon at a later date.[18]

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[17]James Stephen, *The Slavery of the British West India Colonies Delineated, Vol. 1,* London, 1824, Appendix III, pp. 454-474.
[18]*A Relic of Slavery. Farquharson's Journal for 1831-1832,* copied from the original by Ormond J. McDonald, 1903. The Deans Peggs Research Fund, Nassau Bahamas, 1957, page 75.

Farquharson's slaves lived as a closely-knit group, almost as an extended family. This was demonstrated in March, 1832, when a two-day riot occurred at the plantation. James Farquharson whipped Isaac, one of the slaves, for mounting a mule "at the wrong side" and refusing "to mount at the other side" after James had ordered him so to do. Isaac's brother, Alick, a driver, angrily rebuked James for his action. After a heated exchange of words, James hit Alick and a fight ensued. The rest of the slaves, except for two old ladies and a few of the drivers, joined the fray with sticks and clubs, threatening to avenge Isaac and Alick. With the exception of an African called Peter, all of the rioters were Creoles. To quell the riot, Farquharson had to call for assistance from a neighbouring plantation. Alick, Bacchus, Peter, March, and Matilda, identified as ringleaders, were taken to New Providence and imprisoned in the workhouse. After his release, Alick was sold. Mary Ann, one of his wives, and their infant child, Eliza, were sent to New Providence and sold along with him.[19]

Ruins at Farquharson's plantation are still extant. Archaeological evidence indicates that the slaves' quarters were located about 300 yards behind the ridge on which 15 plantation buildings were erected. These structures included the master's two-storied house, eight dwelling (guest?) houses of 308 square feet each, a large two-storied barn, probably the corn house, and a cotton house. It would appear, therefore, that in respect of both work and leisure the plantation facilitated intercourse between master and slave, slave and free.

[19]Ibid., pp. 50-51.

Farquharson normally referred to his slaves as "the people," and occasionally as "the hands." He refused to drive them when they were sick, and did not require them to work in the open fields when it was rainy. Work was assigned daily except Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas, "cropover," and on occasions of funerals when slaves were allowed to leave the plantation if necessary.[20] Permission to leave the plantation in order to attend funerals was granted at least twice during the period 1831-1832. On Thursday 18th August, 1831, Farquharson reported that practically all "the people" had gone to Sandy Point to attend the funeral of Old Corker, a respected elderly African slave. On Saturday 1st December, 1832, he recorded that very little work was done because his people had gone to Polly Hill to attend the funeral of Ben Storr, another elderly slave.[21]

It would appear that Farquharson's slaves were also allowed to leave the plantation for a while at Christmas. On Wednesday 26th December, 1832, for example, he wrote:

Some of our people gone abroad to see some of their friends, but all of them at home in the evening.[22]

Farquharson's plantation was a diversified operation. It raised stock, grew large quantities of corn, peas, beans, and other vegetables though mainly for subsistence. Cotton was produced commercially, and castor oil was processed for export. The plantation produced its own lumber, thatch, rope, and salt. As elsewhere in The Bahamas, fish and other marine products were bountiful. Occasionally he sent some of his slaves to scour wrecks. In March, 1832, for example, the brig *Enterprise,* while

[20]Ibid., pp. 24, 53.
[21]Ibid., pp. 30, 80.

en route to Jamaica from Savannah, Georgia, was wrecked at Graham's Harbour, San Salvador. However, by the time Farquharson's men had arrived on the scene, all of the brig's cargo, apart from some tackle, had already been taken by slaves from Burton Williams' plantation which was nearby.

Atypical of British West Indian plantation slavery, Farquharson's slaves can be said to have been a microcosm of the Bahamian slave population generally.

Denys Rolle's Plantations

Denys Rolle, a wealthy philanthropist and a Loyalist who originated from Devonshire, England, was probably The Bahamas' only absentee plantation owner. Among other Loyalists, he migrated to The Bahamas from East Florida in 1784, taking with him some 140 slaves. He set up a plantation in Exuma where he had been given a Crown grant of 2,000 acres of land. He later acquired an additional 5,000 acres. Not long afterwards, he returned to England, leaving his plantations under the management of an overseer, Thomas Thompson, who resided at Exuma, and an attorney, John Lees, who resided in New Providence.

In 1797, Denys Rolle died. His son, John, who later became an ardent follower of William Pitt the Younger, and eventually became John Lord Rolle, inherited his Exuma plantations.

[22]Ibid., p. 83.

Between 1784 and 1834, and without any slave purchases during this period, the Rolle slaves increased from 140 to 370, of whom 325 were located in Exuma, 30 in Grand Bahama, 11 in New Providence, and eight in the Berry Islands. During this period, the number of slaves who lived in nuclear family units ranged between 86.4% and 90%. On average, their women gave birth for the first time at about age 21 years, with subsequent births occurring at intervals of three years.[23] By 1822, only about 50 of these slaves had been over the age of 40 years. The vast majority were Creoles, and miscegenation was practically nil.

With the decline of cotton, the slaves in Exuma were progressively left to their own devices, and appear to have enjoyed a relative amount of freedom and mobility. They developed their own provision grounds, tended their animals, fished, and spent an increasing amount of time attending to their own affairs.

What is particularly interesting about the Rolle slaves, however, is their collective self-will and determination, and their sense of attachment to the land. Lord Rolle often complained that his slaves had ordered their own affairs without any reference to their owner's wishes.[24] Practically from the time of Denys Rolle's death they claimed that, according to Denys Rolle's will, they should neither be sold, separated, nor severely punished. In December, 1828, for example, Governor Lewis Grant, while in the process of being transferred to Trinidad, reported to the Colonial Secretary:

There is a prevailing opinion in the Bahamas that the predecessor of Lord Rolle, who brought them [his slaves] from America to the Bahamas had provided in his Will that they should never be sold or

[23]Vide Michael Craton, 'Hobbesian or Panglossian? The Two Extremes of Slave Conditions in the British Caribbean 1783-1834,' *The William And Mary Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. XXXV, Numbers 1-4,* p. 343.
[24]*CO 295/67, 219; 295/71, 26;* and *295/78, 233-236.*

separated or otherwise severely dealt with. They themselves have this impression and, for many years, it has been much confirmed in many quarters, by the extraordinary indulgent treatment they have received in having their labour chiefly applied to their private benefit while the expense of their maintenance etc. was supplied by Lord Rolle. After such a state of things, it is not to be wondered at that they should startle at a proposal abruptly made to them by strangers.[25]

The 'proposal' to which Governor Grant referred was a report concerning Lord Rolle's intention, for economic reasons, to transfer his slaves to a more profitable colony, viz. Demerara or Trinidad. News of Lord Rolle's intention was leaked by one Munnings, a temporary agent of Lord Rolle, during the course of a visit to Exuma in 1828. This proposal had the qualified approval of Governor Grant, but it was turned down by the Colonial Office. This disallowance was quite probably influenced by James Stephen Jr., Legal Adviser to the Colonial Office, 1813-1846, and an ardent Evangelical abolitionist. After the first registration returns and inquiries had been made into slave transfer practices, the inter-colonial trade in slaves was practically terminated. By 1826, restrictions had also been placed on the movement of slaves among the Bahama Islands. The claims of the Rolle slaves were reinforced by these political developments. As a result, the slaves were prepared to plead their case against being transferred at the highest possible level. When, therefore, Lord Rolle's Attorney, John Lees, visited Exuma to inform them about their possible transfer, the response he received was unequivocally negative. They refused to be transferred even within The Bahamas.

Under the leadership of Pompey, a 38-year old black Creole slave, 44 Creole slaves, including eight women, disappeared in the woods for about five weeks after which Pompey and 11 other slaves took Lord Rolle's salt boat and sailed to New Providence

[25]Lewis Grant (on board HMS Barham en route to Trinidad), 27th December, 1828, *CO 23/78, 182.*

to plead their case before Governor John Carmichael Smyth. On arrival, and to the chagrin of the Governor, they were apprehended, put into the workhouse, and severely whipped. The Governor ordered their release. They were allowed to return to Exuma, and were assured that they and their followers would not be transferred. On their return to Exuma, they were given a hero's welcome by their comrades who, as a sign of protest at the whipping of the twelve, refused to work and armed themselves with muskets in readiness to fight. Fearing a rebellion, Thomas Thompson requested assistance from New Providence. The Governor commissioned 50 regular soldiers under the command of Captain McPherson who initiated a search of the slaves' quarters and recovered 25 muskets and a small amount of gunpowder. Having arrested the slaves concerned and confiscated the ammunition, the soldiers set off for Rolleville five miles away. On their arrival, they found that Pompey had taken a short cut via the beach and forewarned his fellow slaves who absconded into the bush. Their quarters were searched and a few muskets were found. Pompey was eventually captured and whipped again. The slaves then agreed to return to work. They refused to work more than half days, however, insisting that they had to use the afternoons to attend to their own business.

William Wylly's Plantations

William Wylly's slaves in New Providence afford us another, though not wholly dissimilar, perspective on Bahamian slavery. In this case, rank paternalism was the norm and slave life was benevolently, but forcefully, regulated.

Wylly had three plantations in New Providence, viz. Clifton, Tusculum, and Waterloo. The latter two were used for stock-raising. Clifton was used for the cultivation of corn and market produce.

In 1810, Wylly had 40 slaves. By 1818, they had increased naturally to 67, 75% of whom lived at Clifton. Besides three drivers, the only men who were continuously employed were eight cowherds and dairymen, five shepherds, three plowmen, two carpenters, and two masons. Except for the busiest seasons and the hardest tasks, most of the field work was done by women, and it was anything but continuous. Occasionally, Wylly had practically to invent tasks, such as the building of walls, in order to find work for his slaves. Children were hardly ever numbered among his workforce.

The slaves were given 22 family allotments averaging three acres per family. In July, 1815, and practically anticipating the amelioration laws which were recommended in the Bathurst and Goderich circulars and incorporated into the 1824-1830 slave laws of The Bahamas, Wylly drew up 20 regulations to govern the social, spiritual, and economic lives of his slaves.[26]

While the nuclear family was normative for Bahamian slave communities generally, it was both normative and strongly encouraged on Wylly's plantations. Severe penalties were meted out to adulterers and their paramours. Midwives were encouraged to facilitate live and healthy births, and nursery facilities were provided

[26]Regulations for the government of the slaves at Clifton and Tusculum in New Providence, *CO 23/67, 147.*

for children. On working days, mothers of children under the age of six years were to take them to the nursery before beginning their daily tasks, and were to collect them in the afternoons after having completed their day's work. Nursing mothers were given tasks near the homestead.

In 1813, Wylly caused a chapel to be built, which served both as a house of worship and as a school for his slaves. Prayer Books and spelling books were provided, and drivers who were themselves literate were paid to teach the other slaves how to read and write. He also secured the services of a Methodist Minister for the purpose of providing the slaves with religious instruction.[27]

On their provision grounds, the slaves cultivated corn, yams, potatoes, pumpkins, squash, peas, beans, okras, benny, eddoes, groundnuts, melons, plantains, and bananas. Nearly all had poultry, and more than half owned hogs.[28]

Because Wylly had more slaves than work to keep them occupied, and with a view to discouraging sloth and laziness, he made the technically illegal decision to give those slaves whose work was not permanently needed the option of having three task-free days (Friday to Sunday) each week in return for foregoing their weekly supply of corn. He also allowed them the use of his boat to transport their produce which was too heavy for them to take to market by road. Only a slave called Caesar and certain unnamed 'sulkers' who had neglected their grounds and malingered at their tasks

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[27]Vide A Deans Peggs ed., *A Mission to the West India Islands: Dowson's Journal for 1810-17,* the Deans Peggs Research Fund, Nassau, Bahamas, 1960, pp. 61 and 73.
[28]Enclosure in Wylly to Munnings, 3rd October, 1818, enclosed in Munnings to Bathurst, 3rd October, 1818, *CO 23/67, 165.*

were excluded from the offer. They would get their share of corn but had to work the regular hours. In times of scarcity, however, all slaves could opt for corn from the storage barn at a price of four shillings a peck, repayable in labour at a rate of a shilling per daily task.[29]

When accused by his critics of allowing his slaves more time to work for themselves than the Bahamian law required, and of supplying them with less than the required amount of provisions, Wylly explained:

> My principal object has been to accustom them to habits of Industry and Oeconomy which, I am convinced, never will be found to exist among any Slaves, in this part of the World, who are victualled by their Masters.[30]

There is some correlation between the family life practices of the slaves on the Wylly plantations and those of slaves elsewhere in The Bahamas. In the slave registration returns for 1822, there were 26 holdings, representing c. 25% of all Bahamian slaves, where slaves were listed in family groupings. According to this evidence, no less than 71.9% of the 3,011 slaves, distributed over 11 of the Bahamian Islands, lived in nuclear families, while 13% were listed in single-parent families, and 15.1% were listed outside of a family grouping. By contrast, on the Montpelier plantation in St. James, Jamaica, in 1825, 77.6% of the slaves lived in family households, of whom 40.3% lived in single-parent households and 37.3% lived in nuclear families.[31]

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[29]Wylly to overseer James Rutherford, 14th August, 1818, *CO 23/67, 165.*
[30]William Wylly to President W. V. Munnings, 31st August, 1818, *CO 23/67, 147.*
[31]Barry W. Higman: Household Structure and Fertility on Jamaican Slave Plantations: A Nineteenth Century Example, *Population Studies, Vol. XXVII, 1973,* pp. 527-550. The Slave Family and Household in the British West Indies, 1800-1834, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. VI, Autumn 1975,* pp. 261-287.

The strength of the Bahamian slave family was related to the positive fertility characteristics of the female slave, which were due largely to the consistently well-balanced, high protein diet of Bahamian slaves.[32] On the aforementioned 26 holdings, 66% of all females between the ages of 15 and 49 years were identified as mothers. More than one third of the slaves living in nuclear families were children, thus averaging 3.29 children *per* nuclear family. In the case of the 13% listed as single-parent families, there was an average of 2.97 children living with each single parent (who was probably a widow or a wife in a polygamous marriage, though only five cases of polygamy are found in the 1822 sample of 26 holdings).

Evidence from the 26 holdings also indicates the presence of teenage mothers with one child in their parents' household. These teenagers would have been, on average, 18.75 years of age.[33] It would appear that it was not uncommon for some girls to get married after giving birth for the first time. It seems highly probable, however, that separate cohabitation in a nuclear family was the accepted norm for Bahamian slave couples over the age of 20 years. Furthermore, the institution of marriage and stable family relations among Bahamian slaves were protected by Bahamian law. By a law of 1824, for example, slave owners were forbidden both to separate slave husbands from their spouses and to separate children under the age of 14 years from their parents.[34]

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[32]Kenneth F. Kiple, *The Caribbean Slave: A Biological History,* CUP, 1984, pp. 104-119.
[33]Michael Craton, Changing Patterns of Slave Families in the British West Indies, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. X, No. 1, Summer 1979,* pp. 1-35. Craton comments that 28 young mothers, the average ages of whom were 18 years and 9 months, lived with their parents. Only 5 were over 20 years old, and the average age, at the birth of their first child, was 17 years and 8 months. Only one of the 28 has a second child.

The family structure and semi-peasant lifestyle of Bahamian slaves facilitated both the preservation of much of their culture and the cultural interaction between themselves and white Bahamian society. The slaves' folklore tradition played a significant role in this process.

Slave Folklore

There is no literary slave work extant to indicate that Bahamian slaves recorded aspects of their folklore tradition. Theirs was an oral tradition which was transmitted from one generation to the next, initially in the home and then in the wider slave communities. This was especially true in respect of storytelling and proverbs.

Storytelling

During the summer of 1888, Charles Edwards collected a number of Bahamian stories which he published under the title *Folk-Lore of the Bahama Negroes.*[35] This collection was made in Green Turtle Cay, Abaco. In 1918, Elsie Clews Parsons published a larger collection of stories entitled *Folk-Tales of Andros Island, Bahamas*[36] which she made in Andros. Parsons' collection included that of Edwards. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that while the stories in Edwards' collection were quite probably ubiquitous in Bahamian slave communities, some islands of which Andros may be an example had stories of their own. Parsons noted that Androsians tended to incorporate songs into their stories. This was probably a didactic device which was intended to serve as an aid to memory.

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[34]Act of 4 Geo. IV, c. 6, *Acts of the Assembly of the Bahama Islands, Nassau, 1827,* pp. 227-228.
[35]Charles L. Edwards, Folk-Lore of the Bahama Negroes, *The American Journal of Psychology* Vol. II, No. 4, August, 1889.

Bahamian slave stories were basically of two kinds, viz. old stories and fairy stories. The former betray an African source and are typical of Bahamian folklore, and the latter reflect an English origin, of the fairy tale genre. The fairy stories have been adapted to a type of old story in which the mythical and the magical were replaced with an animal from Africa, the United States or The Bahamas. Stories which speak of the lion, the elephant, and the tiger, for example, suggest an African origin, while those which speak of the rabbit suggest an Afro-American folklore tradition. In some cases, the slaves' adaptation of these stories in whole or in part took the form basically of verbal contraction. An example of this was the American *Brer,* as in *Brer Rabbit,* which, in its Bahamian adaptation, has become *B',* as in *B' Rabby.* In other cases, animals from one geographical area were either replaced by or coupled with animals from another. An example of this is the story of *B' Helephant* and *B' V'ale,* whales having been plentiful in Bahamian waters during our period. In other cases, a simple translation was made, as in the case of *Ananse* which became the *Spider,* in the story *B' Rabby, B' Spider an' B' Booky.* Bahamian slaves were also disposed to converting Biblical stories into old stories. *Adam and Eve,* and *The Solomon Cycle* were two such examples. The stories began and ended with a rhyming doggerel verse. In some cases, the last line of the concluding verse was a creation of the storyteller himself.

These stories served a didactic purpose. The story *B' Rabby In De Cornfield,* for example, commends ingenuity, assiduousness, and a keen sense of humour. The

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[36]Elsie Clews Parsons, *Folk-Tales of Andros Island, Bahamas,* Lancaster, PA., and New York, published by The American Folk-Lore Society, 1918.

repetition of such stories by slave children could not but affect and inform their subconscious.

Proverbs

A collection of Bahamian 'Negro Proverbs' was made by L. D. Powles and published in his book *The Land of The Pink Pearl or Recollections of Life in The Bahamas* in 1888.[37] I have selected 16 of them for comment.[38]

Like the old stories, Bahamian slave proverbs were designed mainly for the youth. As such, they had both a vertical and an horizontal referent, viz. God, and the slaves' family/community. A few of the proverbs in the vertical referent betray influence from both the Old and New Testaments. For example, compare proverb #3 with Isaiah 1:3, and proverbs #1, 2, and 4 with the Sermon on the Mount. Some of the proverbs at the horizontal level are paralleled in both the Old Testament and the Bantu traditions. No. #7, for example, has parallels with the Fante proverbs:

If Otsibo says he can do something / he does it with his followers. Though the elephant is huge / his domain is looked after by the duiker.[39]

Compare these with Proverbs 14:28, viz.

In a multitude of people is the glory of a king, but without people a prince is ruined.[40]

The proverbs which dealt with the slaves' relationship with God were intended to promote gratitude for, and trust in, Divine Providence. Those dealing with the slaves'

[37]L. D. Powles, *The Land of The Pink Pearl or Recollections of Life in The Bahamas,* London, 1888, pp. 165-167.
[38]See *Appendix.*
[39]J. B. Christensen, *The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture* in E. P. Skinner ed., *Peoples and Cultures of Africa,* New York, 1973, pp. 509ff.

interpersonal relationships emphasized respect for the aged and their counsel, diligence and perspicaciousness. They also promoted a sense of equality and interdependence even between slave and master. However, they contained an element of caution against indiscriminate social and business intercourse even within the slave community.

These proverbs betray not only a similarity between West African and Old Testament cultural traditions, and aspects of the slaves' transatlantic African cultural retention, but also the cultural readiness of these slaves for the Christian proclamation.

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[40] *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with The Apocrypha, Expanded Edition, R.S.V.*

4 (a) Slave Spirituality: The Gospel Impact

The impact of the Christian message on the spirituality of Bahamian slaves was particularly evident in the songs which have come to be known as Negro Spirituals, as well as in some of their stories and proverbs.

The biblical concept of liberation is a recurrent theme in several of the Bahamian Negro Spirituals. The slaves found stories about the Exodus, Elijah, and Daniel (in the Old Testament), and about Jesus (in the New Testament) with whose sufferings they readily identified very appealing. This is borne out by the following songs which are still in Bahamian use: *When Israel was in Egypt's land; Swing low, sweet chariot; My Lord delivered Daniel; Were you there when they crucified my Lord.*[1] Indeed, Jesus is central to the spirituality of Bahamian slaves. This Christo-centrism was typical of eighteenth century North American Wesleyan Methodist piety, as evidenced by Wesleyan hymns. The centrality of Christ was further emphasized in the Anglican Church during our period with the introduction of Anglo-Catholic ritual and symbolism, with particular reference to the cross as a symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ, and the altar (which became the common term for the Communion table) which also symbolised Christ's sacrificial and saving death. This contrasts markedly with the spirituality of Jamaican slaves for whom the Spirit was central. This was particularly true of the adherents of George Liele's Ethiopian Baptist Church, as also of Myalism, Convince, and the Revival groups which emerged out of the Great Revival of 1860/61.

The slaves' initial exposure to the Christian message was due to a number of factors both in North America whence most of the Bahamian slaves were taken and in The Bahamas itself.

The Anglican Church in North America embarked upon a programme of evangelizing Negroes and Indians as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1704, e.g., SPG opened a Catechising School for Negro and Indian slaves in New York City. By 1705, the SPG missionary, Samuel Thomas, of Goose Creek Parish Church, South Carolina, was working with 1,000 slaves many of whom could read the Bible for themselves. In 1743, it established a school at Charleston, South Carolina, for the purpose of training Negroes to engage in missionary work among their fellow slaves. This school was later put into the charge of two young Negroes named Harry and Andrew. In 1751, SPG established a Negro school in Savannah, Georgia.

In 1731, during SPG's missionary work on the rice and cotton plantations on the South Carolina seaboard, the Society was invited by the Governor of The Bahamas, Woods Rogers, to send a missionary to minister within his jurisdiction. SPG responded by sending William Guy in April 1731. With Guy's arrival, SPG adopted The Bahamas into its mission field, and by 1738, the Society had begun its ministry in Primary School education there.

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[1]Vide L.D. Powles, *The Land of The Pink Pearl,* London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington 1888, p. 159ff, where Powles described these songs as "Shouter Hymns."

Literate slaves like Cato Perkins, an inhabitant of the Current, Eleuthera, also held Bible classes with their fellow slaves. According to an 1846 report of the Colonial and Continental Church Society:

> An old negro, named Cato, had, while a slave, been in the habit of gathering his fellow bondsmen together, to read the Scriptures with them. He persevered in this practice, though it exposed him to much persecution, and his efforts were so blessed that the whole settlement began to be enlightened.[2]

The report went on to describe how Cato frequented and later joined the Anglican Chapel at the Current. He had probably been an Anglican, or a Calvinistic Methodist, prior to his ordination by John Marrant.

Sometime during the first decade of the nineteenth century, William Wylly had a Chapel built for the slaves at his Clifton and Tusculum plantations in New Providence, and he engaged the services of William Turton, a Barbadian Methodist Minister, to give religious instruction to his slaves. Expressing concern that his slaves had not been given instruction for a period of nine months, he wrote to William Dowson on December 28th, 1813, as follows:

> I thought it had been understood between Mr Turton and myself, that either he or some other gentleman of your Mission was to attend occasionally to the religious instruction of my people at Clifton, and Mr T[urton] accordingly visited them once or twice; but owing, I believe, to the distance from town, and the late imperfect state of the roads, they have not been visited for nine months past.[3]

Wylly requested that a Wesleyan Minister visit his plantation at Clifton for the purpose of giving religious instruction to his slaves at least six times a year.

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[2] *Annual Report of The Colonial and Continental Church Society,* 1846, p. 675.
[3] A. Deans Peggs, ed., *A Mission to the West India Islands, Dowson's Journal for 1810-17,* The Deans Peggs Research Fund, Nassau, Bahamas, 1960, p. 73.

The impacts, however, which punctuated the Negro Spirituals with personalities and themes from the Christian tradition across denominational lines were those of the Great Awakening 1740-1743, the Great Revival of 1800-1805, and the Second Great Awakening of the 1830s and the 1840s (and the Prayer-Meeting Revivals 1857-1858), in North America. Although the immediate *loci* of the First Awakening were the parishes in Puritan New England, i.e. Massachusetts and Connecticut, the Middle Atlantic Colonies were not unaffected, due to the evangelistic activity of William Robinson in Hanover County, Virginia, and that of George Whitefield in Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina. With the establishment of the Anglican Church in these areas prior to the American Revolutionary War, however, whatever excitement Robinson and Whitefield may have effected was met with a degree of opposition and persecution from the government and the Established (Anglican) Church. With the formal ending of the war in 1783/84 came black and white Loyalists and their slaves to The Bahamas. Among the Black Loyalists were the pioneers of Anabaptism and Methodism in The Bahamas. Therefore, whatever effect (and there was some effect) the Revivals of 1800 to 1858 had on The Bahamas came after the Baptist and Methodist Churches had already been started by former black slaves like (the Baptists) Amos Williams (and his son, Prince), Sambo Scriven and Frank Spence, and (the Methodist) Joseph Paul, all of whom came to The Bahamas in 1783/4. These black evangelists were themselves influenced, albeit indirectly, by the Awakening of 1740-1743.

Many Negroes, slave and free, were introduced to the Christian proclamation for the first time during the Great Awakening of 1740-1743. Among them were Shubal Sterns, John Marrant, George Liele, and David George.

Sterns was deeply influenced by the preaching of George Whitefield. Through his evangelistic zeal, the Message spread among blacks from New England through parts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Mississippi.

John Marrant, a free Loyalist black from New York, was another. His conversion in about 1769 was instigated by the preaching of Whitefield. During a period of service in the Royal Navy during the American Revolutionary War he was wounded. Unable to continue in the armed forces, he was discharged in London. Meanwhile he had a brother who was a Loyalist in Birchtown, who wrote to him concerning the religious situation of blacks in Nova Scotia. John thereupon contacted the Countess of Huntingdon who arranged for his ordination, at Bath in 1785, as a minister in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection. Shortly thereafter he left for Birchtown where he founded a chapel, and ordained Cato Perkins and William Ash as preachers.[4]

The former slave, George Liele, was another. After his conversion in 1774, he founded a Black Church at Yama Craw, outside Savannah, in December 1777. In 1784, he began his ministry of evangelism among the slaves in Jamaica.

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[4]Vide James W. St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870,* University of Toronto Press Inc. 1992, p. 71f.

The former slave, David George, born on a plantation in Essex County, Virginia, was yet another. Self-taught, he preached to blacks and whites in Shelburne, Nova Scotia.[5] He was a pioneer evangelist in Sierra Leone and a primary agent in both African Christian Independency and the 'Modern' Missionary Movement.[6]

There were yet others such as Joseph Paul, a Black Loyalist and Methodist Evangelist who went to Abaco in 1784 and, four years later, moved into New Providence, shortly after which he joined the Anglican Church; the Baptist Evangelists Sambo Scriven, a slave who fled to The Bahamas from St. Augustine, Florida, in an open boat in 1785; and Amos Williams and his son, Prince, who came to The Bahamas from South Carolina. All of these men, influenced directly or indirectly by the Revivals of the Great Awakening, made their mark in Bahamian Church History. According to William Gordon:

> In consequence of the Revolution in North America there are a good many of the North American Negroes in The Bahamas. Several of these especially if they be from the New England Colonies make a profession of Religion, but it is that of the Methodists or Independents. There are three congregations of them in Nassau; two of the preachers I am personally acquainted with.[7]

Probably referring to Joseph Paul, Gordon went on to say:

> I was at two or three of the Thursday evening meetings of one of them. There were about 50 Negroes present ... Their worship was entirely in the mode of the Methodists and the preacher delivered himself with earnestness in the ungrammatical Negro dialect.[8]

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[5]Within the context of a description of his ministry in Jamaica, George Liele made reference to the ministry of 'Brother Amos [Williams] at [New] Providence,' claiming that Amos had about 300 members, and the ministry of 'Brother David George' who was a member of the Baptist Church in Savannah but who was permitted to preach in three provinces in Nova Scotia where he had membership of 60 black and white communicant members. Vide Carter G. Woodson ed., *The Journal of Negro History, Vol. 1,* 1916, p. 73.

[6]Vide Lamin Sanneh, *Prelude to African Christian Independency: The Afro-American Factor in African Christianity.* HTR 77:1 (1984) 1-32.

[7]*William Gordon to Bp. Porteus, Sept. 7, 1792 [dated in "Notation"],* Lambeth Palace Library.

All of this is not to suggest, however, that the slave songs had their origin in the activities associated with the Great Awakening. Although Cone writes primarily from a North American perspective, his point is not altogether irrelevant to the Bahamian situation when he says that, though the white camp meeting songs exerted some influence on the spirituals,

there were other powerful influences upon the black songs that enabled them to become vehicles of a distinctive Black Theology.[9]

Many of these "powerful influences" emerged out of that Afro-Baptist Sacred Cosmos of which Sobel speaks.[10]

The assumption that the African slaves' religious culture constituted a *praeparatio evangelica*[11] strengthens Cone's argument. For in the Gospel, the slaves saw the fulfilment of their religious aspirations. This was particularly true in the case of Jesus with whom they readily identified and in whom they found their *telos.*

It is interesting that Cone should cite the slaves' workday experience itself as the second distinctively black source of the spirituals. Quoting James Miller McKim's 'Negro Songs' in Bernard Katz's *The Social Implications of Early Negro Music in the United States,* he explains that a slave, when asked where black people got their songs, replied:

I'll tell you; it's dis way. My master call me up and order me a short peck of corn and a hundred lash. My friends see it and is sorry for me. When dey come to de praise meetin' dat night dey sing about it.

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[8]Ibid.
[9]James H. Cone, Op. cit., p. 41.
[10]Mechal Sobel, Op. cit., ch. 4.
[11]*cf.* John S. MBiti's *Eschatology. Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* eds. Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, Lutterworth Press. USCL, London, 1969, p. 180.

Some's very good singers and know how; and dey work it in, work it in, you know; till dey get it right.[12]

A number of old Bahamian songs, e.g. *The Sloop John B', Sponger Money,* and *Heigh ho! Johnny come blow the organ* also emerged out of the blacks' workday, particularly seafaring, experience. In 1874, Archdeacon Charles C. Wakefield related an interesting experience regarding the latter song when he wrote, concerning a visit to Exuma:

[The] next day was S. Margaret's Day, the Patroness of the Hart's Settlement, and was marked by a celebration of the Holy Communion and a school festival. ... We had a devout Service with thirty Communicants. After a children's service at eleven, we all marched to a field in procession, with flags &c. Mr. Page had been trying to teach them "Onward, Christian soldiers," and for the first two yards of the procession all went fairly well, but suddenly the people took the singing into their own hands and to our horror their religious procession began to move briskly along at quick-step, to the tune of "Heigh ho! Heigh ho! Johnny come blow the organ," a song by the black sailors at heaving anchor.[13]

The ease with which these Exumian blacks switched from "Onward Christian soldiers" to "Heigh ho! Heigh ho! Johnny come blow the organ" on a liturgical occasion would indicate not only that Bahamian Negroes, slave and free, psychologically made no rigid distinction between the sacred and the secular but also that, in the main, Negro Spirituals were 'secularly' inspired by a basically 'religious' people who had heard the Gospel and were endeavouring to bring it to bear on their workday experience.

However, seeing that the slaves traditionally had an eschatology but no teleology, their exposure to the Christian proclamation and their encounter with the risen Christ must have radically affected their consciousness of the *Zamani* in a positive way. The Gospel had the effect of fulfilling, not negating, their religious promise. It confirmed

[12]Cone, Op. cit., p. 42.

their belief in a dynamic form of existence in *Zamani* time. It also corroborated their belief in the overlapping of the *Zamani* and the *Sasa,* and strengthened their view of the unity and sacredness of the cosmos. Its novel contribution was to replace immortality with eternal life, and to raise the quality of life in the *Zamani* from a mere replica, or cyclical continuity, of the *Sasa* to a full realisation of the ultimate purpose of creation, with the risen, exalted and glorified Christ as "the teleological meaning of all being."[14] The Sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist would have served as powerful reminders of all this, as well as introduced a heightened element of tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet' in a partially realised eschatology. Given the emphasis on "the washing of regeneration [in the practice of baptism by immersion, preceded by a conviction of sin and the subsequent experiences of damnation and redemption, preceded, i.e. by the initial visionary spiritual journey, called *trabelin'*,[15]

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[13] The *Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers,* Vol. XXVI, No. 101, pp. 20, 21, Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

[14]MBiti, *Eschatology. ...* p. 181.

[15]Vide Mechal Sobel's *Trabelin' On: The Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith,* Greenwood Press. Westport, Connecticut. London, England. pp. 108-135.

In his *Slave Religion,* Albert J. Raboteau describes this journey as a "tripartite movement: first a feeling of sinfulness, then a vision of damnation, and finally an experience of acceptance of God and being reborn or made new." (p. 268.) He proceeds to summarise *God Struck Me Dead,* a volume of 38 religious conversion experiences collected by A.P. Watson in the 1920s and edited by Clifton H. Johnson, which experiences conform to the tripartite paradigm thus:

"As described by the former slaves in *God Struck Me Dead,* the conversion experience is usually inaugurated by a feeling of heaviness or sadness, the weight of sinfulness. Sometimes the individual feels ill and cannot eat or drink. In this condition, the sinner hears a voice warning him of his state. His condition worsens, he falls into a trance in which he sees himself dead, while another self, an inner or 'little' self, cries for mercy. The sinner sees a vivid image of Hell and realises that he is destined for eternal damnation. He hangs over the deep pit suspended by a single thread. Satan may appear and threaten to knock him down or to loose hell hounds to pursue him. Suddenly a mediator appears in the form of an angel or a mysterious 'little man.' An emissary from God, the mediator reassures the frightened sinner and leads him to a vision of heaven, which frequently appears as the gleaming New Jerusalem or as a peaceful pasture full of grazing sheep. Taken up into the presence of God, the person learns that he is not damned but saved and, as one of the elect, receives from God a commission to lead a holy life and to preach the Gospel. Awakened, the convert is overwhelmed with a sudden feeling of being totally renewed. Filled with joy, he cannot resist shouting. Struck by the spirit 'from head to foot,' he feels a 'burning in the heart and bones' which drives him to speak. The rest of the convert's life is marked by his conversion experience. The date it occured is almost always noted. One of the elect, he now has the responsibility to evangelise others." (pp. 269-270.)

from death to life] and renewal in the Holy Spirit,"[16] the slaves, among other Negroes who embraced the Gospel, would have been sufficiently conscious of their new status, liberation, and victory, 'in Christ,' and, *ipso facto,* that of their ancestors with whom they were perpetually in solidarity, as to form a new world view of what it meant to be liberated, yet enslaved, in a strange and oft-times hostile world.

Similar conversion experiences are known to have occurred among Bahamian blacks during our period. Two citations should suffice. Archdeacon Trew was paying tribute to a deceased CCSS teacher at the Harbour Island Infant School, one Mrs. Keeling, in 1844, when he relayed the following incident:

An address delivered by Mrs. Keeling to the children, upon some slight occasion, made a deep impression on a little girl named Mary S--, aged thirteen. While at prayer at home, on that evening, she leaped up from her knees, exclaiming, "O mother, what shall I do, my sins are so heavy? Oh, let me go to my teacher!" ... The child ran to Mrs. Keeling's door, knocking and calling for admission, and crying, "O Teacher, let me in! my sins are so heavy that I cannot bear them. I feel myself sinking into hell. Oh, what shall I do? After much prayer and long conversation, Mrs. Keeling asked her, "Mary, do you believe in Jesus now?" She said, "Yes, I do, I do indeed believe that Christ has saved and blessed me by His grace. Praised and blessed be God! I am a brand plucked out of the burning." The next day was a blessed day in the school. Mary S-- was early in it, exhorting her companions to flee from the wrath to come, and to seek the salvation of their souls.[17]

Mary's religious experience was reminiscent of the "trebbels" or "trabelin'," in the slaves' conversion experiences in the American South.[18] Neither the evangelical Bahamian, William K. Duncombe, Rector of St. John's Parish, Harbour Island, nor Archdeacon Trew was averse to that kind of emotional outpouring. Not so the black Anglo-Catholic Bahamian, Marshall J. M. Cooper, who served in St. Christopher's Parish, Rum Cay and San Salvador, for a period of 22 years. Knowing of similar

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[16]Vide *Titus 3:5,* RSV.

[17] *Colonial and Continental School Society's Annual Report,* 1851, p. 43.

[18] Vide Mechal Sobel, *Trabelin' On: The Slave Journey to An Afro-Baptist Faith,* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, ch. 5.

experiences among the Native and Mission Baptists there, he recounted rather disparagingly:

> The principal times in which all [i.e. the chief pastor, leader, deacons, elders and sitting elders] have a free hand at preaching or speaking are at a 'wake' or 'sitting-up,' i.e. when there is a death, or on the first of August (i.e. Emancipation Day). Christmas Eve is also a time for speech making, but New Year's Eve is the night of nights, when any, young or old, of both sexes, are permitted, if they so desire, to tell of the "goodness of the Lord shown to them during the past year," or of any special visions of the night watches that they have experienced. The general term for the latter is "travels."[19]

Wrestling with the social implications of this eschatological dynamic in slave spirituality, the Finnish scholar of Comparative Religions, Olli Alho, advanced the argument, with particular reference to North America, that, among the slaves, religion functioned as a justification and motivational basis for social behaviour. He argues that such a pattern would consist of the compounding of two opposite ways of combining religious thought and social ideology: on the one hand, a thoroughly "this-worldly" religiosity which functioned as an ideology for active forms of slave resistance, and, on the other, a thoroughly "other-worldly" spirituality which served as an ideology for passive forms of submission, with what he terms "conscious, active adaptation" as the mean between these extremes. He contends:

> Between these two extremes there remains a combination that we may call conscious, active adaptation. Without being passively submissive the slave endeavoured to avoid the kind of open, violent confrontation with the whites that had in some instances proved suicidal. The particular nature of this combination lay in its tendency to create from minimal premises a maximally active and affirmative attitude towards life itself. The religious dimension of this attitude resulted in a balance where "this-worldliness" and "other-worldliness" appear more like parallels than alternatives.[20]

Alho goes on to explain how the polarities between this-worldly and other-worldly religiosity were resolved in the slaves' collective quest for freedom:

> The slaves learned from the whites about the transcendental reality of heaven, its ruler and his son; and the history of salvation; but in making these notions their own they attenuated the transcendental

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[19] *Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers,* Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

[20] Olli Alho, *The Religion of the Slaves.* Helsinki: Academia Scientarium Fennica, 1976, p. 232.

aspect by transforming them into something concrete and approachable. They made the sacred history of the Chosen People of the Bible their own, they identified its personages including Christ himself, with historical figures, and used the same words to describe heaven and countries where men were free. In this way they created a unique land of freedom which was not characterised by being either "this-worldly" or "other-worldly," but by the absence of slavery. This merging of sacred and profane realities was not a linguistic trick made by witty slaves, but a process in the developing consciousness of the community.[21]

Alho's concept of "conscious, active adaptation" seems to suggest that slave spirituality, as impacted by the Gospel, functioned more as a self-affirming mode of expressing meaningful aspirations for the future in *Sasa* time, i.e. the future as anticipated sacramentally in Baptism and the Eucharist, and as envisioned through acts of self-transcendence, than as a self-negating mode of resignation to chattel slavery. This affirmative action did not rule out occasional acts of armed resistance to slavery, as Alho himself affirmed,[22] and as the uprisings under Denmark Vesey and Jack Pritchard (variously known as 'Gullah Jack' and 'Cooter Jack,)[23] in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1822; the 'Black Prophet,' Nat Turner in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831; and the historic slave uprising in Jamaica in 1831 in which the Baptists were implicated and which some historians regard as one of the factors which contributed to the emancipation of the slaves all attest.

Contextually, however, the Bahamian slave story, in which conversion experiences were also known to have been had, was practically one of freedom in slavery, especially when compared with other slave stories. Even in the situations involving Alick in San Salvador in 1832, and Pompey in Exuma in 1833, the struggle was not so much against the institution of slavery *per se,* though there was no acquiescence in

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[21]Ibid.
[22]Ibid.
[23]Vide Robert S. Starobin's *Denmark Vesey: The Slave Conspiracy of 1822.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, pp. 30-31.

it on the part of Bahamian slaves, as a retaliation against an assault on the one hand, and what was considered a pending infringement of a community's right to own and occupy land without outside interference on the other hand, even though legally they all were slaves. This means, therefore, that not only were the actual conditions of slavery in The Bahamas very different from those in North America and the Caribbean but also that the impact and effect of the Gospel on Bahamian slaves were different as well. With the notable exception of the short-lived period of the cotton industry, Bahamian slaves lived more like semi-peasants who, in a relationship of interdependence with their masters, subsisted on the harvest of the sea and, to a lesser extent, the produce of the land; and lived in nuclear family units whose cultural continuity was less under pressure than elsewhere. Unlike their North American and Caribbean counterparts, they employed a more subtle means of self-affirmation, particularly in situations involving *identity conflict.*[24] One such means that vibrantly survived our period was the public biannual celebration of Junkanoo.

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[24]Vide p. 15 of this Thesis.

(b) Bahamian Junkanoo

Junkanoo, variously spelled John Canoe, John Connu, Jonkonnu, and John Kuner, was a masked slave festival, celebrated with music and vigorous dancing several hours before sunrise on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and is known to have existed in North Carolina, Belize, Jamaica, St. Kitts, and Nevis, as well as in The Bahamas. Bermuda has known a similar festival called Gomba or Gombey. The origin of Junkanoo has been the subject of much speculation.

F. G. Cassidy has traced the etymology of *John Canoe* to the Ewe word for witch doctor.[1]

The earliest extant reference to this festival in the Caribbean is found in the writings of the eighteenth century Jamaican planter politician, Edward Long, who wrote:

> In the towns during Christmas holidays, they have several tall robust fellows dressed up in grotesque habits, and a pair of ox-horns on their head sprouting from the top of a horrid sort of visor or mask, about which the mouth is rendered very terrific with large boar-tusks. The masquerader, carrying a wooden sword in his hand, is followed by a numerous crowd of drunken women, who dance at every door, bellowing out John Connu! with great vehemence... In 1769, several new masks appeared; the Ebos, the Papaws, etc. having their respective Connus, male and female, who were dressed in a very laughable style.[2]

Long further explained that both the street parade and the main dancer were an honourable memorial to John Conny, an active, successful, black merchant near Axim (now in Ghana), along the Guinea Coast. According to Kwame Yeba Daaku, John Conny ruled over three Brandenburg trading forts: Pokoso, Takrama, and Akoda, on the coast of Ghana. By 1724, at about age fifty three years, his influence had declined,

[1]F.G. Cassidy, *Jamaica Talk,* p. 259.

and when the Dutch took over the great Fredriksburg Castle, Conny moved inland and took up residence at the court of Opoku Ware, the king of Ashante.[3]

It is possible for John Conny's reputation and memory to have given rise to a form of hero worship. If so, the practice could have been brought to the Caribbean and the Americas by slaves from the Gold Coast. Many such slaves were taken to Jamaica and to North America.

Apart from the possible association of Junkanoo with the historical figure, John Conny, there were several West African festivals which could serve as its origin. There was, e.g., the highly developed institution of the secret society, among the basic functions of which was the members' participation in the seasonal festivals and recreations of the peoples to which they belonged. This was particularly true of the festival associated with the yam harvest of the Mmo secret society of the Igbo, which usually occurred between September and October, when the ancestral spirits were invoked, and the Homowo yam festival of the Ga peoples, involving feasting, drinking and dancing in lament and in remembrance of the dead. This festival ended with a well organised procession in which masked novices of the society took the lead, followed by a hired band of entertainers.[4] There was also the Egungun secret society of the Yoruba, the primary annual festival of which commemorated their ancestral spirits, when sacrifices were offered to them and their assistance was requested in the agricultural activities of the group. During this festival, according to

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[2]Edward Long, *History of Jamaica, Vol. 2,* 1774, pp. 424-425.
[3]Kwame Yeba Daaku, *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1600-1720.* Oxford, 1970.
[4]Vide Butt-Thompson, *West African Secret Societies,* pp. 86-91.

Morton-Williams, a masquerade was performed by male members of the Egungun cult for the purpose of manifesting the ancestral spirits and commanding their power.[5] According to Geoffrey Parrinder, the ancestors were represented by some twenty to thirty members of the Egungun society who, in their magnificent costumes, patrolled the streets for a week, to the great excitement of the onlookers.[6]

Commenting on Cassidy's etymology of *John Canoe,* Orlando Patterson argued that John Canoe was derived originally either from one of the dances of the West African secret societies, or from the main dance of the band of hired entertainers, or from both.[7]

That Junkanoo is a New World slave religious cultural celebration whose antecedents are rooted in West African religious culture, is further corroborated by the primacy of goatskin drums among its musical instruments. Melville and Frances Herskovits, in their discussion of the drums in *Suriname Folklore,* and harking back to the significance of the drums among the Akan of the Gold Coast, claim that the drums have a three-fold power in the mythology of the bush Negro: the power of summoning the spirits of the ancestors to appear in the *Sasa,* the power of articulating the message of these supernatural beings when they arrive, and the power to commission them back to the realm of the *Zamani.*[8]

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[5]Vide P. Morton-Williams, Yoruba Responses to the Fear of Death, *Africa, Vol. XXX, No. 1.*
[6]G. Parrinder, *West African Religions,* p. 123.
[7]Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery,* p. 246.
[8]Vide Melville and Francis Herskovits, *Surinam Folklore,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1936, p. 520.

Writing from the North American perspective and with specific reference to John Kunering in North Carolina, Sterling Stuckey links John Kunering/Junkanoo to the annual yam festival of the Egungun secret society of the Yoruba who, along with other Nigerian peoples including the Igbo, were well represented among the slave communities in North Carolina.[9] Arguing for the celebration of John Kunering across tribal lines in North Carolina, as Patterson does for John Canoe in Jamaica, he states:

> Africans were so given to secret societies, and their purposes and characteristics were generally so similar, that a great many ceremonies across Central and West Africa involving the use of masks and costumes -signs that ancestral figures are being represented- might resemble and be related to John Kunering, and might have enabled Africans from various parts of Africa to identify with and join in Kunering in North Carolina, since masks are used universally to represent ancestral figures.[10]

Judith Bettelheim, claiming that Bahamian Junkanoo was influenced by Jamaican Jonkonnu, has argued that:

> Although no proof exists, it would seem that Christmas masquerading was practised in Nassau and the name "John Canoe" was applied to the practice, ex post facto, by someone who knew the well-publicised Jamaican tradition.[11]

She bases her case on a report in *The Nassau Guardian* of 27th December, 1929, according to which "John Canoes and dancers" appeared in large numbers. She makes the comment:

> This is the first official occasion that I have been able to document when the name "John Canoe" is applied to the Christmas celebration in Nassau. Of note is the spelling: it is the same as that used in the nineteenth century in Jamaica.[12]

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[9]Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory & The Foundations of Black America,* Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 68.
[10]Ibid., p. 69.
[11]Judith Bettelheim, "Jamaican Jonkonnu And Related Caribbean Festivals," *Africa And The Caribbean: The Legacies Of A Link,* Eds. Margaret E. Crahan and Franklin W. Knight, p. 89.
[12]Ibid.

Travel among the various countries of the British Caribbean during the period of slavery is well documented, and some Bahamian slaves were among those who travelled between The Bahamas and Jamaica. Indeed, it is quite probable that some of the few slaves who lived in The Bahamas prior to 1783 were brought from Jamaica. Hence the probability of Judith Bettelheim's claim. However, due note must be taken of the fact that *The Nassau Guardian* was founded in 1844 and that its first reference to the Bahamian Christmas festivities was made in the edition of 27th December, 1864, where the editor simply lamented the fact that no Christmas *pantomime* took place that year. Judith Bettelheim's case seems to be based on an argument from silence which can cut both ways, particularly given the Bahamian slaves' minority position prior to 1783 and the relative secrecy which surrounded their religious activities. *The Nassau Guardian's* failure to mention the slaves' Christmas celebrations prior to 1864 and to use the word *Junkanoo,* instead of *John Canoe,* when it did mention them on 27th December, 1929, are indicative of the privacy of this aspect of the slaves' lives.

Prior to the 1840s, Bahamian slaves practised their ancestral faith, including Junkanoo, in quarantine, as the early Christians did during the first few decades of the Christian Church.

With the establishment of bishoprics in the British West Indies, and the Established Church's evangelistic zeal, the Bahamian slaves' response to the Church's message was phenomenal, especially in former Baptist strongholds. Even the Muslims in Exuma converted to the Church. But the faith and praxis of the Church of England in

The Bahamas did not allow for the element of religious syncretism which the Baptist faith did. This posed a threat to the slaves' ancestral faith which had sustained their forebears throughout the rigours of the Middle Passage and the first few centuries of chattel slavery. Not that the slaves were not drawn, as by inner necessity, to the Gospel. They undoubtedly were. There were three basic factors, however, which elicited the slaves' prophetic voice. First, the Established Church made no allowance for any degree of continuity between the slaves' religious past and Anglicanism. Second, racism was institutionalised in The Bahamas; and third, chattel slavery was replaced by another type of bondage, viz. the *Truck System.* Perhaps the Church's non-segregationist liturgical practices and education appeared too long-term a means of addressing these latter two social evils.

Bahamian Junkanoo embodied the slaves' prophetic voice. It constituted a demand for dialogue with their ancestral faith, and a call for social justice in the kind of democratically free society which that faith and their Baptist religious experience proleptically held out to them.

In the process of cultural adaptation from one geographical environment to another, Bahamian slaves sometimes employed a principle of verbal contraction. This obtained more especially in their folklore tradition where, e.g., the Afro-American *Brer,* as in *Brer Rabbit,* became *B',* as in *B' Rabby* in its Bahamian adaptation.[13] It is here suggested that, through a similar course of action, the Afro-American *John Kuner* became the Bahamian *Junkanoo.*

The earliest extant reference to Bahamian Junkanoo is found in P.S. Townsend's journal. Townsend spent Christmas 1823 in Nassau. He wrote:

> Being Christmas, our ears were assailed with the noise of the black & white boys playing on the green before our house. We should not have noticed ten times as much sound in New York but in this still town it seemed quite grating. We were also regaled last night at Christmas eve, until 3 or 4 in the morning, with some bad music on hoarse cracked drums & fifes, by groups of Negroes parading the streets.[14]

Whether or not "the black & white boys playing on the green" were playing at Junkanoo is debatable, though not improbable. Women and children did not actually participate in Bahamian Junkanoo in the nineteenth century. When present, they would have been among the spectators. This could have been the precursor of contemporary Bahamian Junior Junkanoo. As with the festival itself, this junior imitation had the effect of dismantling the barriers which normally kept slave and free, black and white apart. A comment by a nineteenth century Circuit Magistrate, L.D. Powles, indicates that this obtained also at the adult level of Bahamian society. He writes:

> The darkies are fond of processions, and never miss an opportunity of getting one up. About Christmas time, they seem to march about day and night with lanterns and bands of music, and they fire off crackers everywhere. This is a terrible nuisance, but the custom has the sanction of antiquity, though no doubt it would have been put down long ago if the white young gentlemen had not exhibited a taste for the same amusement.[15]

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[13]According to Joseph A. Opala, Brer Rabbit, "analogous to the 'trickster' found in animal stories throughout Africa and represented in Mende, Temne, and Limba tales as the 'Spider' and, in Krio stories, as 'Koni Rabbit,' " is the main character in Gullah folk tales. Op. cit. p. 13.

[14]*Nassau, Bahamas, 1823-1824.* Nassau: Bahamas Historical Society, 1980.

[15]L.D. Powles, *The Land Of The Pink Pearl or Recollections Of Life In The Bahamas.* London, 1888, pp. 147, 148.

Edward T. Churton, the fourth Bishop of Nassau, made the following critical comment about the Christmas festival in Nassau, towards the end of our period:

> On Christmas Eve and throughout the succeeding night there is an incessant letting off of crackers, beating of drums, and blowing of penny whistles and trumpets; crowds are parading the streets, many wearing masks and dressing themselves up in fantastic costumes; .... The same is reported on New Year's Eve, but not to the same extent; .... Under such circumstances it can be no cause for surprise that at the churches where the congregations are formed chiefly or wholly of coloured people, the Christmas services are not well attended, ...[16]

As an adult male festival, Junkanoo was a nocturnal celebration with masked participants in fringed outer clothing, parading and dancing to the music of goatskin drums, bugles and cowbells, in a choreography of two steps forward and one step backward. Their heads were held erect and their elbows, except for those of the drummers and buglers, were positioned rather rigidly by their sides. Having begun the festival in their respective villages, particularly Fox Hill, Grant's Town and Bain's Town, the Junkanoos would 'rush' onto Bay Street, the commercial centre of downtown Nassau, and, forming themselves into a parade and looking neither left nor right, they would celebrate from about three o'clock to about eight o'clock, a.m., up and down Bay Street.

Junkanoo is never known to have existed in Barbados. Yet, George Pinckard's description of the Barbadian slaves' celebration of a Sunday in 1816 is somewhat reminiscent, *mutatis mutandis,* of Bahamian Junkanoo. He wrote:

> They assemble in crowds upon the open green, and, forming a ring in the centre of the throng, dance to the sound of their beloved music and the singing of their favourite African yell.
>
> The instrumental parts of the band consist of a species of drum -a long hollow piece of wood with a dried sheepskin tied over the end, a kind of rattle, and the ever-delighting banjar [banjo].

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[16]*Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper, June 1886 - March 1890.*

The dance consists of stampings of the feet, twisting of the body, and a number of strange indecent attitudes. The head is held erect, or, occasionally, inclined a little forward; the hands nearly meet before; the elbows are fixed, pointing from the sides; and, the lower extremities being held rigid, the whole person is moved without lifting the feet from the ground. Making the head and limbs fixed points, they writhe and turn the body upon its own axis, slowly advancing towards each other, or retreating to the outer parts of the ring. ... The gravity, ... the solemnity of countenance, under which all this passes, is peculiarly striking. Not a smile, not a significant glance, nor an immodest look escapes from either sex: they meet under the most settled, and unmeaning gravity of countenance. They dance without any interval for several hours.[17]

What Pinckard referred to as the Barbadian slaves' "favourite African yell" was probably the African 'shout,' known as the 'ring shout' in the United States.[18]

In his *The Souls of Black Folk,* W.E.B. DuBois, understanding the shout as a form of communion "with the Invisible," speaks of the devotees of the shout as being seized by "the Spirit of the Lord," and thus made "mad with supernatural joy."[19]

Given the parallels between the religious culture of West Africa and that of the Old Testament, there is no doubt that the "shout" was to the slaves what *teruah* was to the Hebrews. The Hebrew *teruah* can have a number of connotations. In Psalm 27:6b, e.g., as in Psalm 33:3, it means "shout(s) of joy." In Psalm 89:15, a blessing is pronounced on "the people who know the festal shout." Here *teruah* connotes the people's joyful response, within the context of the Hebrew cultus, to an overwhelming

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[17]George Pinckard, MD, *Notes On The West Indies, Second Edition, Vol. 1,* London, 1816, pp. 126, 127, 128 and 129.

[18]J.A. Opala, writing from the perspective of the "Sierra Leone-American Connection," attributes the development of the "ring shout" to the Gullah. He writes: "In slavery days they [the Gullah] developed a ceremony called 'ring shout' in which participants danced in a ritual fashion in a circle amidst the rhythmical pounding of sticks and then, at a culminating moment, experienced possession by the Holy Spirit while shouting expressions of praise and thanksgiving." Op. cit. p. 11. Cf. *Slave Spirituality: The Gospel Impact* in chap. 1 of this Thesis, re. the missionary activity of S.P.G. in South Carolina, during the early part of the eighteenth century.

[19]W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls Of Black Folk,* in John Hope Franklin, ed., *Three Negro Classics,* New York: Avon Books, 1963, p. 339.

experience of Yahweh's goodness and majesty. In I Samuel 17:20, however, it denotes a "war cry," as it does in Joshua 6:20; in Leviticus 25:9, a "signal;" and in Numbers 10:5-6, an "alarm." According to Psalm 47:5, it could also be a "cry of homage," in which case the Psalmist, displaying unshakeable faith in Yahweh Elohim, promises homage because he is quite convinced that the LORD will help him. We find a similar expression of faith in Yahweh in Psalm 3:3 where Yahweh is spoken of as "a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head."[20] When *teruah* -shout- and *sabab* -circle- are used in the same context, as in Joshua 6:3, 15-16, 20, both symbols become especially powerful. It is with particular reference to Yahweh as "the lifter up of my head," however, especially when compared with Psalm 27:6a where the principle of *peripeteia* (cf. Jeremiah 31:22; Isaiah 43:19; 11:6-9) seems to be in evidence, that one sees a parallel with the "erect" position with which the Bahamian Junkanoo holds his head. In Bahamian Junkanoo, the "shout" is replaced with the "bugle."[21]

What Pinckard described as the slaves' "favourite amusement" was undoubtedly his unwitting observation of the slaves at worship.

It is significant that such worship should occur not only on the day when the slaves enjoyed "an interval from toil" but also on the day when their 'Christian' masters

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[20]Vide A.A. Anderson, *Psalms, Vols. 1 & 2,* New Century Bible. Oliphants.

[21]From the perspective of cultural adaptation, the Bahamian conch shell, which was used as a kind of trumpet by both the Lucayan Indians and the Afro-Bahamian slaves, might have been more apt. But the 1824 Slave Act penalised slave owners if they allowed more than 12 "strange" slaves "to assemble together, or beat their drums or blow their horns [bugles] or [conch] shells." Vide *4 Geo IV c. 6, 1824.* However, because Black Loyalists used bugles in the *Regiment* into which many of them were enlisted, the use of bugles within the context of Junkanoo may have proved more socially acceptable, their military implications notwithstanding.

commemorated their Saviour's Resurrection. For as the Judaean exiles in Babylon used Saturday which, to their captors, was a hard lucked day, for their religious purposes, so too these African exiles used Sunday, a day of rest and worship for their captors, to their religious advantage by giving liturgical expression to the unity of the *Sasa* and the *Zamani,* fellowship with their Ancestors and the renewal and reinforcement of cosmic and community life. The locus of their "several hours" of worship constituted, as it were, their "isle of Patmos" whence they could envision a new world order and an alternative community.

Melville and Frances Herskovits observed a similar dance in Surinam, and claimed that the dance there related identically to elements of the ancestral ring dance in the United States:

> [the feet executed] figures in place without leaving the ground, the arms hanging loosely at the side. ... the arms flexed and held rigid at the elbow and knees bent but rigid, the movement of the feet, angular and precise, was reiterated by the outstretched palms, while all the muscles of the hip took up the rhythm.[22]

For Bahamian slaves, as for Africans generally, dance was primarily religious, and was practically inseparable from worship.[23] Hence the slaves' solemnity and "gravity of countenance," as observed by Pinckard. According to Amaury Talbot, dancing affords Africans:

> the one means of representing, as perfectly as possible, their otherwise inarticulate sense of the mystery of existence, the power of the supernatural influences which enfold them, the ecstasy of joy in life -of youth and strength and love- all the deeper and more poignant feelings so far beyond

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[22]Melville J. Herskovits, *Rebel Destiny,* New York and London: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill, 1934, X, ch. 1.

[23]Cf. J. S. Pobee's 'African Spirituality,' in Gordon S. Wakefield ed., *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality,* SCM Press Ltd., 1983, p. 6, where, contrasting African Spirituality with that of historic Western Christianity, he commented that the religion of technologically simple African societies "is more danced out than thought out."

expression by mere words ... and, whether the occasion be one of rejoicing or grief, of victory in war or funeral obsequies, of thanksgiving to the gods for their blessings of crops and children or of mere social amusement, it is by far the chief, and almost the only way of picturing and depicting their affections and sensibilities.[24]

From the perspective of Bahamian Junkanoo, the slaves' celebration of what probably originated as an annual yam festival adapted to the conditions of New World slavery had the effect of doing, at Christmas, what the Western Church did in the fourth century AD, on the day that the Romans celebrated *Natalis Solis Invicti.* The slaves also used the feasting and merriment associated with Christmas for their religious purposes, as the Christians of the fourth century did in the case of the Roman Saturnalia. Could it be that the slaves chose to celebrate Junkanoo at this time not only because of the free time the masters afforded them but also because of the Messianic implications of *sabab?* Could it be, too, that they were challenging the Church after the manner of "Sir, we wish to see Jesus,"[25] i.e. the *Jesus* whom the Church proclaimed as *Mashiah* and with whom so many slaves readily identified? After commenting theologically on *sabab,* the authors of the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* make the following summary comment:

All of the foregoing finds its fullest expression and climax in the work of the Messiah.. [who] would triumph over all the enemies of God and man, redeeming his own and ruling over a changed and revitalized earth (Zech. 14:9-11).[26]

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[24]P. Amaury Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, 802,* London: OUP, 1926
[25]*John 12:21.* RSV. Commenting on these words, C.H. Dodd writes: "These Greeks are the vanguard of mankind coming to Christ. Their desire is to 'see' Jesus; a word chosen hardly without at least a side glance at the 'seeing' which is vision of God and eternal life.
The approach of the Greeks provides a setting for a discourse in which the note of the universality of Christ's work is prominent." C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation Of The Fourth Gospel,* CUP, 1970, p. 371.
[26]R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 2,* Moody Press Chicago, 1980, p. 616.

Writing from the perspective of Jamaica, Orlando Patterson sees John Canoe, among other Jamaican slave festivities, performing a two-fold cathartic function:

> Firstly, ... relief from the tedium and severity of slavery and from the constant onslaught on the self-dignity and pride of the slaves. ... they could drink and dance and make merry to their heart's content; and, most of all, they could re-assert in some small way their own ravished self-dignity simply by virtue of their temporary familiarity and equality with the whites.
>
> Secondly, ... well needed outlets for pent up aggressions and hostilities. ... The aggression of the slaves found expression in their dancing, the violence and intensity of which was so great that death sometimes ensued.[27]

Patterson goes on to contrast the slave situation in Jamaica with that of the United States, a contrast which could have implications for Bahamian Junkanoo. He writes:

> ... in America there was a white host society which was not only culturally cohesive, but, in most areas, numerically superior to the slave population. Against this background the American slave has, in some way, the usual institutional channels -not excluding recreation- through which he could find an outlet for the extreme frustrations of his status. There was, for example, his religion which developed relatively early on the basis of the nonconformist religion of his masters. The Jamaican slave, on the other hand, did not even have the institution of religion to come to his assistance for the greater part of the period of slavery. Thus the seasonal recreations became the only channel for the release of aggressions which approximated the status of an institution. Its relatively high development, then, was itself a consequence of the non-functioning of other institutions within the fragmented and artificial social system of slavery.[28]

It is disappointing that Patterson should use "religion" in reference to "nonconformist religion," without due regard to the Jamaican Baptists, founded by George Liele in 1784, and such Afro-Jamaican slave religions as Cumina, Myalism, and Convince. However, with the exception of the demographic ratio of whites to slaves, much of what Patterson said about the American scene would apply to some extent in the case of The Bahamas where Junkanoo, among other expressions of Bahamian slave religion, has evidenced the dynamic for self-transcendence, fantasy, and revolution.

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[27]Orlando Patterson, Op. cit., pp. 247 and 248.
[28]Ibid.

The goatskin drum and the bugle, in the hands of Junkanoos on parade in the white commercial centre of the Bahamian capital, symbolised Slave Spirituality in its most self-affirming and revolutionary form. Self-transcendence and fantasy are at an all-time high. The Church's witness and the injustices of racism and the *Truck System* are challenged, and the racial and socio-economic barriers which ordinarily obtain are, *pro tempore,* demolished.

Chapter Five

Later Group Settlements in The Bahamas

5 (a) African Recaptive Settlement

In 1807, Britain abolished the transatlantic slave trade and made it illegal for any British subject to engage in it. This was a result of persistent agitation by English Evangelical Christians whose cause was ably championed in the British Parliament by the antislavery advocate, William Wilberforce. The Evangelicals' conversion and their aversion from sin led them to denounce Britain's involvement in the slave trade as sinful.

Between 1807 and 1815, the Royal Navy intercepted all ships which were suspected of trafficking in African captives, and escorted them to the nearest British port for processing by a Vice-Admiralty Court.[1] All human cargo found on board these ships was recaptured, liberated, and settled in the nearest British Colony. Although many Africans were spared the indignity of chattel slavery as a result of this action, policing the Atlantic slave routes was too great a task for Britain alone. Swift Baltimore clippers taking slaves to Cuba, for example, invariably out-maneuvered the Royal Navy. The situation was aggravated by the collusion of Latin American officials and African coastal males.[2]

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[1]A Vice-Admiralty Court was set up in Nassau on 25th February, 1697, as an instrument of the British Mercantile System.
[2]Vide Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade,* London, 1949, p. 89f; and Leslie Bethell, *Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade,* Cambridge, 1970, p. 126f.

After the Anglo-French War 1803-1815, the interception of suspected slave ships was restricted to British vessels. However, Britain made treaties with Spain and Portugal in 1817, and with the Netherlands in 1818, as a result of which Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands declared the slave trade illegal, and the British Navy was authorised to search their ships for African slaves.[3] Courts of Mixed Commission were erected in West Africa, the West Indies, and Latin America to adjudicate on ships suspected of trading in slaves.[4] In 1819, for example, Courts of Mixed Commission were set up in Freetown to adjudicate intercepted slave ships. In 1836, as a result of an arrangement with Spain, the British Government appointed R. R. Madden, a former stipendiary magistrate in Jamaica, to the newly created post of Superintendent of Liberated Africans at Havana. Madden's task was to oversee the trans-shipment of *emancipados* -liberated (Africans)- to the nearest British port. The nearest British ports to Cuba were Jamaica and The Bahamas.

Between 1811, when the first group of recaptives had been brought to The Bahamas, and 1841, when the last such group had arrived, a total of roughly 3,565 recaptives were settled in New Providence, Highborn Cay, Rum Cay, Long Island, and the Ragged Islands. The majority of them were settled in New Providence where they lived in villages named Adelaide, Carmichael, Fox Hill, Grant's Town, and Bain's Town. The principal settlements during our period were Adelaide, Grant's Town, and Fox Hill. The most populous of these was Grant's Town.

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[3] Vide Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone,* Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 137.
[4]Leslie Bethell, "The Mixed Commissions for the Suppression of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of African History* 7, 1966, pp. 79-93.

After being processed, the recaptives were placed under the charge of a Collector of Customs who was assisted by an African Board which was established in 1836.[5]

Some recaptives were enlisted in the Militia and the Royal Navy; but the majority of them were employed in fishing, wrecking, cutting wood, raking salt, agriculture, and domestic work.[6]

The arrival of the recaptives was vigorously opposed by Bahamian whites. Racial prejudice and fear aside, a review of the demographic and economic state of affairs in The Bahamas immediately prior to the arrival of these recaptives should facilitate an understanding as to why white Bahamians, the majority of whom knew what it was like to have been discriminated against by a Bahamian host society, should feel so threatened by the influx of these Africans.

In 1810, the population of the Bahama Islands was as follows:

Island	Whites	Slaves	Free Colourds	Whites per 100 slaves	Free Colourds per 100 whites
New Providence	1,720	3,190	1,074	57	59
Harbour Island	661	539	52	123	8

[5] The Collector of Customs was responsible for the recaptives' physical welfare and their placement as apprentices for a period ranging from seven years to fourteen years. The purpose of their apprenticeship was twofold, viz. to afford them an opportunity to learn a skill or trade before entering the wider Negro community, and to expose them to civilising and christianising influences. (Cf. James Stephen to Liverpool, 14th July, 1811, *CO 23/58.*) To this end, employers were also required to ensure that they be instructed in the Christian faith, be baptised, attend church, and, in the case of apprentices under the age of 21 years, attend Sunday School. (Vide Enclosure in Colebrooke to Glenelg, 5th August, 1835, no. 77, *CO 23/94.*) The African Board was responsible for the management of the African Hospital. Many of the recaptives brought to New Providence had been suffering from either scurvey or dysentry. (Vide Walker to Commissioner of Customs, London, 3 January, 1834, *CO 23/224;* and *The Bahama Argus,* 19th November, 1836.) The Board was also responsible for non-apprenticed and vagrant recaptives.

[6]Report on the state and Condition of the Liberated Africans, 10th October, 1828, Enclosure no. 7 in Grant to Sir George Murray, 10th October, 1828, no. 19, *CO 23/79.*

Eleuthera	576	1,098	143	52	25
Abaco (1807)	250	150	10	167	4
Exuma	96	1,261	55	8	57
Cat Island	54	662	58	8	107
Long & Ragged Is.	141	734	67	19	48
San Salvador	21	486	5	4	24
Rum Cay	7	177	0	4	0
Andros (1807)	10	180	0	6	50
Crooked & Acklin's Is.	23	1,142	53	2	230
Inagua	1	28	0	4	0
Caicos Islands	32	522	6	6	19
Turks Islands	540	1,308	87	41	16
Total	4,132	11,477	1,615	37	38

Source: CO 23/59, 37.

The intimidating realities that the ratio of non-whites to whites was 3:1, and that the free non-white population was on the increase particularly in New Providence was aggravated by the fact that by this time the cotton industry had practically collapsed, and the self-hire system had become a means of livelihood for a number of slaves and masters alike. Initially, the Bahamian Legislature, composed mainly of Loyalist whites, was peeved because it had not been consulted by the British Government prior to the British Parliament's decision to settle the recaptives in The Bahamas. Consequently, shortly after the arrival of the first group of Africans, the Bahamian Legislature, with the concurrence of the Acting Governor, Chief Justice Vesey Munnings, petitioned King George III and requested, albeit in vain, that further settlement be curbed if only for economic reasons.[7] According to John Stephen, Rector of Christ Church, even the value of slaves was affected by these settlements. In his testimony before a select committee of the House of Assembly in 1815 he stated:

> As far as I have been able to learn from conversation, I have clearly understood that the value of Slaves in this colony has decreased during the last seven years, which may be owing to various causes, and chiefly to a superabundance of Slaves, to the exhausted state of the soil, and to the Introduction of several Cargoes of Africans seized at sea and condemned as lawful Prize, which have been let out to the Inhabitants upon Indenture.[8]

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[7]Enclosure in Munnings to Liverpool, 25th November, 1811, *CO 23/58*.
[8]Enclosure in Charles Cameron to Earl Bathurst, 24th January, 1816, *CO 23/63*.

The recaptives were diligent workers whose labour was preferred to that of both free blacks and slaves.

Tension became feverish in New Providence in 1825 when the Collector of Customs, C. Poitier, purchased 400 acres of land from public funds and resold it at a reduced price to recaptives whose apprenticeship had ended.[9] The whites rightly viewed this as the dawn of a new black peasantry.

With the passage of time, the recaptives had several benefactors including Governors Lewis Grant and John Carmichael Smyth.

In 1825, a number of liberated Africans who had been settled in an un-named area in the south-western end of New Providence began to relocate themselves in an area immediately south of the Governor's residence.[10] Governor Grant accommodated them by having the Surveyor General, J. J. Burnside, subdivide the area into lots of a quarter of an acre, and sold them at a price of ten shillings each. In 1833, 252 of 385 recaptives who had settled at Highborn Cay were resettled in Grant's Town. The other 133 had died, probably from scurvy and dysentery. The Cay itself was severely affected by drought. In 1833, therefore, the Acting Governor, Blayney Balfour, decided that its use for African settlement should be discontinued.[11] By 1835, Grant's Town had been subdivided into 474 lots, 50% of which had been purchased and developed for housing and farming. The village then had a population comprising 160

[9]C. Poitier to Bathurst, 8th February, 1825, *CO 23/74.*
[10]Colebrooke to Glenelg 15th December, 1835, no. 125, *CO 23/94.*

men, 176 women, 93 boys, and 118 girls. Of these, 21 were merchants, 8 were seamen, and 236 were field labourers.[12] In that year, too, a wooden structure was erected to serve as a chapel and an Infant School.

Shortly after his arrival in 1829, Governor Smyth developed the area south-west of New Providence and created two villages one of which he named Carmichael. There he settled 514 recaptives.[13] In 1830, he appealed to the Legislature for funds with which to build a school, but his request was denied on the ground that the British Government should be responsible for funding the project. He, therefore, used some one thousand pounds of his own money with which he built chapels and schools in his newly created villages.[14]

In 1833, a superintendent was appointed at Carmichael. He was answerable to the African Board, and his duties included the daily recitation of the Prayer Book offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, conducting classes for children six days per week between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., and night classes for adults at least three times per week.[15]

Governor Smyth's other village was built six miles west of Carmichael. He named it Adelaide. In 1835, he had a chapel and an Infant School built there.

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[11]Balfour to Stanley, 1 July, 1833, *Register of Despatches 4,* Archives Department, Nassau.
[12]Colebrooke to Glenelg 15th December, 1835, no. 125, *CO 23/94.*
[13]J. Carmichael Smyth to Goderick 4th October, 1832, no. 183, *Governor's Despatches* 3 Aug. - 6 Dec., 1832.
[14]Carmichael Smyth to Goderich, 5th February, 1832, no. 137, *CO 23/86.*
[15]Hunter to Glenelg 18th February, 1833, no. 14, *CO 23/99.*

The liberated Africans who settled in The Bahamas were not only recipients but contributors as well, particularly in the area of popular culture. Two of their enduring contributions in this regard were an informal banking system called 'Asue,' and a moral and financial support system called 'Friendly Societies.'

The Asue

The Asue, also called 'Sou Sou' in Barbados, is believed to have been of Yoruba origin. It was practised principally by women, as it is today, and was used as a money saving scheme with a specific financial project in view.[16] Altogether voluntary and based entirely on trust, its *modus operandi* was as follows. A group of persons verbally contracted to 'throw in' a mutually agreed sum of money each, on a regular basis and over a mutually agreed period of time. The individual's sum of money was called a 'hand.' These 'hands' were kept by a participant who was unanimously accepted as the 'asue keeper.' The 'asue keeper' was verbally entrusted to disburse the savings, called a 'draw,' in the amount of the mutually agreed sum multiplied by the number of participants, until each participant received, in one lump sum, the 'draw' to which she had been entitled.

This system of economic empowerment undoubtedly enabled many recaptives to purchase land and build houses for themselves in Grant's Town and other villages.

(B) Friendly Societies

[16]The author's wife participates in the scheme on a regular basis.

Friendly Societies were a development and expansion of Bahamian slaves' Burial Societies.[17] Although they may also have been influenced, at some stage, by their British counterparts, including the *St. Andrew's Society of Nassau* which was founded in 1798, they seem to have been a natural outgrowth of the Diaspora Africans' determination to exist as a group in a competitive environment. In Sierra Leone, for example, an African American named Paul Cuffee, son of a freed African father and a Red Indian mother, who lived in New Bradford, Massachusetts, encouraged a Methodist congregation to organise a co-operative trading society, the Friendly Society of Sierra Leone, to enable members to grow or buy produce and market it abroad. Thomas Clarkson, among others, set up a non-profit-making society in London to market their African produce there and, at the same time, to supply them with saleable goods for marketing in Sierra Leone. At that time, the rice merchants in Sierra Leone were all Europeans.[18] However, there was another important factor which undoubtedly influenced the recaptives in The Bahamas, viz. their Christian nurture. This was acknowledged by the *Grant's Town Friendly Society* in an address to King George IV in 1835, which read, in part:

> In adopting the Language and habits of the English people we have learned with these the truths of the Christian Religion, which have moved them to be protectors of the African Race; and as Christians we have formed ourselves into a Society ...[19]

The earliest Friendly Society was *The Bahamas Friendly Society* which was founded in New Providence on 1st August, 1834, and included newly emancipated slaves. By

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[17]Cf. M. J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past,* Boston, 1958, p. 161, where Herskovits argues convincingly for an African source for similar black Societies in the U. S. A.
[18] Christopher Fyfe, op. cit., p. 101, 113.
[19]The Humble Petition of the President, Vice-President and Members of the Grant's Town Friendly Society. Enclosed in *Colebrooke to Glenelg, 8 Oct. CO 23/94.*

1910, more than 160 Friendly Societies with a total membership of about 8,000 had been formed.[20]

The purpose of these Societies was basically fourfold, viz. to defray funeral expenses of deceased members and certain of their dependent relatives; to provide relief for widows and orphans, and those who were unable to support themselves in sickness and old age;[21] to promote temperance; and to assist with the foster care of black youths.[22] The first two purposes are indicative of the relationship between the Friendly Societies and the earlier Burial Societies. Quite probably, the fourth purpose, like the third, emerged with the first of the Friendly Societies. They were especially interested in the religious and educational nurture of the youth.

During the annual Emancipation Day celebrations, the Societies in New Providence would supply band music and process with the island's youth to Christ Church for a service of thanksgiving. This was followed by a march to the Governor's residence where a representative member of one of the Societies would address the Governor on some current matter of social interest or concern. In an address dated 1st. August, 1851, for example, members of the Bahama, Grant's Town, and the Eastern District Friendly Societies said, among other things:

We pray God long to extend all the blessings of Her Majesty's Government to us and our children, that we and they, elevated by true religion and Christian education, may advance by means of godly wisdom in the scale of human civilization, standing fast not only in that political freedom which is

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[20]Vide *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Working of the Friendly Societies of the Colony,* p. 7. The author accessed a copy of this Report through the courtesy of the Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

[21]Vide The Humble Petition of the President, Vice-President and Members of the Grant's Town Friendly Society. Enclosed in *Colebrooke to Glenelg, 8 Oct. CO 23/94.*

[22]Vide *The Nassau Guardian,* 2nd August, 1852.

now the birthright of every British subject, but also in that higher liberty from sin and degradation, wherewith Christ makes his people free.[23]

Here we see not only a strong sense of family and a high esteem for the Church and its educational ministry but also a profound understanding of the Church's role and purpose in the process of civilisation. In a society where, and at a time when, parents, particularly those of poor white children, often exhibited an air of indifference to their children's education, recaptives and their descendants were in the vanguard of a tripartite approach to child education, viz. the Church, the school, and the home.

[23] *The Nassau Guardian,* 2nd August, 1852.

(b) Black Seminole Settlement

Black Seminoles is the name given by some historians to the descendants of a group of Gullah slaves who had escaped from the rice plantations in South Carolina and Georgia and intermarried with a group of Seminole Indians in the forests of Spanish Florida.[1]

The Gullah were rice growers from Bunce Island in the Sierra Leone River, who had been enslaved and taken to the Sea Islands off the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia to work in the rice fields there.[2] Some of these slaves escaped and fled into the wet forests of Spanish Florida where, by the late 1700s, they had become established, and cultivated corn and rice.[3]

The Seminole were ethnically and culturally Creek Indians from Georgia, who, in their attempt to escape enslavement, sought an independent form of existence in Florida where they met the Gullah. There they married into each other's ethnic group and fought a common enemy, viz. advancing white American settlers, particularly the slave catchers. The settlement of these groups in Florida was encouraged by the Spaniards who used them as a buffer between the British and Spanish colonies in the American South.

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[1]Vide Joseph A. Opala, *The Gullah: Rice Slavery and the Sierra Leone-American Connection,* USIS, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 1987, p. 21f.
[2]Rice was introduced into North America in 1685. By the end of the 17th century, it had become the staple export crop for these two former British Colonies.
[3]Joseph Opala, op. cit., p. 21.

In 1821, about 102 Black Seminole Indians,[4] some of whom brought their wives and children, arrived in The Bahamas aboard Bahamian fishing and wrecking vessels. One of the boats on which many of them arrived was captained by one James Mott who was reputed to have been a trafficker in slaves. The majority of them, under the leadership of Scipio Bowleg, an Indian doctor,[5] settled in a place called Red Bays, on the north-west tip of Andros. About five of them went to the Berry Islands.[6] Those at Red Bays engaged themselves in the felling of timber, cutting dye woods, gathering sponge, and scouring wrecks. Through their thrift and industry, several of them were able to purchase small vessels, and one even purchased a few slaves.[7]

During the Anglo-American War 1812-1814, the British, under Admiral Sir Alexander Cochran and General Sir John Keane, successfully solicited the support of the Indian tribes in Florida, having first promised them protection and support as 'friends and brothers' in return.[8] The Americans had the support of the Cowetas. The war formally ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on 24th December, 1814, but news of the treaty did not reach the British forces in North America before they had launched an attack against New Orleans in January of the following year. The Americans, under General Andrew Jackson, engaged the British forces and dealt them

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[4]*CO 23/78/58* Enclosure Grant to Bathurst 30th June, 1828.
[5]John M. Goggin, 'An Anthropological Reconnaissance of Andros Island, Bahamas,' *American Antiquity V,* 1939, pp. 21-26, re p. 24.
[6]*CO 23/70/5* Enclosure Grant to Bathurst 19th April, 1821. Winer Bethel Searcher of Customs Nassau to Comptroller Customs London 30th October, 1828, *Governor's Office Secretary of State Papers 1828.* Apart from this reference to a Seminole settlement in the Berry Islands, our sources are silent about it. Improbable though it may seem, it could be that the source confused the Berry Islands with the Joulter Cays, the latter being immediately north of Andros. According to Goggin, a small group of Black Seminoles did land on these cays but they later moved to Red Bays.
[7]Winer Bethel Collector of Customs to Customs Office, London, *Duplicate Despatches 4th August, 1831.*
[8]Munnings to Bathurst, *Duplicate Despatches 10th January, 1818 - 31st December, 1825,* p. 343.

a crushing defeat on 8th January, 1815. In the meantime, border clashes were erupting between the frontiersmen of Georgia and the Seminole and Gullah of Spanish Florida.

In 1817, General Jackson was detailed to initiate action against the Seminole with a view initially to pushing them into the more southern parts of Florida and, after the United States' purchase of Florida from Spain in 1819, eventually resettling them on reservations in Oklahoma. This action sparked off the First Seminole War 1817-1818 in which Gullah and Seminole warriors fought as allies.

Having in their possession a document signed and sealed by Cochran and Keane, a group of 28 Seminole, under the leadership of Kenadgie King or Supreme Chief of the Seminole Indians in Florida, arrived in New Providence on 29th September, 1819. Speaking in English through "an Indian of mixed blood," probably a Black Seminole, they complained that they had been driven from their homes by the Cowetas and that they were seeking British assistance.[9] With Britain no longer being at war with the United States, the Bahamian Government did no more than accommodate them for a week before shipping them back to Florida.[10]

The settlement in Red Bays was not discovered until 1828 when 97 Black Seminoles were seized by the Collector and Comptroller of Customs for processing in accordance with Britain's abolition of the slave trade. For the circumstances of their arrival had given rise to the suspicion that they had been brought into The Bahamas with a view to being sold as slaves in Cuba. It was discovered, however, that some of

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[9]*Royal Gazette,* 2nd October, 1819.
[10]Ibid., 9th October, 1819. Munnings to Bathurst, *Duplicate Despatches 1818 - 1825, p. 375.*

them had fought for Britain in the battle at New Orleans, and were still in possession of their honourable discharges from the British forces.[11] In putting his case to Lord Bathurst on their behalf, Governor Smyth contended:

I see, therefore, no grounds to suspect any improper motives on the part of the owners of the vessels who brought them from Florida, or to doubt the truth of the story told by the poor people themselves more particularly as many of them still have their discharges from His Majesty's service. ... I humbly conceive that under all the circumstances of the case, Your Lordship will be satisfied to leave things exactly as they are, it being perfectly known and understood here that these Negroes [Black Seminoles] are as much under [the] protection of the British Government as any other free person.[12]

On the advice of Winer Bethel, the Collector and Comptroller of Customs, they built themselves a chapel and were placed under the pastoral care of William Hepworth, Rector of Christ Church. It seems, however, that apart from administering baptism and performing marriages, Hepworth was unable to do much else to assist them spiritually. It would appear that, as far as their spiritual well-being was concerned, they ministered to, and among, themselves much of the time,[13] and that they were able to do this because, through their Gullah ancestry, some of them had been beneficiaries of the missionary labours of SPG in South Carolina.[14]

At the request of Governor Smyth, the Bishop of Jamaica commissioned one Rev. McSweeney as island missioner to The Bahamas. The Governor directed him to pay special attention to the settlers at Red Bays. Pleased with McSweeney's ministry there, the Governor reported:

I had the satisfaction of hearing very good accounts of them a few days ago from Rev. McSweeney whom the Bishop of Jamaica has been good enough for the present to place at my disposal. He

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[11]James Carmichael Smyth to Bathurst, *Duplicate Despatches 10th August, 1831.*
[12]Ibid.
[13]Vide Winer Bethel Collector of Customs to Customs Officer, London, *Duplicate Despatches 4th August, 1831.*
[14]Vide Chapter Six, re p. 173, of this Thesis.

recommends the establishment of a school and the supplying of them with a more capable instructor than merely one of themselves. I shall not fail, as opportunities offer, to attend their wants.[15]

It so happened, however, that Governor Smyth's concern for blacks, particularly his opposition to the flogging of female slaves, won for him the disfavour of both the Legislative Assembly and the local newspaper, the Bahama Argus, which eventuated in a successful petition for his recall in 1832. Saddened by this turn of events, 46 Black Seminoles signed a petition on 7th May, 1832, expressing regret over the recall of Governor Smyth.[16]

No school was established in Andros until 1854 when the Government opened one in Nicholls Town. The fact that these Indians were able not only to conduct their own church services when they had neither an Anglican clergyman nor a catechist but also to write and sign a petition is further evidence of SPG's successful ministry among their ancestors in South Carolina. It seems to indicate, too, that their nurture in the Christian faith according to the principles and teaching of the Church of England was passed on among their families from one generation to the next.

As a result of a devastating hurricane in 1866 when nine persons were drowned, 25 houses were destroyed, and 140 persons were left homeless at Red Bays, the Black Seminoles were persuaded to relocate to the north-east of the island where they were given land in settlements called Nicholls Town and Mastic Point. Over the years, they intermarried with their black hosts. As a result, all of the Seminole features of their

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[15]Smyth to Bathurst 3rd February, 1832, *Duplicate Despatches 1825-1836.*
[16]Vide *CO 23/86/250-53.*

descendants have disappeared.[17] Furthermore, but for the surname *Bowleg,* and the craft of making baskets, 'fanners,' and other artifacts of straw,[18] all of their cultural traits have also disappeared.[19]

[17]Vide John M. Goggin, 'An Anthropological Reconnaissance of Andros Island, Bahamas,' *American Antiquity V,* 1939, pp. 21-26.
[18]Cf. Joseph A. Opala, op. cit., p. 13f.
[19]Vide John M. Goggin, 'The Seminole Negroes of Andros Island, Bahamas,' *Florida Historical Quarterly XXIV,* January, 1946, pp. 201-206; and 'An Anthropological Reconnaissance of Andros Island, Bahamas,' *American Antiquity V,* 1939, pp. 21-26.

Chapter Six

Social Interaction and Cultural Coalescence

Nineteenth century Bahamian society had a pyramidal structure similar to that of other British West Indian Colonies. At the apex stood the minority white elite who wielded both economic and political power, at the base were the slaves, and between them stood the free people of colour. Unlike the other colonies, however, Bahamian society was characterised more by race and colour than by class. This was due in large measure to the transforming effect which the white Loyalists and their slaves had on Bahamian society. The determination of these Loyalists to rebuild their lives and their fortunes was reminiscent more of the former North American Colonies and the new life which they had forged for themselves there than the class system which their forebears had left behind in Britain.

The people most receptive to the Loyalists' attempts to replicate Southern US racism in The Bahamas were those in isolated island communities like Spanish Wells, Cherokee Sound, Man-O-War Cay, and Hope Town all of which remained exclusively white, through endogamy, until the second half of the twentieth century. However, in the more populous settlements of Abaco, Grand Bahama, New Providence, Eleuthera, Long Cay, Crooked Island, Acklins Island, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, the pre-Loyalist Bahamian tendency to interact across racial and cultural lines was not easily curbed. This was evidenced by a high level of miscegenation, inter-racial contact in the workplace, mixed social and recreational activity, and a common language by the year 1834.

Although the Bahamas Registration Act of 1821 acknowledged no distinctions in the pigmentation of slaves, Bahamian practice did recognise degrees of genetic mix and gradations of skin colour among unequivocally black slaves. Similar practices obtained in other British West Indian Colonies. In Jamaica, for example, the terms mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, and samba were applied with precision to those who were one-half, one-quarter and one-eighth black, or a mixture of any of these with another black, respectively. In The Bahamas, however, they seem to have been less precise and based more on skin colour than on parentage. Such terms as *yellow* and *brown* were more commonly used; though, for statistical purposes, all slaves who were not 100% black were listed as mulattoes.[1]

There were 966 slaves, or 9.7% of the total Bahamian slave population, listed as mulattoes in the registration returns for 1834. The proportions varied from island to island. For example, Long Cay, Crooked Island, and Acklins Island, which were settled after 1783, had a mulatto slave population of 14.79% in 1834. This was partially due to the relative isolation of these island communities whose resident whites were mainly males. These men were known to have practised miscegenation quite openly with their female slaves. The fact that Long Cay, the site of The Bahamas' General Post Office since 1800, was a port of call for ships travelling from England to Jamaica also contributed to the high incidence of miscegenation in this area.

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[1]Vide Table 4.

Rare though the occurrence was in The Bahamas, white women also bore children for male slaves. In 1810, for example, an entry was made in the Baptismal Register of Christ Church as follows:

> Mary Bullard, a free girl of colour, daughter of Esther Bullard, a white woman, and Anthony Bullard, a slave belonging to Nathaniel Bullard, at Bullard's Bay.[2]

In New Providence where there were 2,250 slaves in 1834, there were only 220 mulattoes, or 9.78 % of the island's slave population. This may have been due to the high rate of manumission on this island where a third of all slaves manumitted were mulattoes. In 1834, New Providence had a free mulatto population of about 780. In sum, therefore, the island had a total mulatto population of about 1,000, representing some 25% of its non-white population.

In one instance in New Providence, some Bahamians who were ordinarily regarded as white were perceived by white visitors as being of mixed blood. In 1824, for example, Dr. Townsend was touring a supposedly white fishing and wrecking village in New Providence when he made the following remark concerning the villagers,

> Most of them have a dash of dark blood in their veins & many are mulattos.[3]

The proportion of mulattoes in the slave populations of Eleuthera, Long Island and the Turks and Caicos Islands was roughly 13%. On Harbour Island, by contrast, where racial separation was the norm, only 8.4% of the slaves were listed as

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[2] *Baptismal Register, Christ Church, 1791-1840,* Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.
[3] *Nassau, Bahamas 1823-4: The Diary of a Physician from the United States visiting the Island of New Providence,* published by the Bahamas Historical Society, Nassau, 1968, p. 25.

mulattoes and, with comparatively few free coloureds in the population, the proportion of mulattoes to other non-whites was only about 10%.[4]

The proportion of mulatto slaves on Cat Island, Exuma, San Salvador, and Rum Cay, where blacks outnumbered whites, was even lower, averaging less than 5% of the respective slave populations.

The fact that the nuclear family was normative in Bahamian slave society during this period[5] suggests that much of the miscegenation which occurred at this time resulted from inter-racial marriages.

The workplace was another venue of interaction between black and white, slave and free in Bahamian society.[6]

Corporate worship according to the rites of the Church of England and as mandated by the Governor in Council in 1725 and George II in 1729[7] afforded Bahamians of varied ethnic, racial, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds an opportunity to assemble on a weekly basis. This was borne out by a visitor who, describing her observations of a service at Christ Church, wrote:

> I have just returned from Christ Church and was delighted yet surprised at what I saw. I saw lords, governors, admirals, chaplains, midshipmen, sergeants and corporals many of them with families, merchants and prominent men with their wives and daughters. Besides them, occupying the most conspicuous seats, were jet black quadroons and mulatto men, women and children. They seemed at home. In the choir were beautiful white ladies and fine looking gentlemen, while beside them were jet black ladies and gentlemen. No one seemed to look upon the scene as anything out of place.[8]

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[4]Vide Saunders, *Slave Population of The Bahamas,* pp. 272-282.
[5]Cf. Chapter Five p. 167 of this Thesis.
[6]Vide Chapter Five of this Thesis re domestics p. 153, & Charles Farquharson's Plantation, p. 157ff.
[7]Vide Introduction (5a) re p.68f of this Thesis.
[8]*The Nassau Guardian,* 25th July, 1874.

Apart from the reference to lords and governors, an obvious exaggeration, that visitor's observations were reflective of the demographic comprehensiveness of the Anglican Church during our period.[9] Initially, the principal beneficiaries of this kind of liturgical and social interaction were the residents of New Providence and, with the necessary adjustments, Harbour Island. In time it spread to other inhabited islands *mutatis mutandis.*

The Governor's residence was another venue where people of varied backgrounds socialised occasionally. One such occasion was 23rd April, 1824, when Governor Grant sponsored a ball in honour of King George IV's birthday. Adela Hart, a winter resident, was one of the guests. Conscious of the racist element in Bahamian society and the inter-racial composition of the guests, she later commented:

> [The second ball was that in celebration of King George IV's birthday, which was] both splendid and charming. ... [But the dinner constituted] a scene of indescribable hilarity, [as the occasion] made it necessary to invite many [whites and non-whites] who did not, generally, mingle with the gentry; and nothing is more amusing than the assumed consequence of those persons, when they are admitted to the society to which they are unaccustomed.[10]

As Miss Hart herself implied, The Bahamas' colonial status required an inclusive guest list for the king's birthday ball. Her comment also reveals that but for the Anglican Church's weekly liturgical celebrations, the gathering of such a wide cross-section of the community was a rare occurrence. Here we see the Anglican Church and the 'supreme governor' of Church and State not only promoting the erection of a Christian society but actually facilitating its integration.

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[9]For a comparison with other religious groups see Chapter Four pp.129ff of this Thesis.

Sports also proved to have had a dynamic for social interaction across racial, colour, and class lines. This was evidenced by the following extract from the preamble to an Act of 1816, which was designed to regulate Sunday activities:

> of late [it has] been a common practice for white persons as well as free people of colour, free blacks and slaves, to meet and assemble together upon the public grounds and other places in and about this town and suburbs, for the purpose of playing ball, and other sports and pastimes, thereby profaning the Sabbath or Lord's Day.[11]

It is interesting that these social activities occurred on the Lord's Day and were, for that reason, proscribed. There is something at once theological and dialectic about the entire exercise. On the one hand, it signifies something of that renewal of which the Lord's Day has always been a symbol. On the other hand, it unveils the social forces which militated against the society's renewal.

Indicative of the dynamic at work in the coalescence of the principal cultures in nineteenth century Bahamian society were comments made by Dr. Townsend and Magistrate L D Powles respectively. Although the experiences which occasioned the remarks happened on separate islands and were separated by a period of about sixty years, the occasion in both instances was social and included music and dancing.

Dr. Townsend was at a dinner party in Nassau when he described the evening dance as "a country dance to dull music on the piano."[12] He was undoubtedly referring to the quadrille. Powles was at a wedding reception at Fortune Island when he noted in detail:

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[10]Del Lorraine, *Letters from the Bahama Islands, 35-37,* Philadelphia, 1827.
[11]*57 Geo. III c. 9, 1816, 204.*
[12]Ibid.

A great many quadrilles were danced, with a great deal of bowing and scraping. The dancers moved with much grace and brought every muscle of their bodies into play. The music consisted of a fife, a large accordion, and two tambourines which had to be continually taken out and warmed at a large fire in the yard to be kept going. About midnight, a bevy of old ladies in their working dresses appeared and danced jigs for an hour with all the energy of their first youth. One of them, the bridegroom's mother, was fearfully and wonderfully fat, but she hopped about like a bird. The jigs are ordinary Irish jigs and [the blacks as well as the whites] seem to consider them quite as much their national dances as the Irishman does.[13]

Here we see the gradual merging of two cultural strands, viz. the African and the Scottish/Irish. The process of cultural adaptation and improvisation implicit in this citation was aptly described by the late Clement Bethel, a Bahamian musician and composer, when he wrote:

The tambourines referred to in Powles' description are ordinary Bahamian goatskin drums. The tambourines had to be heated periodically at the fire to keep them in tune.

These dances [which were of the order of Set Dances which were commonplace in European capitals during the first half of the nineteenth century] included quadrilles, polkas, mazurkas, jigs and later the waltz, among others. They enjoyed widespread popularity among master and slave alike.[14]

Unlike the Sugar Colonies where blacks spoke a patois which combined features of English and West African languages, Bahamians of all racial and ethnic backgrounds spoke the English language itself. In an editorial dated 22nd August, 1835, entitled "Prospects of the Colonies," the Bahama Argus commented:

Thus may we justly contrast the Bahamas with the other colonies. Our labourers intelligent - speaking the English language, and not a miserable patois.[15]

This was underscored by Governor Colebrooke in a letter to James Stephen in 1835 when he wrote:

The language spoken here by whites & blacks is the English language. Another peculiarity with us is that many of the Black people except for the colour of their skins are as much Englishmen as if they had been born & brought up in that country.[16]

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[13]L.D. Powles, Op. cit.

[14]Clement Bethel, *From Quadrilles to Junkanoo: Bahamian Music,* cited in *Bahamas Handbook and Businessman's Annual,* Etienne Dupuch Jr. Publications, 1983, pp. 83ff.

[15]*Bahama Argus,* 22nd August, 1835.

This was but an inevitable consequence of the liturgical and social forces which have been at work in Bahamian society since practically the beginning of English settlement.

With English as its official language, and a process of cultural coalescence well under way, The Bahamas was poised for that spiritual and social transformation which the Anglican Church was committed to effect through education and worship.

[16]Colebrooke to James Stephen, 4th October, 1835, *CO 23/94*.

Chapter Seven

The Church and Education Pre-Disestablishment 1784-1847

During the American Revolutionary War 1775-1783, little progress was made in Bahamian education. The colony underwent a period of economic and social disruption[1] which resulted in the government's inability to meet the educational needs of a resident population which had more than trebled with the arrival of the Loyalists. Neither the government nor the church had the funds to rise to the occasion. In 1786, however, SPG assigned Thomas Robertson to Harbour Island. The Society paid him ten pounds annually to teach black and white children in the school which had been built there in 1772. Robertson headed that school until his death in 1792.

The educational needs of some children, particularly in New Providence, were met by a number of private schools.

Notable among these schools was that of Joseph Paul. In 1786, Paul founded a school in New Providence for the children of free blacks and slaves. This was the first school of its kind in The Bahamas. The curriculum comprised the 3 Rs. Paul, though a Methodist, was a regular worshipper at Christ Church. After a dispute with his fellow Methodists, he took out formal membership with the Anglican Church in March 1793. With him he took his school which the Anglicans welcomed and renamed Bray's Associates' School for Negroes.[2] Paul was made the school's first principal.

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[1]Vide *Classified Digest of the Records of the Society for the Propogation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1892,* London, 1893, p. 219.

[2]Bray's Associates was a London-based Anglican charity which was initiated in 1723 by Thomas Bray, a founding member of SPCK and SPG, and commissary to the Bishop of London re Maryland,

In 1785, David Zubly, a Loyalist of Swiss descent, who formerly lived in Savannah, Georgia, opened a private school in New Providence. His curriculum included Latin, Greek, English, Geography, and the traditional three Rs.[3] As in the case of at least one other private school, this was obviously an attempt to address the educational needs of some of the island's white elite.

According to the *Bahama Gazette* of 3rd May, 1799, there was a private school in Nassau, which taught English, Latin, and Greek to "young gentlemen" and qualified them for commercial business, while "young ladies" were taught the "Rudiments of English, the Use of the Globe, and to read Blank verse."

Having won the majority of seats in the Bahamian Legislature early in 1795, the Loyalists immediately set about enacting legislation to meet the educational needs of the colony. On the 14th and the 23rd December, 1795, the Legislature passed *An Act for the Erecting and repairing of churches, for the Maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospel and the support of the Poor,* and *An Act for establishing Schools in the several Islands therein named and providing Masters duly qualified,* respectively.

The first of these two Acts created six parishes in addition to the existing parishes of Christ Church and St. John, viz. St. Patrick (Eleuthera), St. Salvador (Cat Island), St.

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on receipt of a bequest of 900 pounds sterling. Dr. Bray used the interest from this money to support catechists working among the slaves in America and to provide books for converts. In 1735, it responded to a plea for the establishment of schools in The Bahamas. After the American War of Independence, the charity's support was diverted from America to the poor in Britain. Especially concerned about the Black Loyalists, the Associates initiated educational work among the blacks in Nova Scotia.

Andrew (Exuma), St. Paul (Long Island), St. David (Crooked Island), and St. George (South Caicos, Turks and Caicos Islands). It also required all Anglican clergymen to be graduates of an English, Scottish, or Irish university.

In its preamble, the Act of 23rd December, 1795, identified three criteria which the Legislators deemed essential to the welfare and prosperity of the country, viz. the instruction of the youth, the establishment of public schools, and the recruitment of qualified teachers.[4] To this end, it called for the establishment of public schools in all of the parishes and appointed Commissioners to be responsible for examining, issuing certificates, and recommending to the Governor those persons whose academic qualifications and moral rectitude qualified them as prospective schoolmasters. Such persons were required to be able to teach English and Latin as well as Writing, Arithmetic, and Merchants Accounts. The Commissioners, who included the President of the Council, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Chief Justice, Assistant Judges of the General Court, the Judges of the Civil Law Courts, the Secretary of the Colony, the Attorney General, and the Parish Rectors, were all members of the Anglican Church.

The belief, then current in England, that persons should do their duty as civilized members of society in the station of life to which they were called was also considered integral to the welfare and prosperity of the Bahama Islands; and popular education, with its religious and moral components, was deemed a fitting means to

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[3]Vide the *Bahama Gazette, April 2, 1789.*

[4]Vide the Preamble to *Bahama Islands An Act for establishing Schools in the Several Islands therein named and providing Masters duly qualified,* Fulham Papers Volume XV, 94-99, Lambeth Palace Library.

this end. A besetting problem, however, was plantation slavery which had only been introduced into The Bahamas in 1784. The Act of 23rd December, 1795, made no provision for the education of slave children as they were legally the property and responsibility of their masters.

The partnership which had previously existed between the Bahamian Government and the Anglican Church in respect of public education was continued under the Act of 1795. The Church's dominant role in education was progressively reinforced by the Education Act of 1799 which gave it full control of all public schools, and by the Education Act of 1816 which required all principals of public schools to be members of either the Church of England or the Church of Scotland.

In 1804, the Legislature provided for the establishment of the colony's first Academy or High School. Its curriculum included English, Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Mathematics, Writing, and Bookkeeping. Within the seven years of its existence, the Academy's two principals, viz. Henry Jenkins and John Stephen, were Rectors of the Parish of St. Matthew during the years 1804-7 and 1807-9 respectively.

By 1804, the people of Eleuthera had set up schools in Current, St. George's Cay, Palmetto Point, Savannah Sound, and Tarpum Bay; and the people of Abaco had erected a school in Green Turtle Cay. The Legislature, impressed with these initiatives, committed itself to pay the salary of teachers in each of those schools in

the amount of fifty pounds per teacher for that year. This marked the beginning of a partnership in education between the Government and the people in the Out Islands.[5]

In 1815, Dr. Bray's Associates wrote to John Stephen, Rector of Christ Church, recommending that Andrew Bell's Madras System of engaging the services of older and educationally advanced pupils in the teaching of younger ones be introduced into the Associates' school in Nassau, and commended William Cooper as a fit person to introduce it.[6] Stephen caused the matter to be discussed in Parliament where it received favourable consideration. The following year, the Legislature passed a Bill authorising the funds with which to pay Cooper's passage and his salary.

In 1839, William Strachan, Rector of St. Matthew, caused a Bill for the implementation of the Madras System in all public schools to be presented and debated in both Houses of Parliament.[7] The Bill was enacted, and the Madras System continued to be the official mode of educational instruction in all public schools until well into the second half of the twentieth century.

In 1816, the House of Assembly also voted the sum of eleven hundred pounds for the erection of an all-white Boys Central School. To all intents and purposes, this was an Anglican Academy, as it was "publicly known for educating children in the principles

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[5]*Out Islands* was the official designation of islands of The Bahamas other than New Providence.
[6]Dr. Bell, an army chaplain in Madras in 1789, devised this system of 'pupil-teachers' during the height of the Industrial Revolution as an economic means of meeting the need for large numbers of teachers in English towns. It involved a method of teaching whereby older pupils, having attained a certain level of education, instructed younger ones.
[7]Vide *William Strachan to E. Hawkins, 9th February, 1839,* SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

of the Established Church,"[8] and all students were required to attend worship at Christ Church twice on Sundays. It also functioned as a 'Normal School.'[9] The Associates' School, for example, closed for a period of six months, at one stage, to enable its headmaster, Joseph Watkins, a black man, to pursue a course of study and training there. William Rattray and John Langley, headmasters at South Eleuthera and Harbour Island respectively, were also given time off to do courses there.[10]

A significant step was made in education in 1824, the year in which Episcopal Church Government was bestowed upon the Anglican Church in the British West Indies. The 1725 Resolution of the Governor in Council, and the 1729 Act by which the Anglican Church was established and endowed enjoined upon slave masters and mistresses the duty of causing their slaves to be instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, to be baptized, and to be regular in attendance at worship. That these duties were discharged to the extent that it was clerically possible within the Anglican Church is evidenced, for example, by the church's Baptismal Registers. In 1723, Joseph Watkins, a planter, had 34 of his slaves baptised, and in 1724/5 Governor Phenney had eight of his slaves baptised.[11] On 26th July, 1792, six of Lord Dunmore's slaves were baptised, and on 5th September, 1798, Dr. John Coakley had eight of his slaves baptised.[12] William Wylly, a Methodist, actually built a chapel for his slaves, and

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[8]Part of a Report submitted by *Robert James Hughes to A M Campbell, Monday 24th July, 1837,* SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. According to Hughes, the curriculum included "Religious Instruction in Faith and Duty, the Catechism, Collects, and Graces."

[9]A 'Normal School' was a 'Training School' for teachers.

[10]Boys Central School evolved into Government High School in 1925, and remained the only public High School in the Colony until the attainment of Majority Rule in 1967. In 1974, the year after The Bahamas obtained Political Independence, Government High School evolved into the College of The Bahamas which, in 1995, obtained the status of the University College of The Bahamas.

[11]List of Christenings, Marriages, and Burials 1721-1726, *CO 23/13, 267-70,* Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

[12]*Christ Church Baptismal Register 1791-1840,* p. 36 and p. 65 respectively.

engaged the services of a Methodist minister to visit his plantation and give religious instruction to them.[13] What was significant about 1824, however, was that slave children were no longer excluded from public education. Furthermore, as clergymen and catechists became increasingly available, the State and the Church became more intentional about providing these children with a systematic programme of instruction. The emphasis at the time was on moral and religious education. According to Lord Bathurst, moral and religious education served three principal purposes. First, it constituted the foundation of "progressive change" in the character and the future condition of the slaves. Second, it was preliminary to the admission of slave evidence in a court of law. Third, it was deemed a necessary foundation for Christian marriage.[14]

Through the instrumentality of this educational thrust, therefore, the slaves were to be prepared for eventual emancipation and responsible citizenship. This preparation was designed to last for a period of ten years.[15]

(A) Episcopacy and Education

On 25th July, 1824, Christopher Lipscombe, Bishop designate of Jamaica, and William Hart Coleridge, Bishop designate of Barbados, were consecrated in Lambeth Palace Chapel by Archbishop Sutton of Canterbury, assisted by Bishops Howley of

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[13]Vide *A Mission to the West India Islands: Dowson's Journal for 1810-17,* A Deans Peggs ed., the Deans Peggs Research Fund, Nassau, Bahamas, 1960, p 61 and pp. 73-74.
[14]Vide Lord Bathurst's Letter to Governors of British (Slave) Colonies with Local Legislatures, Colonial Office, Downing Street, 9th. July 1823, *Parliamentary Papers, 1824, XXIV.* Cited by Michael Craton, James Walvin and David Wright, *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation,* Longman London and New York, pp. 300-301.
[15]Vide George Canning's *Papers in explanation of the measures adopted by his Majesty's Government with the view of ameliorating the condition of the Negro Slaves in the West Indies,* presented to the

London, Pelham of Lincoln, and Blomfield of Chester. Lipscombe's episcopate covered the period 1824-1843.

Before embarking for Jamaica, Lipscombe delivered a sermon in St. Thomas' Church, Portsmouth. In language reminiscent of Calvin's doctrine of the total depravity of man, though he was speaking primarily of Britain's poor both at home and abroad, the bishop put his case for the need of moral and religious education. Viewing character as "everything to the poor man," the source of his happiness and the means by which he can contribute to the public good, Lipscombe regarded it as a matter of the greatest importance that man's character be thoroughly informed by Christian principles. Such Christian nurture would result not only in man's happiness and the public good but also in the banishment of ignorance and poverty from Britain's domains.[16]

Although consecrated in July, 1824, Lipscombe did not arrive in Jamaica until February 1825. The Episcopal hurdle which he encountered went all the way back to 1728 when Gibson, Bishop of London, obtained a Royal Patent, assuring him of his jurisdiction of the Church of England overseas.[17] The assumption of the Bahamian and Jamaican Parliaments was that the powers of preferment and disciplining of the clergy in the colonies were vested in the local Governor by virtue of the 1559 Act of Supremacy. As far as the Legislators were concerned, they themselves were in the hands of neither the Bishop of London nor the local Governor. The Bahamian

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House of Commons on Tuesday, March 16, 1824. Cited by the *Royal Gazette And Bahama Advertiser,* May 12th., 1824.

[16]Vide the *Hampshire Telegraph, October 23, 1824,* cited by the *Royal Gazette,* February 19, 1825. Such education was also regarded as a bulwark against popery. Vide M G Jones, *The Charity School Movement: A Study of Eighteenth Century Puritanism in Action,* Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1964, pp. 29ff.

[17]Vide Hans Cnattingius, op. cit., p. 24.

Parliament went so far as to effect an Act restricting the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London to the discipline of the clergy only. William Strachan, Rector of St. Thomas' Parish, Turks Islands, brought the matter to the attention of the Bishop of London who referred it to the Privy Council for Trade and Foreign Plantations. On 18th November, 1823, the Privy Council ruled that the Act should be disallowed.[18]

Lipscombe arrived in Jamaica on 11th February, 1825, accompanied by his wife, his mother-in-law, the Revs. W. Pope and W. Patterson, and Henry Lipscombe. His arrival was met with mixed emotions. Many of the planters considered him a spy for the Home Government, and some of the clergy were ill-disposed to being under Episcopal control.

In 1825, the Jamaican Parliament passed the Clergy Act. This Act stipulated that, as far as the clergy were concerned, the Ecclesiastical Laws and Canons used in England were to apply in Jamaica. The jurisdiction did not extend to the laity, nor did it end the Governor's authority to present clergymen to vacant parishes. The Act regulated clergy stipends and fees, and gave the Bishop disciplinary powers over the clergy. Stipends were payable on the clergy's production of a certificate of their residence and the performance of their duties from the churchwardens. The withholding of such certificates made the churchwardens liable to a fine of five hundred pounds. The absence of a clergyman from his cure for a period of three months without the Bishop's consent incurred a fine of two hundred pounds; and any clergyman who was

[18]Vide *Copy of Remarks of Mr. Stephen Grant upon an Act(No. 657) to regulate the Temporal concerns of the Church of England by law established, and to cotribute towards the support of the Poor within these Islands, and for other purposes,* passed in January 1823, and contained in a letter,

absent without leave for more than eighteen months had his cure declared vacant. The Act had an initial duration of eleven years. It was renewed in 1836, 1847, and 1858. It was rescinded altogether with the disestablishment of the Church in 1869.

Bishop Lipscombe visited The Bahamas a total of three times. His first visit occurred on 6th May 1826, accompanied by Henry Lipscombe and W. Patterson. There were then only two priests in The Bahamas, viz. William Hepworth and William Strachan, rectors of Christ Church and St. Thomas' respectively. This shortage of clergy was felt the more acutely because St. Matthew's Church, New Providence, erected in 1802, was vacant. Its rector, John Wright, died in 1818, and William Strachan had to divide his time between the congregations of Christ Church and St. Matthew. In their letter of welcome to the Bishop, the Wardens and Vestry of Christ Church expressed great concern that Hepworth could not devote his undivided attention to their parochial and liturgical needs.[19] The Bishop promised them that the matter would be addressed; and on 12th May, 1826, William Strachan was inducted as Rector of St. Matthew's. Two months later, Strachan advertised that he was going to establish an Academy in his parish for the purpose of teaching classical subjects.[20]

A letter of welcome from the *free people of colour residing in New Providence* was also delivered to the Bishop. It had sixty three signatures. What is especially significant about this letter is its association of "a well regulated Church Establishment, the dissemination of useful knowledge, an excitement of virtue, and

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dated December 30, 1823, by the Rev. William Strachan to the Bishop of London, *Howley Papers, Vols. 2, 3, & 5, Selected Folia, Academic Microforms Neg., # 507,* Lambeth Palace Library.
[19]The *Royal Gazette,* May 10th., 1826.
[20]Vide the *Royal Gazette,* July 15, 1826.

the promotion of true Religion" with the advent of episcopacy.[21] Most of the Black Loyalists who migrated to The Bahamas were either Methodists or Baptists. This letter, as representative of the free people of colour, indicates that many free non-whites who were initially Methodists or Baptists either converted to Anglicanism or, though non-Anglican but cognizant of current decisions made by the British Parliament, had high expectations of the Established Church, given the establishment of Anglican bishoprics in the region.

Lipscombe's initial visit to The Bahamas was a brief one; and given the scattered nature of this archipelago, he could not have visited more than New Providence and its two Parishes, Christ Church and St. Matthew's. His Episcopal functions included the consecration of the burial grounds of Potters Field and Bethlehem, in the Parish of Christ Church, and the three burial grounds in St. Matthew's Parish. He expressed concern about the formation of Sunday schools and parochial schools under the superintendence of the clergy[22] but he was unable to do much about these during his initial visit. He left for Jamaica on 23rd May, 1826.

Lipscombe next visited The Bahamas during 17th February - 26th March, 1830. He came armed with his plan for the educational nurture of the masses.

On 4th March, 1830, a public meeting was held in the Court House, Nassau, for the purpose of forming a *Branch Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in connection with the Diocesan Committee established in Jamaica, under the*

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[21]The *Royal Gazette,* May 13th., 1826.

patronage of his Excellency Sir James Carmichael Smyth, Baron, Governor of the Colony, and the Honourable and Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of the Diocese.[23] Other members of the Society included a committee of some seven persons who, nominated by the Governor, were to be responsible for the business operations of the Society. The funding of these operations was to be derived from membership subscriptions of $5.00 per annum or a one-time donation of $25.00.[24] Additionally, special collections were to be taken at annual services which were to take place in all parish churches to promote the work of the Society. By the end of the Bishop's visit, a total of $650.00 was collected for the work of the Society.[25]

The Society was to be concerned primarily with the establishment of Sunday schools throughout The Bahamas, and the diffusion of religious and moral education among the poor through the gratuitous distribution of Bibles, Prayer Books, and SPCK sponsored religious and moral tracts.[26] These books and tracts were to be made available to the other members of society at reduced prices. Among the Sunday schools established were two for white children in the Parishes of Christ Church and St. Matthew. Two visitation committees were appointed to monitor the progress of these schools. A Lending Library was also set up for the two parishes.

The Governor endorsed the formation of the Society. Declaring ignorance to be degrading to humanity, he expressed satisfaction that the realization of the Society's objectives would have a beneficial effect on society as a whole by equipping the

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[22]The *Royal Gazette,* July 15, 1826.
[23]Ibid, March 6th., 1830.
[24]Ibid.
[25]Ibid, June 2nd, 1830

various classes to do their duty "in those stations in which it has pleased the Almighty to place them."[27] The English belief that their class system was divinely ordained was not only commonplace during our period, it was imprinted on the impressionable minds of the nation's youth through the agency of the Established Church.[28] As of 1824, concerted efforts were made to establish this guiding belief among the subjects of the Empire, particularly among the masses in the British West Indies. The Governor hailed the formation of the Bahama Branch Auxiliary Society of SPCK as a fitting agent of this.

Due to the want of a Minister at St. Andrew's Kirk, Nassau, the Bishop made several attempts to establish a Sunday school for white children there, but without success. During the period 1817-1837, the Kirk was without a Minister for a total of fifteen years. The longest vacancy lasted from 1830 to 1836. For a Presbyterian Church which received its first Minister in 1810 and whose second Minister died within four months of his arrival, such a void of Ministers had a demoralising effect on the congregation. This was only aggravated by the collapse of the cotton industry in 1810, the demands of cultivating salt in commercial quantities as a viable alternative, and the attraction of seafaring as a means of livelihood. For those Scottish Bahamians who were 'attached to the religion and morals of their forefathers,' and who wished 'to instil the same attachments into the minds of their children,' the preoccupation with economic survival occasioned an air of indifference to the religious obligations of

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[26]Ibid, March 6th, 1830

[27]Ibid.

[28]Cf. the response to the question "What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?" in "A Catechism," *The Book of Common Prayer,* 1662.

Kirk membership. It was to this state of apathy that the Editor of the *Royal Gazette* referred when he commented, in extremely fine print:

> We must be permitted to advert to the deplorable state of the Presbyterian establishment of this town: - not owing to the want of a neat and commodious church -not to any want of liberality in the Legislature in granting ample salaries and other allowances; -nor to any declension of religious inclination in the people- but to causes which none of these supports to a church can reach or remedy at present.[29]

The problem of getting a Minister for St. Andrew's Kirk was exacerbated by the fact that the Presbytery of Edinburgh, under which the Kirk was placed when it was established and endowed by Act of the Bahamian Parliament in 1824, was itself short of clergy. Although apathy was prominent among the "causes" which neither the religious nature of the Scots nor the liberality of Parliament was able to "reach or remedy," due cognizance must be taken of the fact that Presbyterianism, like Anglicanism, relied heavily upon a well educated ordained ministry operating in a parochial setting.[30] The fact that the Rector of Christ Church periodically conducted Sunday evening services in the Kirk in 1835 and 1836 did little to rectify "the deplorable state" of St. Andrew's. The Kirk needed a full-time incumbent whose Scripture-based teaching would effect a reformation of manners in adults and children alike.

The immediate context of the editor's comments, however, was the Presbyterians' negative response to Lipscombe's attempt to start a Sunday school at the Kirk. With a view to stimulating primarily, though not solely, Presbyterian interest in the beneficial effects of Sunday schools, he devoted three full columns of his newspaper

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[29]The *Royal Gazette,* March 6, 1830.

to *A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SCOTCH CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOLS (IN KINGSTON)*. His source of information was the *Jamaican Courant* which he quoted unabridged and without its author's approval. Between 1824 and 1827, the Presbyterian Church in Kingston, under the leadership of Rev. Wordie who was ably assisted by his wife, succeeded in establishing four Sunday schools for children of all classes and religious denominations. A Library was also set up for the benefit of Sunday school teachers. As far as the Kirk in Nassau was concerned, by contrast, no Sunday school at all was forthcoming before 1836 when the Bahamian Parliament passed an Act which enabled the Kirk to call Ministers from the Presbytery of Glasgow as well as the Presbytery of Edinburgh. In April 1837, St. Andrew's received Dr. William Maclure, a vigorous opponent of denominational church teaching in public schools, who was newly ordained for the parish.

The seed of moral and religious education had now been sown, and by 1833, the year preceding Emancipation, the seed was bearing fruit and the Society was proving to be contagious. On 17th August 1833, an ecumenical group of between fifty and sixty men, along with the Governor, convened in Nassau for the purpose of forming the *Bahama Auxiliary Bible Society* in co-operation with the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. The purpose of the Bible Society was the promotion and distribution of the Christian Scriptures. Unlike the Branch Society of SPCK, the Bible Society was interdenominational and voluntary.[31] The timeliness of the formation of the Branch

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[30]Unlike in Presbyterianism, however, in Anglicanism, the ordained ministry is both incomplete and inefficient in the absence of Bishops, as the story of the Anglican Church in Britain's West Indian Sugar Colonies, particularly Jamaica, prior to 1824/5 would attest.
[31]SPCK, though a voluntary society, differed from the typical voluntary society in that it held a Parliamentary charter, and in England and English dependencies operated as an agency of the Church of England; hence the role of the Governor and of the Bishop of Jamaica in the Branch Society. Thus,

Society of the SPCK notwithstanding, the formation of the Bahama Auxiliary Bible Society within a year of slave emancipation could hardly have been more momentous. For although the erection of the two West Indian sees was linked directly to the preparation of the slaves for ultimate emancipation, the structure and human resources of the Established Church alone were insufficient to meet the task. This was a part of the Church's problem in the Bahamian archipelago since 1729. The problem became more acute with the arrival of the Loyalists and their slaves in 1783/4. As William Carey realized in 1792,[32] a less theologically conventional and a less ecclesiastically structured 'means' needed to be employed. The power of the Scriptures to effect moral and social reform had proven itself time and again. The preparation of the slaves for responsible citizenship in The Bahamas was no exception. Accordingly and in true evangelical style, the ecumenical group of fifty to sixty men devised a means of disseminating, "without note or comment," the book

> which has God for its author, the salvation of man for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter.[33]

But for the words "without note or comment," Aubrey George Spencer, Bishop of Jamaica 1843-1854, would have had no difficulty with this comment about the Bible. In a sermon delivered before the Newfoundland and British North America School Society, based on the text of Hosea 4:6, he said, *inter alia:*

Lipscombe's concern to establish Sunday Schools for white children in St Matthew's, Christ Church, and at the Kirk, racist though it may appear, was consistent with the concern of these agencies to minister to British settlers overseas as a matter of priority. A typical voluntary agency like the Bible Society, by contrast, had no denominational bias. Cf. A F Walls, *Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church* in *The Evangelical Quarterly* 88 (2), 1988, 144-155.

[32]Vide William Carey, *An enquiry into the obligations of Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathens. In which the religious state of the different nations of the world, the success of former undertakings and the practicability of further undertakings, are considered,* Leicester 1792. Cf. A F Walls' *Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church,* op. cit.

The knowledge that is essential to salvation is "to know the true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent," and to cultivate this knowledge till it is consummated in eternal life. And where is this knowledge to be found? In the Bible. ... The Bible is the Word of God; but God's Word has but one meaning, and to get at this meaning, clear and uncontaminated, ... we must have recourse to the records of early and sustained practice, the interpretation of the Catholic Church at its purest and primitive ages, while it was yet illuminated by the beams of Apostolic memory and light.[34]

Satisfied that the Church of England was a branch of "the Catholic Church at its purest and primitive ages," he continued:

But it many be asked where is the unlearned, but sincere and anxious, inquirer to obtain this leading information? ... I reply at once ... the Church of which we are privileged members, the Church in her missions, the Church in her lawful expositions, the Church in her Schools.[35]

Spencer put a strong case for the Church's emphasis on child education when he said,

When men have arrived at years of maturity without having experienced the power of the Gospel in the process of education, it is to be feared that their minds have acquired a rigidity and determination of tone which nothing but a more than ordinary demonstration of the "spirit of counsel" and of "ghostly strength" can possibly subdue. ... But with the young, with those whose youthful minds have not yet been "spoiled by philosophy or by vain deceits," in whose pliable and unformed characters we have no long-indulged habits to overcome, no inveterate captivity to the world to eradicate, and little beside the struggling of original sin to combat, education is a mighty instrument which the Church should never abandon, and which she must generally wield with success.[36]

Spencer's case for the role of the Church in education was corroborated by the fact that, in The Bahamas even by 1846, there were many who had yet to be educationally equipped to read the Bible for themselves. In 1834, the slave population of The Bahamas numbered 10,002, 40% of whom were under the age of 13 years. Roughly 51% of the slave population was female, 12% of whom were between the childbearing ages of 15 years and 45 years. These female demographics, aided by a healthy climate, good dietary practices, and relatively healthy lifestyles, contributed

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[33]The *Royal Gazette*, February 5, 1834.

[34]*A Sermon preached before the Newfoundland and British North America School Society, at its Twenty-third Anniversary, in St. Stephen's Church, Coleman Street, on May 27th, 1846, by the Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Jamaica, pp. 8, 9.*

to an annual birth rate among Bahamian slaves of roughly 35 per 1,000. The child population was growing, therefore, at a steady rate. Additionally, there were 2,800 children between the ages of six years and 14 years among the non-slave population, but 2,000 or 71% of these were enrolled in no school at all in 1834. Furthermore, there were only four public schools in the entire archipelago in 1834, apart from the Bray's Associates' School, the Boys Central School, and a few private schools. This contrasts markedly with 1817 when there were ten public schools, ten grant-aided schools and the Associates' School. The reason for this phase of educational regression was the Bahamian Government's insolvency. With the exception of 1786-1787 when cotton peaked, and 1861-1865 when the financial returns from "running the blockade" during the American Civil War made The Bahamas a wealthy colony, this archipelago remained the poorest of Britain's West Indian Colonies. The magnitude of the task of educating the colony's youth was made more difficult by the fact that these children were spread over some twenty of the Bahama Islands. The Church's manpower and financial resources were too limited to meet the educational needs of The Bahamas during the decade immediately preceding slave emancipation. As late as 1842, Governor Cockburn complained to SPG:

> There is perhaps no part of her Majesty's dominions where the number of clergymen of the Established Church is so inadequate to the due performance of the sacred duties required of them as in the Bahamas.[37]

At the time of Cockburn's writing there were four priests in the colony. The fifth, Robert Davies, was drowned during inter-island visitations three weeks prior to the date of Cockburn's letter. In 1834, there were only two priests, both of whom were

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[35]Ibid, p. 9.

[36]Ibid, pp. 11, 12.

[37]*Governor Francis Cockburn to Rev. A M Campbell, November 24th, 1842,* Rhodes House Library.

stationed in New Providence. Yet the Church guarded its monopoly of popular education too jealously to permit any direct involvement by Dissenters.

Between 1833 and 1845, the British Government and several charities invested a total of about 163,897 pounds[38] in Negro education in the British West Indies. In its Emancipation Act of 1833, the British Government voted 5,000 pounds for Normal Schools, 25,000 pounds for schoolhouses, education grants of about 30,000 pounds annually until 1842, and smaller education grants until 1845.[39] Of these amounts, a total of about 62,385 pounds were administered by the SPG which, at the invitation of Bishop Lipscombe, resumed its missionary work in The Bahamas in 1835. The Society made an initial grant of 400 pounds sterling, out of its pledged 5,000 pounds, towards post-emancipation Negro education in The Bahamas, while the initial British Parliamentary grant amounted to 250 pounds sterling.[40] In sum, The Bahamas received roughly 8,153 pounds sterling through SPG for Negro education during the period 1835-1845.[41] This amount included funds from the Christian Faith Society[42]

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[38]This figure is deduced from SPG's "Statement of The Negro Education Fund" in C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of SPG: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1900,* London, 1901, p. 195.

[39]Vide A. Caldecot, *The Church in The West Indies,* Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1970, p. 101.

[40]Vide *William Strachan to Rev. A. M. Campbell, 9th June, 1838,* SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

[41]C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of SPG: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701-1900,* London, 1901, p. 195.

[42]This Society had its origin in a bequest of Robert Boyle, by his Will dated 18th July, 1691, *for Charitable and other pious and good Uses,* at the discretion of his Executors, with the greater part of the bequest being earmarked *for the Advance or Propagation of the Christian Religion amongst Infidels in Virginia.* The Executors invested 5,400 pounds sterling in an Estate at Brafferton, York, the clear Rents from which were to be remitted to the College of William and Mary in Virginia, to be applied for the Education and Instruction of Indian students. After the American Revolutionary War, the original purpose of this bequest failed to obtain. The Society received its first Royal Charter through the exertions of Bishop Porteous of London on 30th October, 1794, and a renewed Charter through the influence of Bishop Blomfield on 11th January, 1836, under the title, *The Incorporated Society for Advancing the Christian Faith in the British West Indian Islands and Elsewhere, and in the Mauritius.* Vide *The Two Charters of the Society for Advancing The Christian Faith in the British West*

and personal donations to the Negro Education Fund.[43] During the remainder of our period, SPCK made grants to The Bahamas alone totalling some 9,000 pounds.

In 1830, Governor Smyth appealed to the Legislature for funds with which to build a school at Carmichael, but his request was denied on the ground that the British Government should be responsible for funding the project. He, therefore, used some one thousand pounds of his own money with which he built chapels and schools in his newly created villages.[44]

In 1833, a superintendent was appointed for Carmichael. He was answerable to the African Board, and his duties included conducting classes for children six days per week between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., and night classes for adults at least three times per week.[45]

Prior to leaving the colony in 1835, Governor Smyth initiated the erection of a dual purpose building at Adelaide, which served as a chapel and an Infant School.

Carmichael Smyth was succeeded by William Colebrooke. Before expending any of the funds which were allocated for Negro education, Governor Colebrooke appointed a Commission to study the educational needs of the colony. The Commission was set up in 1835. It was chaired by William Hepworth, and included William Strachan, Thomas Lofthouse (Chairman, The Bahamas District of the Methodist Church), and

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India Islands and Elsewhere, London: Printed by Richard Clay, Bread-Street-Hill, Doctor's Commons, 1836.

[43]Vide C. F. Pascoe, op. cit., p. 195.

[44]Carmichael Smyth to Goderich, 5th February, 1832, no. 137, *CO 23/86.*

Joseph Burton (Zion Baptist Church). The Commission made three recommendations. First, that it be allowed to manage the Bahamians' share of the British Government's education grant. Second, that an institution of higher learning be established for males who were desirous of pursuing a university education, as a matter of priority. To this end, they recommended the formation of King's College Nassau where boys would be instructed in English, Greek, Latin, French, History, Mathematics, and Geography as a preparation for matriculation into King's College, London. Third, that a Committee be selected to visit the island communities which had schools and those which desired schools but had none.

In the light of the Committee's findings, the Commission further recommended the establishment of a Board of Public Instruction, the building of schools in eight of the islands where no schools existed, and the erection of a Normal School in Nassau.

All of the Commission's recommendations were favourably received. Additionally, a dual purpose wooden structure was erected in Grant's Town. Under the patronage of St. Agnes, it served as a Chapel of Ease to Christ Church and an Infant School.

In 1838, William Strachan was instrumental in the erection of a school house in St. Matthew's Parish. It could accommodate 150 scholars, and was based on the Madras System.[46]

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[45]Hunter to Glenelg 18th February, 1833, no. 14, *CO 23/99*.

[46]Vide *William Strachan to Rev. A M Campbell, 9th June, 1838,* SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

In 1838/9, William Kelsall Duncombe, the first Bahamian priest, set up an Infant School at Harbour Island. The erection of this school was made possible by a CFS grant of fifty pounds.[47] In 1841, the school was adopted by the Colonial and Continental Church Society which Lipscombe had invited to come to The Bahamas in 1841. This was a free school, though the children were obliged to worship at the Anglican Church and attend its Sunday school.

Duncombe also initiated a new turn in church-sponsored education. In a letter to SPG dated 3rd August, 1838, William Strachan complained that as far as the dissemination of the principles and doctrines of the Anglican Church were concerned The Bahamas was the most neglected of Britain's Colonies. He attributed the success of the "illiterate and unqualified" itinerant Anabaptist preachers among the Bahamian masses to the want of an adequate supply of priests. Duncombe saw the need not only for more clerical assistance but also for the establishment of an indigenous ministry. He was of the opinion that every large Bahamian settlement[48] should have its own pastor. In 1842, therefore, he advanced his case for a native ministry. In commending it, he cited two principal and practical reasons which he considered indicative of its advisability. His first reason was one of economy. He contended that, at a time when missionary societies were experiencing financial difficulty and a shortage of manpower, the employment of native missionaries would prove less expensive than foreign ones. Second, he stated that Bahamians would have fewer health problems re acclimatization and tropical diseases than Europeans.[49] He proposed a theological

[47]Ibid.

[48]"Settlement" is the Bahamian term for "village."

[49]During our period, The Bahamas was renowned for its health affirming climate, particularly during the Winter. However, European missionaries found it no easy adjustment from a temperate climate to a

course of study which he promised would be offered gratuitously to all young men who could adduce satisfactory evidence of their piety, and who would give a distinct pledge that, if ordained, they would enter the ministry of the Anglican Church.[50]

Duncombe was given leave to establish a seminary at Harbour Island. There he trained catechists and ordinands, the latter functioning as catechists prior to being ordained. Several of these men, notably Samuel Minns Jr., the first Bahamian coloured priest, and William Sweeting, the first Bahamian black priest, were educators as well as pastors.

In 1839, the Board was dissolved, reconstituted, and scaled down in size. That same year it issued the following report:[51]

Comparative Figures of Schools and Enrolments for the years 1838 and 1839

	1838		1839	
Island	*Schools*	*Roll*	*Schools*	*Roll*
New Providence	5	523	13	932
Eleuthera	4	160	5	353
Long Island	1	41	1	45
Harbour Island	?	?	1	65
Turks & [Caicos]	2	101	2	135
Abaco	1	70	3	61
Exuma	1	40	1	?
Watlings Island	?	?	1	23
Rum Cay	?	?	1	49
Totals	14	935	28	1663

Although the total school enrolment in 1839 was but a fraction of the children between the ages of one year and eighteen years, the year itself marked phenomenal

sub-tropical one, especially during the Summer. The tropical diseases which took the greatest toll on life in The Bahamas during this period were cholera which appeared only once, viz. in 1852, and small pox which surfaced in 1845 and 1860. Both of these diseases were imported from St Domingo. Yellow fever visited The Bahamas in 1829, 1845, 1853, and during the years 1861-1864. It was only in 1861-62, however, that it proved fatal, claiming among its victims Charles Caulfield, the first Bishop of Nassau. Vide Surgeon Major Bacot, *The Bahamas: A Sketch,* London, 1869, p. 69.

[50]Vide *Annual Report of the CCSS, 1842,* p. 35f.

[51]Computed from statistics in the *Bahamas Blue Book 1839,* p. 145.

growth in Bahamian education. The number of schools actually doubled, in New Providence it practically trebled, and the overall school population increased by 77.86%. This was indicative not only of a increasing interest on the part of many parents in respect of the education of their children but also of the Bahamian Government's understanding of the importance of public education to the welfare and prosperity of the various island communities.

The thirteen schools in New Providence included King's College, three High Schools, and five Infant Schools. Apart from King's College which was funded initially by the sale of shares and an endowment, a Boys School and a Girls School in St. Matthew's Parish, which were funded by the SPG, and two Methodist schools, one in Eleuthera and the other in New Providence, the cost of operating and maintaining these schools was met by annual grants from the Colonial Government.[52]

All government schools were controlled by the Anglican Church and had the Anglican Catechism and liturgy included on their curricula. However, the Anglican dominance of public education did not go unchallenged by Nonconformists. The respective positions of these two groups regarding religious instruction in The Bahamas seemed somewhat similar to the notions of the *National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church* and the *British and Foreign School Society* with respect to the same subject in England.[53]

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[52]Ibid., p. 146.

[53]Although neither Society was opposed to religious education *per se,* the latter advocated a general and simple religious education devoid of peculiar church teaching while the former, regarding religious instruction as useless unless it included training in membership of a particular church, included the Anglican liturgy and Catechism on the curricula of all Church of England schools. It

In 1839, the Board of Public Instruction was dissolved and reconstituted, and two years later all clergymen were removed from it. Neither action, however, had any conciliatory effect. In 1847, therefore, a new Education Act was passed by the Bahamian Legislature. As a result of this Act, the Board of Public Instruction was dissolved and replaced with a six-member Board of Education under the chairmanship of the Governor. The Board was empowered to employ a secretary whose duties included monthly visitations to public schools in New Providence, and annual visitations to government schools on the other islands. The Act also forbade the teaching of the Anglican Catechism and denominational doctrine in public schools, and disallowed government grants to all church schools. With the passage of this Act, therefore, the Anglican Church's control of public education came to an end.

This signalled the first in a threefold series of local events which eventually resulted in the disestablishment and the phased disendowment of the Anglican Church. The other two were the *Burial Ground Question* and the *Hurricane of 1866.*

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would appear, therefore, that the Church in The Bahamas, sharing the view of the *National Society,* managed the Colony's public schools as though they were its own.

7 (a) The Burial Ground Question

The matter regarding Anglican control of public education had barely been resolved when the *Burial Grounds Question* emerged. The Presbyterians were the only church group in New Providence without a burial ground of its own. Heretofore they seem to have had no difficulty with Anglican clergymen burying their dead. In 1849, however, the matter came to a head when a Presbyterian child died and its parents asked William Strachan, Rector of Christ Church, to permit the Minister of St. Andrew's, William Maclure, to officiate at the burial in Bethlehem, also called the Scots' Burial Ground,[1] and the request was denied. Strachan denied the request on the ground that the Colony's burial grounds were consecrated by the Bishop of Jamaica in 1826 and that it was theologically improper and legally impossible for anyone other than an Anglican cleric to officiate in them.

Initially, Strachan was merely informed that the interment was scheduled to take place in the forenoon of Saturday, 30th June, 1849. When he was eventually informed of the hour of the funeral, he decided to give priority to a commitment with which the funeral, as scheduled, conflicted, and deputed his Curate to officiate at the funeral. The funeral party was irate and as a form of protest, the gentlemen refused to doff their hats during the ceremony. After completing the interment, the Curate left the cemetery. Maclure then went to the graveside and, after the gentlemen removed their hats, he offered a prayer. This having been done, the funeral party dispersed.[2]

With the support of the Baptists led by Rev. Henry Capern, the Presbyterians held a public meeting under the Chairmanship of J. G. Meadows MHA,[3] and formed a *Committee of Memorialists.* The Committee was comprised of J. G. Meadows, F. MacCarthy MHA, the Rev. William Maclure, Rev. Henry Capern, Dr. W. Kirkwood, and W. H. Doyle. A lengthy letter was sent to William Strachan, the Rector of Christ Church. The Rector and Vestry deemed the communication offensive, and deputed A. W. Smith, Vestry Clerk, to reply accordingly. After several exchanges of letters with negative results, the Committee solicited some 800 signatures to a letter of protest which they presented to the Speaker of the House of Assembly. Meanwhile, Strachan was in correspondence with the Governor, requesting that the Attorney General give a legal opinion on the matter. The Governor refused and referred the matter to Bishop Spencer instead. The four New Providence Rectors, with the support of their respective Vestries and that of Archdeacon Trew, wrote collectively and severally to the Speaker of the House, insisting that the issue be not brought before the Bahamian Parliament. They had Trew champion their cause before the Governor. Trew exchanged many letters with the Governor, requesting, *inter alia,* copies of the Governor's communication with Bishop Spencer, and the Bishop's response thereto.

In his opinion on the matter, Bishop Spencer confirmed the claim of the Established Church to all the Parochial Burial Grounds, particularly those immediately adjacent to church structures such as St. Matthew's, Nassau, and St. Thomas', Grand Turk, though the dispute centred around Bethlehem. He also asserted the sole and exclusive right of

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[1]In 1785, the Vestry of Christ Church issued an order discontinuing burials in the churchyard. They purchased a plot of land from a Scottish family, and used it as a burial ground.
[2]Vide the *Bahama Herald,* 31st August, 1849.
[3] Member of the House of Assembly.

the Church in, and to, the said grounds as Anglican Church property. He opined, however, that Ministers of all Denominations should be permitted to conduct funerals, in accordance with their respective traditions, in Burial Grounds which were not immediately attached to Anglican church buildings, and he informed the Governor that the Bahamian Parliament should enact legislation accordingly.

The Bishop's position was nothing short of a compromise which, though conciliatory to those who opposed the Church's exclusive privilege, fell short of what the Anglican clergy and laity regarded as the Church's legitimate claim. *A BILL For defining the right to the ceremonial use of certain Burial Grounds in the Island of New Providence, and for providing for the charge and regulation thereof* was presented to Parliament, debated and passed, though with a majority of one vote.

In signing the Bill into law on 4th March, 1850, Governor Gregory, elated at the peaceful resolution of a controversy which, for two years, had divided the Colony denominationally into Establishment and Dissent, said:

> To all those [Bills] which you have this day presented to me, I have given my willing assent; but, with regard to one of them [A Bill For defining the right to the ceremonial use of certain Burial Grounds], I deem it to be my duty thus, publicly and emphatically, to record the expression of my cordial and cheerful concurrence.[4]

The Governor was satisfied that the Bill was fair, just, and conducive to a spirit of charity among the contending parties.

[4]The *Royal Gazette,* Saturday, March 16th., 1850.

Editorial opinion was divided. The Editor of the Royal Gazette, elated at the signing of the Bill into Law, contrasted Bishop Spencer with his clergy and praised him as "a Christian, patriot, and statesman."[5] The Editor of the Bahama Herald, however, was most displeased. For him, the point in question was right *versus* expediency. He was pleased with the Bishop's assertion that the Parochial Burial Grounds were the property of the Anglican Church. But he suspected that the petitioners were politically motivated, and he criticised the Bishop for accommodating them. He complained:

> had the Bishop been personally cognizant of the position of affairs, were he aware of the political origin of this question, and the manner in which it has been agitated, he would have given his decided opposition to this vexatious attack made chiefly by (open or disguised) political antagonists of Church and State.[6]

He expressed optimism that, had the Bishop been resident in New Providence, he would have been personally aware of the political undercurrents at work, he would have acted in a more timely manner, and expediency would not have triumphed over right. Seeing no alternative to The Bahamas being formed into a See of its own, he contended:

> We cannot omit the opportunity thus afforded us of drawing attention to the extreme importance of having a Bishop of our own. ... it needs not our feeble arguments to show how much more effective the working of the Church of England would be in this Colony, were the Bahamas severed from the unwieldy diocese of Jamaica, and either attached to Bermuda, or converted into a distinct See.[7]

Trew was embarrassed and seems to have felt betrayed by the Bishop's position on the matter. He felt strongly about it because, had he not supported a motion for the postponement of the question pending the Bishop's arrival, he was satisfied that the

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[5]Ibid.
[6]The *Bahama Herald,* Friday, 31st August, 1849.
[7]Ibid.

Bill would have been defeated. Deeming it improper for the Archdeacon and the Diocesan to be at variance in the Upper Chamber, he resigned his seat in the Council.[8]

Trew received many letters of regret, some with as many as 66 signatures, from the Anglican community concerning his resignation from the Legislature. The one from the people of Grant's Town and Bain's Town is particularly instructive. In reference to the action he took which resulted in the recall of Governor Matthew on 16th November, 1848, because of alleged sexual impropriety and financial misapplication by the Governor, they wrote, in part:

> We thank you for all you have done for the good of the people since you were first in the Council, particularly for the way in which you stood up for the morals of the place, even in a time when this was no easy thing to do. In the name of our families, our wives, and our children, we thank you for this.[9]

Like the Archdeacon who was himself instrumental in the establishment of three schools in Grant's Town, these letter-writers obviously took seriously the Church's ministry in moral and religious education. They seemed to have been of one mind with the Editor of the Bahama Herald in suspecting that the Burial Ground Question was politically motivated, and like him they too must have been disappointed in Bishop Spencer's position on the matter.

It was more than disappointment, however, it was also a matter of grave concern. For they feared the inevitable, viz. disestablishment. The petitioners' success in the Burial Ground Question was but a step in this direction, and Trew's resignation from the Legislative Council could only facilitate the process. Hence their concern:

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[8]*The Bahama Herald,* 26th June, 1850.
[9]Ibid., 29th June, 1850.

We are sorry that at a time when the Church of England seems in danger we would lose the service of one who, for many years, has administered her scriptural blessings to our fellow-countrymen both in this Colony and in Jamaica.[10]

Unlike the 63 free people of colour who signed a letter of welcome to Bishop Lipscombe on the occasion of his first visit to The Bahamas on 12th May, 1826, and who, at that time, could but look forward to

the natural effect of a well regulated Church Establishment, the dissemination of useful knowledge, an excitement of virtue, and the promotion of true Religion,[11]

the residents of Grant's Town and Bain's Town, through the agency of Trew among others, had already begun to benefit from these things.

(b) The Hurricane of 1866 and Disestablishment

With the end of the American Civil War 1861-1865 came the decline of the Bahamian economy. Foreigners who came to The Bahamas to get rich departed with their gains. Local conditions reverted to what they were prior to the war, except that extravagant

[10]Ibid., 29th June, 1850.

[11]The *Royal Gazette,* 13th May, 1826. Cf. Emancipation Day address of the Grant's Town and Eastern District Friendly Societies, Chapter Eight re p. 205 of this Thesis.

tastes which were acquired at that time were relinquished very slowly if at all. New Providence which benefited most from the war was also the island which suffered most after hostilities ceased in 1865. Andros and its local economy also suffered both during and after the war. During the course of a pastoral visit to Andros in 1865, for example, Bishop Venables, though elated at the progress of the Church under the leadership of Catechist William Sweeting, lamented the fact that many of the men and boys from Andros gravitated into New Providence during the years 1861-5. As a result, the timber and sponge industries for which Andros was famous went into steady decline. On the other islands, however, commercial agriculture proved to be a viable alternative to ship wrecking which was itself being curbed due to the production of an accurate chart of Bahamian waters and the gradual erection of Lighthouses between 1816 and 1868. In 1858, for example, Eleuthera exported 160,530 dozen pineapples to England.[12] In 1864, it exported 229,226 dozen. By 1864 too the other islands were exporting about two million oranges annually. Meanwhile, however, the 'judgement,' as some Bahamians interpreted the 1866 hurricane, was imminent.

Between 30th September and 2nd October, 1866, the Bahamian Archipelago was lambasted by the most devastating hurricane that anyone during our period could remember. In New Providence alone, 92 craft were totally destroyed, 97 were badly damaged, and 43, including Her Majesty's ship *Nimble* were slightly damaged. On the island itself, a bombardment of similar duration could hardly have inflicted greater damage. The destruction of property was indiscriminate. The Anglicans, for example,

[12]*The Bahamas Blue Book,* 1858, p. 200f.

lost eleven churches and five schools, including St. Agnes' Church and the Woodcock Foundation Schools in Grant's Town.[13]

Under normal circumstances, the Anglican Church, as also St. Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk, could expect assistance from the Legislature with which to replace lost buildings and restore damaged ones. But the circumstances which then prevailed were not normal. For other Denominations also sustained heavy losses during the hurricane. Trinity Methodist Church, for example, was destroyed. At this time too, the Colony was at the brink of bankruptcy. The budget was in deficit by 10,000 pounds, a request for a loan from the Imperial Treasury was refused, and the people were too poor to sustain additional taxation. Retrenchment was inevitable.

As far as the religious composition of the Bahamian Parliament was concerned, Dissenters comprised the majority in the House of Assembly, and Anglicans dominated the Legislative Council. George C. Anderson, an Anglican, was Speaker of the House.

In March, 1867, R. H. Sawyer, a Methodist MHA, presented a resolution to the House of Assembly for the disestablishment and disendowment of the 'United Churches of England and Ireland within the Bahama Islands, and the Church of Saint Andrew.' A Committee was immediately appointed to draft the necessary Bill.

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[13]Rawson W. Rawson, *The 1866 Hurricane: Report on The Bahamas Hurricane,* 1866, pp. 9-11, Archives Department, Nassau.

In 1868, the Bill was debated by the House of Assembly. Supported by Presbyterian MHAs, it was passed by a majority of four votes. However, it was defeated in the Legislative Council. The Assembly then asked the Governor to prorogue the House and issue a writ for new elections. The Governor, deeming the request an infringement of his prerogative, refused to comply. An uproar ensued in the Assembly, resulting in the resignation of George Anderson as Speaker. He was succeeded by Ormond D. Malcolm QC, a Presbyterian. Malcolm immediately adjourned the House for three months.

General Elections were held in June, 1868. The Dissenters again dominated the Lower Chamber and appointed O. D. Malcolm Speaker. The House of Assembly passed *A Bill to Amend the Ecclesiastical Laws of the Colony,* but it was rejected by the Legislative Council. In March, 1869, *A Bill to Amend the Ecclesiastical Laws of the Colony, and for other purposes* was introduced to the House of Assembly. The reasons given for the Bill were basically threefold, viz. the depressed state of the Colonial finances, the unfair policy of using part of the taxes paid by residents who were neither Anglicans nor Presbyterians to meet the expenditure consequent upon ecclesiastical establishment while the same taxpayers were obliged to honour financial commitments to their respective Churches, and to remove all causes of religious discontent. The Bill was passed by a majority of sixteen to nine.

Facing the inevitable, the Legislative Council made six amendments to the Bill. The Council was particularly concerned about the financial future of twelve Anglican clergymen and the Presbyterian Minister whose stipends were paid from the Colony's

General Revenue. It decided that the said stipends should continue to be paid for the next ten years. Reflecting that position in its amendments, it approved the Bill in its amended form and sent it to the House of Assembly.

The House amended the section of the Bill pertaining to State-paid clergy and reduced the time-frame from ten years to seven years. It then passed the Bill in its amended form, and sent it to the Upper Chamber.

The Council accepted the Assembly's amendment to its amendment and passed the Bill.

It was fortuitous that religious discord in The Bahamas not only resulted in the 1847 Education Act, and crescendoed in the 1850 Burial Grounds Act, but also climaxed with the 1869 Ecclesiastical Laws Act. Yet it proved to be a happy fault as far as the educational ministry and the spiritual and numerical growth of the Anglican Church were concerned. For, henceforth the Church was free to focus on its peculiar form of educational nurture in a religiously pluralistic society, and labour alongside of other Christian Churches in the process of effecting a Christian society.

Chapter Eight

The Church and Education Post-Disestablishment 1848-1900

8 (a) The Church and Education 1848-1869

a (1) The State of Public Education

During this period, the Bahamian population grew from a little more than 26,500 in 1848 to just under 39,000 in 1869, an increase of 47.17%.[1] Over the same period, the number of children aged 18 years and under grew from about 6,357 in 1848 to just under 9,399 in 1869, an increase of about 48%.[2]

The state of public education during this period was affected by four principal factors, viz. budgetary constraints on the part of the Bahamian Government, the American Civil War 1861-1865, the Education Act, 1864, and the hurricane of 1866. These factors had a roller-coaster effect on public education.

Between 1848 and 1869 the Bahamian Government expended 19,962 pounds, or an average of 907.36 pounds annually, on public education.[3] This total included the Government's generous expenditure of 4,898 pounds in 1867.

In 1850, there were only 22 public schools, six less than there were in 1839, and the want of sufficient funds forced five of them to be closed. By the end of 1853, the

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[1]Department of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, Nassau, Bahamas. These figures are deduced from the 1845 statistics which registered the population at 26,491, and the 1871 population statistics of 39,162.
[2]Ibid. Additionally, the writer took into consideration the census returns for 1851, 1861 and 1871 all of which indicate that those who were 18 years of age and under represented roughly 24%, of the Bahamian population.

number had been reduced to 18 with a total enrolment of 1,484 scholars.[4] In a report to the Board of Education in January, 1854, J. H. Webb, Inspector of Schools, stated that there were about 5,000 Bahamian children in the Out Islands, or roughly 50% of those who should have been enrolled in school, who attended no Day School at all. Of the 1,484 who attended school, roughly 50% could not read, about 60% did not know the fundamentals of Arithmetic, and the rate of absenteeism among them was high. Several factors contributed to this sad state of affairs. First, the scattered nature of island communities both with respect to the geographical layout of the archipelago itself and the population density on some of the larger islands. In 1851, for example, Andros Island with an area or 2,300 square miles had a population of 1,030, or .45 persons per square mile. Second, the lack of an Anglican presence on many of the islands. On the one hand, the Anglican Church normally established missions where the people were 'sufficiently intelligent' to participate in its liturgy.[5] On the other hand, the presence of the Church invariably included the establishment of a school. Third, in areas where public schools existed and the Anglican presence was either weak or non- existent, the quality of teaching was normally poor due at least in part to untrained teachers. In his education report, for example, Webb described the policy of employing untrained females as principals of public schools in the Out Islands as 'questionable.'[6] Fourth, economic survival. During our period, money often took precedence over education particularly among white Bahamian families.

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[3]Cf. A. Deans Peggs' *A History of Bahamian Education,* unpublished M.Ed. Thesis 1947, Durham University, Appendix V, p. 419, Nassau Public Library.
[4]*The Nassau Guardian,* 15th February, 1854.
[5]Vide *Bishop Venables to the Rev. Secretary for SPG,* 13th January, 1868, Rhodes House Library.
[6]*The Nassau Guardian,* 18th February, 1854.

Public School education in New Providence stood in stark contrast to that on the Out Islands. To begin with, the island was comparatively small, having an area of 80 square miles, and its population density was the highest in the Colony, being 101 persons per square mile in 1851. Here the Church had long been established, the standard and quality of education were remarkable, and school attendance was, on the whole, quite good. According to Webb,

> The Public Schools in New Providence have fully sustained the reputation which they have enjoyed for some years. All have good numbers of children in attendance, and some are full to overflowing.[7]

Through its Bahama Literary Association, New Providence also afforded opportunities for the intellectual stimulation and the educational enrichment of the adult community. The Association provided reading and lecture rooms, and class rooms for music, discussion, the study of English and Spanish, and Drawing.[8]

These educational opportunities, however, were not unaffected by the American Civil War.

The war had both positive and negative effects on Bahamian public education. In April 1861, President Lincoln ordered a blockade of the southern ports of the United States. Two months later, Queen Victoria issued a proclamation declaring Britain's neutrality in the war, and commanded all British subjects to refrain from contravening British or American law regarding the hostilities.[9] As a result of the blockade, however, the Southern States began to trade their cotton for guns from European

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[7]*The Nassau Guardian,* 15th February, 1854.
[8]Cf. *The Nassau Guardian,* 24th June, 1865.
[9]Ibid., 29th June, 1861; and Britain's Neutrality During the American Civil War 1861, enclosed in *CO/23/165/370.*

countries, and New Providence, because of its strategic location, became an entrepot for this clandestine trade. As a result, the Bahamian economy boomed. Imports soared from a value of 234,029 pounds in 1860 to 5,346,112 in 1864 when blockade running was at its height. Over the same period, the value of exports rocketed from 157,350 pounds to 4,672,398 pounds. During the first two months of 1865, twenty steamers ran the blockade and landed 14,182 bales of cotton, valued at $750,000, in New Providence.[10] At the opening of Parliament in February 1864, Governor Charles Bayley congratulated the legislators on "the flourishing state of the Revenue." The national debt which stood at 14,453 pounds was liquidated, and the public treasury had a surplus of 13,242 pounds.[11] According to Stark,

> Fortunes were made in a few weeks. Wages were doubled. Success [in running the blockade] paid larger premiums than were ever attained by any legitimate business in the world's commercial history.[12]

However, this economic surge was not without its educational and moral downside. Absenteeism among school children rose to an all-time high of 42%, as children and parents alike became preoccupied with making money. This was aggravated by an overall decline in morality and health particularly in New Providence, as liquor flowed freely[13] and yellow fever became virulent due to overcrowding.[14] For, according to Stark,

> The town [of Nassau] actually swarmed with Southern refugees, captains and crews of blockade runners. Every available space in or out-of-doors was occupied. Men lay on verandahs, walls, docks and floors.[15]

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[10]James H. Stark, *History and Guide to the Bahamas,* New York, 1891, p. 94f.
[11]*The Nassau Guardian,* 24th February, 1864.
[12]Stark, op. cit.
[13]Ibid.
[14]Surgeon Major Bacot, *The Bahamas: A Sketch,* London, 1869, p. 69.

Even the very young acquired a taste for liquor and tobacco. On 3rd June, 1865, a journalist complained about the deleterious effects of the war on the Colony's youth as follows:

> [The] youth is suffered to run to seed by the filthy habit of smoking, drinking, &c. It is no uncommon thing to see a boy of seven years' old now-a-days with a cigar in his mouth.[16]

With money being readily available, the youth saw no need to learn a trade and opted for idleness in the market place, in the streets, and on the wharves instead.[17]

As in 1795,[18] the state of the Bahamian economy in 1864 enabled the Government to channel some of its financial resources into public education. Its educational objectives were not dissimilar to those of 1795. The Education Act, 1864, however, was initiated in no small measure by Governor Bayley himself who, in an address to the Legislature in February, 1864, reminded the MPs of the want of an Inspector of Schools and the desirability of filling that office in the interest of public education.[19] With this the legislators readily concurred,[20] and caused provision to be made for it in the 1864 Act. The Act formalised the partnership in education between the Government and the Out Islands communities. It stipulated that island communities desirous of establishing a school should make written application to the Board of Education and include details about the extent to which they were prepared to contribute towards the cost of erecting, furnishing, and the upkeep of the school, their willingness to see to it that their children attend school, and their intention to pay their children's school fees. It also authorised the subdivision of the Colony into school

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[15]Stark, op. cit.
[16]*The Nassau Guardian,* 3rd June, 1865.
[17]Ibid.
[18]Vide Charper two of this Thesis re p. 114, footnote 4, and chapter 11 re p. 221f.

districts the oversight of which was to be carried out by School Committees headed by Stipendiary Magistrates, set the minimum age for Pupil Teachers at 14 years and that of Monitors at ten years, established a curriculum which included the 3 Rs, History, Scripture, Needlework and Industrial Pursuits, fixed school fees at two pence per child per week, and set the salaries of Pupil Teachers and Monitors at ten pounds *per annum* and two to four pence per week respectively.

In 1865, the Board of Education recruited one William Job from the Institute of the British and Foreign School Society in Borough Road, London, to serve as both Secretary to the Board of Education and Inspector of Schools.[21]

When Job arrived, there were 25 public schools with an enrolment of 1,567 scholars, and an average attendance of 755 or 48 %.[22] By December that year, the Legislature had spent 3,832 pounds on public education, the number of schools had risen to 30, the enrolment stood at 2,045, and the average attendance had risen to 1,190 or 58%.[23]

However, the Act was deficient in one important respect, viz. it limited membership on the Board of Education to Members of the Legislature under the chairmanship of the Governor. As a result, Church leaders, being excluded from the Board, were denied an opportunity to influence public education at so high and important a level. It would appear, though, that there were two reasons for this exclusion, viz. the

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[19]Ibid., 24th February, 1864.
[20]Ibid., 2nd March, 1864.
[21]Ibid., 3rd June, 1865.
[22]A. Deans Peggs, *A History of Bahamian Education,* unpublished M.Ed. Thesis 1947, Durham University, Appendix V, page 419, Nassau Public Library.
[23]Ibid.

prevention of denominational conflict at Board of Education meetings, and the consignment of responsibility for moral and religious education to the various Churches. The former has been discussed in chapter eleven of this thesis. In the case of the latter, Government unstintingly aided the cause of religion not only in respect of the established Churches but in the case of Methodism as well. During the years 1858-1864, for example, the Legislature acceded to requests by the Methodists for financial assistance with the erection of eight Methodist chapels in the amount of 2,800 pounds.[24] In 1865, it approved another 1,100 pounds for the erection of four additional chapels.[25] No doubt it was to this kind of liberality on the part of the Government that Governor Rawson referred when he said to the legislators on 16th March, 1865,

> The liberality with which you have entertained and dealt with the several applications for increasing the means and efficiency of Religious instruction manifests your appreciation of the importance of this object, to which, and to the extension of a sound secular education, we must look for the inculcation of principles of self-reliance, and the introduction of habits of industry among the mass of the population.[26]

Apart from the singing of a hymn, the reading of a portion of Scripture, and the saying of the Lord's Prayer at the beginning and the end of the school day, public education was intended to be secular.

Some progress in public education was made during this period, but mainly in terms of the erection of school buildings and the average daily attendance at school. In 1866, for example, the Board of Education had a budget of 4,097 pounds, it had 37 schools, 2,714 scholars, and an average daily attendance of 63%.[27] Yet passes in the 3

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[24]*The Nassau Guardian,* 14th April, 1868.
[25]Ibid.
[26]Ibid., 3rd May, 1865.
[27]Peggs, op. cit., Appendix V, p. 419.

Rs during that year were 27%, 19%, and 14% respectively. Moral laxity and academic proficiency were too antithetical to coexist in the same impressionable mind, and secular education alone was no match for the moral challenge which resulted from the prosperous era of blockade running.

Such material progress as had been made in public education by 1866 was shattered by the hurricane which pounded the Colony in October of that year. Fortunately, the Government was sufficiently solvent to invest 4,898 pounds in education in 1867.[28] In 1869, however, the Colony went into an economic slump from which it did not recover for roughly fifteen years. As a result, retrenchment became inevitable and public expenditure on education had to be reduced. The Government budgeted 2,666 pounds for education in 1869, 2,232 pounds less than in 1867. That year, too, it had 38 schools, one less than in 1868, with an enrolment of 3,130 scholars, 98 more than in 1868, and an average daily attendance of 68%, the highest for the century.[29]

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[28] *The Nassau Guardian*, 3rd May, 1865.
[29] Peggs, op. cit., Appendix V, p. 419.

a (2) The Church and Education

The years 1848-1869 proved both challenging and opportune for the Anglican Church. For, conscious of its mission and no longer able to propagate its notion of religious education through the public school system, it had to find a 'means' of nurturing the Colony's youth in the liturgy and doctrine of *Ecclesia Anglicana.* This task was the more necessary and urgent due to a shortage of both manpower and money.

Proleptically, a means was provided in 1844 when Bishop Spencer instructed Archdeacon Trew to form a Bahama District Church Society. This agency was also known as the Bahama Church Society and the Church Aid Society during our period. Spencer considered this to be the most effective means of arousing the sympathy and

charity of adult Anglicans. Its purpose was primarily 'the proclamation of a common gospel' and child education,[30] and its objects of disbursement included church, chapel, and schoolhouse repairs, the partial maintenance of ministers and teachers, and the circulation of religious books. Voluntary contributions from Dissenters were to be accepted but no such donations were to be solicited. For although the Society constituted a means, it was intended to function within the framework of the Established Church under the patronage of the Governor and the presidency of the Bishop. It was of the order of SPCK and SPG, and was intended to embrace all that these societies contemplated doing in the Colony.[31]

During this period and beyond, the educational ministry of the Church was assisted by Dr. Bray's Associates, the Colonial Church and School Society, the Christian Faith Society, and SPCK. However, the elemental forces of nature often proved disruptive and destructive particularly during the hurricane season -June through November each year. In November 1853, for example, the people in Long Island and Exuma were reduced to poverty. Describing the effect of that hurricane a year later, Samuel Minns reported,

> The whole Mission was devastated by the severe hurricane of November 1853 -a hundred ruined cottages on Exuma and about as many on Long Island attest the evidence of the fatal scourge. Vast tracts under water not to be drained for a long time, and the destruction of the farms have caused a famine which to this day stalks through some parts of the Mission. The Church members are extremely poor and can afford nothing in support of the Mission -many are actually starving.[32]

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[30]Vide 'Instructions from the Bishop of Jamaica to the Venerable Archdeacon Trew, on the formation of a Church Society in the Bahamas,' included in *The Lord Bishop's Circular to the Clergy of Jamaica,* p. 4.

[31]According to A F Walls, SPCK and SPG were not voluntary societies in the true sense of the term. For a discussion of the subject, see his *Missionary Societies and the Fortunate Subversion of the Church,* in *The Evangelical Quarterly* 88 (2), 1988, 144-155.

[32]*Samuel Minns to SPG,* October 1854.

The foreign missionary agencies and the Church operated as partners in mission. This meant that the local Church was obliged to pull its financial weight. Its status as the State Church entitled it to Government assistance with respect to stipends and the erection and maintenance of church buildings, but the Bahamian Government was itself often in dire financial straits. On 28th January, 1854, therefore, the Bahama Church Society, in its endeavour to emulate the missionary labours of SPG and the Colonial Church and School Society, recommitted itself to continued and earnest prayer that

> a more fervent, enlarged and effectual missionary spirit may be, through the mercy of God, poured out upon all Churchmen in this Colony.[33]

The Society's primary focus was the Out Islands which, by and large, were unprovided with the sacramental means of grace and the opportunities of a Christian education. It was looking to the Church's New Providence membership in particular for assistance in this regard. To this end, it resolved

> That the abundant Gospel privileges enjoyed by Churchmen in New Providence involve upon them very serious responsibility to promote the Christian education and spiritual welfare of the inhabitants of our comparatively destitute Out-Island districts.[34]

With a view to maximising the benefits of foreign missionary labours and further consolidating the Church's operations in The Bahamas, Trew re-organised the Nassau Corresponding Committee of the Colonial and Continental Church Society in 1854 and formed it into the Bahamas Auxiliary of the Colonial Church and School Society. By this time, the Church had already established six schools in New Providence,

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[33] *The Nassau Guardian,* 1st February, 1854.
[34] Ibid.

including an adult Christian education centre called the Church Institute and Mission Hall (or the Mission Hall) and a Grammar School.

The Mission Hall was formally opened in 1850 for the purposes of providing Sunday School facilities for the children of Christ Church, disseminating the faith, doctrine and discipline of the Church, instruction in the 39 Articles of Religion, and exhibiting the missionary character, and promoting the missionary work, of the Church.[35]

The Grammar School was established in 1854 and its curriculum included English Language, Greek, Latin, Geography, History and Mathematics.[36] It would appear that it was founded as a replacement for King's College which had closed by 1849 due to the want of a viable endowment fund and the Government's inability to meet the cost of its operation. Like King's College, however, the Grammar School also had to be closed within about ten years of its inception due to a lack of funds.

In April, 1864, the Chief Justice, J. C. Lees, and 164 other New Providence residents signed a petition calling for the establishment of a public High School in Nassau. The petitioners had the full support of Governor Rawson among others. In commending the request to the Legislature, the Governor said,

> Whilst your liberality provides the means of education for the poorer and less aspiring classes of the community, there is no provision at all for the public education of those who are destined for professional or mercantile careers.[37]

[35]Cf. P. W. D. Armbrister, *Christ Church Cathedral in The Bahamas,* The Nassau Guardian, p. 13.
[36]Vide *The Nassau Guardian,* 4th December, 1854.
[37]Ibid., 6th April, 1864.

Bishop A. R. P. Venables had only arrived to take charge of the Diocese of Nassau[38] on 5th March, 1864, when he learned of this educational void among the Bahamian upper class. Determined that the Church should maintain control of higher education in the Colony, he wrote to SPG on 7th April, 1864, less than a week after the petition had been presented to the Legislature, stating,

By the next mail, I expect the arrival of a Clergyman to open an Upper Class School, from which I hope much good may result.[39]

The Bahamian aristocracy was white and, in the main, either Anglican or Presbyterian, though the Methodists were making inroads. While endeavouring to convert the blacks through an expanding parochial school system, the Anglicans were also determined to hold on to as many white families as they could. Methodism was becoming its chief rival in respect of the latter. A year later, for example, Venables had cause to say, with reference to Eleuthera where Methodism was strong, "the ill will of the Methodists at Eleuthera is very trying".[40]

The Church's control of higher education would enhance its presence among the white elite, strengthen its membership among blacks and whites, and further its religious cause in Bahamian society. No doubt Venables had already been informed of the Education Act of 1847. Being, therefore, a man of means and generous with the same, he would not but pre-empt even State action in the Church's cause. He did establish an upper class school for boys -the Nassau Grammar School- as planned. Its

[38]The Archdeaconry of The Bahamas was elevated to the Diocese of Nassau in 1861, when too, Christ Church became Christ Church Cathedral, and Nassau was declared a city. Nassau's first Bishop, Charles Caulfield, died of yellow fever within five months of his episcopate, whereupon Venables was consecrated for the See.
[39]Vide *Bishop Venables to Rev. Bulloch, S.P.G.*, 7th April, 1864.
[40]*Bishop Venables to Rev. Bulloch,* 10th March, 1865.

curriculum included English Language, Greek, Latin, French, Mathematics, History, Geography, and Drawing. His intention was that boys, on graduating from the Grammar School, would matriculate automatically into a British university or succeed in the entrance examinations required by one or more of the professions.

The largest and most financially secure of the Church's schools in New Providence during this time were the Woodcock Foundation Schools. The establishment of these schools resulted from the benefaction of a young English solicitor named William Woodcock who had contracted pulmonary consumption in 1846 and was advised by his physician to spend the ensuing winter in a warm climate. Woodcock was en route to Madeira when Trew who was aboard the same ship met him and invited him to visit The Bahamas with a view to being ordained by Bishop Spencer and working among the people of Grant's Town and Bain's Town.[41]

After an initial visit to The Bahamas in the Spring of 1847, Woodcock returned in 1848. On 12th October that year, he and Samuel Minns, the first 'coloured' Bahamian to be ordained, were ordained Deacons by Bishop Spencer in St. Andrew's Church, Jamaica. Woodcock was licensed to the Cure of St. Agnes' which comprised Grant's Town, Bain's Town, and the southwestern suburbs of Nassau. He associated himself with the Nassau Corresponding Committee of the Colonial Church and School Society without delay. At that time, St. Agnes' Parish had one public school building with two departments in it, an infant department and a juvenile department. On 2nd

[41]*Nassau Quarterly Mission Paper,* p. 218, Archives Department, Nassau, Bahamas.

February, 1849, the Inspector of Schools made the following report to the Board of Education concerning this school,

I can only observe in reference to this school what I have before said, viz., that the infant department of this institution is satisfactory, but the juvenile otherwise.[42]

The report went on to describe the schoolhouse as "small and inconvenient".

At his own expense, Woodcock purchased land and erected a schoolhouse with a department for boys and one for girls. The building was ready for occupancy on 28th March, 1849, when classes officially began. The school was under the charge of a Master and a Mistress, whose housing costs and salaries were also paid out of Woodcock's private funds. It was a free school, and its purpose was to supply

a plain religious education to fit the scholars by theory and by training to fill their stations in life with credit to themselves and with glory to God.[43]

The school's motto was "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". The Bible was basic to the entire curriculum which included,

Old and New Testament histories, secular and Scripture reading, writing from dictation, mental and slate arithmetic, the physical geography of the globe, natural history, and the chronology of Jewish, Roman, and English histories.[44]

In July, 1849, the Government re-located the Infant School outside of St. Agnes' Parish. Woodcock immediately purchased an unoccupied house which was adjacent to his school and converted it into a Juvenile Girls' School; and to fill the void left by

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[42]Vide the *Bahama Herald,* Tuesday, 9th October, 1849.
[43]Ibid.
[44]Ibid., and 11th December, 1850.

the re-location of the St. Agnes' Infant School, he converted the girls' department of his initial school into an Infant School.

With a view to fostering a sense of responsibility and an *esprit de corps* conducive to good behaviour, the older boys were provided with scarlet caps, and were referred to as *The Red Cap Order.* Their jackets and pantaloons were decorated with red stripes. There was also a voluntary *Penny Clothing Club* comprising school children who donated a penny each on a weekly basis to assist needy children with clothing.[45]

By October 1849, the demand for additional classroom space at the Woodcock Schools had necessitated the erection of another school building. Plans were drawn for a 60' by 30' structure. This time Woodcock decided to involve the local community in helping to meet the cost of construction. To this end he orgainsed a school bazaar under the patronage of the Governor and his family.[46]

Woodcock also initiated a programme for the training of a Native Agency for Sunday School Teachers. Under the heading *Schoolmasters for Tarpum Bay [Eleuthera] and Exuma,* W. K. Duncombe reported to the Colonial Church and School Society,

> I am very thankful to have the prospect of procuring two missionary Schoolmasters for the Society's Stations at Tarpum Bay and Exuma. Both of them have been Sabbath School Teachers here, one for four years and the other under the late W. J. Woodcock between two and three years. The plan I propose adopting in this case is to place them both, for a time, in training, under Mr. Swan, in the Woodcock Schools -daily and Sabbath- and that they be occupied during that period also in visiting the sick and attending to other missionary work under him in his district.[47]

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[45]Ibid., 9th October, 1849.
[46]Ibid., 5th October, 1849.
[47]*Annual Report of The Colonial Church and School Society,* 1852, pp. 671, 672.

Early in 1851, Trew praised the educational and pastoral ministry of Woodcock before the Colonial Church and School Society. He was confident that, should his ailing friend's life be spared and his health permit him to labour among the "3,000 souls" of St. Agnes' for another few years, there would be no telling what the long-term moral, religious and even political effects of Woodcock's work might have been on the Colony as a whole.[48]

Woodcock died on 9th December, 1851, at the age of 33 years. When his will was read, it was discovered that he had bequeathed his property in trust to the Bishop of the Diocese, the Archdeacon of The Bahamas, the Rector of Christ Church, and the Curate of St. Agnes' for the support of the schools which he had founded.

The academic success of the Woodcock Schools was evidenced by the acceptance of two of the schools' graduates at Codrington College, Barbados, in April 1853. There they participated in a vacation teachers' course which the Principal, Richard Rawle, conducted for elementary schoolteachers. On their return in September that year, they were given teaching posts at the Woodcock Schools. Concerning one of them, viz. Edward Tait, Robert Swann who succeeded Woodcock as Curate at St. Agnes' reported thus to the Colonial Church and School Society,

> Edward Tait (the more advanced of the two) was put in charge of the training branch, in hope that he would in a short time be relieved by a master appointed by your Society, as suggested in an appeal forwarded by the Archdeacon. The training branch was conducted with promise of success far beyond our expectations. Truthful, faithful, serious, and earnest, he stood out in striking relief amongst even religious professors. It was not necessary to urge him to his duty, and to watch him in the doing of it. A desire expressed, or a suggestion offered, secured his instant attention.[49]

[48]Ibid., 1851.

[49]*Annual Report of The Colonial Church and School Society,* 1854, p. 1209.

The 'training branch' to which Swann referred was an Industrial Training Branch re commercial agriculture, which was added to the Woodcock Schools in April, 1854, with the assistance of the Colonial Church and School Society. Tait was the Training Branch's first master. It was intended to be a wholesome alternative to ship wrecking. According to Swann,

> That part of the plan which relates to the cultivation of the soil is especially deserving of notice. It aims at raising up a body in the community, who shall find it their pleasure and profit to devote themselves to agricultural employment, instead of, as is now too much the case, to the vicious system of wrecking.[50]

The adult Christian education centre, the Grammar School, and the Woodcock Foundation Schools were among 'the abundant Gospel privileges' which the 8,159 residents of New Providence, or roughly 22.7% of the Bahamian population,[51] had been enjoying by 1854. It was fitting, therefore, that the Bahama Church Society should concern itself with arousing the New Providence Church community to their responsibility in respect of the educational nurture of the residents in the Out Island. Harbour Island was a notable exception among the Out Islands in that it had, in addition to a thriving school sponsored by the Colonial and Church School Society, a Reading Room and Lending Library which were sponsored by SPCK.[52] Meanwhile, the Bahama Church Society's appeal for the other islands did not fall on deaf ears.

Among those who initially responded were some of the Out Island clergy themselves. For example, Samuel Minns opened a Day School on Hog Cay in St. Paul's Parish,

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[50]Ibid., 1854, p. 1018.
[51]Vide General Abstract of Population of the Bahama Islands, *The Nassau Guardian*, 9th July, 1851.

Long Island, at a cost of about 40 pounds *per annum,* which he paid out of his annual stipend of 250 pounds.[53] He also paid the schoolmaster an additional stipend from his personal funds to superintend the Sunday School at St. Paul's.

New Providence Parishes also responded generously. In 1867, St. Mary's Parish met the cost of erecting a schoolhouse and providing a schoolmaster for a mission station which Venables encouraged it to sponsor in South Eleuthera.

Like the public schools, however, the Church's Sunday and Day Schools were also affected by the American Civil War. In 1864, the average weekly attendance at the Woodcock Schools dropped from 300 to 112, a reduction of about 37%. Although the non-attendance rate was not as high as the public schools', the effect was hardly less demoralising. According to a report of the Bahamas Auxiliary of the Colonial Church and School Society,

> The schools have suffered much in consequence of the trade in connection with the American blockade, which has greatly tended to demoralize our people. The older boys leave school for the wharfs and boats in the harbour, and the parents are so busy that the girls and infants are very much neglected. Our Sunday Schools have also suffered.[54]

In spite of these setbacks, however, the Schools continued to make commendable progress. In a report on the schools' annual examinations which took place in January, 1865, *The Nassau Times* stated,

> The pupils were examined in the following subjects: reading, spelling, Scripture history, arithmetic, geography, and English history. In all these subjects the scholars proved themselves to be well grounded, and the specimens of their writing and drawing exhibited were very commendable. On the conclusion of the examination in the boys' school, the party adjourned to the girls' department where a similar programme was gone through, the singing, recitations, and fancy needlework of the girls eliciting much praise, while the performances of the infant class occasioned considerable amusement.

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[52]Vide *The Royal Gazette,* 30th April, 1834.
[53]Vide *Samuel Minns to S.P.G.,* October, 1854, and January, 1855.
[54]*Annual Report of The Colonial Church and School Society,* 1864.

Out of an enrolment of 350, a total of 281 pupils -116 boys, and 165 girls and infants-or about 80% were in attendance. It would appear, therefore, that in spite of the war, the enrolment and the average attendance at the Woodcock Schools had increased by 1865. It augurs well for the co-operation which then existed between the home, the Church, and the Church's schools as well as the quality of education provided by these schools.

By 1865, church buildings had been erected in the thirteen parishes of the Diocese. In a communication to SPG, Venables explained,

> Every Out-Island Parish has its Church, and some of them several. Whenever we can afford to establish a Catechist at any Settlement, the erection of a Church follows as a matter of course.[55]

With the erection of church structures went the establishment of Sunday Schools and, in many instances, Day Schools as well.

When the 1866 hurricane hit the Colony, the Church had a total of 13 schools -five in New Providence and eight in the Out Islands. All of these were damaged by the hurricane. Undaunted by the task of rebuilding, the Bishop sent one of his Bahamian priests, Richardson Saunders, to England to plead the Diocese's cause while he himself headed a local redevelopment fund with a personal donation of one thousand pounds.

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[55]*Bishop Venables to Rev. Henry Bulloch,* 19th August, 1865.

Being the Established Church, the rebuilding programme of the Diocese was assisted by the Bahamian Government. New church and school structures were, in some cases, larger and more durable than the ones they replaced.

By 1869, the Church had some fifteen Sunday Schools with a total enrolment of 2,500 and a teaching staff of 230, and thirteen Day Schools with a total enrolment of 1,174 and a teaching staff of twenty seven.[56] There is no means of knowing the number of persons who were affected by the Church's adult education programme.

By the end of this period, the Church had roughly half as many schools, and was educating slightly more than half as many children, as the Government. It would appear, furthermore, that while the Government's role in secondary education was nil and its involvement in primary education in the Out Islands was on the decline, the Church's involvement in both respects was on the increase.

[56]These figures are deduced from the *Diocesan Statistical Returns* presented to the Synod of 1871, Nassau Public Library. These figures do not reflect the true educational position of the Diocese at the time, as a few Parishes failed to submit their returns in a timely manner.

(b) The Church and Education 1870-1900

b (1) The State of Public Education

There were four principal factors which affected the course of education during this period, viz. the Colony's financial predicament which largely occasioned an Act for the disestablishment and phased disendowment of the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches in 1869, the Education Act, 1875, and the two Education Acts which made elementary education compulsory in New Providence and the Out Islands in 1878 and 1886 respectively.

Public education was not spared the Government's fiscal axe which fell in the wake of the recession of 1869. The state of the economy was such that Government could not even budget for education over the ensuing fourteen years. The year 1870 witnessed the dawn of annual statutory grants towards public education in the amount of 2,400 pounds. This amount was unaltered until 1876 when, according to the Education Act, 1875, it was to have been increased annually thereafter by 300 pounds.[1] Due to the recession, however, even this modest increase could not become effective before 1880. Indeed, the Government was in no position to budget for public education again until 1885 when it earmarked 3,100 pounds for that purpose. In 1890, the education budget was increased to 3,795 pounds,[2] an amount facilitated by a bountiful harvest of sponge, pineapples, and sisal.[3]

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[1] *The Nassau Guardian,* 7th May, 1881. On 30th April, 1881, Governor Callaghan directed that the Education Act, 1875, and the Bye-Laws of the Board of Education made by the said Board under the authority of the said Act be published for general information.

[2] Vide Peggs, op. cit., Appendix V, p. 419f.

[3] In 1890, approximately 950,000 lb of sponge valued at 58,615 pounds were exported. Vide *CO23/223/234-36.* Two years later, some 665,332 dozen pineapples valued at 56,061 pounds, and 100

In 1872, the Government closed eight of its Out Island schools. The islands mainly affected by these closures were in the Northern Bahamas, viz. Andros, Grand Bahama, and the Berry Islands.[4] In 1872, the average daily attendance at school was 55%, compared with 66% in 1870, and the percentage of persons who were able to read and write was 24%, an increase of only 3% over a period of ten years.[5] In 1875, a Board of Education Report revealed that there were about 10,924 children between the ages of four and fourteen years of whom only 4,466 or 40.9% were enrolled in school. Of these, 2,848 or 26.1% were enrolled in Board schools, 1,358 or 12.4% were in Church schools, and 260 or 2.4% were in private schools. Of the 6,458 or 59.1% not enrolled in any school at all, 1,732 or 15.9% were in New Providence, and 4,726 or 43.3% were in the Out Islands.[6] There were several factors, including the unavailability of public funds, moral laxity among the youth, and low morale among parents and teachers, which were responsible for this sad educational state of affairs.

Shortly after assuming office as Secretary to the Board of Education and Inspector of Public Schools in 1868, William Blair began to criticise the low moral and intellectual condition of the Colony's youth. Apparently unaware of the demoralising effect of the American Civil War on Bahamian society, he branded post-emancipation attempts at moral and religious education a failure. In large measure, however, Church leaders, not disputing the inadequacy of attempts at moral education up to that

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tons of sisal were exported. Vide *The Bahamas Blue Book 1890*, p. 274, and *CO23/234/406* respectively.

[4]Vide *Bishop Venables to Rev. Bullock, SPG*, 30th January, 1871.

[5]*The Nassau Guardian*, 24th February, 1872.

[6]Vide the Report of the Diocesan Council re Primary Schools in The Bahamas, September, 1875, in *Nassau Diocesan Reports 1871-80*, pp. 62-3.

time, attributed the youth's predicament more to the want of direct influence by Religious Leaders on the public education system, due to their exclusion from membership on the Board of Education by the Education Act, 1864, than to any other single factor. In February, 1871, therefore, the Bishop of Nassau petitioned the Legislature on behalf of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Zion Baptist (BMS) Ministers as well as himself to amend the said Act with a view to enlarging the Board to include Church leaders. Bishop Venables argued,

> This exclusion is invidious and offensive to the Members of a useful, honoured, and educated profession, and is most injurious to the spread and efficiency of the present system of Popular Education. In the selection, training, and appointment of teachers, in encouraging parents to send their children to the Public Schools, and generally in promoting the cause of Education, no persons in the Colony occupy so good a position and can exercise so strong an influence as Ministers of Religion.[7]

Venables' petition was successful, but no action was taken on it until the passage of the Education Act, 1875. Thereafter, the said Church leaders were among those empowered by the Act to be visitors of public schools, and to correspond with, and communicate any suggestions or complaints to, the Board.[8]

In its concern to exhibit a non-denominational stance, however, the Board passed a bye-law which made it unlawful for any Board teacher to act as a paid religious teacher or catechist of any Church. This was undoubtedly the Board's response to a complaint by Robert Dunlop, Minister of St. Andrew's Kirk, who, on 18th January, 1868, published a list of the names of eight Board teachers whom he accused of being employed as paid catechists by the Bahama Church Society. He complained,

> I have been given to understand that the Board of Education is strictly unsectarian in its constitution, in the principles by which it professes to be governed, and in the objects which it seeks to accomplish; but the employment of so many teachers who are the accredited agents of a proselytising institution

[7]*The Nassau Guardian*, 11th February, 1871.
[8]Ibid., 18th May, 1881.

leads to but one conclusion: that the Board of Education is in accord with the Bahama Church Society in the education really communicated.[9]

Dunlop also complained that Anglicans were allowed frequent use of a public school building adjacent to the Education Office itself for liturgical purposes. In this regard, the Board's bye-laws insisted that, before any public school building could be used for denominational purposes, prior approval had to be obtained from the School Committee and the teacher in the case of the Out Islands, and from the Board itself in the case of New Providence.[10]

By and large, the Education Act, 1875, was concerned with improving the standard of public education in the Out Islands. To this end, the Board made four particularly notable bye-laws, viz. laws governing the establishment of new (Out Island) schools, the continuance of schools, the training, certification and classification of teachers, and a system of 'payment by results' which was to become effective on 1st January, 1882. The first two bye-laws placed responsibility for the establishment and continuance of schools on parents and residents in the Out Islands. The latter two made teachers responsible and accountable for quality education in public schools.

The inhabitants of any settlement desiring the establishment of a school were obliged to make application in writing to the Secretary of the Board, enclosing details of the number of children between the ages of five and fifteen years who would probably attend the school, the extent to which the residents were prepared to share the cost of the erection, furnishing and upkeep of the school, their willingness to send their

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[9]Ibid., 29th January, 1868.
[10]Ibid.

children to school on a regular basis, and their intention to pay the established school fees of two pence per child per week. Should the average daily attendance of any school be less than 25, or the cost of education exceed two pounds per child *per annum,* the Board was empowered to remove the teacher and close the school.[11] This latter provision seems rather insensitive to the scattered and sparsely populated nature of the Colony's various island settlements. For example, Andros, Grand Bahama, and the Berry Islands, being 2,300 square miles, 530 square miles, and 12 square miles in area respectively, had population densities of .9 persons per square mile, 1.3 persons per square mile, and 20.8 persons per square mile respectively in 1871. The effect of school closure on residents in such circumstances could not but be demoralising for parents and children alike. The situation was little helped, if at all, by the local teacher's right to sue parents whose children's school fees were not paid in cash or kind in a timely manner. However, the teacher was empowered to exempt a child in destitute circumstances from the payment of such fees, subject to the approval of the Board.[12]

The Education Act, 1875, recognised four classes of teachers, viz. certificated teachers (from whom school principals were selected), assistant teachers (who were certificated on a monthly basis), pupil teachers and monitors (who had to meet certain prescribed qualifications and were also certificated monthly), and teachers of needlework (who had to submit monthly returns of their work according to a prescribed schedule). Each person applying for a teaching post with the Board had to be between the ages of 15 and 40 years, was required to submit a testimonial from a

[11]Ibid., 18th May, 1881.
[12]Ibid.

Minister of Religion and, once employed by the Board, was required to be morally upright, and to worship regularly on Sundays.[13] The latter two stipulations were probably a result of Venables' petition.

Notwithstanding these measures, the overall status of public education was not much improved. The average daily attendance deteriorated considerably by 1878 when it dropped to 47%, 1% lower even than that of 1865.[14] In an attempt to rectify the situation, legislation was enacted in 1878 to make elementary education compulsory for children between the ages of six and twelve years. Initially, it was applicable only in New Providence.[15] But the situation did not improve until the passage of another Act in 1886, which extended compulsory elementary education to the Out Islands, and put a Police Constable at the disposal of the Board to deal with truancy and to prosecute parents for their children's non-attendance at school. These actions were initiated as a result of a report by a Special Commission which was appointed to investigate the status of child education throughout the Colony. In 1883, the Commission found, *inter alia,* that there were 10,000 children of school age, 6,000 of them belonged to a school, 2,000 had a school but did not attend, and 2,000 had no school to which they belonged. Progressive improvement in the local economy facilitated increased public expenditure on education and the erection of a few more public schools. Thus in 1890, there were 38 public schools with a total enrolment of 6,221 scholars, and an average daily attendance of 64%.

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[13]Ibid.
[14]Peggs, op. cit., Appendix V, p. 419.
[15]*The Nassau Guardian,* 18th May, 1881.

It would appear, therefore, that both prior to, and during, our period, successive Bahamian Governments were not only interested in, but also initiated and accepted a certain amount of responsibility for, the education of free children in the Colony. This was evidenced by the many Education Acts passed by the Legislature between 1725 and 1886, and by the expenditure of a total of 79,547 pounds on public education between 1850 and 1890. However, common sense dictated that even during the comparatively prosperous periods of the short-lived cotton era and the American Civil War, the geography of the Bahamian archipelago and the scattered and sparsely populated nature of the many island communities made the educational assistance of foreign Charities particularly through the agency of the Anglican Church both necessary and desirable. Therefore, despite the Education Acts of 1847, 1878 and 1886, and the Ecclesiastical Laws Act, 1869, the Church continued to play a vital role in Bahamian education.

b (2) The Church and Education

After 1869, the Anglican Church became very proactive in its educational ministry. This was greatly facilitated by competent Episcopal administration, generous financial assistance from at home and abroad, sound money management, an unflagging zeal for mission, and a commitment to education as an instrument of conversion.

In May, 1869, Bishop Venables returned to England for the first time since taking charge of the Diocese of Nassau on 5th March, 1864. He remained there for eight months. Much of this time was spent raising funds and drafting a constitution for his Diocese.

Early in January, 1870, Venables returned to Nassau. A year later, the Church' first Diocesan Synod was held. In his Synod Charge, the Bishop took as his text Daniel 2:45 -*The stone was cut out of the mountain without hands.* Consistent with the Ecclesiology of the Oxford Movement, he focused at length on the supernatural origin and growth of the Church, the persecutions and trials through which it passed, and the life and vigour with which it manifested itself.[16]

At the first business session of Synod, Venables recommended the urgent formation of parochial vestries, a clergy sustentation fund, a bishopric endowment fund, a general system of almsgiving, and a Diocesan Council. This latter was formed out of, and assumed all the duties of, the Bahama Church Society effective 31st March, 1871.

By 1874, Venables had made the following investments on behalf of the Diocese:[17]

Parochial Investments, in Pounds, Shillings and Pence

For Christ Church Parish in Bahamian Government Debentures	800-00-00
For St. Matthew's Parish in the same	350-00-00
For St. Agnes' Parish in the same	100-00-00
For St. Patrick's Parish in the same	276-13-00
Total	1,526-13-00

Investments made by the Bishop for General Diocesan Endowment

[16]Ibid., 28th January, 1871.
[17]Ibid., 28th January, 1871, and 14th January, 1874.

US $2,500, 6% Bonds, Interest and Principal payable in Gold, purchased for	523-09-05
100 pounds New Zealand Bond, purchased for	102-10-00
Bahama Government Debentures	500-00-00
Total	1,125-19-05

Additionally, the Government donated a total of 2,858 pounds towards the Church's reconstruction programme in 1867, and SPCK made cash donations totalling 8,245 pounds between 1868 and 1890. Of its contribution, SPCK donated 5,000 pounds towards the endowment of the Diocese as follows, 4,500 pounds was to be paid in installments of 500 pounds, according as similar sums of 500 pounds were raised locally and invested. The remaining 500 pounds was to go towards the Bishopric Endowment Fund when the Diocese would have raised 1,000 pounds for the same purpose.

As a result of the investments which the Bishop had made earlier, SPCK immediately forwarded 2,500 pounds to the Bishop, which he invested as follows, 2,000 pounds in twenty 100 pound Bahama Government Debentures, and 500 pounds entrusted to SPG for investment purposes. SPG invested the funds in New Zealand Bonds. SPG also donated 500 pounds towards the endowment of the Diocese, provided the Diocese could raise 2,500 pounds locally. As in the case of SPCK and for the same reason, this contribution was not delayed.

After the death of Bishop Venables on 8th October, 1876, Archbishop Tait and several West Indian Bishops appealed to Anglican Missionary Societies and private individuals to contribute towards a 10,000 pound Endowment Fund for the Diocese of Nassau in memory of A R P Venables. SPG made a grant of 1,000 pounds towards the Bishopric Endowment Fund, together with an annual allowance of 200 pounds for

five years. SPCK approved a second sum of 500 pounds payable when the fund had been raised to 4,500 pounds from other sources. SPCK also voted a further sum of 1,000 to be paid in certain specified instalments until the total Endowment of 10,000 pounds was realised. In sum, SPCK's contribution to the Bishops' appeal was 2,000 pounds. The Christian Faith Society also made a donation of 100 pounds, and the Committee for the Colonial Bishoprics' Fund gave 1,000 pounds.[18]

In addition to the financial assistance already identified, the Church received invaluable assistance with its educational ministry *per se.* The principal agencies involved were the Woodcock Trust, the Colonial and Continental Church Society, the Christian Faith Society, Bray's Associates, the Ladies' West Indian Association, and the Bahama Church Society.

The Church was especially concerned to establish schools in communities where there were no Board of Education schools. For example, no sooner had the Government closed its schools in Andros, Grant Bahama and the Berry Islands than Bishop Venables informed SPG of his plans to establish schools in those areas as well as in island communities where schools had never previously been established. Writing to Bullock in 1871, he said,

> I have made arrangements for establishing four schools [in Andros] which will more than occupy the ground vacated by the government. Two of them are already at work, ... We have in the same way taken up the work of education in Grand Bahama and the Berry Islands.[19]

With reference to two of the islands in the Southern Bahamas, he mentioned

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[18]*Nassau Diocesan Reports, 1871-80,* re Diocesan Synod Report 1877, p. 21f.
[19]*Bishop Venables to Rev. Bullock, SPG,* 30th January, 1871.

the [Church's] establishment of a day school in Crooked Island and a Sunday school in Acklin's Island in which large Island there had been before no means of education.[20]

In 1876, the Church had 26 Day Schools with an enrolment of 1,327 scholars who were instructed by 27 teachers. Nine of these schools were maintained by CFS, six by Bray's Associates, five by the Colonial and Continental Church Society (three of these -the Woodcock Foundation Schools- were also sponsored by the Woodcock Trust), two by the Ladies' West Indian Association, two by the Vestry of Christ Church, and one by the Rector of St. Andrew's, Exuma. The Nassau Grammar School was funded by tuition fees and private subscriptions.[21] During the same year, the Board of Education had 33 schools with an enrolment of 2,805 scholars.[22]

By the end of our period, the Church had 34 Day Schools with an enrolment of 1,482 scholars, and an average daily attendance of 96.2%.[23] Twenty eight of these schools were in the Out Islands with an enrolment of 1,048, and an average daily attendance of 94.4%. The fact that roughly 82% of the Church's schools were in the Out Islands was indicative not only of the Board of Education's non-involvement in these communities but also of the Church's concern to promote the Christian education and the spiritual welfare of the scattered and sparsely populated island communities no less than the comparatively densely populated suburbs of Nassau. It meant too that, with a total Sunday school enrolment of not less than 4,311,[24] roughly 50% of the Colony's youth came under the direct influence of the doctrine and principles of the Anglican Church. As a result, the impressionable minds of Bahamian children could

[20]Ibid.
[21]*Nassau Diocesan Reports, 1871-80,* re Diocesan Synod Report 1876, p. 55.
[22]Vide Peggs, op. cit., Appendix V, p. 419.
[23]*Statistical Summary of Returns, The Diocese of Nassau,* 1890.

not but be affected by the spirituality of the Anglican Church and the culture of the English people.

The only other Churches involved in education to any appreciable degree by this time were the Methodists whose exclusively white co-educational Collegiate Institute had become Queen's College,[25] and the Roman Catholics who, though comparatively new to The Bahamas, then had two schools, viz. a free parish school for poor children, and an Academy which was established principally for white girls.[26]

The Anglican Church was, therefore, unique in its impact on Bahamian culture. Its challenge henceforth was to focus more of its evangelistic zeal on the conversion of the adult population. In this regard it had two principal contenders, viz. the Methodists in respect of the whites, and the Baptists in respect of the blacks. However, given its role in education and its non-segregationist stance, the Anglican Church was no mean mission-oriented ecclesial body in its endeavour to effect the transformation of Bahamian Society into a Christian Society.

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[24]Ibid., 1891.
[25]Vide chapter four of this Thesis re pp. 134-5.
[26]Ibid., p. 143.

Chapter Nine

Education, Anglo-Catholic Rituals and Church Growth

The growth of the Anglican Church was associated primarily with two related factors, viz. church-sponsored education and the Church's liturgy. The latter proved especially magnetic among Afro-Bahamians after its embellishment with Anglo-Catholic rituals from the 1860s onward. Fortuitously, that which proved attractive to the blacks was highly offensive to a few influential whites.

Initially, the Anglican Church in The Bahamas was associated primarily with English colonists and their religious and moral needs. However, the 1725 Resolution of the Governor in Council which affirmed the historic connection between education and conversion and commended action in the light of the same in respect of Indian and Negro slaves,[1] and the Education Act, 1729,[2] both indicate that the Anglican Church began to evangelise and to baptise into its fold as many persons as could participate intelligently in its liturgy from a relatively early date in Anglo- Bahamian history.[3] This means, too, that the Church's involvement in education and the association of church-sponsored education with church growth also began rather early.

In 1731, William Guy reported that the 200 families which inhabited New Providence, Eleuthera, and Harbour Island at that time all claimed to be members of the Church of England.[4] However, there is no statistical information readily available

[1]Vide chapter 2 (e) of this Thesis, re p. 79.
[2]Ibid., pp. 79-80.
[3]Cf. *Bishop Venables to the Rev. Secretary for SPG,* 20th August, 1868.
[4]Vide chapter 2 (e), p. 80f.

which can help us to determine how many of the roughly 4,002-4,055 residents who then inhabited six of the Bahama Islands[5] were members of the Church immediately prior to 1784.

During the years 1784-1824, the Church tended to focus more on the white population than on free blacks and slaves. Native Baptists who did not rely on a formally educated and ordained ministry were particularly active among the latter. Methodists also ministered among them, but to a lesser extent. The blatant segregationist practices of the Methodists practically disqualified them as a serious contender for black converts. However, both groups were militant, and vigorously opposed Anglican advancement particularly on such islands as Eleuthera and Harbour Island which were mainly white and where Methodism was strong, and Long Island and Cat Island (San Salvador) where the Baptists were quite strong. In a letter to SPG in 1854, Samuel Minns said, concerning his experience in Long Island,

> When I first arrived in this island, I found that as a minister of the Church of England I was an abomination to the Baptists.[6]

Concerning the Methodists in Eleuthera in 1865, Bishop Venables said,

> The white population of Eleuthera are for the most part Wesleyan and very bitter in their attitude towards the Church.[7]

However, while the Methodists remained unflinching, the Baptists tended not only to yield to Anglican advances but, in several instances, actively sought membership in the Anglican Church.

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[5]Ibid., p. 86f.
[6]*Samuel Minns to SPG,* October, 1854.

With the consecration and appointment of two Bishops for the British West Indies in 1824, the Anglican Church aggressively pursued the evangelisation and conversion of the black masses. Given the imminence and inevitability of slave emancipation, their conversion in accordance with the doctrine and principles of the Church of England was deemed necessary for the godly and peaceable government of the Colony. Hence, although the Church owned no schools as such prior to 1847, it maintained and jealously guarded its control over public education up to that time when it was educationally divorced from the Colonial Government. Thereafter and throughout the remainder of our period, its efforts at conversion were intensified, although significant signs of Church growth began to occur from the mid 1840s.

In the absence of corroborative statistical information, J M Trew proudly claimed that during the first six years of his tenure as Archdeacon of The Bahamas, the Church's membership grew by roughly 16.7%, communicants increased almost 100%, Sunday school enrolment increased 100%, church buildings increased more than 100%, and the Out Islands never before brought under Episcopal supervision increased more than 400%.[8] By the time of his resignation in 1858, the number of active clergymen had increased 350%.

Church growth accelerated during the episcopate of Nassau's second Diocesan, and first Anglo-Catholic Bishop, Addington R P Venables, 1863-1876.[9] By the end of his second year as Bishop of Nassau, Venables had visited every inhabited island in his

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[7] *Bishop Venables to Rev. Bullock, SPG,* 10th March, 1865.
[8] *The Bahama Herald,* 26th June, 1850.
[9] Nassau's first bishop, the former Archdeacon Charles Caulfield, 1858-61, was enthroned on 17th June, 1862. He succumbed to an attack of yellow fever on 4th September, 1862.

far-flung Diocese. There were times when he was known to have visited the whole of his See in as short a period of time as twelve months. As a result, he got to know his people well. He was not unaware of the Baptist background of the majority of Afro-Bahamians, neither was he unsympathetic towards the element of emotionalism which characterised much of their worship. On the contrary, he decided to use it as a means of Church growth. In a letter which he wrote to Bullock in 1868, he said,

> Hitherto the Church has established itself only where the people are sufficiently intelligent to take some part in the Church service. I have made up my mind to accept a more elastic system with the uneducated poor of our Out Islands. I propose, therefore, to recognise all as members of the Church who will accept the Sacraments at the hands of the clergyman whenever he may visit them, but to leave them at other times to carry on their worship in their own way.[10]

However, he was not prepared to leave them at the educational and liturgical levels at which he was willing to welcome them. While not restricting them to the Prayer Book, he was concerned to curb extravagances in worship, and to educate them in matters liturgical. He continued,

> [I propose] restraining them as far as possible from extravagances in worship, and instructing them in the performance thereof, but not fettering them with the Prayer Book.[11]

Venables' decision was a practical, though an incarnational, response to an increasing number of Baptist groups, including their local preachers, who wanted to joining the Church *en masse.* In Crooked Island, for example, the Baptists put their Chapel at the disposal of the Anglican incumbent, George Ward, and expressed interest in joining the Church. Their leader actually made application to become an Anglican catechist. Within the first two months of his tenure, Ward had baptised more than 100 Baptist children.[12] This was no isolated Baptist initiative. During the course of a visit to

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[10]*Bishop Venables to the Rev. Secretary for SPG,* 20th August, 1868.
[11]Ibid.
[12]*Bishop Venables to Rev. Bullock,* 10th March, 1865.

Eleuthera in 1867, the Bishop went into a Baptist settlement at the south-eastern end of the island. He described the community as,

> an ignorant and almost unknown black population where no school existed and no form of public worship except services held by a local preacher (Baptist).[13]

Venables was of the opinion that this Baptist preacher, who walked ten miles to inform the Bishop that he had collected 40 children, presumably for baptism, was unable to read. On his return to Nassau, he prevailed upon the Rector and Vestry of St. Mary's Parish to form a Missionary Society as a Sub-Branch of the Bahama Church Society, and adopt the settlement as its mission. Two years later, St. Mary's Vestry sponsored a catechist who initially conducted day school classes in the Baptist Chapel and Sunday services in a private house. Not long afterwards, they erected a dual purpose building to meet both the educational and liturgical needs of the community.[14]

When Venables took charge of the Diocese in March, 1864, there were 13 parishes, eight clergymen, and a church membership of 6,000, including 1,188 communicants. At the time of his death in October, 1876, there were 16 parishes, 81 church stations, 17 active clergymen, 81 catechists, and 11,416 professing Anglicans. Among the latter were 2,827 communicants, 3,196 Sunday scholars, and 300 Sunday school teachers. There were also 23 week-day schools, 1,327 week-day scholars, and 27 day-school teachers.[15]

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[13]*Bishop Venables to SPG,* 29th August, 1870.
[14]Ibid.
[15]*Nassau Diocesan Reports, 1871-80,* re Synod Report, June, 1877, p. 23.

Venables had also raised the level of the Church's consciousness with respect to the Church's mission at home and abroad. St. Agnes' Parish was mission conscious almost from its inception, because of the initiative of John Trew and Robert Swann. Swann, for example, kept the parish informed about the Church's mission in Fallangia, Rio Pongas, West Africa, where a former member of St. Agnes' and a former teacher at the Woodcock Foundation Schools, Samuel J Higgs, died in 1857 at the age of 23 years.[16] Building on this interest in overseas mission while, at the same time, being conscious of the missionary needs of his own Diocese, the Bishop initiated the formation of a Missionary Society at St. Matthew's, which, like that of St. Mary's, was to serve as a Sub-Branch of the Bahama Church Society. He encouraged regular mission oriented public lectures in the Church Missionary Hall, the *Areopagus* of the Diocese, and formed a Diocesan Board of Foreign Missions to which all the congregations were requested to make annual contributions.[17]

Notable among the active clergy during Venables' episcopate were two of the first three black Bahamian priests, viz. William Henry Sweeting and James Theodore Hutcheson.[18] Sweeting previously served as catechist, schoolmaster and magistrate in Andros. Hutcheson, though born and educated in The Bahamas, was ordained in Jacksonville. He returned to Nassau in 1865 immediately after which Venables secured the necessary legislative authority for him to function as a priest in the

[16]Vide Report of the Bahama Church Society, 1857, in *Annual Report of the Colonial Church and School Society,* 1858, p. 129. The Mission in Fallangia resulted from the formation of the *West Indian Association for the Furtherance of the Gospel in Western Africa* in Barbados, under the presidency of the Bishop of Barbados. SPG facilitated the establishment of this Association, on the occasion of the Society's jubilee, with a contribution in the amount of 1,000 pounds sterling.
[17]*Nassau Diocesan Reports, 1871-80,* re Synod Report, June, 1877, p. 47.
[18]The other black Bahamian priest was Joseph Robert Love. Vide ch. 3 (d) re p. 144 of this Thesis.

Diocese.[19] There were five other Bahamian priests, one of whom was coloured and the other four white, who served under Venables, viz. William K. Duncombe 1834-71, Samuel Minns 1848-73, Jeremiah S J Higgs 1849-83, Richardson Saunders 1856-1902, and William W Duncombe 1864-1902. When Venables died, another black Bahamian, Marshall James Mitchell Cooper, a former scholar of the Woodcock Foundation Schools and a Lay Reader at St. Paul's, Long Island, was in training for ordination. He was ordained by Venables' successor, Francis A. Cramer-Roberts, in 1879.

After Venables' death, almost two years had elapsed before Cramer-Roberts was elected to succeed him. It was an interim fraught with anxiety about whether or not the new diocesan should be an Anglo-Catholic or a Protestant. The Archdeacon of the Diocese, Charles C Wakefield, felt so strongly about the matter that he appeared insensitive to the contribution which the Colonial and Continental Church Society had made to the development and growth of the Church prior to the introduction of Catholic ritual into the Colony. Writing to SPG in 1876, he said,

> One or two influential men want the Colonial and Continental Church Society to have a voice, but somehow we have not much esteem for their agents or the principles on which the Society is worked, and the Diocese would profit somewhat by their withdrawal from it.[20]

It would appear that while some, principally the clergy, favoured Episcopal continuity along Anglo-Catholic lines, there were others, mainly influential laymen, who preferred holding onto the traditional Anglican ritual to which they had become accustomed. Satisfied with the Catholic direction into which the Church was moving, Wakefield cautioned,

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[19]Vide *The Nassau Guardian,* 18th March, 1865, and 22nd March, 1865.

Whoever our Bishop may be, he must be a tolerant man who will value work for God wherever he finds it. While some of us are "advanced" men, we are almost to a man of firm Catholic conviction. We do not ask for, or expect to obtain, an extreme Churchman, but we do pray for one who will not stamp out every effort which is made to give the people something higher and better than *West Indian Protestantism,* a combination of Erastianism, pride, ignorance and selfishness.[21]

Although the tension continued unabated throughout the remainder of our period, the Church's membership continued to grow. During the interregnum, for example, the number of professing Anglicans increased to 11,505, and the number of communicants rose to 2,849. Bishops of Nassau seem to have had a preference for Anglo-Catholic clergymen. In an appeal for unity and concord, Bishop Churton said,

Sometimes the too impetuous eagerness of new-comers from England has been resented by the ultra-conservatism of Bahamian residents. Let the one consider that the City of God is not built in a day: let the others not forget that things new, as well as old, are contained in the treasury of Heaven for our benefit. Yet, let controversies be heard without, but let peace reign within the fold.[22]

In the end, Anglican comprehensiveness prevailed. For although ritualism had swept practically the whole of the Diocese, there were two notable exceptions, viz. the parishes of Christ Church Cathedral and St. Matthew.

During Cramer-Roberts' episcopate, the Church continued to grow. He assumed office in November, 1878. He was particularly impressed with the Church's educational accomplishments in New Providence. In an undated letter sent to SPG, he said,

I have been much struck with the attainments of the children in the schools I have visited: they certainly would put some of our country schools at home rather in the shade.[23]

Impressed with the progress of the Church in New Providence, he went on to say,

The Church on this Island seems to be gaining ground and getting many under her care.[24]

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[20]*Chas. C Wakefield to Rev. W J Bullock, SPG,* 30th November, 1876.
[21]Ibid.
[22]E T Churton, *The Last Seven Years,* London, 1893, p. 20.
[23]SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

However, there was one besetting problem, viz. insufficient funding which, if not rectified, could not but retard the Church's growth if not actually stifle it. On 13th April, 1881, the Bishop was informed that the Standing Committee of SPG had decided to discontinue its annual grant towards his stipend. The communication was brought to the attention of the Diocesan Council. The Council was informed in 1876 that this action would be taken. So depleted were the Church's finances, however, that the nine members of the Council signed a letter to SPG, apologising for the Diocese's continued reliance on the Society's annual grant while, at the same time, explaining that every effort was being made to make the Diocese self-supporting. Meanwhile, the Church's financial predicament was grave. The Council, therefore, pleaded,

> Our difficulties are immense, and can only fully be realized on the spot. ... We beg, therefore, very respectfully and most earnestly, that the Standing Committee will favourably reconsider their decision, and if possible, continue the grant for at least five years longer.[25]

About three weeks later, the Bishop himself wrote to SPG, informing the Society that his Diocese was at the crossroads. In his letter he said,

> Fresh fields are certainly opening, but no funds are forthcoming to carry out the work. It will, I fear, prove a great harvest for the Methodists who are working very hard at present in the Colony. Is there nothing to be done to keep the Church from sinking into insignificance and from giving her enemies an opportunity to exult over her?[26]

His plea did not go unanswered. SPG relented, and extended the grant through the end of our period. In one of its reports, the Society explained the reversal of its decision as follows,

> Events altogether beyond the Society's control have, in some cases, interfered with its policy of gradually reducing grants to colonial dioceses. Rules must never be allowed to stand in the way when wisdom points to their supersession. ... To have withheld prompt and liberal relief [from the Diocese of Nassau] would have been to sacrifice all that had been done in the past.[27]

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[24]Ibid.
[25]*Robert Swann et al. to SPG,* 30th May, 1881.
[26]*Bishop Francis to Rev. W H Tucker, SPG,* 23rd June, 1881.

Thus, the Church's growth process continued, and by the end of Cramer-Roberts' tenure in 1885, its membership had increased to 12,539 or by roughly 9%, and the number of communicants had risen to 3,692 or by 29.59%.[28]

During the last fifteen years of our period, 1886-1900, the Diocese was administered by Cramer-Roberts' successor, Edward T Churton, and the growth of the Church continued both numerically and in respect of "the holiness without which no one will see the Lord,"[29] though more emphasis was placed on the latter than on the former.

Churton was especially concerned about the depth and quality of the moral and spiritual lives of his people. For him, man, as made in the Image of God, was called to *holiness of life* through the imitation of God.

> God made man in His own Image; thus to imitate the holiness of God is as necessary a law to one so constituted, as it is to breathe, to speak, or to walk.[30]

Though acknowledging the holiness of some men of old,[31] Churton maintained that the life of holiness to which Christians were called was through the imitation of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Logos.

> Through imitating His human nature we are to participate in the Divine Nature; this being actually the measure of growth in holiness to which we are called.[32]

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[27]*The Mission Field,* 1889, p. 443.
[28]*The Nassau Quarterly,* 1887, p. 239f.
[29]*The Letter to the Hebrews* 12:14b, The New Oxford Annotated Bible ... RSV.
[30]E T Churton, *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas,* London, J Masters and Co., 1888, p. 9.
[31]Vide Introduction 2 of this Thesis, re pp. 12, 19, and 20.
[32]Churton, *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas,* p. 38.

For him, holiness of life was dynamic, and Christians were expected to grow in it by the grace imparted in the Church's ministry of Word and Sacraments. Post-baptismal sin, therefore, had to be addressed, and repentance and forgiveness of sins had to be proclaimed repeatedly. It was not good enough, therefore, for the Church merely to establish missions on the 25 inhabited islands of The Bahamas, neither was it sufficient for the masses merely to flock into the Church's fold. Churton insisted that repentance be preached as a duty and a matter of priority by his clergy.[33] It was because of this emphasis on repentance that the ancient,[34] though highly controversial,[35] practice of Auricular Confession and Absolution featured prominently in the Diocese of Nassau.

Education at all levels of the Church's membership, clerical and lay, was deemed a key factor in repentance and the ministry of reconciliation. To this end, Churton not only required that all of his clergymen be trained, preferably graduates of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, and SS Peter and Paul, Dorchester, with as many of them as possible also being university graduates, he also instituted annual three-day retreats and conferences for them, and established a Diocesan Library.[36] Additionally, he provided them with a comprehensive *Clerical Rule of Life,*[37] and a selective bibliography for the purposes of personal devotion and study.

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[33]Ibid., p. 16ff.
[34]Cf. *The Book of Common Prayer, 1662,* re The Visitation of The Sick, and the charge "Receive the Holy Ghost ..." (based on John 20:22-23) in The Ordering of Priests.
[35]According to *The Nassau Guardian,* 8th April, 1871, the practice was strongly denounced by the Revs. R. Dunlop and J. Davey of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches respectively, at a regular Union Prayer Meeting at Trinity Wesleyan Chapel. It was ably defended by Bishop Venables in his response to 298 enquiring members of St. Mary's Parish, the cradle of ritualism in the Diocese of Nassau, according to *The Nassau Guardian,* 31st May, 1871.
[36]Vide Churton, *The Last Seven Years,* p. 5ff. Churton's *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas* was actually a 'Manual of Instruction and Routine' for his clergy.
[37]Churton, *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas,* p. 124f. Vide Appendix.

While appreciative of the willingness of catechists to conduct services in the absence of a priest, Churton was appalled at the number of illiterates whom he encountered among them. He, therefore, began a scheme of utilising the voluntary services of some Board of Education teachers in the Out Islands, but not before they themselves had been instructed in the Church's teaching.[38] His plan was that, while an interested person was undergoing teacher training in Nassau with a view to being assigned to a Board school in the Out Islands, he was also instructed in the Church's doctrine by an Anglican priest.[39]

In addition to expanding the Church's involvement in elementary education, the Bishop also encouraged his clergy to visit all Board of Education schools in their parishes, become involved in teaching in Out-Island Board school, and encourage and assist Board teachers as best they could.

You will have schools of various kinds in your parish. You should endeavour to devote some time, regularly, to the encouragement and assistance of your school teachers. ... A Missionary in a Diocese like this will increase in usefulness, by condescending to qualify himself for examining a school in reading, grammar, arithmetic, &c., as well as in the subjects which belong to a "spiritual pastor."[40]

He also admonished them to bring a moral and religious perspective to bear on the "so-called purely secular subjects" in the public school system.

Remember that *all* education is, or ought to be, included within the province of religion. In giving lessons the most secular, you are still drawing out powers of mind which are to be used for the glory of God Who gave them. Give something more than a reading lesson in English language, with the Bible for text-book. Take something practical from the parables, or Sermon on the Mount; and catechize your children on faith or morals.[41]

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[38]This did not violate any of the Board of Education's Bye-Laws. The said Bye-Laws merely forbade a Board teacher to act as the "paid religious teacher or catechist of any religious denomination."
[39]Churton, *The Last Seven Years,* p. 7f.
[40]Churton, *The Island Missionary of the Bahamas,* p. 74. Cf. Introduction (8) of this Thesis, re p. 93.
[41]Ibid., p. 74f.

Anything of a religious nature which Anglican children attending Board of Education schools needed but did not get at those school was provided in the Church's Sunday schools. A Diocesan Bookstore was established. As a result, there was no lack of literature for either the Church's day schools or its Sunday schools.[42] The clergy were also encouraged to assist with the public catechising of the youth, particularly in the more remote settlements on the larger Out Islands.

At the adult level, Churton supplemented the lectures which were initiated by Bishop Venables for residents in New Providence with a series of winter lectures. Also, in 1891, he established a Mission to Seamen the majority of whom were sponge fishermen who were often at sea for several weeks at a time. He provided them with a chaplain, a chapel, and a sailor's home. Informing Synod of the progress of the mission in 1893, he said that some of them had begun to curb their tendency to abuse liquor and fight among other vices, and had begun to seek and enjoy the ministrations of the Church including Confirmation and Holy Communion.[43]

A highly effective educational tool and instrument of spiritual growth affecting the majority of Church members was the ritual which had well-nigh permeated the entire Diocese. Bishop Churton seemed to have attempted some in-depth study of the Afro-Bahamian psyche. Perhaps that was his reason, at least in part, for his harsh criticism of the Church's pre-1863 approach to mission in the Bahama Islands, when he said,

> If we were to go back to the year when Bishop Venables began his glorious work in these islands, we should probably find that up to that time, evangelization had been attempted on the usual Protestant

[42]Churton, *The Last Seven Years*, p. 9.
[43]Ibid., p. 12.

lines. The way in which Christianity was then exhibited could hardly have been adapted to a people of African descent.[44]

Churton was probably uninformed of the success of W K Duncombe's Protestant and evangelical approach to mission in St. John's Parish, Harbour Island. Perhaps he was prepared to view that as an exception, as he did in the case of W J Woodcock.[45] In his obvious preference for the didactic potential of Anglo-Catholic ritual, he said,

I believe that the first impressions to produce on a simple people should be those of order, regularity, and beauty in Christian worship, so as to beget in their souls awe, and the desire for a higher life.[46]

However, Churton was no advocate of ritual merely for the sake of it. It was but one among several instruments of mission. Advising against extremism in both instruction and ritual, he said

I am inclined to think that variety of teaching is not greatly needed for our simple Africans: repetition does not pall upon them. Observe how continually they repeat the same ideas in their conversation, how they will sing the same two or three bars of music to the same words a hundred or a thousand times. If this is so, perhaps they may be more hindered than helped by a great variety of ceremonial.[47]

Commending that which constituted the essence of the Christian proclamation and the unchanging and living testimony of the Christian Church, he said,

What they want is to understand the uniform and unalterable witness which the Church bears by word and deed to the life and death and kingdom of her Lord.[48]

As the Church had traditionally linked education with liturgy, so now it has made education *sine qua non* of ritual, the twofold purpose of which was the glorification of

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[44]Special Teaching for Special Conditions of Men in *Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers,* Vol. IX, No. 33, 1894, p. 22.
[45]Ibid.
[46]Ibid., p. 23.
[47]Ibid., p. 22.
[48]Ibid.

God and the edification of the faithful. By the end of our period, therefore, Church growth had become associated with both numerical and spiritual growth. The matrix of this growth, however, was the liturgical life of the Church whose primary duty was to "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."[49]

Anglican Church worship during our period was basically that of the 1662 Prayer Book, and centred principally around baptism which was administered by affusion, in the case of infants and children, and by immersion in the sea, in the case of adult blacks and converts from among the Baptists (and confirmation, after 1824), Morning and Evening Prayer, burial of the dead, marriage, and Holy Communion which, particularly during the first half of our period and with specific reference to the Out Islands, often took place in private houses.

Prior to emancipation, and for some time thereafter, Anglican worship was 'high and dry.' An emotional element was allowed to creep into the Communion Service in St. John's Parish, Harbour Island, during the rectorship of W. K. Duncombe. Describing a Communion Service on the occasion of one of his visits to Current Island, Eleuthera, he wrote:

> My first visit was to the *Current* where, as usual, we had a delightful service. I preached from Acts viii: 5, "Then went Philip down to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." The congregation listened with devout and marked attention; nothing was heard but an occasional ejaculation or sob. But it was at the Communion Table that the outpouring of the Spirit was chiefly manifest. Our little sanctuary soon became a Bochim. Such an outburst of feeling I never witnessed before; some sobbed and prayed aloud, while others wept in silence.[50]

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[49] *The Gospel according to John* 4: 23f. RSV.

[50] *Annual Report of the CCSS, 1852, Colonial and Continental Church Society Annual Reports, MS 15718,* Gildhall Library, London.

Some latitude was permitted in respect of Morning and Evening Prayer by Bishop Venables. An example of the effect of this on Anglican worship in some instances is found in a report by Archdeacon Wakefield concerning a visit to Exuma. Wakefield wrote,

> After supper, ... we had a Service. The room [in the house of Aunt Dinah, the 'Mother' of the Settlement] was crowded to suffocation. ... A hymn was sung, some wild Baptist anthem, and extempore prayer, a short lesson, and then an address.[51]

Venables' episcopate also witnessed the introduction of colour and ceremony with the advent of Anglo-Catholicism into the Diocese of Nassau.

It was during the episcopate of E. T. Churton, however, that the ritualism associated with Anglo-Catholicism was employed maximally yet, with few exceptions mainly in respect of the Reserved Sacrament, complementarily with the rubrics of the 1662 Prayer Book and the relevant Articles of Religion.

Prior to Churton's episcopate, adult baptisms by immersion took place around sunset. This was by choice of the candidate, probably in the light of current Baptist practice. Quite probably, too, there was a psychological recollection of the relationship between the *Sasa* and the *Zamani* with the attendant implications for the candidate's new faith vis-à-vis his ancestors. To the extent that Churton allowed baptism by immersion in his diocese, he preferred that it take place at sunrise

> both to avoid an unseemly rush of spectators, and for the sake of the symbolism which is so obvious - the new life in Christ beginning with the opening day.[52]

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[51]The *Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers,* Vol. XXVI, No. 101, p. 20f.

[52] Churton, *The Island Missionary of The Bahamas,* p. 115.

He was convinced, however, that both infant and adult baptism should be administered in the church "because the previous service, taking vows, &c., ought clearly to be held there."[53] But there was another factor, albeit a secondary one, which seems to have influenced Churton's decision against baptism by immersion in the sea, viz. the Baptist readiness to evangelise immediately after an experience of conversion and baptism, without any apparent regard for holiness of life and growth in grace on the part of the newly baptised. He, therefore, mandated the erection of stone fonts, with a drain, at the main entrance of all churches. This had the twofold effect of symbolising baptism as the gateway into the fellowship of the Church, and baptismal regeneration occurring within the same. Anointing with the oil of chrism on the candidate's forehead, in the sign of a cross, was an integral part of the rite. This served, in addition to its sacramental and theological purpose, the practical purpose of explaining the Anglican usage of the word *christen* synonymously with *Christian baptism.* This was important in view of the fact that Baptists were beginning to refer to their service of *blessing children* as *christening.* In the case of infants and children whose parents did not robe them in a chrisom, a chrisom-cloth was temporarily placed on them immediately after 'chrismation'. Thus, baptism by affusion progressively became normative throughout the diocese, and as a reminder of baptism, baptismal stoups, containing ceremoniously blessed water, were placed on the right side of the door(s) leading into churches. On entering and leaving the church, the faithful would dip the index and middle fingers on their right hand into the holy water, and sign themselves with it in the form of a cross, encompassing, as it were, the vital parts of the body between the forehead and the loins. This practice also

[53] Ibid.

served as a reminder of the relationship between baptism and the death and resurrection of Christ, baptismal regeneration according to the third chapter of the *Gospel according to John,* and the moral implications of baptism with particular reference to the sixth chapter of *Romans.*[54]

Maintaining the traditional Anglican, as well as the historic and theological, connection between baptism and Holy Communion, Churton saw to it that, as more priests were ordained for his diocese, the Eucharist progressively became the central act of worship for Bahamian Anglicans. Consistent with the Pauline injunction that a man should "examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup,"[55] great moment was made of self-examination, penitence (particularly auricular confession), and fasting prior to making one's communion. Because of the latter, which normally began at midnight, early morning said celebrations of the Eucharist with hymns became commonplace in the diocese, principally on Sundays and other holy days of obligation. Churton shared the traditional Anglican view of private prayer as a derivative of common or corporate prayer. He was concerned, therefore, that private prayer should be informed by Morning and Evening Prayer. As most of the black Bahamian Anglicans had a Native Baptist background, they were not readily familiar with the Church's divine office of Matins and Evensong. Normally, silence, intended for private prayer, would prevail while the faithful made their communion. But because of the influx of converts, the choir sang "one verse of a hymn, addressed to

[54] Cf. Churton, *The Island Missionary of The Bahamas,* p. 52.
[55] *The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians* 11: 28. RSV.

our Saviour, between the coming and going of each *railful* [of communicants]."[56] This practice was initiated in St. Mary's, New Providence, by Archdeacon Wakefield.

In non-multi-stational parishes, of which there were few, there was a second, choral, celebration of the Eucharist, with incense, robed altar boys, and six lighted candles which, with the cross over the altar, a symbol of the crucified and risen Lord, represented the seven sacraments of the Church. What was particularly significant about the use of incense, itself a symbol of prayer and resurrection, was that the altar, a symbol of Christ, and the elements of bread and wine on it were incensed in an anticlockwise circular fashion. Because of the hour of the day, 11: 00 a.m. on a Sunday, and with the exception of the priest, this service was non-communicating. This celebration was standard in St. Agnes' and St. Mary's both of which were predominantly black congregations.

Morning and Evening Prayer continued to be a part of the regular Sunday worship throughout the diocese, particularly in Settlements where there were no resident parish priests. In such cases, catechists, of whom at least one was a female during our period, would officiate and, if licensed to do so, read a sermon. Catechists were also authorised to baptise infants, but only in the event of an emergency and in the house of the parents of the infant concerned. The rite was simple, and took the form of pouring water on the head of the infant while the catechist said the words, "I baptise thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

[56] Churton, *The Island Missionary of The Bahamas*, p. 116.

Although provision was made for celebrations of the Eucharist in the homes of the sick, where practicable, the practice of reserving the Blessed Sacrament in church for the primary purpose of communicating the sick and dying gradually developed.

With the Church's doctrine of the Real Presence of the Risen Christ in the consecrated elements of bread and wine, a sense of awe and wonder, reverence and devotion became associated with Anglican churches in The Bahamas. Churches, though humble in many respects, were, therefore, beautified, and Altar Guilds, comprising mainly older women, were established to take special care of the sanctuary and its furnishings. Altar Boys Guilds were also set up, especially in New Providence parishes. Ritual and ceremony served to heighten the church's atmosphere, as worship became elaborate and colourful and was performed with decorum, and the faithful were rapt in awe, wonder and praise. Because of the Reserved Sacrament, devotions in the presence of the exposed Sacrament developed and eventually evolved into a devotional service called the *Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.* This service was made an appendage to Evening Prayer on Sunday evenings. It was initiated at St. Agnes' and St. Mary's, and, as priests became more and more available, eventually spread throughout the greater part of the diocese.

Great care was also taken with funeral services. According to Churton,

> A funeral, if well ordered, tends greatly both to kindle sympathy and to awaken awe, as well as Christian hope in the believer.[57]

The theme of *resurrection* was central to the service which, when a priest was officiating, took the form of what later came to be known as a *Mass of the*

Resurrection. The coffin was placed immediately west of the chancel, with the face of the deceased turned eastward, symbolising the hope with which the deceased would *boldly*[58] face the Sun of Righteousness, in the resurrection. A few hymns were sung, and incense was used as during a choral celebration of the Eucharist. At this service, mourners who were confirmed members of the Church were encouraged to maker their communion. At the *Commendation,* the priest walked around the coffin once in an anticlockwise circular fashion,while incensing the same.

After interment, graves were neatly kept and often furnished with a stone cross, and the dead were corporately remembered on Easter Eve, All Saints' Day, and All Souls' Day.

Although our sources are silent about *ancestor veneration* in The Bahamas, one cannot but infer that the liturgical use of incense was instrumental in evoking a "rebirth" of the circle in the subconscious of Afro-Bahamian Anglicans who, in turn, made a psychological association of the ancestors and the social mores which they traditionally guarded with the person and teaching of Christ[59] in whom both the ancestors and the moral values with which they were associated were superceded.[60] Psychologically, too, the ancestors were among the faithful departed, and a part of the communion of saints.

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[57] Ibid.
[58] In the sense of the Greek word *parresia*, Cf. the discussion of the Hebrew words *teruah* and *sabab* in chapter seven of this Thesis.
[59] Cf. Kwame Bediako, *Christian Religion and The African World View: Will Ancestors Survive?* Unpublished Duff Lecture II, delivered at New College, the University of Edinburgh, 1992, p. 24. Also C. Nyamiti, *Christ As Our Ancestor,* Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984, p. 27.

The Anglican celebration of marriage, with its attendant symbols, was also prescribed. Civil marriages were recognised as valid by the Church. But Anglican couples were encouraged to be married by a priest, in the church, on which occasion the couple was given the Church's blessing, so that they could be graced "surely to perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made," symbolized by the giving and receiving of a ring, and to live out the "causes for which Matrimony was ordained."[61]

This rich liturgical symbolism which encompassed all the vital areas of Bahamian life was not only consistent with the rubrical prescriptions of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and the intention of the 39 Articles of Religion; it was also invaluable to a people whose inherited thought processes endowed them with a predilection for dialogue over discourse,[62] notwithstanding the fact that English was their only language. Churton was, therefore, insightful when, in exhorting his clergy to root their teaching on the *holiness of life* in the prevenient, co-operating, and abounding grace which God freely bestows on the lives of the faithful through the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, and, citing sanctification by the Spirit, union with Christ, and the imitation of Christ as the essence of that life, he said to them,

> Try to convey some notion of these things even to your most unlearned people. Go on, as it were, translating and re-translating your lesson till you have got it in language such as these men and women could use in talking to one another.[63]

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[60] Cf. Bediako, op.cit., p. 24.
[61] The solemnization of Matrimony, *The 1662 Book of Common Prayer.*
[62] Cf. J S Pobee, "African Spirituality," in *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality,* SCM Press Ltd., 1983, Gordon S. Wakefield ed., p. 6.

Education and liturgy were thus complementary instruments of conversion employed by the Church. By means of them, the Church grew as a worshipping community, having all the vital areas of its life impacted by the spiritual worship which God requires of those who worship him. Statistically, by the end of our period, the number of Church members who, during Churton's episcopate, were referred to as "Anglo-Catholics"[64] for the first time increased to 16,370 or 30.5% of the population in 95 stations, and the number of communicants rose to 5,437, representing 33.2% of the membership and an increase of 47.3% over the number of communicants in 1885.[65] Additionally, a girls' high school -St. Hilda's High School- was added to the list of the Church's schools. In this growth process and by the time of his resignation in 1900 because of ill health, Churton was assisted by 22 priests seven of whom were Oxford graduates, and 109 catechists and lay readers all of whom rendered their services gratuitously.[66] Such growth was consistent with the Church's commission to make disciples, baptise and teach in God's name, and man's vocation to holiness of life through the imitation of Christ and the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

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[63] Churton, *The Island Missionary of The Bahamas,* p. 39. The emphasis signified by bold print is the author's. Cf. Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture,* Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1989, re pp. 50-54.
[64]Vide *Statistical Summary of Returns, Diocese of Nassau, 1891.*
[65]Cf. *Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers* Vol. XVI No. 64, 1902, pp. 75-76, and 80.
[66]*Nassau Quarterly Mission Papers* Vol. XVI No. 64, 1902, pp. 75-76, and 80.

Conclusion

We have seen that the process of settlement in The Bahamas, after the extermination of the aboriginal Bahamians, involved two principal ethnic groups, viz. the British and the West African, and that both of them made significant and lasting contributions to the cultural development of The Bahamas. The coalescence and continuance of these contributions were due in no small measure to the educational and evangelising activity of the Anglican Church whose story has been inextricably interconnected with that of civil society since the early eighteenth century. This was true not only of the period of Church Establishment when Church and State worked together for the godly and peaceable governance of the colony and the transformation of its people into a Christian society, but also of the post-disestablishment period as church-sponsored education and the Church's liturgy and Anglo-Catholic rituals impacted both ethnic groups at all levels of Bahamian society.

Through education, the Church was also able to make significant inroads into the Afro-Bahamian and predominantly Baptist community. With Church doctrine as an integral part of its educational nurture and attendance at Anglican worship a condition of church-sponsored school attendance, literate Baptists progressively gravitated towards the Anglican Church. Through regular liturgical participation, the *raison d'être* of Anglican-sponsored education, these Baptists eventually converted to the Anglican Church whose non-segregationist liturgical and ritual practices kept them within its fold. This was especially true subsequent to 1869, for the Church's disestablishment in that year neither dampened its missionary zeal nor did it impede

its educational advance. On the contrary, with church structures in all thirteen Bahamian parishes and a proactive approach to education, there was a diffusion of Anglicanism in Bahamian society.

In this process of Anglicanisation, Afro-Bahamians were not *tabulae rasae* neither did they suffer from cultural amnesia. We have seen that their basically religious dormant subconsciousness did survive the Middle Passage, and that the cultural expression which it took in The Bahamas did betray a complex religious heritage which was fundamentally West African, its geographical adaptations notwithstanding. This has been reasonably inferred from some of the findings of Jungian analytical psychology, convincingly argued by Herskovits, and evidenced by our discussion of *Bahamian Slave Spirituality,* the holistic world view associated with it, Bahamian *Slave Folklore* and *Junkanoo.* This element of continuity with the Afro-Bahamians' cultural heritage was greatly assisted by the pastoral sensitivity and sympathetic approaches of Venables and Churton to the religious past of their converts. Churton seems to have been especially insightful in respect of the Afro-Bahamian psyche as well as understanding of the sustaining power of *Negro Spirituals* during the period of chattel slavery -their "Egyptian bondage." He looked forward to the day when those "by-gone traditions" including the anti-clockwise circular dance, the *spirituals* and even *Junkanoo* would give place to "the happier doctrines of the Church, more congenial to an age of freedom, enlightenment, and progress." Freedom dawned with slave emancipation. Enlightenment and progress were associated with church-sponsored education and Anglo-Catholic liturgical and ritual practices. Churton not only saw that day, he helped to usher it in. In so doing, the "traditions" did give place

to "the happier doctrines of the Church," but more in terms of continuity and fulfilment than otherwise and largely because of the same doctrines and the worship to which it gave both structure and content.

Continuity with the Afro-Bahamian Anglicans' past included a natural sensibility and a strong desire for active participation in worship. The former included the kind of overt emotional and spontaneous ejaculatory expressions which Venables described as "extravagances in worship." These extravagances were restrained only through an enforced discipline and a disposition of reverence associated with a heightened consciousness of the presence of Christ in the Holy Communion and in the reserved Blessed Sacrament. Meanwhile the need for emotional fulfilment was met and satisfied at a profound level by the Church's aesthetic and awe-inspiring rituals and ceremonial. The desire for participation in worship included preaching and testifying. There was no place for the latter in Bahamian Anglicanism, and preaching was the exclusive reserve of the episcopally ordained and licensed. Lay liturgical involvement was provided by intelligent and active participation in a highly structured form of public worship whose requirements included a literate congregation, lectors, robed altar boys and singing choirs, sidesmen and altar guilds. Notwithstanding these accommodations, however, many Afro-Bahamian Anglicans seem to retain a predilection for emotionally charged and lively worship as well as active involvement in the same. To the extent that this is true, there remains a subcutaneous Baptist element in Bahamian Anglicanism. An implication of this for evangelisation on the part of the Anglican Church in The Bahamas is that it needs to retain its Catholic

heritage and continue its educational nurture or face the possibility of its Afro-Bahamian membership gradually lapsing into its immediate religious past.

The writer's theological *midrash* on Bahamian Junkanoo is original. He has found no archival sources to substantiate or compare with his findings. Nevertheless, he is satisfied that the Old Testament ritual parallels which he has cited are sufficiently convincing to support his hypothesis that the rituals of Bahamian Junkanoo have messianic elements which were fertile ground for Christian evangelisation. However, what these elements demanded of organised Christianity was that its incarnational faith and "good news" be brought to bear on the socio-economic issues which, along with the religious factor, impelled Junkanoo out of quarantine into stark public view. The Anglican Church, because of its educational and liturgical practices had already begun to do this, but its *modus operandi* was more long-term than immediate. Meanwhile, Junkanoo's embodied prophetic voice continued well beyond our period. It would appear that its messianic elements would be fully evangelised only as Afro-Bahamians, among others, become proactive in the godly and peaceable governance of The Bahamas and its transformation into a Christian society through education, continuing and regular liturgical and ritual participation, and direct political involvement in the cause for total racial desegregation, social integration and economic justice. The role of the Anglican Church in this task would remain primarily educational and liturgical.[1]

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[1]Cf. Trew's comments re the long-term moral, religious and even political effects of Woodcock's educational work in Ch. 8 a (2) of this Thesis, p. 276.

For support of his hypothesis that the development of Anglo-Catholic rituals enabled the rebirth of West African spirituality in the liturgical environment of late 19th century Bahamian Anglicanism, the writer has had to rely heavily on inferences from Jungian analytical psychology, African theories about the survival and place of their ancestors in the Christian dispensation, and his personal experience. It was difficult to find archival material to substantiate this proposition outright. *A priori* and subjective though his line of reasoning may be, however, it does confirm the continuing nature of repentance and conversion, and the spiritual connectedness of Christians with what was "reasonable" in both their actual and adopted past. Furthermore, it is consistent with the mandate of the Great Commission.

The theological perspective which the author has brought to his historical analysis is the ancient and well-attested theory that primal religions, including the West African religious heritage of Afro-Bahamians, constitute a *praeparatio evangelica.* Advanced initially by Justin Martyr and adopted into the Anglican theological tradition by J R Illingworth in *Lux Mundi,* this theory is popularised by a number of contemporary missiologists including Andrew Walls in Britain, and John Mbiti, Lamin Sanneh and Kwame Bediako, among others, from Africa. Although the writer has not found any evidence that either Venables or Churton used the term *praeparatio evangelica,* he deems it reasonable to assume that both of them shared the Anglo-Catholic belief that all of man's moral, religious and liturgical yearnings were summarily contained in Catholic Christianity of which Bahamian Anglicanism, Churton certainly insisted, was representative. It was principally this belief, consistent with the Great Commission, which largely excited their missionary and evangelistic fervour -their

passion for orthodoxy and holiness of life, and their church-sponsored education and liturgical practices. As a result, the Church grew, became racially mixed and a place where both Anglo- and Afro-Bahamians could feel at home, and facilitated the development of a distinct Bahamian culture.

Select Chronology

600-800 AD	Lucayan (Taino-Lucayan/Arawak) Indian settlement.
1492	Christopher Columbus' landfall in The Bahamas.
1513	Probable date by which the Lucayan Indians were exterminated.
1648	The beginning of English settlement.
1670	The beginning of Proprietary Government, Royal mandate to erect churches and chapels, and the erection the first Anglican church structure.
1704-1718	The Bahamas used as pirates' haven.
1718	Arrival of Woodes Rogers as Royal Governor, and the expulsion of pirates.
1721	Importation of unspecified number of slaves from Guinea.
1724	The Bahamas erected into one parish, viz. Christ Church.
1725	Bahamian slave owners mandated by Governor in Council to have slaves instructed in the principles of the Christian religion.
1729	Establishment and endowment of the United Churches of England and Ireland (the Anglican Church) by Act of the Bahamian Parliament, and re-enforcement of the 'Education Act' of 1725.
1731	Visit of William Guy, SPG missionary.
1733	The SPG adopted The Bahamas as one of its missionary fields and appointed William Smith as its first missionary there.
1735	The SPG established a free primary school in New Providence, though it was not formally opened until 1738.

1746 Education Act confirming Church and State as partners in public education.

1783/4 Treaty of Versailles, and arrival of Loyalists and their slaves.

1786 Joseph Paul, black Loyalist, founded The Bahamas' first Negro school.

1789 Date by which white Loyalist merchants assumed political and economic power.

1790 Negroes found Native Baptist Church.

1793 Joseph Paul *et al.* erect first Methodist chapel.

1795 Two Act. (1), for erecting and repairing churches. (2), for establishing schools and subdivision of The Bahamas into six parishes.

1799 Education Act gave Anglican Church full control of all public schools.

1800 The arrival of William Turton, a Barbadian Wesleyan Minister, and placing of Bahamian Methodists under English Conference.

1808 The SPG withdrew from The Bahamas.

1811 Beginning of African Recaptive settlement.

1816 Education Act required all principals of public schools to be members of either the Church of England or the Church of Scotland.

1821 Black Seminole Indian settlement in The Bahamas.

1824 Erection of the Sees of Barbados and Jamaica.

1824 Beginning of a programme of Religious and moral education in the British West Indies as a preparation for eventual slave emancipation.

1824 Establishment and endowment of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk, Church of Scotland, in The Bahamas.

1830	Formation of a Branch Society for Promotion of Christian Education.
1832	Slave revolt in San Salvador.
1833	Founding of Zion Baptist Church by BMS.
1833	Formation of Bahama Auxiliary Bible Society in co-operation with British and Foreign Bible Society.
1833	Slave revolt in Exuma.
1834	Episcopal ordination of first Bahamian, William Kelsall Duncombe.
1836	The SPG returned to The Bahamas.
1841	The CCCS began missionary work in The Bahamas under the names
of	the Bahama Church Society and the Harbour Island Corresponding Committee.
1844	The Bahamas was made an Archdeaconry within the Diocese of Jamaica.
1847	Education Act by which Anglican control of public education was withdrawn, and the Anglican Catechism and denominational doctrine disallowed in public schools.
1849	The burial ground question.
1849	Opening of the Woodcock Foundation Schools.
1861	Erection of the See of Nassau.
1861	Consecration of Charles Caulfield, first Bishop of Nassau.
1861	Beginning of the American Civil War.
1862	Death of Bishop Caulfield.
1863	Consecration of Addington R. P. Venables, second Bishop of Nassau.
1864	Arrival of Bishop Venables.

1863	The Bahama Church Society and the Harbour Island Corresponding Committee were combined under the name of The Bahama Church Society.
1864	The Bahamas subdivided into thirteen parishes.
1865	End of the American Civil War.
1866	Devastating Hurricane.
1869	Disestablishment and phased disendowment of the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches.
1871	Formation of Diocesan Council and subsumption of the functions of
the	Bahama Church Society under same.
1876	Death of Bishop Venables.
1878	Beginning of Francis A. Cramer-Roberts' episcopate as third Bishop
of	Nassau.
1878	Education Act making elementary education compulsory in New Providence.
1885	End of Francis A. Cramer-Roberts' episcopate as Bishop of Nassau.
1886	Beginning of episcopate of Edward T. Churton as fourth Bishop of Nassau..
1886	Education Act making elementary education compulsory in the Out Islands.
1900	Resignation of Edward T. Churton as Bishop of Nassau.

Appendix

(1) Wylly's Slave Regulations

REGULATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SLAVES AT CLIFTON AND TUSCULUM IN NEW PROVIDENCE (Printed at the Office of the Royal Gazette, 1815. *CO 23/67,147*). Cited by D. Gail Saunders, *Slavery in The Bahamas 1648-1838,* The Nassau Guardian, 1985, pp. 228-230.

I. CHILDREN, as soon as may be convenient after their births, and adults after proper preparation, are to receive baptism; and pains are to be taken to instruct them in their duty as Christians.

II. It must, however, be confessed that, owing to the distance of the Capital, and the want of Clergymen of the established Church, but little has hitherto been effected towards their spiritual welfare. An allowance of twenty pounds a year is appointed to be paid to any respectable Minister, of any description of Protestant Christians, as a compensation for the trouble of visiting the people of Clifton, four times in the course of the year.

III. The people are regularly to attend at the Chapel, at eleven o'clock, every Sunday forenoon, to hear Prayers, which will be read to them by the driver; the name of every defaulter is to be noted in the plantation Journal, and, unless a sufficient excuse shall be made, every slave, so neglecting to attend, shall be obliged to perform a full task upon the next Saturday.

IV. THE FUNERAL SERVICE is to be read by the driver, at every interment.

V. Good Friday is always to be kept holy, and the people are not to be permitted to work in their grounds, either on that day or on Sundays.

VI. PRAYER BOOKS and spelling books are to be furnished for the use of the people, who are to be encouraged to learn to read and write. Three guineas are to be paid to the Driver (or any other fit person) for each pupil taught to read a chapter in the Bible or New Testament, and to repeat the Lord's Prayer, and Creed. This premium, however, is not to be paid for more than ten pupils in any one year.

VII. CHRISTMAS DAY, and the day next before and after it, are holidays; and half tasks only are to be set the people on Saturday. At Christmas, they are to be at liberty to go where they please; and they are to receive permission to go to town on Saturdays, provided they have poultry, vegetables, or other articles to carry to Market... But they are never to leave the plantations in rainy weather, or when their provision grounds are out of order.

VIII. Every man, upon taking his first wife, is entitled to a well built stone house, consisting of two apartments, and is to receive a sow pig, and a pair of dunghill fowls, as a donation from the Proprietor.

IX. Sufficient land is set apart for the use of the people, and half an acre is annexed to each house, as the property of the occupant for the time being; separate pastures are allotted for their hogs; and each head of a family is permitted to keep one sow: but to prevent their pastures from being over stocked, the whole of the pigs are to be sold off, when fit for the spit, one only excepted, which may be reared for pork, if confined to a pen. One quart of corn is to be stopped out of the weekly allowance of every slave who keeps a sow; and is to be delivered to some trusty Negro, chosen by themselves, who is daily to feed the hogs that may be running in their pasture; nothing is to be deducted from the allowance of any slave, who may choose to keep his hogs in his own pen.

X. Two suits of oznaburgs, or some other coarse linen, and one suit of woollen, are to be allowed, annually to each slave, of whatever age... A blanket once in three years... and the women receive an

additional blanket, and a straw bed, at each time of lying in. The midwife's fee is three dollars; but she receives nothing if the child should die within the month.

XI. The drivers are not to inflict any correction exceeding one dozen stripes (without stripping or binding the offender), except by order of the proprietor or his Agent: and to prevent oppression, notes are to be made in the Journal of every punishment inflicted, however small.

XII. In cases of adultery, the man forfeits his hogs, poultry, and other moveable effects, which are to be sold, and the proceeds paid over to the injured husband.. Both offenders are, moreover, to be whipped, their heads to be shaved, and they are to wear sack cloth (viz. gowns and caps made of cotton bagging), for the next half year, during which time they are not to go beyond the limits of the plantation, under the penalty of being whipped.

XIII. The offence of running away is also punished by whipping, shaving the head, wearing sack cloth, confinement to the plantation, and forfeiture of goods, which last are to be seized by the Driver. They are, afterwards, to be sold, and the money laid out in the purchase of books for the School.

XIV. All punishment exceeding one dozen stripes are to be inflicted with due solemnity, in the presence of all the slaves of the plantation, and with the common Military Cat. West India cat whips, and American cowskins are utterly prohibited; and no punishment can lawfully exceed thirty-nine stripes.

XV. The Proprietor claims the pre-emption of all hogs, pigs, poultry, and eggs, which the people may have for sale, and for which he is to pay the Nassau prices, to be fixed by the driver and two other men chosen by the seller.

XVI. An ox (or a competent number of hogs) is to be killed for the Christmas dinner of the people; and Rum, Sugar, Pipes and Tobacco are served out on that day.

XVII. The Proprietor allows the Driver, at Clifton, and the principal herdsman at Tusculum, a broad mare each, for the purpose of enabling them the more frequently and expeditiously to ride over the pasture grounds and other Lands. They are not to sell those mares, but are entitled to their increase. He, moreover, gives them an allowance of twelve guineas a year, each, in quarterly payments, in addition to the usual plantation provisions and clothing. This, however, only when no Overseer is employed.

XVIII. A scarcity of provisions has, sometimes, made it necessary to reduce the weekly allowance of provisions, below that which is established by Law, in which cases, the children are to be victualled by the nursery woman; and all deficiencies are, immediately, to be made up, in money, to labouring hands, according to the current price of guinea corn in Nassau.

XIX. On working days, the children are to be carried, early every morning, by their mothers, to the Nursery, where proper care will be taken of them during the day; and their mothers are to call for them, when they return from their work, in the afternoon. Women, who have children at the breast, are never to be sent to any distance from the homestead.

XX. These regulations are to be, publicly, read to the people, immediately after prayers, upon the first Sunday in January and July, in every year.

Given under my hand, at Nassau, the fifteenth day of July, 1815.
WILLIAM WYLLY

(2) Proverbs

Bahamaian slave proverbs were designed mainly for the youth. As such, they had both a vertical and a horizontal referent, as the following illustration would demonstrate:

God/Slave Relationship

1. Cow wit'out tail, God brush fly off.
2. Lizard no plant corn but him hab plenty.
3. When fowl drink water him lift up him head and say, "Thank God," but man drink water and no say not'ing.
4. Rain nebber fall at one man door.

The Slaves' Interpersonal Relationships

1. Ol' firestick no hard fo' catch.
2. De parson hab good word fo' de chil'; hard word fo' de fat'er; wise word fo' de congregation and sweet word fo' de collection.
3. John Crow nebber make house till rain come.
4. Cunnin' better dan strong.
5. Big talk nebber buil' big ship.
6. Ebery day fishin' day, but no ebery day catchin' fish.
7. Vwon' finger can feel a flea but 'e can't catch it.
8. Spider an' fly no make bargain.
9. Sleep hab no massa.
10. Loose goat don't know how tie goat feel.
11. Time longer dan rope.
12. Full bellie tell empty bellie t' take heart.

A few of the proverbs in the vertical referent betray influence from the New Testament, particularly the Sermon on the Mount. The influence of Isaiah 1:3 is also not far to seek in one of them. In one instance, at the horizontal level, there is an echo of the Epistle of James 2:15-16. There is an element of humour displayed in the proverb about "De parson." Quite probably it arose out of a Baptist worship setting.

The proverbs dealing with the slaves' relationship with God were intended to promote gratitude for, and trust in, Divine Providence. In those dealing with the slaves' interpersonal relationships, emphasis was placed on respect for the aged and their counsel. Emphasis was also placed on perspicaciousness and diligence. There was a notable emphasis on equality and interdependence, even between slave and master. Some of these proverbs served as instruments for keeping the hope of freedom and self-determination alive. It is also evident, however, that some proverbs cautioned against indiscriminate social and business intercourse even within the slave community.

Some of these proverbs have substantial parallels with a number of African and Old Testament proverbs. No. 7, e.g., has a parallel in the Fante proverb "If Otsibo says he can do something / he does it with his followers. Though the elephant is huge / his domain is looked after by the duiker."[1] These are paralleled in Proverbs 14:28 "In a multitude of people is the glory of a king, but without people a prince is ruined."[2] No. 9 has a parallel in the Kafir proverb "Death does not know Kings."[3]

These proverbs all evidence transatlantic African cultural retentions and some Old Testament parallels, as well as the slaves' determination to create an alternative society to that of chattel slavery.

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[1]J B Christensen, *The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture,* in E P Skinner ed., *Peoples and Cultures of Africa,* New York, 1973, pp. 509ff.
[2]*The New Oxford Annotated Bible With The Apocrypha, Expanded Edition, RSV.*
[3]Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir,* London, 1904, p. 297.

(3) Clerical Rule of Life, Recommended[4]

I. Rules

1. Rise not later than 7:00 a. m.
2. Communicate on all Sundays and Holy Days; if possible, fasting; with preparation before, and thanksgiving after.
3. Devote a fixed time daily to private devotions, including the recitation of Matins and Evensong, and a mid-day prayer.
4. Faithfully to visit both the sick and the whole.
5. To be methodical, punctual, and thorough, in all things; especially in paying all lawful debts. Not to delay making a will, and directing the disposal of personal property.
6. Give a fixed portion of income to the service of God and the relief of the poor.
7. Observe in a loyal spirit all the rules and directions of the Church, and teach the whole Catholic Faith.
8. Observe days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the Church; and use food at all times to supply daily necessities, and not for self-indulgence.
9. Avoid uncharitable or frivolous conversation; be especially careful in female society; never quote Scripture without a real intention to edify: and abstain from all such pursuits and amusements as might become, in any way, an occasion of scandal to others, or injure the spirit of detachment proper to a Missionary.

II. Recommendations

1. To give one hour at least in every day, or six hours in each week, to definite theological study.
2. On one of the days of each Ember Season, kneeling, to read over the vows and exhortations of the Ordinal; and to make the day as far as possible a time of retirement for self-examination and prayer.
3. To use the provision made in the Prayer Book for unquiet consciences, by confessing before some brother-priest if needful, at the first opportunity which may offer.
4. Once in each year, if opportunity should offer, to seek one or more days of seclusion from the world at a Retreat, for the reviving of spiritual life and missionary energies.
5. As Missionaries, to pray often to be strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man; and especially for an increase of faith, humility, and Christian fortitude, of patience and hopefulness; and to lay hold on eternal life, and strive for the incorruptible crown.

[4] These Rules &c., are intended to have a *missionary* character of their own. For the rest, they are taken in part from those of the Pastora Order of the Holy Ghost, established by the Bishop of Linchfiel in his Diocese: partly also from the "Green Rule" of the S. S. C.

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