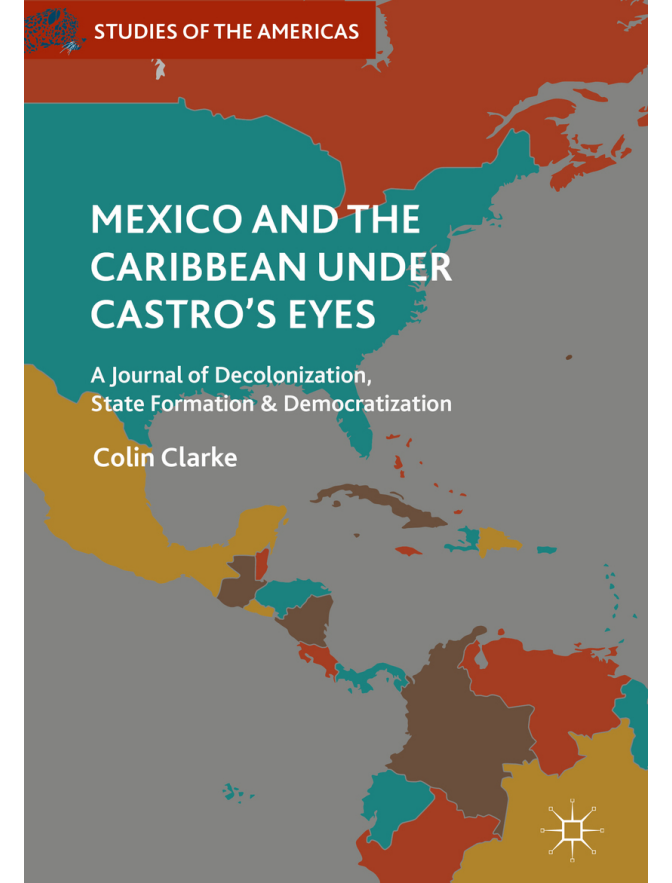




STUDIES OF THE AMERICAS

MEXICO AND THE CARIBBEAN UNDER CASTRO'S EYES

A Journal of Decolonization,
State Formation & Democratization

Colin Clarke



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Colin Clarke

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*To Elizabeth
Thomas-Hope
and Trevor
Hope*

**Also by
Colin
Clarke**

*Jamaica in
Maps
Kingston,
Jamaica:
Urban*

*Development
and Social
Change, 1692–
1962*

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2002*

*Decolonizin
g the Colonial
City:
Urbanization
and Social
Stratification
in Kingston,
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during the
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Campaign,
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and the Politics
of
Decolonization*

*: Jamaica
Journals, 1961
and 1968*

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member of
staff. My
research in

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Mexico, in
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this book to
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Thomas-Hope

and Trevor
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in the
Cotswolds in
England, and
over the years,
generous hosts
in Jamaica.

Abbreviations

AID

Aid for
International
Development
(US)

CARICOM

Caribbean
Community

CARIFTA

Caribbean
Free Trade
Area

CDR

Comité de la
Defensa de la
Revolución

CHISS

Centre Haïtien
d'Investigation
en Sciences
Sociales

COCEO

Coalición de
Obreros
Campesinos y

Estudiantes
de Oaxaca

CRUDEM

Centre Rural de
Développement
de Milot

DAAC

Departemento
de Asuntos

Agrarios y
Colonización

FEO

Federación
Estudiantil
Oaxaqueña

FUCOPO

Fusión Cívica
de
Organizaciones

Productivas de
Oaxaca

INAH

Instituto
Nacional de
Antropología
e Historia

INIT

Instituto de
Información y

Turismo

JLP

Jamaica

Labour Party

NASA

National

Aeronautic

and Space

Administration

(US)

PAM
People's
Action
Movement

PDP
People's
Democratic
Party

PNM

People's
National
Movement

PNP

People's
National Party

PRI

Partido
Revolucionario
Institucional

UABJO
Universidad
Autónoma
Benito Juárez
de Oaxaca

UCL
University
College
London

UDC

Urban
Development
Corporation

UDI

Unilateral
Declaration of
Independence

UNAM

Universidad
Nacional

Autónoma de
México

UPR

University of
Puerto Rico

UWI

University of
the West
Indies

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Caribbean

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close-knit
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in its
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date back to
the post-
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period

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brackets) of
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visited

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1. Introduction: Mexico and the Caribbean

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Geography and
the Environment,
University of
Oxford, Oxford, UK

 Colin Clarke

**Four Journals:
One Book**

There is a strong kinship between this book, consisting of four journals dealing with Mexico and the Caribbean over the period 1966 to 1978, and my two published field accounts—*Post-Colonial Trinidad: An Ethnographic Journal* (2010) and *Race, Class and the Politics of Decolonization: Jamaica Journals, 1961 and 1968* (2015); they

all focus on
decolonization, the
quest for democracy,
and issues of race,
colour, class, and
culture. Moreover,
these three journals
overlap with and
inform my four
monographs on
Kingston , Jamaica
(1975, 2006), San
Fernando , Trinidad
(1986), and Oaxaca,
Mexico (2000), all of
which deal with these

same issues in specific urban and rural contexts.

Chapter 2 (of this book) is based on a research visit I made to examine the land reform in Mexico in 1966. This follows on from my doctoral fieldwork in Kingston in 1961, while Jamaica was still a British colony (one year short of independence), and my postdoctoral

project on East Indians
in San Fernando,
Trinidad, that was
carried out in 1964,
two years after the
independence of
Trinidad and Tobago
from the UK. The
independence of
Jamaica and Trinidad
and Tobago in 1962
fragmented the
colonial Federation of
the West Indies,
leaving each of the
remaining colonies to

seek new constitutions on their own.

Chapter 3, based on my travels through the arc of islands in the Caribbean from Haiti to Guyana in 1968, is an adjunct to follow-up fieldwork in Kingston that year and captures the beginnings of the Caribbean Black Power movement as a reflection of contemporary events in the US and the

radical student
movements in Europe.
It contains an account
of post-colonial
Caribbean
fragmentation in the
case of Anguilla's
separation from St
Kitts , and a revisit to
Trinidad, which
continues many of the
conversations and
experiences of my
1964 fieldwork.

This journey was
followed about

6 months later by an account (also in Chap. 3) of a short visit I made to Cuba in 1969. At this date, the Castro regime had been in power for 10 years, was viewed by the US as a socialist, non-democratic state, and had declared itself communist in late 1961, introducing cold war geopolitics into the Caribbean and Latin America through

the Missile Crisis of
November 1962.
Cuba's neighbours
shared most of these
concerns, but all had
impoverished
populations that
responded to Castro's
anti-colonialism and
anti-Americanism .
And in the case of
Mexico, which
underwent a
revolution against the
dictatorship of Porfirio
Díaz in the early

twentieth century,
there were symbolic
and organic links to the
Castro revolution.
These provided
opportunities for state
manipulation that
bolstered the country's
own revolutionary and
socialist credentials.

Aware that, for the
previous decade,
Mexico and the
Caribbean islands had
been under Castro's
eyes as neighbouring

societies potentially
ripe for communist
revolution, I thought
that a visit to Cuba
following my 1966 and
1968 journeys was
essential to my
understanding of the
Castro revolution at
first hand. In April
1969 I attended a
conference in Mexico,
from which it was
feasible to fly to
Havana and then travel
back to the UK via

Madrid—the only non-Soviet airports open to travellers wishing to visit Cuba. My companion on the journey, Bryan Roberts, and I required no visas as British citizens, and we were able to sign up on arrival at the airport in Havana for a bespoke guided visit—under surveillance—that took us to urban and rural Cuba, universities, teacher

training colleges,
polyclinics, peasant
coffee holdings,
nationalized sugar
estates, industrial sites,
and sugar warehouses.
We saw a sufficient
range of activities and
enterprises to be able
to make up our own
minds on the ground
about what we saw—
the crux of what
fieldwork can add to
any investigation.

A revisit to Jamaica in 1972 followed by a stay in Haiti are recorded in Chap. 4. In Haiti, I visited projects identified for me by Reggie Norton, the then Secretary of Oxfam's Field Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, of which I was a member for several years in the 1970s. Visiting these projects enabled me to

travel widely in rural
Haiti and to get under
the skin of the
notorious Duvalier
regime. I revisited
Puerto Rico and went
back to Trinidad,
where I encountered
issues flowing from the
Black Power
disturbances of 1970,
which had severely
shaken but not toppled
the Williams
government. I made
another short visit to

Trinidad in 1973 to take the politico-racial temperature and collect 1970 census materials for my research project on San Fernando.

Chapter 5, which was preceded by an unrecorded 6-week preliminary visit to Mexico in 1976, provides an account of my 1978 travels as part of a 5-month project on class , eth

nicity, and community among the diverse peasantries in the state of Oaxaca. Oaxaca is roughly the same size as Wales but even more mountainous, and visiting the various regions and altitudinal zones from the *tierra caliente* (warm zone) via the *tierra templada* (temperate zone) to the *tierra fría* (cold zone) was both difficult and a delight.

Following on
immediately from my
stay in Oaxaca, I
travelled from Mexico
to Barbuda in the
Lesser Antilles via
Puerto Rico and
Antigua. I had already
carried out research on
Barbuda in
collaboration with
David Lowenthal, and
our archive-based
paper on the myth of
slave breeding had

been published before
my visit.

My 1966 and 1978
Mexican journals were
kept under
circumstances similar
to the 1968 and 1972
Caribbean entries. The
events I witnessed
were recorded by hand
in a notebook on the
same day or the day
following their
occurrence, and they
have been transcribed
specifically for

publication in this book. All the photographs were my own, as was the case for my parallel journals dealing with Trinidad (2010) and Jamaica (2016). With the permission of my wife Gillian and my children Aidan and Veronica , I have also included extracts from my letters to them, which fill in the gaps in my Mexican journals when

I was on the move or for some other reason sent a separate record of my encounters and observations. The sections based on my letters are placed in square brackets and bear the recipient's name; for clarity, they are dated separately from the remainder of the text, though they usually correspond with dates in the journal.

It will be obvious to the reader that the journals that comprise this book, and my two already-published journals on Trinidad (2010) and Jamaica (2016), can be read in conjunction with one another in a variety of ways. Taken together the three journals provide four separate accounts of post-colonial Trinidad in 1964, 1968 , 1972, and

1973 , which straddle
independence and the
Black Power
disturbances of 1970;
and three narratives of
Jamaica in 1961 and
1968 (a whole book),
and 1972, stretching
from the end of British
colonialism and the
neocolonial
Bustamante regime to
the beginning of the
Michael Manley
government via the
Rodney riots. There are

also two descriptions of Mexico in 1966 and 1978 , which depict the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in its pomp and under left-wing threat and its subsequent repression; and two views of Haiti and Puerto Rico in 1968 and 1972 , which focus, in the case of Haiti on the Duvalier regimes of Papa Doc and Baby Doc, and in the case of Puerto Rico

on its quasi-colonial status and indigenous sense of white identity. All the remaining Caribbean territories visited contain one single entry, and like the previously mentioned units, whether continental or insular, were in the 1960s and 1970s under the shadow of Castro's Cuba.

The overall purpose of the

journeys recorded in these journals was to extend my knowledge of Mexico and the Caribbean by moving outwards from the detailed year-long fieldwork I had carried out in Jamaica and Trinidad in the early 1960s. It was my intention to write a series of comparative papers dealing with the whole Caribbean region with regard to

population geography
(Clarke 1971a),
urbanization (Clarke
1974a), and
racial/ethnic and
island identity (Clarke
1976) based in part on
my Jamaica and
Trinidad findings, but
extended as
generalizations to
other territories. My
second objective was
to create a lecture
course on the
Caribbean drawn from

first-hand experience as well as secondary materials. My third intention was to develop a research and teaching interest in mainland Latin America—involving Mexico—consistent with my joint post as a Parry Lecturer in Geography and Latin American studies at Liverpool University. In addition to lecturing on the Caribbean to

undergraduates in the Department of Geography, I was involved in teaching masters students in the Latin American Centre and with doctoral supervision in geography—expanding my teaching capacity based on my own fieldwork in Jamaica and Trinidad by adding Mexico and the other Caribbean territories.

The tone of my writing changed from a detailed preoccupation with urban geographical and anthropological research to broader social-scientific and humanistic concerns as my interests shifted across the trilogy of journals that I kept between 1961 and 1978. In the 1961 Jamaica journal I was a doctoral candidate, and

I completed my second spell of fieldwork in Kingston in 1968 only a year before my doctoral thesis was finished. In 1964 Gillian , my wife, joined me in postdoctoral fieldwork in San Fernando , Trinidad; we were free of local institutional affiliations, and got on with our geographical-anthropological fieldwork in an

independent manner.
All this changed once I
was back in the UK at
the University of
Liverpool, where I had
teaching and research
obligations in the Latin
American Centre, in
addition to the
Geography
Department, when the
former was opened in
1966. From that time
onwards, I had the
responsibility to travel
and engage

intellectually with
colleagues and
students at home and
abroad, colleagues and
students in the field,
and with a wide range
of local people whom I
met through
interviews and general
conversations
recorded during my
research and travels.

Mexico and the
Caribbean share a
number of
characteristics typical

of countries in the
developing world: a
history of colonialism
as appendages of the
West European
powers; exploitation
through the agency of
large landed estates;
and the subordination
and direction of non-
white populations
through forced labour
(indigenous Indians in
Mexico or imported
Africans in the
Caribbean).

Consequently, all the territories occupied by Mexico (originally the Spanish colony of New Spain) and the Caribbean currently experience age-old issues of exploitation, underdevelopment, political dependence, democratic deficit in all senses, class and race inequality, coupled to the modern problems of over-urbanization, urban marginality,

peasant
decomposition,
poverty, illiteracy, and
a range of language
problems, all of which
in various guises
surface in the two
regions and four
journals that make up
this book.

The remainder of
the introduction
provides a brief
overview of the
topography and
settlement history of

Mexico and the Caribbean; and a more detailed explanation of the racial, class, and cultural stratification of the mainland and island regions, leading to the formulation of a typology of the societies I visited between 1966 and 1978. The final two sections concentrate on the two leitmotifs of the 1960s and 1970s that informed the

keeping of the journals
and should be borne in
mind as they are read,
namely (1)
decolonization , state
formation, and the
quest for democracy in
the post-colonial
societies of Mexico and
the Caribbean and (2)
the conditions that
were likely to constrain
or challenge these
developments—Cuba,
the cold war, and
student radicalism.

Mexico and the Caribbean: An Overview

Mexico (53 million population c.1970) and the Caribbean (25 million population c.1970, in the countries I visited) comprise adjacent but distinctive mainland/island regions, spreading from east to west over 4500 kilometres from

the Pacific to the Atlantic Oceans, and lie between the US and north coast of South America (Table [1.1](#)). Mexico (just under 2 million square miles) is part of the continental land mass of North America, much of it forming a high plateau at 2000 metres, fringed to east and west by the Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidental, with

peaks volcanic and otherwise rising above it (Fig. 1.1). The Caribbean consists of an archipelago with a land mass four-fifths smaller (Table 1.1), located to the west of the Gulf of Mexico, in the mouth of which Cuba, the largest island, lies (Fig. 1.2). The western islands in the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Jamaica , Hispaniola, occupied

by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico) rarely exceed an altitude of 1000 metres (Fig. 1.3), while the smaller, even lower, eastern islands in the Lesser Antilles run north to south from the US and British Virgin Islands, some with mountain peaks, others consisting of low-level platforms, to Trinidad which lies adjacent to the River

Orinoco and mainland Guyana (Fig. 1.4 and Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Mexico and the Caribbean: area, population (c. 1970), and European colonial affiliations and colonial names (where different given in brackets) of territories visited

Territory	Area (km²)	Pop (000)
Anguilla	91	6
Antigua	280	62

Territory	Area (km²)	Pop (000)
Barbuda	155	1
Cuba	114,524	8500
Dominica	751	70
Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo)	48,422	4000
Grenada	308	89
Guadeloupe	1432	273
Guyana (British Guiana)	210,000	714

Territory	Area (km²)	Pop (000)
Haiti (Saint-Domingue)	27,750	4300
Jamaica	11,425	1860
Martinique	1080	3240
Mexico (New Spain)	1,958,000	53,000
Nevis	93	110
Puerto Rico	8860	2700
St Kitts	168	340

Territory	Area (km²)	Pop (000)
Sint Maarten/St. Martin	86	15
St Vincent	344	90
Trinidad	4828	955

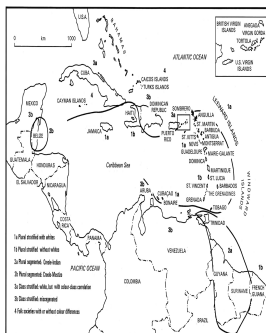


Fig. 1.2 Mexico and Caribbean societies: a typology

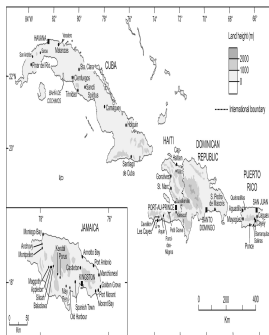


Fig. 1.3 The Greater Antilles: topography and place names

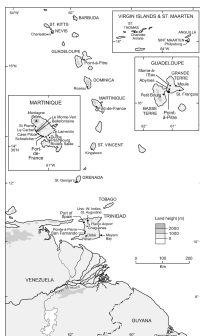


Fig. 1.4 The Lesser Antilles and Guyana: topography and place names

The topographic distinctions in the archipelago are simply explained. The Greater Antilles represents the upper slopes of east-west trending mountains whose bases are submerged in the Caribbean Sea (Fig. 1.3). The north-south aligned Lesser Antilles consist of volcanic cones as in St Kitts , Martinique, and Grenada (Fig. 1.4),

coral platforms
attached to volcanic
extrusions as in
Antigua and
Guadeloupe, or free-
standing coral islands
—as in the outer
Leeward Islands like
Anguilla and Barbuda
(Fig. 1.5). Trinidad's
Northern Range is a
continuation of the
coastal mountains of
Venezuela with much
of the south of the
island made up of

sedimentary rocks
derived from silt
deposited from the
mouth of the Orinoco
(Fig. 1.4). The
Caribbean islands and
much of Mexico are
inherently unstable,
experiencing periodic
earthquakes and
volcanic eruptions of
devastating
proportions. Their
tectonic instability is
exacerbated by their
tropical maritime

location that gives rise to hurricanes in the months of July, August, and September. Once established in the Caribbean, these cyclones can devastate several islands one after the other and even invade coastal Mexico (Watts [1987](#)).

The Caribbean was the first tropical region explored and colonized from Spain by Columbus , beginning

with his first journey in 1492. The city of Santo Domingo on Hispaniola, the most populous island, became the de facto capital of the Hispanic Caribbean during the next 30 years of settlement, and the earliest European civic and religious buildings in the Americas were located there. In the early sixteenth century, the indigenous

population of Santo Domingo was largely wiped out by panning for gold, using slave labour, and by imported European diseases to which the Indians had no immunity—hence the early need to import African slaves for heavy manual work. After 1520, the Spanish conquest of Mexico and the discovery of its silver mines shifted the

focus of attention to the mainland, leaving the islands with north-coast havens, notably Cuba and Puerto Rico, as entrepôts for Mexican and South American goods en route to Europe (Watts 1987). Mexican Indians at high altitude were to experience a similar post-contact decline to their Caribbean counterparts and for similar reasons—slave

labour and disease—
but they lived in
communities with
sufficient numbers to
survive and experience
a demographic
recovery in the
eighteenth century
(Clarke 2000).

Despite their
different topographies
and histories, Mexico
and the Caribbean
have, as we have seen,
three features in
common: (1)

colonialism; (2)
economic production
based on the large
landed estates; (3)
systems of forced
labour affecting their
subordinate non-white
populations. However,
for each of these three
commonalities a
Mexican and Caribbean
variant exists. Whereas
colonialism in Mexico
was solely Spanish, in
the Caribbean, after
1600, there were four

politically and
militarily competing
imperial powers—
Spain, Britain, France,
and Holland—and
insularity facilitated
both maritime
competition and
administrative and
social control (Table
[1.1](#)). Estates in Mexico
produced maize and
cattle for local
consumption in the
cities and mines of
New Spain, while in the

Caribbean plantations exported sugar to the metropolises in Europe. In Mexico, the indigenous Indian population was subject to periodic forced labour (*repartimiento*) in the white-owned silver mines and cochineal groves—exports from which to Europe underpinned the Mexican export economy, while in the Caribbean imported

African labour was permanently enslaved to work on the sugar and coffee plantations of its white owners. In these ways both Mexico and the Caribbean were drawn by globalizing forces into relations with Europe and Africa, yet labour relations in the Americas were of the most primitive and exploitative kind.

Irrespective of their
different and
distinctive
environments—
continental mainland
and offshore islands—
Mexico and the
Caribbean still possess
some partially
overlapping
characteristics, such as
the Spanish language
and Roman
Catholicism
(exemplified by
Mexico, and three of

the Greater Antilles—Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico). These features are shared with the neighbouring countries of Central and South America, or Latin America, all of which, with the exception of Brazil, were formerly Spanish colonies. In the non-Hispanic Caribbean, however, British and Dutch Protestantism vied

with French
Catholicism, and the
French and English
languages orientated
the colonial
inhabitants away from
Latin America towards
Europe (and the US).
Each set of Caribbean
colonies was moulded
politically,
economically, socially,
legally, and
linguistically by the
exploitative
imperatives,

institutions, and
culture of Spain,
France, Britain, and the
Netherlands. But how
did British, French, and
Dutch colonies come to
be established in the
Spanish Caribbean
after 1600?

Spanish hegemony
in the Caribbean was
challenged by the rise
of its North-West
European rivals as
maritime powers in the
early seventeenth

century. Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, off the coast of present-day Venezuela (Fig. 1.2), and St Eustatius , Saba, and Sint Maarten (paired with the French colony of St Martin on the same island) in the northern group of Lesser Antilles became Dutch possessions in the 1630s (Fig. 1.5), but more as part of the military strategy of the

Dutch War of
Independence against
Spain than in the
expectation of
agricultural
development. By 1667
Surinam was Dutch too
(Fig. 1.2). France
captured Guadeloupe
and Martinique in
1635, and in 1697
annexed the western
third of Hispaniola or
Saint-Domingue
(Haiti), which for about
half a century had been

occupied by
buccaneers and French
settlers (Fig. 1.2).
England was by far the
most successful of the
predators on the
Spanish possessions,
capturing St Kitts in
1623 and Barbados in
1625; by 1655, when
Jamaica was taken
from a small Spanish
garrison after an
abortive attempt on
Santo Domingo,
colonies had been

established in Nevis,
Antigua, and
Montserrat. The
French and British
continued to dispute
the Lesser Antilles
throughout the
eighteenth century as
the Caribbean became
'the cockpit of Europe,'
but by 1800 the
Windwards—
Dominica, St Lucia, St
Vincent, and Grenada
—were all in British
hands , while Trinidad

and British Guiana
were formally ceded to
Britain by Spain and
Holland as late as 1815
(Clarke 1990) (Fig.
1.2).

Race, Class, and Culture Mexico from Colony to Country

At the time of the
Conquest of Mexico by
Cortés from Hispaniola
in 1519–1521, what is
now Mexico was
peopled by
sophisticated
centralized states, the

most prominent being that of the Aztecs, who occupied an island-capital located in Lake Tenochtitlán in Central Mexico at an altitude of over 2000 metres. The Aztecs or Mexicans had developed sophisticated systems of kingship and priesthood, and a cult that focussed on human sacrifice, performed in temples located on the top of

pyramids. Trading relationships were maintained with parallel cultures in other parts of Mexico, such as the Zapotecs in Oaxaca, who had developed their own distinctive ceremonial site at Monte Albán . With the destruction of the ceremonial city of Tenochtitlán by the Spanish, and the construction of a Spanish colonial city—

Mexico City—on top of the ruins, a new social order was established with an elite of white conquistadors and a mass of subordinate Indians (Moctezuma 1988) (Fig. 1.1).

Surviving members of the Indian elite were hispanized in language, converted to Catholicism, and incorporated into the colonial elite. Huge appropriations of land

(*encomiendas*) were ceded by the Spanish crown to the conquistadors and their followers, and the bulk of the Indian population was rendered landless and subject to labour draft (*repartimiento*) for work in the silver mines and the rural production of cochineal (Humboldt [1811](#)). Miscegenation among whites and

Indians slowly produced a mestizo majority. A white elite and hispanized mestizo middle class dominated an Indian population, practising a nominal but syncretized Catholicism, located on its traditional lands often at high altitude, and subsisting on the triad of maize, beans, and squash (Clarke 2000). By 1900, after a

century of
independence during
which the Catholic
landholding
corporations were
dissolved, social
inequalities had
intensified in the
nation of bronze. The
white and mestizo elite
and small middle class
—largely urban in
location—dominated a
rural country of large
haciendas with a white
or mestizo

proprietorship and a mass of mestizo and Indian labourers—set apart from the residual Indian language-speaking population that was still essentially non-Spanish speaking after 400 years of colonialism (Clarke 2000).

The objectives of the Mexican Revolution (1911–1917) were contradictory and

aimed at abolishing the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz , distributing land to the landless, modernizing the state and creating an urban-industrial economy, and incorporating the Indian population through primary education and literacy in Spanish (Clarke 1980). What was achieved was the replacement of the Porfirian dictatorship

by a single political party eventually called the PRI that was to govern for 70 years, and the creation of a single-party non-democratic state. A land reform was embarked on from the 1920s, the pace of which quickened in the 1930s under Cardenas, and fluctuated thereafter until the pro-capitalist Salinas reforms of the 1980s; it

created a subsistence-level development for most of its rural beneficiaries, not the basis for a quasi-middle-class lifestyle. The state bureaucracy was expanded and elections were organized every six years, but the civil service remained sclerotic and incompetent, and democracy was tightly

constrained (Knight
1986).

An urban-industrial strategy was embarked upon by the PRI , especially during World War II and thereafter, using tariff barriers behind which to develop factories with national and international affiliations. But demographic growth and internal migration created one of the

biggest cities in the world—Mexico City—far beyond the formal sector's capacity to absorb labour, though city-growth was essential to reduce the pressure of population in the rural communities created by the land-reform programme. Incorporation of the Indians through hispanization foundered on the

multiplicity of
languages spoken, and
the need to use
Spanish as a medium
of instruction: a few
Indians learned to
speak and read
Spanish, but the
majority struggled and
fell back on
monolingualism—a
major problem until
after World War II
(Clarke 1980).

Modern Mexican
social structure still

consists of a
superordinate category
of mestizos who
account for about
90 percent of the
population, with a
white and mestizo elite
and a middle and
lower class that are
racially both mestizo
and Indian. Below this
national population
there persists a
subordinate category
of Indians who are
essentially classless,

emphasize the corporateness of their municipal life, and use one of about 80 languages, which form boundaries marking their larger ethnic identity. Enduring subordination as a collectivity, the Indians are nevertheless able to escape at will into the mestizo section of society, but only by risking proletarianization and

further
impoverishment
(Clarke [2000](#)).

Caribbean Slavery

The elimination of the
Caribbean Indian
population in the
Greater Antilles soon
after the conquest, and
from the Lesser
Antilles during the
eighteenth century,
resulted in the

importation of African slaves—in even greater numbers—as the British and French developed the international sugar trade after 1650. Caribbean sugar economies developed as slave societies with black populations of West African Atlantic Coast origin, though many Africans were eventually recruited by local slavers from

zones deep in the African interior (Thomas 2006). At the ports, they were sold to European slave traders for trans-shipment across the Middle Passage to the Caribbean and beyond to Latin America.

The British, French, and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean became the only societies in the New World with majority populations

of black slaves—a social situation similar to the indigenous Indian majority in Mexico. However, the Spanish Caribbean Colonies, with their emphasis not on sugar plantations but on international trade in the case of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and subsistence farming and ranching in Santo Domingo, were societies with slaves as

distinct from slave societies. All the colonies of the Caribbean, irrespective of the slave proportion in their population, shared another characteristic with Mexico—white male dominance coupled to white female absence. The stage was set for miscegenation on a large scale, mediated in the Caribbean case by the short life

expectancy of slaves on sugar plantations in the humid tropics, and the need to import continual replacement supplies of slaves from Africa (Higman 1976, 1984).

Gradually after 1700 a substantial coloured population began to emerge in the Caribbean, often receiving freedom from planter owners/fathers

(sometime deathbed manumissions) or earning freedom through urban work (Cohen and Greene 1972). The Caribbean social hierarchy, white over brown over black, chimed with the white over mestizo over Indian of the Mexican mainland. But in the Caribbean, legal distinctions intervened to make the social boundaries sharper

and more difficult to penetrate. For example, the slave-free boundary was codified by a series of slave laws modified over time, but giving slaves only minimal protection against their master/owners; free people of colour (and later free blacks) were set aside as a separate socio-legal category, able to own slaves themselves, but

unable to vote (on the property and income criteria that were applied to the whites) or to work in local government or transport (Heuman 1981).

By the late eighteenth century, as the slave economies of the French and British Caribbean reached their peak development under slavery, the legal

estates of white
freemen, free or freed
people of colour, and
black slaves were each
subdivided internally
by class, while
profound cultural
distinctions had
developed between the
three major strata in
family structure ,
education, and religion.
White masters were
patriarchal, irreligious,
wealthy, educated, and
able to vote, while the

white lower class
attained none of these
attributes, except
irreligion; brown and
black free people of
colour were of rich or
modest means,
depending on their
father's class
background, often non-
conformist by religion
and literate, but rarely
married because free
brown women were
usually mistresses of
upper-class whites;

black and brown
slaves, whether urban
or rural, were
matrifocal,
polygamous, members
of Afro-Christian
churches, tied to
menial hard-labouring
tasks, and were totally
impoverished. Similar
distinctions applied to
language , education,
and religion (Clarke
1975).

Upper-class whites
spoke with European

accents if they had been born or educated in the metropole, as had many of the planter class, but lower-class whites possessed only a limited education and often conversed with a marked Caribbean intonation. Men of the free people of colour were in a similar position to the whites in terms of education and language—class,

education, and
language coincided,
but free women of
colour and white
women were
invariably poorly
educated and spoke
the Creole language of
their household slaves.
Slaves were illiterate
and rapidly developed
an English or French
Creole with which to
communicate with one
another and the lower-

class whites (Clarke
1975).

Dominant religions were imported into the Caribbean from metropolitan societies—Catholicism in the case of the Spanish and French colonies, and Protestantism in the case of the British and Dutch . In Catholic societies slaves were treated as beings with souls, and the plantation regime was

theoretically less
burdensome than in
the Protestant
colonies, where slaves
were beyond the
human pale, but the
reality of plantation life
was universally vicious
and exploitative.
Whites, though
nominal members of
the established
metropolitan religions,
led brutalized and
debauched lives in
keeping with their

ownership of slaves. In the British islands, free people of colour and slaves were almost totally neglected by the Anglican Church, and by the early 1800s were ripe for conversion to metropolitan Methodism and other non-conformist churches (Clarke 2013).

Wherever there were slaves,

syncretized Afro-Caribbean religions were created among the blacks whom the established churches deemed non-humans or at best lowly humans. These creolized religions had many names—vodun (Haiti), *santería* (Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico) (Scott 1985; Nicholls 1979; Palmié 2002; Moret 2008)—but their core

characteristics were similar to those of the Protestant Caribbean (Simpson 1956). All of these religious systems syncretized African and European beliefs which combined everyday life with the afterlife; and their rituals involved ecstatic behaviour in which the spirit world was accessed by the participants. Once non-conformist

missionaries entered the British West Indies after 1800, the slaves and their freed descendants began to be proselytized, only for them to turn away from orthodox Christianity and then re-embrace Afro-Christianity (Clarke 2013).

Caribbean Emancipation

with Enduring Ex-Slave Majorities

In the British Caribbean , the free people of colour embarked on protest movements in the 1820s to acquire full civil rights, in which they were successful by the early 1830s; but the project was overtaken by slave emancipation itself

which was achieved through slave revolt and metropolitan intervention between 1834 and 1838 (Heuman 1981; Turner 1982). During this short period, known in the British colonies as the Apprenticeship Period, the ex-slaves remained tied to their owner's properties, though they were paid for their labour. Between 1838 and

adult suffrage in the 1940s, franchise distinctions based on income and property (class)—not race or culture—defined three categories that resembled the legal estates of slavery: now those who could be voted for were white and brown; those who could vote were white, brown, plus a black minority; those who could not vote were

the black majority with some who were brown (Clarke 1975). Colour-class boundaries persisted largely because the plantation economies were static or declining, land was locked up in the plantations and not available for purchase and the creation of a peasantry, other than in Jamaica, and there was neither a basis for economic

diversification or for investment in infrastructure.

Events were even worse in Haiti which endured a long civil war following the slave uprising of the 1790s, and much of the economy was devastated. The white planter class fled or was eventually exterminated, and Haiti entered independence with a

mulatto elite and a peasant mass of ex-slaves. Unlike the elite who were educated, wealthy and Catholic, the ex-slaves were matriarchal, Creole-speaking and followers of vodun. Politics were non-democratic, dominated by former military men and continually interrupted by outbreaks of violence, which marked the

termination of one
regime and the
initiation of another.
This chaos was set in a
sea of impoverishment
enjoined by the
indemnity to be paid to
France for permitting
independence to stand,
and validated by the
low esteem in which
the first black republic
was held by the
European powers who
still dominated the
Caribbean. As in the

colonial regimes of the French and the British, so in Haiti post-independence, the minority dominated the majority by non-democratic means and relied heavily on force—or the threat of force—to maintain the unstable status quo (Nicholls [1979](#)).

Caribbean Newcomers

After slave
emancipation in the
British Caribbean
between 1834 and
1838, later
emancipatory
legislation in the
French Antilles in
1848, and in the Dutch
colonies over the
period 1862–1873,
new non-white ethnic
groups were
introduced to the
region, at first to make
good the shortage of

labour—especially, but not solely, in the sugar frontier areas of the South-East Caribbean (Trinidad, British Guiana, and Surinam). The first indentured labourers were Chinese , but they rapidly gravitated into the grocery trade, and Indians (known in the Caribbean as East Indians) soon became the staple of ‘coolie’ indentured

immigration. Many Chinese quickly converted to orthodox Christianity , but most East Indians, where they formed large demographic components, retained ancestral commitments to Hinduism and Islam, though some Hindus converted to Catholicism or Canadian Mission Presbyterianism. In

British Guiana East
Indians eventually
became the majority of
the population, but in
Trinidad they formed a
large minority
segment, standing
outside the Creole
colour-class
stratification of whites,
browns, and blacks
(Richardson 1992).
Irrespective of the
racial proportions,
conditions in both

societies were very similar.

In the late nineteenth century, Syrians entered the Caribbean as traders, emulating the social mobility of the Jews of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Three ethnic minorities—Jews, Syrians, and Chinese, all using various branches of trade, by the 1950s occupied

status gap positions between the two upper social strata, and had converted to the elite religions of Roman Catholicism or Anglicanism. Their upward mobility over time was contrasted with the lowly position of the ethnic groups descended from runaway slaves such as the Maroons of Jamaica; and the Amerindians who

survived in British Guiana formed a miscegenated group in Dominica, which has a Carib Reserve . The descendants of the runaways and the Amerindians, despite their long histories in the Caribbean stretching back to slavery or beyond, could be thought of as outcaste groups (Lowenthal [1972](#)).

Similar to the outcaste groups in their retention of ancestral religions, as we have already seen, are the Hindus and Muslims of Trinidad and British Guiana (now Guyana). In Trinidad, the East Indians first arrived as indentured plantation labour in 1845, serving 5-year contracts. During the 70 years of indentured

immigration 144,000
Indians arrived in
Trinidad, of whom only
33,000 returned to
India. Between 1871
and 1891 the Indian
proportion of
Trinidad's population
increased from 22 to
32 percent. Most of the
indentured immigrants
came from the Ganges
Plain between Delhi
and Benares, and the
area to the north of the
Ganges lying between

Benares and the
Himalayas. Madrassis
from south India were
a small minority: only
5000 indentured
Indians embarked
from Madras between
1845 and 1892, though
recruitment from the
south increased again
in the early 1900s
(Clarke [1986](#)).

Fewer than
15 percent of
Trinidad's East Indian
immigrants were

Muslims . Among the Hindu majority, a wide range of castes was represented in the records. Agricultural castes were greatly in demand for work on the sugar estates, and together with the low castes and outcastes formed over two-thirds of the immigrants. A large number of Brahmins and Kshatriyas—many of them cultivators—also

immigrated, and together accounted for more than 10 percent of Hindus. Members of the Brahmin caste , in particular, were crucial to the maintenance of the Hindu priesthood, Hindu rituals, and Hindu family structures and rituals, as new indentures were abolished in 1917 and a rooted East Indian community

came to be formed
(Clarke 1986).

On the eve of
independence the two-
island colony of
Trinidad and Tobago
had a population of
830,000 (1960), and
Creoles accounted for
over 60 percent. The
breakdown by colour
groups was white
2 percent, browns
16 percent, and blacks
43 percent. East
Indians made up

37 percent of the island total, among whom Hindus comprised 23 percent, Muslims 6 percent, and Christians 8 percent—Catholic in the north and Presbyterian in and around San Fernando in the south. In contrast, the neighbouring island of Tobago (33,000 inhabitants) had an almost entirely black population that was

potentially at
loggerheads with the
Creole majority in
Trinidad. By the time
Trinidad and Tobago
achieved independence
in 1962, it had already
had four elections
based on universal
adult suffrage in which
race and religion—
Hinduism and Islam—
had played
increasingly important
parts. While race was
used as a vote catcher

by Creole and Indian politicians alike, politics enhanced racial rivalries and led to informal racial-religious coalitions. As David Lowenthal perceptively commented 45 years ago, 'much of what passes for Indianness ... is, indeed, a result as well as a cause of East Indian-Creole stress' (Lowenthal [1972](#), 146).

Caribbean Societies and Mexico: A Typology

The social history of the Caribbean and Mexico suggests that their societies are divisible into four broad types: (1) plural stratified, where colour-class and cultural distinctions have largely coincided;

(2) plural segmented, where (white, brown, and black) Creole and non-Creole segments are contraposed; (3) class stratified, where occupational class predominates and other differentiators are present but recessive or minority features; and (4) folk, which are without stratification (Fig. 1.2). Plural-stratified societies were formed

during plantation
slavery; plural-
segmented societies
were originally plural
stratified, but in the
nineteenth century
received masses of
Indian indentured
migrants to the
Caribbean, or Mexican
Indian immigrants
from the Yucatan.
Class-stratified
societies were
established in the
Spanish colonies of

Mexico and Santo Domingo during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or were creations of the twentieth century (after weak development with slavery on the small scale)—as in Cuba and Puerto Rico—and developed with free plantation labour, most of it white. Folk societies were tiny insular appendages of

larger colonies during slavery, and were often marginal for sugar production (Lowenthal 1972; Clarke 1991).

Each category in the typology is divisible into two subtypes (Fig. 1.2) (Lowenthal 1972; Clarke 1991). Plural-stratified societies (1) include those within the full stratificational range—(a) Jamaica, Barbados, the

Commonwealth
Leeward Islands, and
the French and
Netherlands Antilles;
and those that have
had that social range
truncated by the loss of
white elites, for
example (b) Haiti, and
the Windward Islands.
Plural-segmented
societies (2)
encompass those with
Creole-Indian
contrasts: (a) Trinidad
and Guyana (formerly

British Guiana) or (b)
Creole-Mestizo
differences in Belize. I
kept no record of my
short visit to Belize in
1978.

Class-stratified
societies include those
that are essentially
white but with a partial
colour-class
correlation: (a) Cuba
and Puerto Rico; and
two societies (b) that
have miscegenated
class stratifications but

with racial polarization
at the apex and base of
the social pyramid—
namely the Dominican
Republic, which is
mulatto yet with a
white elite and black
underclass, and Mexico
which is mestizo with a
white /mestizo elite
and a mestizo /Indian
lower class plus a rural
Indian enclave. Finally,
folk societies are tiny
non-stratified
communities with a

weak resource base;
either they have no
major colour
differences (a)
Barbuda, black and
Saba, white, or they are
colour-differentiated
(b) Desirade, white-
black, and Anguilla,
brown-black (Clarke
1991).

Historically, the
plural-stratified society
has been key to the
evolution of Caribbean
social structures.

Jamaica during slavery,
for example,
represented a classic
plural society that in
its origins involved
ranked cultural
sections, legally
enshrined and largely
correlated with colour
and class. Haiti,
Barbados, and the
British and French
Lesser Antilles were
replicas. Slave
emancipation took
place in Haiti in the

1790s through slave revolt and a war against French imperialism. It was followed by emancipation in the British Caribbean, the French Antilles, and in the Dutch colonies over the period 1862–1873, in each case by legislative act of the imperial regime. Most other types of Caribbean society may be related to the

plural-stratified
Jamaican type, either
as truncations, or as
demographic
expansions of the
social pyramid.

Plural-segmented
societies were weakly
developed as slave
societies because they
were neither British
nor French in the
eighteenth century,
compared to the two
great slave societies of
the Western

Hemisphere—Saint-Domingue/Haiti (independent 1804) and Jamaica, each in turn with the greatest output in the world of sugar and coffee before and after 1800.

Moreover, plural-segmented societies had an abundance of potential plantation land when the slave trade in the British Empire was abolished in 1808. So, once

Trinidad and British Guiana were transferred to the UK in 1815, a late phase of sugar cultivation was entered using East Indian indentured labour exported through Calcutta. The Indian communities that stayed in Trinidad and British Guiana were so large in number that they stood outside the pre-existing social

stratifications, and did not penetrate them as did their demographically smaller equivalents in Jamaica and the British and French Lesser Antilles.

The white class-stratified Spanish colonies with their port-havens, Havana and San Juan, played a crucial supportive role to Spanish commercial activity on the Spanish

Main until Spanish decolonization of mainland territories in the 1820s. Sugar plantations, based on slave and free labour, had been introduced to Cuba during the brief British occupation in the late eighteenth century, and were expanded by the Spanish in the early 1800s, but the proportion of the labour force that was

enslaved declined from 43 to 28 percent between 1841 and 1860, and slavery was abolished in 1886 (almost 50 years after the British Caribbean) (Knight [1970](#)). In Puerto Rico, where tobacco and subsistence farming dominated the rural scene, slaves accounted for fewer than 12 percent of the population in 1846,

when they were most numerous, and the proportion had shrunk to well under 10 percent before emancipation in 1873. The Dominican Republic remained detached from these circumstances, though free-labour plantations were created by local and US capital, using mostly local (including Haitian) workers, after

1875 (Fraginals et al.
1985).

Consequently, Cuba was a plural-stratified society in 1840, with free whites and enslaved blacks in almost equal proportions, separated by free coloureds. Yet by 1920, the modest increase of blacks and browns in contrast to the enormous influx of white labourers (750,000 arrived from

Spain between 1900 and 1920 when the total population barely exceeded 2 million) had transformed Cuba into a class-based society in which browns and blacks were accorded middle- and lower-class status respectively, but were outnumbered by whites in each class—and especially so in the elite (Clarke [1991](#)). Similar shifts towards

a white majority were recorded in Puerto Rico, where miscegenation and the gradual social incorporation of light mulattoes into the white population (as pass-as whites), as in Cuba, have played a part in the reduction of the black presence (Hoetink 1985). In the Dominican Republic, however, whites and blacks (though

fortified by black immigration from Haiti) form only small minorities, and race mixing has produced a mulatto majority that prefers to think of itself —falsely—as Indian rather than black (Howard 2001).

The survival of the Indian population and its demographic recovery in late colonial times meant that mainland Mexico

had an Indian system of slavery that was geared to silver and cochineal production, and an embryonic white-mestizo-Indian class-stratified society in which African slavery and black race were implicated. Mexico imported African slave labour in small quantities for tropical plantation production of sugar and coffee—like the

rest of Latin America
(Aguirre Beltrán
1984). After
independence in 1821
both Indians and
blacks were
emancipated, but
blacks were only a
small proportion of the
population, and for the
last century have
formed tiny rural
enclaves or have
contributed with
whites and Indians to
the Mexican nation of

bronze which is first and foremost a class stratification with racial-class implications (Clarke 2000).

To reiterate, class became the basis of social stratification in the Hispanic-speaking territories of the Caribbean and in Mexico with black-white colour correlations in the Caribbean and Indian-

white (and some
African) race
associations in Mexico,
where an indigenous
Indian rural enclave
persisted from colonial
times. In the British,
French, and Dutch
Caribbean slavery gave
rise to a Creole colour-
class-culture
stratification, and
indenture resulted in
Indian segmentation
outside it.

Decolonization, State Formation, and Democracy

The Caribbean and Mexico were the first colonial realms established by the Europeans overseas after 1492, and decolonization—the first leitmotif of these journals—took place in three phases, the first two of which were extremely violent. The

first phase began in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and, in the case of the French Colony of Saint Domingue, involved a slave revolt (1791) which chimed with the French Revolution of 1789, and led to a complex but ultimately successful war of liberation ending in 1804—the first independence in the

Americas since the US in 1783 (Table [1.1](#)). Almost coinciding with the wars in Haiti, the break-up of the Spanish Empire in the Americas took place, with Mexico achieving its independence in 1821 after an 11-year military struggle. The Monroe Doctrine was declared by the US in 1823, warning the European powers that no further colonial

acquisitions in the Americas would be tolerated. Britain had acquired Trinidad and British Guiana as recently as 1815, and at this point Spain's American empire was soon to shrink to its three Caribbean colonies, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo (Table 1.1).

The second phase of independence stretched through the

nineteenth century and was confined to the Caribbean. Having liberated themselves, the Haitians invaded the Spanish colony in adjacent Santo Domingo in 1822 and incorporated it into a Hispaniola-wide Haiti. In 1844, the Dominicans rejected Haitian hegemony and declared their sovereignty, only to revert briefly to the

Spanish crown before achieving final independence as the Dominican Republic in 1865 (Table 1.1). The next independence movement in the Caribbean was Cuba's and it gave rise not only to civil wars against Spain in 1868 and 1898 but, at the later date, to US intervention. Cuba gained its formal independence from the

US (to which it had been ceded at the end of the Cuban-American-Spanish War) in 1902, yet it remained formally subservient to its northern neighbour until the abrogation of the Platt Amendment of 1934 (and informally subservient until the Castro Revolution triumphed in 1959).

Of course, the Monroe Doctrine, requiring European powers to forgo the acquisition of colonies in the Americas, did not apply to the US itself. As part of the conclusion to the war of 1898 the US annexed Puerto Rico, which joined Cuba and the Dominican Republic as part of the US sphere of influence in Latin America and

the Caribbean—much as the US had acquired extensive territory from Mexico in the war of 1846–1848 (Table 1.1). All these acquisitions gave rise to the establishment of US military bases that proved their worth after the Panama Canal was opened in 1914, since they provided cover to the main shipping lanes leading to the Isthmus of

Panama from Europe
and the eastern
seaboard of the US via
the Atlantic Ocean and
the Caribbean Sea.

While the Mexican
Revolution was taking
place in the period
1911–1917, the
integrity of the ex-
colonial national state
was never
permanently
threatened, though
Oaxaca stood aloof
from the 1910 uprising

against President Porfirio Díaz , and in 1915, following a liberal , anti-centrist policy that had been tested and abandoned almost a century earlier, it seceded from Mexico. The Oaxaca Sovereignty movement was a loose coalition of urban *porfiríst as*, mountain leaders, and disaffected revolutionaries, but was defeated by the

forces of President Carranza in 1916. The secessionists , mostly peasants, withdrew into the mountains of the Sierra Zapoteca and the Mixteca Alta, from which they prosecuted a guerrilla war until 1919 (Garner [1985](#), [1988](#)). In 1920 García Vigil was elected governor. He fell out with the peasant leaders, withdrew his

recognition of the federal government on the grounds of corruption, and restated Oaxaca's sovereignty.

Abandoned by the secessionist peasant leaders, García Vigil was executed in 1924, and Oaxaca was quickly reabsorbed into the Mexican Federation as one of its economically least

significant states
(Clarke 2000).

The third and
entirely peaceful phase
of Caribbean
decolonization took
place with imperial
consent and was part
and parcel of the
international political
developments that
followed the end of
World War II. The
United Nations
recognized two valid
paths to decolonization

through self-determination based on universal adult suffrage (then over age 21): independence achieved by constitutional decolonization from the mother country or incorporation by the electoral consent of the colonized into the body politic of the mother country or another country. In 1945 the British, French, and

Dutch would have agreed that their Caribbean subjects were the least exotic, most Europeanized and least demanding of independence among the peoples in their respective empires. Despite similar evaluations, it is interesting that each metropole chose a different method of decolonization. Britain opted to decolonize via

independence; France
chose to incorporate
via
departmentalization—
that is the French
Caribbean colonies
became overseas
départements of
France; and the Dutch
offered local autonomy
plus integration in the
Tripartite Kingdom of
the Netherlands. None
of these ‘solutions’
worked out as its
imperial authors

envisaged.
Balkanization of the
Caribbean by
colonialism was
repeated by the
process of
decolonization (Clarke
1990).

It was never British
policy to create a series
of island states in the
Caribbean: in British
opinion in 1947 a
federation of all the
Commonwealth units
was the ideal—and

essential—vehicle for decolonization and the creation of an economically viable, electorally democratic, and sovereign state. After more than a decade of negotiations followed by a pan-Caribbean election based on two political parties, a federation was inaugurated in 1958 (with independence set for 1962). The union

included the 'big three' islands of Jamaica, Trinidad, and Barbados, together with the Windwards and Leewards (Fig. 1.2). Yet its drawbacks were already plain: it had a population of scarcely more than 3 million; it did not include the mainland colonies of British Guiana and British Honduras; its economy was dependent on

traditional tropical agricultural exports such as sugar and bananas, diversified by bauxite and oil, and with a nascent region-wide tourist industry; and its island units were economically competitive rather than complementary (Lowenthal [1961](#)).

Tensions soon developed between Jamaica and the federal government located in

Trinidad more than
1600 kilometres away.
Jamaicans feared a
strong federal centre
and anticipated federal
interference in taxation
, tariffs, and trade.
Objecting to their
relative under-
representation in the
legislature, they
complained about
bearing a
disproportionate
burden of the costs of
government and,

refusing federal leadership, their leaders allowed ministerial posts to fall into the hands of small islanders. Jamaica eventually secured solutions to most of these complaints, but when a referendum was held in Jamaica in 1961 voters by a small majority favoured withdrawal (Clarke [2015](#)).

When Jamaica
opted out of the
federation Trinidad
and Tobago followed
suit, and both became
independent on the
timetable originally
devised for the
federation in August
1962, leaving Barbados
and the Windward and
Leeward Islands to
form a rump
federation. The
independence of
Barbados and Guyana

in 1966 ended hopes of
federal union, and
Britain devised
associated statehood to
enable Antigua and
Barbuda, St Kitts, Nevis
and Anguilla,
Dominica, St Lucia, St
Vincent and Grenada ,
individually, to become
internally self-
governing, with
overseas
representation and
defence reserved for
the mother country

(Wallace 1977).
Federation, which
existed in Mexico
because of terrestrial
proximity among the
key components of the
Spanish colonial state
and survived the
Revolution because of
the Federal
Government's use of
force, quickly
foundered in the
British colonial
Caribbean as a result of
insularity.

However, many of the centrifugal tendencies that bedevilled attempts to federate the British Caribbean persisted on a reduced scale among the associated states, several of which consisted of two or more islands whose links had been determined in the past less by ties of sentiment than by the Colonial Office's desire

for tidy administrative arrangements. Even in these associated unitary states, large islands frequently would not acknowledge their responsibility for financing the development of smaller but associated neighbours; and small units feared domination by larger ones, preferring a continuing contact

with the distant but
(hopefully) benevolent
UK. All these factors,
especially fear of
domination, played a
crucial part in
Anguilla's unilateral
declaration of
independence (UDI)
from the proto-state of
St Kitts, Nevis, and
Anguilla in 1967,
which culminated in a
British armed
intervention in 1969
and Anguilla's formal

reincorporation as a
British dependency
with 6000 inhabitants
in 1980 (Clarke 1971b)
(Figs. 1.5 and 1.6).

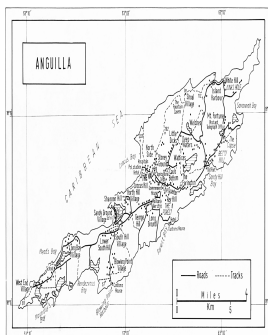


Fig. 1.6 Anguilla

After the Anguilla
debacle, which I was
able to witness first

hand and record in my 1968 journal, Britain became increasingly interested in escaping the toils of association, since it was clear that internal matters and external affairs could not in reality be neatly separated as the constitution of the associated states had supposed (Clarke 1971b). Rapid constitutional decolonization with

British golden handshakes was offered on demand, first to Grenada (1974), then to Dominica, St Lucia , and St Vincent in the late 1970s, and finally to Antigua and Barbuda (1982) and St Kitts and Nevis (1983). St Kitts and Nevis were delayed from attaining independence because of the constitutional crisis created by

Anguilla's UDI, and the British determination to allow the small island to separate itself from the other two and regain its dependence on the UK.

Delays over the independence of Antigua and Barbuda, which I visited in 1978 after my second recorded visit to Mexico, reflected Barbudan claims to a separate future either

in association with Britain on the Anguillan model or in complete independence, though Barbuda had only 1500 inhabitants living on a simple coral island (Fig. 1.7). However, since 1900 the land had been largely held by all Barbudans in common, and the islanders feared that an independent Antigua would change

the land law and allow individual alienation, perhaps by outsiders, which would derange their traditional livelihoods (Lowenthal and Clarke 1979, 1980). Britain stood by its position at the Lancaster House conference which David Lowenthal and I attended as advisers to the Barbuda delegation: namely, that it was steadfastly

opposed to further Caribbean fragmentation, and refused to accept additional island orphans under its wing in addition to the existing dependencies —Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos Islands (Fig. 1.2).

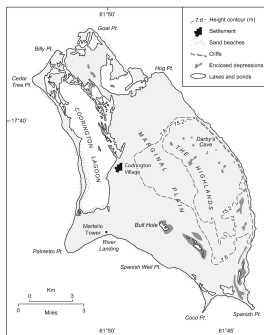


Fig. 1.7 Barbuda

In contrast with the
aborted British policy
of independence via

federation for its
Caribbean colonies,
France, in keeping with
its colonial philosophy
of social assimilation,
proposed that
Martinique,
Guadeloupe and their
dependencies, and
French Guiana should
become politically
integrated as
départements of
France, and send
elected representatives
to the French Chamber

of Deputies in Paris (Fig. 1.2). This new status was rapidly endorsed by the French Caribbean territories in 1946, though many thought that it was more an expression of gratitude for the ousting of the wartime Vichy Regime than a wholesale rejection of independence. Unconcerned by the growth of

independence movements in other parts of the colonial world, the French believed that they had successfully fulfilled their commitment to decolonization in the Antilles.

French governments have long accepted responsibility for promoting the economic and infrastructural development of the

French Caribbean and
have made massive
welfare and
developmental
investments which
have created living
standards in
Martinique and
Guadeloupe that can be
matched in the
Commonwealth
Caribbean only by oil-
rich Trinidad. For all
French governments,
the question of
political status has

been closed. In 1967,
in response to growing
agitation for autonomy
or independence in
Martinique and
Guadeloupe, the then
Minister of State for
Overseas Departments
and Territories
declared that French
West Indians are
bound by a contract to
France; it was
legitimate for them to
seek to be free, but
useless to ask to be

independent, since
departmentalization
served to assimilate
them to their
compatriots in the
metropole. When
President Giscard
d'Estaing visited
Martinique in 1974 he
argued that no
adjustments were
needed to the political
status of the French
Caribbean, though
there was still room for
progress in the social

and economic spheres (Gastmann 1979).

Initially, in the post-World War II period, the Dutch did not favour independence for their Caribbean colonies, preferring—like the French—to incorporate them. Unlike the French *Départements d’Outre-Mer* (DOM) however, the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam were first granted

internal self-government in 1950 and then, four years later, were formally linked to Holland in what was called the Tripartite Kingdom of the Netherlands. The autonomy of the Caribbean units was guaranteed, and they were given the right to participate in the formulation of policies for the kingdom as a whole. Dutch

evaluations of this solution to Caribbean decolonization were altered by heavy immigration from Surinam and by labour troubles in Curaçao, which required military intervention in 1969 (Fig. 1.2). As in the case of Britain and its associated states, the granting of full independence seemed to be the only way to avoid these semi-

colonial problems
(Hoetink 1972).

The policy adopted
by the Dutch
government was to
propose full
independence for
Surinam (320,000
population) and the
Netherlands Antilles
(250,000 population).
Surinam was
responsive to these
overtures from The
Hague, and final
dissolution of the

constitutional link was achieved in 1975; a US\$1.8 billion aid programme having been agreed, Suriname (with new spelling) became independent. But the Netherlands Antilles were more reluctant to be pressured into independence, largely because of the small size of the territories, their geographical location, diverse ethnic

composition and linguistic characteristics, and weak economic integration. Subsequently a further obstacle to independence has appeared in the shape of Aruban separatism, an echo of British problems in the associated states (Gastmann 1979).

Different British, French, and Dutch

constitutional
solutions to post-
colonial state building,
while emphasizing the
importance of
democratic, multiparty
political systems, and
regular elections, have
increased the political
diversity of the
Caribbean, and
everywhere except in
the French
départements the
loosening of imperial
bonds has created

small, economically dependent—often island—states that are intensely vulnerable to outside interference. Yet the US has not decolonized either the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico which has evolved instead into an *estado asociado libre* (free associated state) of the US, nor the US Virgin Islands (purchased from Denmark in 1916 to

complete the ring of bases in the Caribbean guarding the key inter-island passages leading to the Panama Canal). On the contrary, the US has filled the political vacuum created by European decolonization in the twentieth century, much as it did in the nineteenth century after it forced Spain out of the Caribbean. The Caribbean by the

early 1980s was indisputably America's backyard.

Thus, the second half of the twentieth century saw formal colonialism outlawed, only to be superseded by the development of a global cold war, and the establishment by the superpowers of a network of client states. In the Caribbean, decolonization in the

1950s and 1960s
started in a non-
ideologically conflicted
lake dominated by the
US and Europe; but, by
the early 1960s, the
Cuban Revolution of
1959 was already
threatening the
introduction of cold
war politics by proxy,
not only to the
Caribbean (and Latin
America), but to the
neighbouring state of
Mexico which since

1930 had functioned as a constrained one-party democracy. However, Mexico had had its own revolution between 1911 and 1917 that had contained elements of socialism, perhaps the most permanent manifestation being the land reform I was to study in the field in 1966 (Clarke [2000](#)).

Cuba, the Cold War, and Student Radicalism

The second leitmotif of the four Mexican and Caribbean journals published in this volume is the Cuban Revolution of 1959, which had been literally launched from Tuxpan on the Gulf of Mexico in November

1956 (Thomas [1971](#)).
This clandestine
seaborne incursion by
the yacht *Granma* ,
followed by guerrilla
war in the east of the
Caribbean island,
culminated in the
victory of the Castro
focos—guerrilla bands
inserted originally into
the Sierra Maestra—
and their entry into
Havana on 1 January
1959. The Cuban
Revolution, from 1959

to late 1961 a
nationalistic and
socialist-orientated
movement, declared
itself communist
several months after
the routing of the US
invasion at the Bay of
Pigs in April 1961
(Clarke [2015](#)).
Engineered by the CIA,
this would-be counter-
revolution employed
armed white Cuban
defectors who had
previously fled to

Florida (Thomas 1971). The global cold war, which had been kept out of the Caribbean and the adjacent parts of Latin America since the late 1940s by European imperialism and US hegemony in Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, now entered the region in new and compelling ways.

After 1960 Cuba and the US cut their ties, and an embargo was placed on US-Cuban trade by the US Congress. Cuba was drawn into an increasingly close relationship with the Soviet Union, and by the late 1960s export of the monocultural sugar crop, which had previously entered the US market under favourable terms, had

been switched in its entirety to the USSR. The Missile Crisis of November 1962 (when Soviet missiles were on the point of being delivered to sites allegedly targeted on US cities), the plan to industrialize using imported East European factories under the leadership of Ché Guevara in the mid-1960s, and the attempt to create a

'new man' free from capitalist values and selfishness were way-stations towards the replacement of the US with Soviet hegemony, which was more or less complete by the time the target of 10 million tons of sugar (a far larger output than had been achieved ever before) was set by the Castro regime for 1970. They failed to

reach it (Thomas
1971).

During 1961, and especially after the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban regime began to think of its revolution being for export, and students from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica were invited to Havana on scholarships and told that the Caribbean would be in the forefront of a

revolutionary
movement to foment
rural guerrilla *focos*
throughout Latin
America—an
outrageous suggestion
as far as cautious
Soviet strategy for the
region was concerned
(Clarke 2015). The
Soviet Union, in
contrast, envisaged
socialist revolutionary
potential in terms of
twentieth-century
urban capitalism, and

insisted that the contradictions inherent in the relations between capital and labour were crucial to produce the violent impulse to revolution. In short, the Soviets were critical of Cuba's rural revolutionary adventurism as expressed in the guerrilla *foco* (Lowenthal 1987). It was one thing to topple

the Batista regime in Cuba, where Castro and his associates were on home territory, but another to insert a guerilla band into unknown and possibly unprepared territory in a foreign Latin American or Caribbean country.

It was only with the death of Ché Guevara in rural Bolivia in 1968, while attempting to re-enact the

guerrilla insurrection of Castro in the Cuban Sierra Maestra , that a more sober assessment of the possibilities for exporting revolution was accepted in Cuba. Cuban support for radical regimes in Middle America did not occur until 1979 (after the last of these journals was recorded), and only after the Sandinistas in

Nicaragua and the
People's Revolutionary
Government in
Grenada had taken
power by the ballot
box and the coup
respectively. But
throughout the 1960s
the political leadership
in Mexico and the
Caribbean believed
that Cuba was
preparing to foment
trouble among its
neighbours, especially
where radical student

movements were already on the front foot, as they were in Mexico City in 1968, in Kingston , Jamaica in 1968, and in Trinidad in 1970. By this time, however, the Cuban regime was having second thoughts.

The first protest movement took shape in Mexico City in the summer of 1968 as students, inspired by the radical student

movement in France and Germany, demanded greater social openness, women's rights, the outlawing of police oppression, and multi-party democracy (Hellman 1978). Pitted against them were the older generation of political old-hands or *dinosaurios* (dinosaurs), university administrators, the governing PRI, the

police, and the army.
The context for the
violence was the
opening of the Mexico
City Olympic Games in
early October 1968,
and the determination
of the student body to
capture world news by
holding a rally in La
Plaza de las Tres
Culturas in Tlaltelolco
a few days beforehand.
The gathering of about
10,000 students was
ringed by police, who

opened fire on the crowd, killing between 30 and 300 participants. PRI repression, involving imprisonment and physical violence, led ultimately to a sense of guilt among the political class, and to the need for greater political openness in Mexico. This policy was initiated during the presidency of Luis Echeverría (1970–

1976), the Minister of the Interior at the time of the Tlaltelolco killings (Hellman 1978).

Almost coinciding with the Tlaltelolco massacre were the Rodney riots in Jamaica—based on the Mona (Kingston) campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI). Walter Rodney, a Guyanese lecturer in African

History at the university, was barred (as an undesirable non-Jamaican) from re-entering the country on 15 October, after attending a congress of black writers in Montreal. The next day university students protested on campus at his exclusion, and rioting involving lower-class black supporters, who had been radicalized or

engaged by Rodney over the previous summer months, took place in the city centre. Rodney's Black Power movement, which had been active in Jamaica throughout 1968, derived its inspiration from three sources: it looked to Marcus Garvey and the Ras Tafari movement; it employed the verbal techniques of contemporary Black

Power advocates in the
US—Stokely
Carmichael and
Eldridge Cleaver; and it
deployed many of the
arguments for radical
change that had been
developed by social
scientists in the New
World Group at UWI,
who criticized
Jamaica's government
and its successful but
socially complacent
economic trajectory as

‘neocolonial’ (Payne
1988).

According to
Rodney , Black Power
had three objectives :
‘(1) the break with
imperialism which is
white racist; (2) the
assumption of power
by the black masses;
and (3) the cultural
reconstruction of the
society in the image of
the blacks’ (1969). But
while the first of these
objectives was

consistent with aims of
the Cuban Revolution,
Cuba's class-based
white society with a
black underclass was
at variance with the
black majority
societies of the
Commonwealth islands
in the Greater and
Lesser Antilles, and the
black and Indo-
Caribbean societies in
the South-East
Caribbean, notably in
Trinidad, where white,

brown, and black
Creoles were the
majority.

The third student-
based outbreak
occurred in Trinidad in
1970. Disturbances,
involving student
activists at UWI St
Augustine and
marginalized urban
blacks in Port of Spain
and San Fernando ,
were largely contained
within the Creole
segment of society

until a march was organized to Chaguanas in the Indian sugar belt in February 1970 (Fig. 1.4). Although the Indians were supportive of the marchers, few joined them, and when unionized oilworkers (black) and unionized sugarworkers (Indian) entered the fray, the People's National Movement government

of Dr Eric Williams swiftly declared a state of emergency. At this juncture part of the national Defence Force (army) sympathetic to Black Power mutinied, and control was re-established by the government only because of the loyalty of the coastguard and the police who isolated and disarmed the mutineers (Nicholls [1971](#)).

The fourth student outbreak of violence with relevance for this book took place in Oaxaca City in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico (Fig. 1.8), in the late 1970s and was a delayed spin-off from the 1968 Tlaltelolco massacre. The Oaxaca student movement—the Federación Estudiantil Oaxaqueña (FEO)—had strong left-wing, even Marxist,

affiliations. A coalition of workers, peasants, and students was formally inaugurated in 1972 with the acronym of COCEO (Coalición de Obreros Campesinos y Estudiantes de Oaxaca), and had the explicit objective to achieve the socialist transformation of the country. Later, in 1976, it was to join other movements to create

the Frente Campesino Independiente, which linked peasant movements in Tuxtepec , where it was most active, with those in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the Central Valleys in which Oaxaca City was situated (Figs. 1.9 and 1.10) (Clarke 1996).

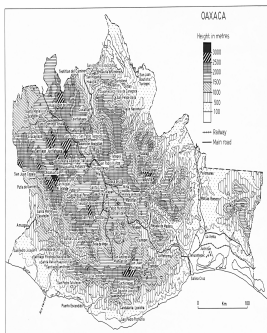


Fig. 1.9 Oaxaca: relief and main settlements



Fig. 1.10 Place names in the valley of Oaxaca (after Welte)

A right-wing reaction against these developments started with the inauguration of a new PRI governor, Zárate Aquino, in December 1974. COCEO was immediately identified as the enemy—‘to dismember and annihilate it would be the fundamental objective for property owners and the political regime’

(Martínez Vásquez
1990, 158). The
governor commanded
the army to impose
order on those
municipal authorities
where opponents of
the PRI had claimed
that the recent
elections were
fraudulent—Zimatlán ,
Zaachila , Santa
Gertrudis, and
Xoxocotlán in the
Central Valleys, and
Juchitán and others in

the Isthmus of
Tehuantepec. In 1975,
the Universidad
Autónoma 'Benito
Juárez' de Oaxaca
(UABJO) was paralysed
by conflicts over the
voting rights of
students in the
elections to the
directorships of the
various schools, and in
1976 the elections to
the rectorship
produced two title-
holders, each with

strong but opposed
sets of backers at state
and federal levels.
Throughout 1976 the
two university factions
battled both the state
and federal
governments in actions
that embroiled the
campus, the city and
the state; both factions
seized university
buildings, many of
them in the historic
centre of Oaxaca City,
from which their

members sniped at and killed one another (Lozano 1984).

The PRI in Oaxaca now combined with other conservative forces such as merchants and large landowners to form the Fusión Cívica de Organizaciones Productivas de Oaxaca (FUCOPO) turning 'itself into a binding agent and organizer of the actions of the

bourgeoisie, the corporate apparatus of the state and the governor' (Martínez Vásquez 1990, 188). Early in 1977 FUCOPO announced the closure of all business houses for two days, and on the second supporters clashed in the markets with student radicals. Student demonstrators massed at the School of Medicine on the northern outskirts of

the city and marched on the zócalo (main square); just short of the centre they were dispersed with considerable violence by state police; and overnight federal troops took control of the streets. The next day Governor Zárte Aquino flew to Mexico City and formally asked President López Portillo for leave of absence. By evening a

new PRI governor, General Eliseo Jiménez Ruiz, the Senator for Oaxaca, had taken command. The state of emergency imposed at that time provided the context for the Oaxaca fieldwork recorded in my journal in 1978.

The Latin American and Caribbean states involved in these violent outbreaks—left-ideological in the case of Mexico and

Black Power in the case of Jamaica and Trinidad—responded in ways designed to contain, isolate, undermine, or co-opt the students. Both these movements were, in this writer's view, underpinned by Marxism, in the Caribbean case using race as a proxy for class. In the case of Mexico, the student massacre at Tlaltelolco

destroyed the carefully managed democratic facade behind which the one-party dictatorship of the PRI had, for almost 40 years, penetrated and propagandized all levels of civil society, and all sectors of labour and the economy.

Nominally a supporter of the 1959 Castro Revolution in Cuba, the PRI was

suddenly revealed as infinitely less radical than many had thought, as the hundreds of imprisoned student insurgents—often the children of elite and upper-middle-class families—rapidly discovered. However, the student insurgency led to a willingness on the part of the PRI leadership during the early 1970s to permit a

staged democratic opening, incorporating the left in what were conceived as marginal localities (such as the state of Oaxaca) away from the centre of power represented by Mexico City. By the early 1980s left-wing forces in Oaxaca's Isthmus of Tehuantepec had successfully competed with the PRI on the streets and electorally

to produce the socialist republic of Juchitán—unthinkable though that had been in 1969 (Aubague 1985).

In the Caribbean, Jamaican politicians in the 1960s and 1970s argued that Black Power was already a political reality, and that notions of black dignity and black beauty were self-evident in an independent black

state. The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government, intent on manipulating race for its own ends, named Marcus Garvey one of the post-independence National Heroes, and erected a statue to Paul Bogle (also a National Hero) to commemorate the centenary of the Morant Bay rebellion in 1965 and his leading role in it. In 1966, the government capped

these tactics by
inviting Emperor Haile
Selassie of Ethiopia
(God to the Ras
Tafarians) to visit
Jamaica, though his
presence was
controversial and gave
renewed impetus to
black awareness.
Nevertheless, the
works of Malcolm X
and Stokely Carmichael
were banned, and in
1968 Black Power
leaders were either

excluded from society
(as in the case of
Rodney) or dubbed
'misguided socialists'
(Payne 1988).

When Michael
Manley's People's
National Party (PNP)
defeated the JLP in
1972, he did so largely
by stealing a
substantial part of
Rodney's agenda,
blending it more
explicitly with
socialism and

presenting the concoction as a national agenda for change. After a near-decade of democratic socialism, conflict with the US, economic chaos, politically inspired gang violence, and the further tribalization of Jamaican politics during which Manley became personally and politically close to Fidel Castro,

democratic socialism ended in the debacle (for Manley) of the 'cold-war' election in 1980, which pitted him against the Leader of the Opposition, Edward Seaga (nicknamed CIAga). Seaga won, and Manley entered the political wilderness for the remainder of the decade (Clarke [2006](#)).

In the case of Trinidad, where Black

Power was essentially a Creole (not an Indian) phenomenon (Nicholls 1971), leading to tension between whites and browns on the one hand and blacks on the other, the Creole government was able to count on conservative Indian support for the status quo. Manipulation of racial images, personalities, and

histories was less marked in Trinidad and Tobago than in Jamaica, and on the basis of the oil economy, the government had more economic scope. In the late 1960s Trinidad bought Shell's oil assets and acquired a substantial share of the sugar industry. Discoveries by Amoco of new oil and natural gas deposits under the

seabed off the Atlantic coast in the early 1970s encouraged Eric Williams to stay in politics. Backed by OPEC price rises, he was able to create national wealth undreamt of at independence in 1962, or even in the dark days of 1970. Trinidad and Tobago's GDP increased ninefold between 1970 and 1980, and while the

occupational-class structure within the racial segments remained similar over time, living standards and the government's capacity for public expenditure were transformed (Clarke and Clarke [2010](#)).

A major change in official attitudes to Cuba took place in the Caribbean in 1972 at the Annual Meeting of the Heads of

Commonwealth
Governments. During
their deliberations,
Michael Manley
(Jamaica; independent
1962), Eric Williams
(Trinidad and Tobago;
1962), Errol Barrow
(Barbados; 1966), and
Forbes Burnham
(Guyana; 1966) agreed
that the Cuban
government did not
represent a threat
(although Cuba was by
1970 slipping rapidly

into the Soviet sphere), that a dialogue with Castro was essential, and that they all had much to learn from Cuban developmental strategy (but how much, given that their agricultural economies, unlike Cuba's, were not being underpinned by a huge Soviet subsidy?). An invitation was given to Castro to attend subsequent meetings,

and fraternal relations were established with Cuba throughout the remainder of the 1970s, especially by the two comparatively 'socialist' governments in Jamaica and Guyana.

What had happened in the early 1970s to make the Commonwealth leaders of Caribbean independent states more favourable to Castro's Cuba than

their predecessors in the 1960s? In Jamaica, there had been a good deal of Cuban meddling prior to independence in 1962 involving the Marxist People's Freedom Movement and its various black racist satellite organizations, all of which had worried both the outgoing British colonial officials and the incoming

nationalist political class (Clarke 2015). Elsewhere in the Caribbean concerns focussed strongly on British Guiana/Guyana where both political parties were racially affiliated, both had left-wing orientations, and the two major foreign powers, the UK and US, were utterly preoccupied by Guyanese Marxism and its potential to create

geopolitical waves throughout the Caribbean. But these were thought to have been resolved by the 1969 election—the first election since independence. This was won by Burnham , who was considered more moderate and tractable than Jagan, a major interpretive error on the part of the UK and US governments.

The Caso Oaxaca (Oaxaca Case) of March 1977 was resolved by the federal government placing the army in complete control of Oaxaca City and the most important settlements of the state. In Oaxaca City, the central university buildings had been emptied and were put under a permanent armed guard, involving sentries and a mobile

platoon of armed
soldiers stationed
behind the cathedral,
and a targeted
repression began of
selected students and
other activists
entailing gaol, torture,
and death. General
Jiménez Ruiz was
known nationally for
his anti-communism
and for his successful
anti-guerrilla
campaign in the
neighbouring state of

Guerrero . Under his
governorship, during
which my 1978
fieldwork was carried
out, Oaxaca
experienced a military
repression, which
fragmented COCEO and
demobilized the
masses politically.
Oaxaca remained
under military control
until the next major
(constrained) elections
in 1980, which brought
Pedro Vásquez

Colmenares, a former managing director of one of the two state airlines, to the governorship. As a mark of federal approval and support, the President of the Republic, López Portillo , witnessed Vásquez Colmenares's inauguration in Oaxaca City (Clarke [1996](#)).

Conclusion

This book is not about Cuba, but about the influence of Castro's 1959 revolution and its reverberations as refracted socially, economically, and politically throughout mainland Mexico and the adjacent insular realm of the Caribbean. My 1969 visit to Cuba (see this book) enabled me to experience first hand the people and landscapes of that

island, and I reacted in two ways: I was impressed by the dynamism and thorough-going change following the land reform, the literacy campaign, and the introduction of health care and polyclinics, yet depressed by the lack of electoral democracy , the overwhelming presence of the Communist Party, and

the lack of attention to the marginality of the black population. Throughout the whole period covered by these four journals (1966–1978) the entire Mexican and Caribbean region was under Castro's eyes, though the gaze and the return gaze, which were hostile after 1960 (especially in the Caribbean) became

more benevolent after 1970.

There were several reasons why revolutionary Cuba, whether geared to exporting revolution or not, might have an electrifying appeal to the social outcasts if not to the political class among its Caribbean and Latin American neighbours: (1) Cuba's break with the US, the regional

hegemon, which was clear-cut by the end of 1961; (2) the Cuban refusal, despite US pressure, to hold democratic elections during the first decade of the revolution, and to introduce them later only on the basis of a communist one-party system (a variant of the Mexican capitalist version); (3) the originality, and generally pragmatic

basis, of Cuba's
development
programme (especially
in the first decade of
the revolution)
emphasizing rural
housing, child and
public health, and
education—especially
adult literacy; and (4)
the emphasis on race ,
class, and gender
equality, even though
whites were
numerically
preponderant in pre-

revolutionary Cuba ,
and the revolutionaries
in power were as white
and *machista* as the
Batista regime they
replaced. The
prototypical socialist
hero was conceived of
as a 'new man' but he
was white.

The appeal of these
four issues: (1) anti-
Americanism/anti-
colonialism, (2)
assent/dissent over
the efficacy of

democracy, (3) free-market versus state-led development strategies, and (4) the emphasis on social equality, radical versions of which Cuba seemed to embody to the outside world, were a constant source of inspiration to its Latin American and Caribbean neighbours—or more precisely to the opponents of the political regimes

currently in charge of Mexico and the Caribbean states which, with more or less democratic systems, were facing identical problems in the 1960s and 1970s. By adopting a closer relationship to the Cuban regime, the countries in its neighbourhood believed that they could take on some of the shine of Cuban

communism with impunity , and demonstrate to their compatriot critics (youth, Marxists, other left-wingers) and the marginalized (blacks, women, unemployed, urban and rural masses) that they were open to Cuban ideas on development. In the case of Mexico after the 1980, the issue of the Cuban Revolution and its lure decreased in

significance compared to internal Mexican and US foreign pressure to democratize.

The challenge to Mexico and the Caribbean presented by Cuba in the aftermath of the 1959 revolution, the ability of the regime to enlist the cold war to its rhetoric and strategy after 1961, and its support—often

varying in intensity—
for international
student radicalism,
nevertheless failed to
transform traditional
social structures and
values in those
countries closest to
hand. New states with
democratic practices
and intentions were
created, and even
Mexico's single-party
held six-yearly federal
elections. But what did
not change were the

colour-class, racial and cultural discrimination, and ethnic segmentation of colonial times, and the persistence of the crudest forms of capitalist relations in the wake of decolonization.

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*Mexico and the
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2. Mexico o in 1966

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UK

 **Colin Clark**
e

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Introduction

My visit to
Mexico in

1966 followed
on from my
appointment
to Liverpool
University as a
Lecturer in
Geography
and Latin
American
Studies at the

Easter of that
year, though I
had already
been a
research
member of
staff as a
Leverhulme
Fellow in
Geography

since the end
of my Trinidad
fieldwork in
autumn 1964.
The six weeks
in Mexico in
the summer
enabled me to
attend the key
International

Geographical
Union
Conference on
Latin America
held in Mexico
City and
present a
paper on my
doctoral
research on

Kingston ,
Jamaica, to the
urban
sessions,
several of
which I was
invited to
chair (Clarke
1966). It also
provided the

opportunity
for me to test
out my newly
acquired
Spanish (I had
attended a
one-year
course for
undergraduate
beginners at

the University
of Liverpool in
1964–1965),
and to have
my first
experience of
mainland
Latin America.

Once the
conference

was over I
chose to carry
out
preliminary
field research
on the
Mexican land
reform,
because (a)
the reform

was one of the
crucial
outcomes of
the Mexican
Revolution
50 years
before and one
of the most
renowned
cases of social

change in
Latin America;
(b) visiting
reform sites
would give me
an experience
of different
regions and
altitude zones
in Mexico; (c)

the experience
would lay the
groundwork
for future
activities to
parallel my
previous
research in the
Caribbean; (d)
during my

research in
Jamaica in
1961 I had
cast my net
beyond my
doctoral
fieldwork in
Kingston , and
had become
familiar with

rural problems
associated
with the
distinction
between
plantation and
peasant
(Clarke [2015](#)).
I assumed my
Jamaican

encounters
would have
resonance in
Mexico and
would
contextualize
that country's
land reform.

On visits in
Mexico City

with my
colleague from
Liverpool,
John
Dickenson , I
was struck by
the gap
between the
rhetoric of the
governing PRI

in its use of
the image of
the Mexican
Revolution
(1911–1917)
and the reality
of life for the
majority of the
people. The
revolution had

been over for
almost
50 years, but
class
polarization;
the lack of
democracy in
a one-party
state despite
the six-yearly

holding of
elections at
presidential,
federal, and
state levels;
the
manipulation
of the land
reform to
imply rural

transformatio
n; and the
false depiction
of the Indian
as integrated
and uplifted,
all created a
rosy image
rather like the
one I was to

encounter in
Jamaica two
years later.
There the
post-colonial
government of
the JLP sought
to imply that
colonialism
was over, and

the very act of
independence
had eradicated
the entire slate
of colonial
problems
inherited from
the UK.

In Mexico
City, the urban

poor had
already been
studied by
Oscar Lewis,
whose book
*The Children of
Sanchez*
(1961) would
have been
treated by the

PRI
government as
treasonable
had Lewis not
been a US
citizen.
Dealing with
oral history as
seen through
the eyes of

Sanchez and
his three
children, two
sons and a
daughter,
Lewis showed
that the family
had been
steeped in
poverty over

at least two
generations,
and lacked the
capacity to
improve itself
without
outside
assistance,
which had not
been

forthcoming
from the state
or its agencies.
Although
Lewis's
'trapped'
approach,
which he later
extended to
Puerto Rico

and to Puerto Ricans living in New York (1966), was to be heavily criticized by social scientists on the left, he provided a

perspective
critical of the
state which
coincided with
my own
reaction to
Mexico City
and Mexico
more
generally.

My 1966
visit took
place two
years before
the 1968
Olympic
Games in
Mexico City, on
the eve of
which the

student
massacre at
Tlatelolco
destroyed the
carefully-
managed dem
ocratic facade
behind which
the one-party
dictatorship of

the PRI had for
35 years
penetrated
and
propagandized
all levels of
civil society
and all sectors
of labour and
the economy.

Nominally a
supporter of
the 1959
Castro
Revolution in
Cuba, the PRI
was suddenly
revealed as
infinitely less
radical—a lack

of
comprehensio
n that student
insurgents had
rapidly to
correct for
themselves.
Mexico had
already been
described by

Octavio Paz as
a labyrinth of
solitude. He
wrote, the
Mexican
'builds a wall
of indifference
and
remoteness
between

reality and
himself, a wall
that is no less
impenetrable
for being
invisible. The
Mexican is
always remote,
from the
world and

from other
people. And
also from
himself'
(1961, 29).
Behind the
benevolent
national
facade lurked
a dictatorial,

exploitative,
and violent
state. It took
me years in
the late 1970s,
1980s, and
1990s to
penetrate
those virtual
walls imposed

by the PRI
using my field
research, the
advice of my
Mexican
friends, and
the insights of
Mexican
colleagues
whose

published
exposés
gradually
revealed the
truth.

One of the
major
creations, one
might almost
say myths, of

the Mexican
Revolution—
and the focus
of much of my
1966 visit—
was the land
reform, which
ostensibly put
nationalized
private land in

the hands of
the post-
Porfirian rural
masses but, in
reality,
enabled
largish estates
to retain the
best-quality
land, and

made it
feasible for
them to
spread their
holdings
undetected
across several
of the federal
states of
Mexico. A

major finding
of my 1966
journey
through the
land-reform
areas of
Oaxaca and
the Bajío ,
south and
north of

Mexico City
respectively,
was that
success of
these land-
reform
settlements
hinged on
good
environmental

quality in
terms of soil
and water and
ease of
communication
in terms of
road and rail
connections.
Hanging over
the entire

land-reform
system was
the question
raised by the
French
agronomist
Dumont
shortly before
my visit—was
Mexico a state

of peasants or
were its
peasants
controlled by
the state
(1962)?

Isolation was a
major
developmental
problem in

1960s Mexico,
and the high-
altitude Indian
communities
of Chiapas ,
though secure
in their
communal
lands
confirmed by

presidential
fiat, were
condemned, as
I discovered,
to economic
backwardness
both by the
rocky terrain
and its
inaccessibility

—and by their
own wish to
continue to
live the lives of
their
ancestors.

Mexico

City: 1966

**Saturday,
July 23,
1966**

Swapping my
ticket on
Eastern
Airlines, which
was on strike,
I was

fortunate to
pick up a seat
on an
Aeronaves de
México flight
from New York
to Mexico City
late on Friday
evening (Fig.
[1.1](#)), and

arrived at
11.30 pm local
time—almost
24 hours after
leaving
Liverpool.
From the air
the city looked
a mass of tiny
lights, which

together
defined a very
large area. It
was raining
steadily as I
left the
airport, and
the crowd
seemed
surprised to

see a fair,
bearded man
—somewhat
taller than any
of them—pass
through.

The
outskirts of
Mexico City
are industrial,

and the dingy
buildings and
workers' flats
were barely
identifiable in
the darkness.

The big
American cars,
flyovers, and
underpasses

looked
modern. My
taxi entered
the city centre,
crossed the
Paseo de la
Reforma,
passed the
statue of
Cuauhtémoc ,

and pulled up
in the Calle
Lerma outside
the Hotel
María Cristina
, where, after
waking the
night porter, I
got a single
room.

By
11.00 am on
Saturday
morning I had
finished
breakfast and
visited the
American
Express Office
to change my

dollars into
pesos. The
Paseo de la
Reforma is
superb in the
mid-morning
sunlight: tree-
lined, and with
impressive
new buildings

—banks,
boutiques, car
show rooms
and hotels,
national
monuments
celebrating
independence,
and the eye-
catching

statue of the
goddess Diana.
Even the
shoeshine
boys look
smart, with
their uniforms
and gilt-
coloured
footrests. It is

easy to move
around when
you don't have
to dodge
street boys or
put up with
catcalls.

During the
afternoon, as I
headed out to

the southern
side of the city,
I caught my
first glimpse of
the volcanoes
forming the
rim of the
basin in which
Mexico City
lies at

2400 metres.
As the day
warmed, the
cloud lifted
and the
mountains
became
clearer. I
skirted the
east side of

Chapultepec
Park , passed
the USSR
embassy (the
US embassy is
on the
Reforma), and
stopped at the
church of San
Angelo, its

blue dome
resplendent
with blue
Puebla tiles,
and its gold-
leaf encrusted
baroque altar.
On some of the
statues,
ribbons with

silver seals
attached to
them had been
hung as tokens
of gratitude
for prayers
answered
(*milagros*).

In the
Pedregal , one

of the
southern
suburbs , there
are sumptuous
houses all with
gardens that
have been
carved out of
the lava
outcrop—

most carry the
name of the
architect. This
area has been
developed
since 1954,
when
President
Alemán
created the

Universidad
Nacional
Autónoma de
México
(UNAM)
campus to
replace the
university in
the city centre.
I saw the old

Olympic
Stadium,
which can
house 80,000
spectators, but
has now been
supplanted by
the Aztec
Stadium.
Circling this

amphitheatre,
I caught my
first glimpse of
the mural-
covered
University
Library,
O’Gorman’s
fantastic
creation. The

library
building is
much smaller
than I had
imagined, but
with other
murals , for
example on
the medical
building, it

relieves the
drab and
functional
campus.

Students
are swimming
in the Olympic
Pool or playing
football—I
think they may

be kicking the
head of former
President
Alemán,
removed from
his statue
during the
recent
protests at the
university. I

returned via
Coyoacán , the
residence of
Hernán Cortés
between the
destruction of
Tenochtitlán ,
the Aztec
capital in the
lake, and the

building of
Mexico City as
the colonial
Catholic
capital of New
Spain.

Coyoacán has
beautiful early
sixteenth-
century

houses with
carved doors,
and the rain
did nothing to
detract from
their beauty.

**Sunday,
July 24,
1966**

John
Dickenson ,
who has just
arrived at an
adjacent hotel,
rang me at
9.00 am, and
we had
breakfast
together. We

are both here
for the Latin
American
Regional
Conference of
the
International
Geographical
Union, which
is due to start

in Mexico City
in about a
week's time.
After
breakfast, we
set out on a
mammoth
walk, taking in
the Alameda
or central

park, the Casa
de Azulejos ,
now Sanborn's
drug store, the
post office,
and several
large buildings
that have sunk
by varying
degrees into

the drying bed
of Lago
Texcoco.

The *zócalo*
is an immense
square at the
centre of the
colonial city,
surrounded by
a magnificent

set of nearly
identical,
sixteenth-
century
buildings, the
facades of
which are
decorated by a
red volcanic
veneer cut into

squares. These buildings are now used for a variety of purposes, such as government offices—the Palacio Nacional occupies the

greater part of
one side of the
zócalo—
jewellers,
miscellaneous
shops, and the
Monte de
Piedad—in
business as a
pawn shop for

150 years, so
it claims.

On the
zócalo or Plaza
de la
Constitución,
we heard two
masses: the
first in the
gaunt

Cathedral and
the second in
the
neighbouring
Iglesia
Parroquial.
The Cathedral,
which is said
to stand on the
site of

Moctezuma's
Aztec temple,
has an
elaborate
baroque
altarpiece.
Nearby, Aztec
remains are
being
restored, and

we see a
serpent's head
and two
carved
drainpipes,
both in the
shape of
animal heads.¹

Unfortunat
ely, the

Ministerio de
Educación
Pública, where
we had hoped
to see the
Diego Rivera
murals , was
closed, so we
walked to the
Plaza Santo

Domingo,
where the
scribes
lining its
western side
provide
services for
non-
literate clients.
There are

numerous
colonial town
houses in the
historic core of
Mexico City:
one is now
occupied by
the Banco de
México. Some
churches have

been put to
secular use,
and one
houses the
Biblioteca
Nacional.
Outside stands
the statue of
Humboldt , the
great German

geographer
and traveller
of the early
nineteenth
century,
regarded as
the second
(European)
discoverer of

Mexico after
Cortés.²

From the
top of the
Torre Latino-
Americana we
get a
panoramic but
hazy view. We
couldn't see

the two
volcanoes,
Popocatépetl
and
Iztaccíhauatl ,
though a
remnant of
Lago Texcoco
was visible, as
was the

neighbouring
international
airport.

Skyscrapers
were confined
to the
alignment of
the Reforma,
and most of
the buildings

around the
base of the
tower were
densely
packed.

Tenement
dwellers have
access to
rooftops on
which clothes

lines are
strung. My
impression on
seeing the city
from above
was the
overwhelming
influence of
concrete,
giving rise to a

grey, dense
cityscape.

Walking
northwards to
the Plaza
Garibaldi, we
pass the
Mariachis—
Mexican
cowboys in

silver-
decorated,
black riding
gear and
sombros—
who, for
payment, are
only too
pleased to
serenade the

passers-by.
This inner
neighbourhood
is seedy, but
we soon reach
the Plaza de
las Tres
Culturas—
Aztec, Spanish,
and Mexican.

The first
thing that
catches our
eye is Aztec
ruins, the
location,
according to a
plaque, of the
glorious
surrender of

Cuauhtémoc,
Montezuma's
son, to the
Conquistadores
(Plate 2.1).
To the east of
the ruins we
find the
sixteenth-
century Iglesia

de Santiago, a
stark
Franciscan
templo, its
interior
painted white
since the
eighteenth
century and
with high

windows
glazed in new
blue glass—an
inspired
mixture of the
old and the
new. In the
plaza colourful
groups are
practising

Indian dances
—lip service
seems to be
paid to the
Indians and to
the Revolution
of 1910.



Plate 2.1 Plaza
of the Three
Cultures, Mexico
City. In the
foreground the
excavated ruins
of the Aztec
settlement of
Tlaltelolco ; the
Spanish colonial
church located

adjacent to, or
over, them; and
the modern
Nonoalco-
Tlaltelolco
housing scheme
in the
background: an
outstanding
example of plural
cultures
expressed in the

built
environment

We walk
through the
modern
Nonoalco-
Tlaltelolco
housing
project, and
marvel at the

neighbourhood
shops,
playing fields,
schools , and
the excellent
facilities for
children.
Different
architectural
styles are well

blended, and
the public
areas carefully
maintained.
Where are the
slum dwellers
who originally
occupied this
neighbourhood,
we ask

ourselves? It
occurs to us
that they have
been
displaced, and
that we are
looking at a
private,
middle-
income

housing
project, much
needed no
doubt, but not
the most
obvious
accompanime
nt to slum
clearance.

**Monday,
July 25,
1966**

John and I set
off for the city
centre to pick
up census and
financial data
from various

government
departments.
The slum
tenements
surrounding
the
commercial
core of the city
are easy to
pick out by

their flat
rooftops
covered with
clothes lines
and television
aerials.

In the
afternoon, we
walked to the
Ministerio de

Educación
Pública and
the Palacio
Nacional,
where we
were
impressed by
Diego Rivera's
murals of
Mexican

history and his
representation
s of the
Conquest, the
Indian and the
Mexican
Revolution.

**Tuesday,
July 26,**

1966

I found my
way to the
Departamento
de Asuntos
Agrarios y
Colonización
(DAAC) in the
back streets of
Mexico City,

where both
my contacts,
Señores García
and Escalante,
were
superficially
helpful but
prevaricating.
Señor García
expressed the

opinion that
the Mexican
land reform ,
which I intend
to study, is a
social rather
than an
economic
intervention.

**Wednesda
y, July 27,
1966**

John and I
visited Tepito,
famous for its
thieves'
market, the
tough and very

densely
populated
neighbourhood
of rented
tenements
where Oscar
Lewis carried
out fieldwork
for his book
The Children of

Sanchez—the study of a family trapped in the culture of poverty and, in the eyes of Mexican officialdom, a notorious book.³

After lunch
we set out for
Chapultepec
Park and the
Museo de
Antropología,
but were
caught out by
the siesta
which lasts

until 3.30 pm.
When we
eventually got
inside there
were droves of
American
tourists,
masses of
Mexicans, and
gaggles of

children being
shown around.
It is a
magnificent
collection of
archaeology
and
ethnography ,
but we did
wonder how

the Aztec
calendar had
remained so
perfectly
intact, and
where it had
been found.⁴

**Thursday,
July 28,**

1966

In the morning
I made
another visit
to the DAAC,
which resulted
in certain
tentative
arrangements
being agreed.

[Letter to
Gillian 7-28-
1966:

At last a
letter from me
—I do
apologise for
sending only
postcards.
This afternoon

John and I
went to the
floating
gardens of
Xochimilco—
one hour on
the tram for
slightly more
than two
pence, the

highlight of
the journey
being a stop at
a plaza
specialising in
machine
lathes.

Although it is a
tourist centre,
Xochimilco is

quite the most
broken down
village I have
ever seen—
unpaved
streets and
missing
manhole
covers, though
there do seem

to be some
middle-class
people around,
if dress is
anything to go
by. You would
hardly guess
that 50 years
ago Mexico
was in the

middle of the
Revolution.
The poverty is
incredible, and
very like the
Spanish Town
Road in
Kingston ,
Jamaica. What
a contrast with

the Paseo de la
Reforma,
which
compares
favourably
with the
Champs
Élysées in
Paris and the
clean, chic

central parts
of Mexico City.

A notable
contrast with
the Caribbean
is our ability
to use local
facilities
without
feeling that

there is a price
for residents
and a different
one for
visitors. I have
been paying
£2 per night
for a very good
room at the
María Cristina,

and John is
going to move
across here on
Saturday: that
will bring the
bill down to
about 30
shillings each
per night. We
have also

tracked down
an excellent
cheap cafe.]

**Friday,
July 29,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 7-29-

66:

John and I
have just had a
spending
spree—not on
presents, but
on books for
the Latin
American
Centre at

Liverpool. I think we both enjoyed using the University of Liverpool's money. The standard of book production here is high,

the paper and
typeface being
of good
quality. I am
continually
surprised just
how modern
Mexico can be.
The Mexican
elite obviously

prides itself on
its culture in
both a
personal and
general sense.
Most book
shops are
crammed with
expensive art
books, many of

them
imported from
Europe. It has
rained for an
hour or so
every
afternoon so
far, and it's
been too
cloudy to see

the two
volcanoes,
even from the
top of the
Latin
American
Tower.]

**Saturday,
July 30,**

1966

John has
moved over to
the María
Cristina, and
we now have
very cheap
accommodatio
n—less than
£1 each per

night. In the
morning, we
visited the
shrine of
Nuestra
Señora de
Guadalupe,
who allegedly
appeared to
the Indian

Juan Diego
soon after the
Conquest.
Priests
perform a
continuous
mass, the
elements
being served
from behind

the altar, while
penitents and
beneficiaries
of previous
blessings walk
from the gates
of the shrine
to the
entrance to

the church on
their knees.

Our
attention is
taken by a
family of
campesinos
who are taking
it in turn to
kiss the candle

they are going
to donate,
while the sign
of the cross is
being made
over them. The
church walls
are covered in
plaques,
donated by

named
beneficiaries,
giving thanks
to the virgin
for miracles
performed—
the nature of
the *milagro*
itself
summarized in

a small
painted scene.

We went to
Teotihuacán in
the afternoon,
and persuaded
our taxi driver
to put the
Football World
Cup final on in

English on the
car radio. The
Mexicans are
quite put out
by England's
victory over
Germany. We
saw a repeat
of the
television

version of the
game via
EarlyBird in
the evening.

The
pyramids at
Teotihuacán
form a
sacrificial city
built about

nine centuries
before the
Spanish
Conquest (Fig.
[1.1](#)). From the
top of the
Pyramid of the
Sun we had a
good view of
the layout of

the Street of
the Dead, and
could see
heaps of
rubble on the
periphery of
the
excavations,
where there

seem to have
been huts.

On our way
back we
stopped at the
sixteenth-
century
Acolman
Convent,
which was

abandoned
almost one
hundred years
ago, when
Juárez
disestablished
the Catholic
Church during
the Reforma.⁵

In the
evening, we
had a
marvellous
time with
Peter and Mali
Ween, two of
Dick Lawton's
former
Liverpool

geography
students who
later married.⁶
Peter's firm is
here because
of a tax
wangle, but
they are
camping out in
their house,

waiting for a
Mexican visa
without which
they cannot
bring their
furniture
down from
New York.
They live in
the

magnificent
Lomas de
Chapultepec,
an elite area
fairly close to
the city centre,
where they
have a
panoramic
view of the

sparkling
lights of the
city after dark.

**Sunday,
July 31,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 7-31-

66:

John and I
spent most of
today in
Chapultepec
Park . It is a
mecca for poor
people as well
as for some of
the better off.

Picnickers and
lovers, babies
and children
are spread
over a wide
area, while
barefooted
Indians stare
at the
monuments

that tell them
what the
Revolution has
done for them.
Official Mexico
is very proud
of its Indian
heritage , but
seems less
keen on those

aspects of it
that live on
into the
twentieth
century.

We
climbed up to
Chapultepec
Castle in order
to have an

uninterrupted
view of the
park and city.
The exterior is
a typical
nineteenth-
century
chateau, but
the interior is
given over to a

museum of
Mexican
history from
the Wars of
Independence
via the Reform
to the
Revolution.
The closing
room displays

a copy of the
constitution. It
was
incongruous
to see Indians
begging
around the
statue of the
Niños Heroes,
who defended

the castle
against the
Yankee
invaders in the
Mexican-
American War
of 1846–48.]

**Internatio
nal
Geographi
cal Union
Conferenc
e**

**Monday,
August 1,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-1-66:
The
International
Geographical
Union Latin

American
Regional
Conference
with 600
delegates is
being held in
the massive
Centro
Médico, which
is about

40 minutes'
walk from our
hotel. When
we went to
register this
morning with
Jock Galloway
and David
Watts , we
were all

flabbergasted
to see
participants
staggering
away with
huge boxes of
books—these
turned out to
be the
multiple

volumes
incorporating
the full set of
conference
papers, since
all the
transactions,
addresses and
speeches have
been

translated into
Spanish,
where
necessary, and
published by
the *Sociedad
de Geografía y
Estadística*.⁷ It
is a bit of a
shock to read

one's own
paper and
recognise the
content, but
not the choice
of actual
words.

In the
afternoon, we
went to the

British Council
office to hand
over the pile of
books we have
bought for the
university—
about 50
volumes in all.
The British
Council has

agreed to
parcel them
up, take them
to the post
office and pay
for their
despatch to
Liverpool by
sea.

First thing
tomorrow I
shall have to
go to the DAAC
and arrange
with them the
details of my
visit to land-
reform units in
three states—

Veracruz,
Oaxaca and
Michoacán.]

**Tuesday,
August 2,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-2-66:

I have had
a lazy day
planning the
lectures I
really want to
hear; since
they have all
been
published,
there is less

pressure on
attendance.
The pace of
the last week
has taken its
toll, as have 6-
mile walks at
this altitude
(2400 metres).
So we are

using taxis
which are
cheap.]

When it
came to the
opening
ceremony of
our conference
there was no
Díaz Ordaz,

president of
Mexico, but we
had to endure
two terribly
long speeches
by Ángel
Bassols
Batalla, the
Mexican
organizer, and

Professor
Chatterjee ,
the president
of the IGU—
we left during
the second,
and took
refuge at the
reception in
the Hotel

Alffer, where
we met a
friendly group
of American
geographers,
David Snyder ,
Bill Smolle,
and John
Augelli.⁸

**Wednesda
y, August
3, 1966**

The
conference got
under way, but
the papers and
comments

were
disappointing.

**Thursday,
August 4,
1966**

I made an
abortive visit
to the DAAC,

heard several
papers on
colonization,
and thought
the session
was saved by
Augelli's
research on
the Dominican
Republic's

borderlands
with Haiti.

We went in
a group to the
Ballet
Folklórico last
night, and very
much enjoyed
the
performance.

Most of the
women
dancers
looked white,
though Mexico
is supposed to
be a 'nation of
bronze'—that
is mixed
Indian-white. I

remember one
dance in
particular—La
Bamba—an
intricate dance
from Veracruz,
during which a
ribbon is tied
in a bow.

Dudley
Stamp and his
secretary,
Audrey Clarke,
joined our
party, and
afterwards
took us all out
for a drink at
the Torre

Latinoamericana.
Dudley is a
bright spark,
despite his
70 years.⁹

**Saturday,
August 6,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-6-66:

I presided
over my first
session of the
Urban Section
of the
conference
yesterday
morning, and

have another
to do on
Monday. My
own paper
went down
well,
according to
John and Prof
Harold Mayer
from Chicago,

who is
probably the
most able
American
urban
geographer.¹⁰
Dudley Stamp
has offered to
put me in
contact with

the leading
Cuban
geographer
under the old
regime and the
new—Dr
Salvador
Massip.

I spent
much of the

morning at
UNAM trying
to track down,
unsuccessfully,
someone in
the Law
Faculty, a
Señor
Manzanilla.
The DAAC had

(allegedly)
arranged with
him to take me
on a field trip
to visit land-
reform
settlements on
the edge of
Mexico City. I
have still not

got my letter
of
introduction
from the DAAC
, so I am going
to spend an
extra day in
Mexico City
camping out in

the office until
I get it.]

The UNAM
campus
strikes me as
rather
rundown, with
grass growing
in
crevices betwe

en the pavings
and the statue
of former
president
Alemán left in
a damaged
state after
being attacked
by students.
While at

UNAM I met
two law
students who
travelled back
to the Centro
Médico with
me. They say
their courses
are poor,
because the

standard of
teaching, with
a few
exceptions, is
inadequate
and is being
given by
professional
people from
outside the

university's
full-time staff,
most of whom
cannot be
relied upon to
turn up (like
my lawyer
contact). The
students add
that they like

the music of
Bob Dylan—
and especially
his communist
message.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-6-66
continued:

Marjorie
Sweeting

turned up at
the conference
with Charles
Gullick , and
we had a
pleasant talk
together. She
sent her
regards to you,
and tells me

that Oxford
will be
advertising for
a Latin
American
geographer in
the next year
or so—for
what that's
worth.^{11]}

This
evening I've
been invited
out to a dinner
party given by
María Teresa
Gutiérrez de
MacGregor, the
leading
Mexican

population
geographer,
and secretary
of the Urban
Section of the
conference.
She was in
Liverpool two
years ago,
while Gillian

and I were
carrying out
research in
Trinidad, and
is a friend of
my colleague
Mansell
Prothero.

**Sunday,
August 7,
1966**

The dinner
party last
night at María
Teresa's
mother's
house in the

city centre was
most
enjoyable. To
find
her mother's
flat I walked
north from my
hotel along
Insurgentes
Norte and

then joined
the Calzada
Tacuba. In a
zone of small
shops and
restaurants,
permeated by
the smells of
outdoor
cooking

reminiscent of
West Kingston
, I bumped
into David Fox
from
Manchester
University, and
we found the
flat together.¹²
On arrival, we

were
introduced by
María Teresa
to her mother,
a Spaniard,
and her
husband, Raúl
MacGregor , a
biologist at
UNAM—the

original
Mexican
MacGregor
was allegedly
a pirate.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-7-66:

It started
as a cocktail
party, moved

on to being a
buffet supper,
and concluded
with
communal
singing in
Spanish
accompanied
by guitars and
a Mexican

harp. The house was furnished Caribbean-style with plastic-covered settees and hard chairs. Although the

‘do’ was
cosmopolitan,
the ability of
the Latin
Americans,
irrespective of
country, to join
in the singing
of their
favourite

songs left the
North
Americans and
Europeans
sidelined.

This
morning John
and I went to
communion at
the

Episcopalian
Church in the
city centre. It
was a simple
service and
geared to a US
congregation;
never before
have I heard
the priest

invite 'all
confirmed
Christians' to
take the
sacraments.

In the
afternoon, we
walked around
the display of
pictures, held

every Sunday
in the park
two blocks
from here.
Most of the
paintings
are mediocre,
either copies
of ill-digested
European

ideas, or
chocolate-box
art, or erotica
—one picture
showed a nude
bullfighter
avoiding the
phallic horns
of a charging
steer.

We spent
much of the
rest of the day
sorting out our
books and
packing up the
vast amount of
literature we
have
accumulated

during the
conference.
I'm sending it
to the
department
since I shall
not have much
room for it at
home.]

**Tuesday,
August 9,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-9-66:

I was tied
up all
yesterday with
the Urban

Section from
9.00 am to
6.00 pm, and
this was
followed by a
chaotic
conference
dinner in the
evening. A
complicating

factor was the death on Monday morning of Sir Dudley Stamp, who collapsed in a lift at UNAM , which meant that plans for the

closing dinner
were changed
I don't know
how many
times.¹³

Apparently,
the walls of Sir
Dudley's
arteries were
thin, and

coupled to the
hectic life he
has lived
(Audrey
Clarke told me
he once flew
to West Africa
for the day to
examine a
doctorate) and

the high
altitude of
Mexico City,
the condition
probably
killed him. His
death was a
great shock,
because he
was very vital

and in full
control of his
faculties.]

Yesterday I
had a chance
encounter
with
Jacqueline
Beaujeu-
Garnier, a

professor at
the Sorbonne
and one of
France's
leading human
geographers.
We shared a
taxi from the
conference
back into the

centre of town
for about
30 minutes. I
spoke to her in
French, telling
her about my
two research
projects on
Jamaica and
Trinidad. She

was in
Trinidad two
years ago en
route to Brazil,
and knows
Mansell
Prothero and, I
think, Prof
Steel.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-9-66
continued:

John left
for Merida this
morning—
unfortunately
suffering from
Montezuma's
revenge. I

hope he is
going to be
alright. We
have got on
extremely
well, and make
a good
departmental
team. Peter
and Mali are

coming down
to the hotel
later today to
collect our
surplus
baggage and
look after it
until John and
I get back from

our respective trips.

I now have my letter of introduction from the DAAC and several key addresses in the various parts of

Mexico I shall
be visiting. I
set out for
Jalapa by bus
tomorrow
morning at
9.00 am and
will probably
stay there
until Saturday,

when I hope to
move on to
Veracruz on
the Gulf of
Mexico . My
route
afterwards is
across the
tropical
lowlands of

the Isthmus of
Tehuantepec
and then up to
the Indian
area of
Oaxaca.]

Rural Education

**in
Veracruz
Wednesda
y, August
10, 1966**

I took the
whole
morning to
travel the

320 kilometre
s to Jalapa—
the capital of
Veracruz—via
Texcoco and
Apizaco (Fig.
[1.1](#)), most of it
through flat,
mountain-girt
basins with

clouds
gathered
around the
surrounding
peaks. Where
clays
outcropped,
badlands had
been
developed into

fluted
pinnacles and
ravines.
Unfortunately
we bypassed
Puebla , and
my memory is
of small towns
with the odd
paperworks or

Pepsi-Cola
bottling
factory , dusty
little villages
and hamlets,
mud huts with
maize up to
the walls, and
political
slogans

daubed on
crumbling
buildings. In
contrast to the
antiquity of
the
settlements, I
found myself
hurtling down
a well-paved

highway at 50
to 60 miles per
hour in an air-
conditioned,
first-class bus.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-10-
66:

The
landscape of

the central
plateau of
Mexico is
essentially
volcanic,
reminding me
vividly of the
Massif Central
in France. The
whole area to

the east of
Mexico City is
covered with
maize .
However, as
the aridity
increased,
maguey cactus
became
common—

often
intercropped
with maize ,
and we finally
crossed a zone
of coniferous
forests before
dropping
down to Jalapa
at

1300 metres.
Jalapa itself is
rather like a
French
provincial
capital, with a
main square,
winding
streets, and
electric cables

slung from
poles.

At the
moment I am
sitting in the
DAAC
headquarters
of the state of
Veracruz,
waiting for my

contact to turn
up. It is
already
5.30 pm, so I
assume he is
going to work
into the night.
I shall
probably stay
in Jalapa until

Saturday
morning and
spend the
weekend in
Veracruz: with
a hundred
thousand
inhabitants,
it's twice the
size of Jalapa ,

and should be
quite
interesting to
see. Well, I am
still waiting
for Godot, and
I intend
camping out
until he
comes.]

I'm being
looked after by
Ingeniero
Andrade, who
has been
detailed to
take an
interest in my
visit. He points
out that a

group of at
least 20
landless
persons or
families is the
basis for a
request to the
government
for *ejido* lands,
with

20 hectares
(about
50 acres) as
the average
size of the unit
of land 'given.'
Twenty
hectares
cannot be
worked by a

family, but five
hectares can,
and the idea is
that children
should work
the additional
land when
they become
adults and
thus keep

them in
agriculture.
Veracruz is a
rich state.

Andrade
tells me that
the maximum
holding of land
in Mexico is
theoretically

200 hectares
but, in reality,
it varies with
the quality of
the terrain.
Holdings
above that size
can be
targeted for
redistribution

by the state,
but large
landholders
have
properties in
many of
Mexico's
federated
states, and the
total amount

of land owned
nationally
is easily
concealed.
Andrade
claims that a
request for a
new *ejdo* can
be satisfied
within

20 days, but I
wonder
whether that
is really so.
Lots have to be
planned,
surveyed,
subdivided,
and a
settlement

formed,
possibly with a
primary
school.

The role of
cultivator does
not seem to be
socially
scorned here
as it is

currently in
Jamaica. But
the rural
population is
growing at a
phenomenal
rate; and more
than 60
percent of the
inhabitants of

Veracruz are
aged under
24 years.
There are
state-
organized
population
displacements
sponsored by
the federal

government
from
Chihuahua and
other dry
states in the
north of
Mexico to the
Yucatán ; and
within the
state of

Veracruz to its southern and eastern margin, for example, around Jesús Carranza (Fig. 1.1).

**Thursday,
August 11,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-11-
66:

I still
haven't met
the head of the

Department of
the DAAC , to
whom I am
supposed to
show my letter
of
introduction,
but I have had
the
opportunity to

take in his
campesino
(peasant)
clients, who
wait patiently
to be dealt
with by a tardy
officialdom.
They sit for
hours wearing

their rustic
ponchos,
straw
sombrosos
and thick-
soled, thonged
huaraches
(sandals).

However, I
have been

fortunate in
Ingeniero
Andrade and
his associate
Prof García ,
Subdirector de
Educación
Rural in
Veracruz, who
today took me

out to see the
agricultural
work being
done in
association
with primary
education.
Most schools
seem to have
garden plots

run as
miniature
experimental
stations.
Reality is
much cruder
than this, but
the idea is a
basic and
valuable one.]

We visit
one school
where
children spend
2 hours per
day in the
garden, and
see five
classrooms,
each with 20

to 30 children.
The rooms are
dirty and so
are the
children, but
most have
shoes on and
they are well
disciplined.
Professor

García has
been on visits
as far afield as
Israel and
Japan and is
interested in
agricultural
innovation. He
shows me a
greenhouse

made of
polythene
with tomatoes,
soya, and
some cocoa
being grown,
though the
humidity is
insufficient for
the latter.

Outside in
orthodox
seedbeds
there are
dahlias,
cabbages,
lettuces, and
yams, planted
to show the
effect of light

and shade on
growth. An
interesting
innovation is
the use of
polythene
strips on beds
of cabbage to
retain
moisture for

dry farming
and to prevent
weeds.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-11-
66 continued:

We spent
much of the
morning and
early

afternoon at
the Escuela
Normal
(Teacher
Training
College) for
the state of
Veracruz. No
doubt it's a
show piece,

but it is
fabulous by
any standard

—
architecturally
and
educationally.
The Escuela
Normal, with
800 students,

has two
schools under
its wing, a
kindergarten
and a primary
school with
500 pupils
aged 7 to 14.
The two latter
exist in their

own right, but
also provide
the classrooms
used by
trainee
teachers for
their school
practice.]

The college
is 18 months

old and has a library with study alcoves, laboratories, many lecture rooms, and studios for music , dancing, and painting. In

the primary
school, there
are rooms
with one-way
glass for
observing the
classes. The
college has an
auditorium,
swimming

pool, tennis
courts,
volleyball
court, baseball
pitch, running
track, and
football pitch.

In the
Director's
office, pride is

expressed in
the Mexican
Revolution, in
Mexican
connections
with Cuba, and
the fact that
Fidel Castro
prepared his
revolution in

Mexico. But
when a
revolution
becomes
institutionalized—as in
Mexico—does
it not cease to
be a
revolution? It

seems to me
that the
Mexican
Revolution has
given
momentum
and a myth of
national unity,
but how much
more? There is

still a shortage of land, and a fantastic birth rate. This is really a great problem, and as Professor García says, one which will only increase

with
improvements
in medicine.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-11-
66 continued:
Veracruz is
a
comparatively
rich state, and

the benefits of
the Mexican
Revolution are
probably more
tangible here
that
elsewhere.
Most of the
people I have
met at the

Escuela
Normal are
dedicated
leftists.]

But when
we were alone
together,
Professor
García
confided that

liberty was
more
important in
Mexico than
either
communism
or the
Revolution.

Everyone
in the

Director's
office seemed
surprised at
my account of
Jamaica's
problems, and
they see it as
ripe for
communism
or a Cuban-

style
revolution.
Proud of their
long period of
independence,
compared to
Jamaica's
recent
sovereignty in
1962, they

also think that
the US
intervention in
the Dominican
Republic in
1965 may
represent a
threat to
socialism in
that country.

I am
hoping to get
to some land-
reform
settlements or
ejdos
tomorrow—
but you never
know in
Mexico.

In the evening, I went for a walk around town. The commercial area on the hill above the main square is confined to

two parallel
streets with
dry goods ,
pharmacies ,
food shops,
and a good
market. A
wooden
xylophone
being played

on the street
in the open air
makes a
wonderful
sound.

Jalapa
Friday,
August 12,

1966

[Letter to
Gillian 8-12-
66:

What a
frustrating
day! Two
promises to
take me to see
ejdos , and

both of them
broken. I
wonder
whether I shall
see anything of
the land-
reform
programme?
Anyway, I have
learned my

lesson. I am
not going to
hang around
any longer: if
things don't
click
elsewhere, I
shall just push
on to other

places of
interest.

Jalapa
itself has been
worthwhile,
since it's a
modest little
state capital.
The seat of
government

used to be in
Veracruz, but
it was moved
inland to
Jalapa for
strategic
reasons about
a hundred
years ago
when the

French
intervened
and
temporarily
installed
Maximilian as
Emperor
(1864–67).
The town has
a strong

Spanish
phenotype, is
clean, middle
class , and has
lots of civil
servants and
schools. And, I
almost forgot,
it has its own
university.]

As I
wandered
around the
city centre I
noted adverts
for a Bach
concert, a
cinema
showing *El*
Año P asado en

Marienbad
(*Last year in*
Marienbad),
and a playbill
for a
University of
Nancy Theatre
group, the last
two sponsored
by the Alliance

Française and
the local
university.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-12-
66 continued:

The
architecture of
Jalapa, if that
is not too

grandiose a
term, is very
much like that
of the Hispanic
Caribbean:
concrete
facades,
courtyards,
verandahs,
roll-down

shutters.¹⁴ But
none of the
streets on the
periphery are
paved, and
there is
nothing like a
potholed road
for creating a
dismal

impression of
a town.

An
outstanding
feature of
Mexico City
and Jalapa is
the high
density of the
urban

population—
even in the
commercial
area. Houses
are still being
built in the
town centre,
and although
the population
is reputedly

about 60,000, I
imagine you
could walk
round the
entire built-up
area in a
morning.

I have just
reserved my
ticket on the

10.00 am bus
to Veracruz. It
is the oldest
settlement in
Mexico, but it
looks as
though it has
little to offer a
visitor. If I can
get a bus

down the
coast on
Sunday
morning, I
may restrict
my stay to less
than 24 hours.
My next
stopping place
is due to be

Oaxaca City,
and I may stop
there for
several days if
I get some
cooperation.
However, the
most
interesting
Spanish

colonial city in
southern
Mexico seems
to be San
Cristóbal de
las Casas in
the state of
Chiapas near
the border
with

Guatemala ,
and I could
well go there
first.

I realize
increasingly
that a few days
in each place
does not leave
me enough

time to
manoeuvre,
given
bureaucratic
tardiness. So,
if I don't get
help in Oaxaca,
I shall have to
travel around
on my own.

Anyway, my
two days here
have improved
my Spanish
and given
some insights
into schooling,
agriculture,
and the
bureaucracy.]

**Veracruz
Saturday,
August 13,
1966**

I came down
to Veracruz
from Jalapa ,
passing

estates with
coffee under
shade, citrus
groves, and
young
plantations of
breadfruit, but
there was
some sheet
erosion and

gullying (Fig. 1.1). Small farmers with food gardens, especially of bananas, were interspersed with the larger estates, their nucleated

rural
communities
characterized
by wooden
huts with
distinctive
palm-thatch
roofs. As we
descended
into the *tierra*

caliente
(tropical
zone), fields of
sugar cane
became
prominent,
plus coconuts
and mangoes
near Veracruz.
Near the

outskirts of
the city we
passed the
TAMSA steel
plant.

Veracruz is
nondescript: it
has been razed
to the ground
so many times

that there is
almost no
Spanish
colonial
architecture
left, and the
main streets
are lined by
concrete
buildings with

neon lights.
The Plaza de
Armas is
attractive in its
layout, but the
buildings are
not
distinguished,
and as I walk
south I pass

decayed
courtyards
and gruesome
modern
designs.

On the
coast
recreational
facilities are
better than

any I have
seen for locals
in the
Caribbean,
though the
beach itself is
grey-black,
and hot to
tread on.
There are

silver flashes
from the fish
in the shallows
as a seine is
being pulled in
by 30 to 40
men.

I find the
dock area
attractive—

especially the
fort of San
Juan de Ulua—
where there is
a Dutch ship
tied up, but
the quays
seem quiet
and empty,
though with a

genuine air of
prosperity
that one
would hope to
see in Mexico's
premier port.

Being in
the tropics and
on the coast, it
is easy to see

the influence
of the African
phenotype in
the features of
the people.
Certainly, the
Spanish
influence is
much less
marked than

in Jalapa.
Another
feature of the
tropics is the
huge
xylophone of
Veracruz,
played on the
streets by two
men at least.

**From
Veracruz
to
the Isthm
us and
Chiapas**

**Sunday,
August 14,
1966**

I spend
Sunday on the
bus from
8.00 am to
8.00 pm,
covering some

640 kilometres from Veracruz to Tuxtla Gutiérrez, capital of the state of Chiapas (Fig. 1.1). Leaving Veracruz on

the coast road
we travel
through scrub
dotted with
charcoal
furnaces until
we reached
Alvarado , a
poor, scruffy
little fishing

place located
on the
landward side
of sandhills
facing a
lagoon. My eye
is caught by a
car smothered
in clothes—all
for sale.

We then
enter an
immense
sugar belt
following the
line of the
coast, though
there are no
signs of
villages or of

central
factories that
must lie
inland. After a
brief stop at
San Andrés,
we drive on to
Laguna
Catemaco and
then round it.

We pass
through dry
cattle country
with herds of
Zebu until we
reach the
teeming
market town
of Acayucán
with its

thriving
Sunday
market (Fig. 1.
1).

[Letter to
Gillian 8-15-
66:

The bus
journey was
tiring and

monotonous
for anyone
who hasn't a
stake in
looking at the
countryside—
you can go to
sleep for hours
and wake up
seeing the

same
landscape as
when you
dropped off. I
was lucky to
pick up a
Cristóbal
Colón bus
connection at
Acayucán , on

the Gulf of
Mexico-side of
the isthmus,
and from there
onwards we
were
travelling
through the
pioneer zone:
cowboys still

ride into town,
and horses
stand next to
station
wagons.]

The
landscape in
the isthmus is
lowland
covered in

dense scrub,
with forest
growth less
than 20 feet
high and some
flowering
trees. The
colonization
zone around
Jesús Carranza

is typified by
monotonous
rolling
country. It is
stiflingly hot
on board,
because the
air-
conditioning
in the bus has

broken down,
which is
especially
hard on the
breastfeeding
women.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-15-
66 continued:

An attempt
is being made
by the
government to
resettle
peasants from
the
overpopulated
plateaus of
Central Mexico

in the tropical
coastlands of
the south. But
I understand
that there are
few takers,
which is
hardly
surprising
having seen

the almost
impenetrable
vegetation
that extends
on either side
of the road in
the Isthmus of
Tehuantepec.]

At 3.00 pm
we pull off the

main road and
enter Matías
Romero, in the
state of
Oaxaca, with
its dirt roads,
market stalls,
billiard
saloons, and
French-style

railway station
(Fig. 1.1). The
principal
sellers at the
bus station are
women from
Tehuantepec
wearing their
traditional
bright *huipiles*

(tops) and
long skirts.
The town is an
extraordinary
mixture of
ancient and
modern,
urban, and
rural: I notice
a cream

Mercedes
Benz, and in
the same
glance take in
a group of
tethered
horses. Matías
Romero is a
market and
administrative

centre
dumped down
in frontier
country: the
towns of the
isthmus are
islands set in a
wilderness of
uncontrolled
(and

uncontrollable
?) land.

Refreshed
by a few
minutes out of
the bus we
resume our
journey to
Juchitán ,
where we pass

a lorry full of
Indian
labourers—
the lowlands
on the western
side of the
isthmus
support maize
and some
sugar. But as

we climb up
into the
mountains of
Chiapas
through cloud-
covered
conifers, I have
a clear view
out to the
Pacific.

Heavy rain
sets in for the
downhill run
into Tuxtla
Gutiérrez,
where the
streets are
minor rivers to
be navigated
(Fig. 1.1). I

dash to an
inferior hotel
backing onto a
cinema—from
my room I
could hear,
through a
ventilation
shaft, the end
of the

evening's
soundtrack.
Exhausted, I
had two beers
in the bar,
went to bed,
and slept for
11 hours.

The only
man drinking

in the bar had
also been on
the bus from
Acayucán . He
told me that
he works for
the land-
reform agency,
the DAAC , and
always carries

a gun. He added that 20 acres is the maximum size of property given per person, but that it is more likely to be 2 or 3 hectares,

depending on
the quality of
the land. 'It is
a dangerous
job,' he said,
tapping the
revolver in a
holster on his
hip, because
'la ley es

elástica' (the
law is elastic).

**Tuxtla
Gutiérrez
Monday,
August 15,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-15-
66 continued:

Tuxtla lies
in a basin and
is more or less
tropical. At
3.00 pm this
afternoon I am
off to San

Cristóbal in
the *tierra fría*
(cold zone).
I'll try to
contact some
of the
agricultural
offices there,
but if none
bite, I'll stay

for a day or
two and then
head north to
Oaxaca.

Tuxtla is
fairly
sophisticated
considering its
isolation—it's
about

960 kilometre
s from Mexico
City.

Nevertheless,
It's taken me
most of the
morning to
find a birthday
card for Aidan
—even then

it's shop-
soiled. I'm
posting it nine
days in
advance, in the
hope that it
will get to him
in England in
time for his
first birthday.

I'm writing
this in the
park in the
centre of the
city squinting
against the
dazzling sun. I
have really
been aware of
the tropics for

the last three
day. Veracruz
was scorching,
and I was glad
to have a
ceiling fan in
my hotel
room. First-
class buses are
air-

conditioned,
but the system
broke down
yesterday, so
we had a fry-
up in
Tehuantepec
—no wonder
everyone lives
on the plateau.

Racial
phenotypes in
Tuxtla are
difficult to
unravel, but
girl bank
clerks seem
lighter than
salesgirls in
the shops.]

San Cristóbal de las Casas

The road up to
San Cristóbal
was a
perpetual

climb, taking
us up through
a mixed
deciduous and
conifer forest
(Fig. 1.1). In
the distance, I
could make
out Chamula
women

dressed in
black woollen
huipiles (tops).
Leaning
forward on the
tump-lines
across their
foreheads,
they steadied
the bundles of

firewood on
their backs as
they scurried
after their
herds of
sheep.

 In contrast,
at the side of
the road, tall
Zinacantecan

men wearing
sharp-peaked
sombros
were striding
along in
sandals made
from motor-
car tyres, held
on their feet
by numerous

leather thongs.
I was struck by
the contrast
between these
Indian groups
seen through
the window
and the
Mexican/mesti
zo driver of

the air-
conditioned
bus, listening
to the radio as
he swung his
vehicle around
the tortuous
bends.

The
landscape is

mountainous,
and striking
features are
the small lake
basins with
the ubiquitous
maize
reaching to the
water's edge.
But there are

many signs of
soil erosion,
and much
more so on the
higher slopes.
Looking back
down the road
we have taken,
I get a
wonderful

view of range
after range of
mountains.

When I
walk out into
the town in
the late
afternoon, I
find that San
Cristóbal is a

mixture of the
old and the
new: the
Indians,
churches, and
unpaved
streets are in
the first
category, and
the

fashionably
dressed
residents,
motor cars,
and schools in
the second.
There seems
to be a
distinction
between the

poor Mexican
of
predominantly
Indian (or
mestizo)
origin and the
Indian in an
ethnic sense,
such as the
Chamulas and

Zinacantecans
who wear
traditional
clothing as a
mark of their
affiliation. In
town, the
Indians are
very much
onlookers: I

note a
Chamula boy
staring into a
shop window
full of radios.

I find an
exhibition of
black-and-
white
photographs

in the local
library. It is
mostly of
Indians taken
by Nancy
Modiano,
Frank Cancian,
Gertrude Duby
Blom, Clara
Luz Ordáz, and

others—
principally
Americans,
with a few
Mexicans and
one Swiss,
Gertrude
Blom. Cancian
is an
anthropologist

associated
with the
Harvard
Project in
Chiapas.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-17-
66:

When I
arrived on

Monday I was
slightly
disappointed
with San
Cristóbal,
because there
is in Mexico
little that is
truly colonial
—it has

almost all
been wiped
out by wars of
liberation, the
Revolution or
sheer neglect.
However, the
population
that frequents
the town, as

distinct from
those who live
in it, is
absolutely
fascinating.
Two main
ethnic groups
come down
daily from the
surrounding

mountains to
the local
market:
Chamulas and
Zinacantecans
. The former
are small, the
women
particularly so.
The

Zinacantecans
, in contrast,
are strapping,
powerful men,
and wear
either shorts
or a scant
loincloth.]

**Indians
and
Mountains
Tuesday,
August 16,
1966**

At the
marketplace I

find large
numbers of
Chamulas and
Zinacantecos,
who seem to
be selling on
their own
initiative
outside the
market or to

vendors inside
(Plate 2.2).
Zinacantecan
men are
selling lumps
of
consolidated
cassava , and
buying garden
vegetables and

meat. By
following a
group of
Indians out of
town, I
discover that
the way
degenerates
rapidly into a
rough road

before
becoming an
eroded
drover's path;
where the
outskirts of
the town peter
out, the
mountainside
begins. I climb

out of the
valley, and
through a
mixed conifer
and deciduous
zone and
finally emerge
into
pastureland
and conifers,

grazed by
sheep with
shepherdesses
and cows with
bells.



Plate

2.2 Chamula and
Zinacantecan Tzo
tzil -speaking
Indians outside
the market in San
Cristóbal de las
Casas. San
Cristóbal is a
classic case of an
administrative

and market town
dominating a
subordinate rural
Indian economy
(internal
colonialism)

At high
altitude there
are a few men
on horseback,

but no women.
The
tremendous
loads—flour,
chickens,
children—
carried by the
Indians on
their tump-
lines, often

moving along
in family
groups, is
astonishing. I
pass a family
of three on my
way up the
mountainside
and again on
my way down;

the woman
has a child on
her back and
she takes
small, hurried
steps, keeping
up the pace for
hour after
hour. I am
struck by the

friendly
atmosphere,
and most of
the walkers
exchange
greetings with
me in Spanish.

Across the
pastures there
are some

maize *milpas*
(plots)
scattered here
and there, and
I see repeated
evidence of
erosion. There
are also signs
of forestry, but
not much

evidence of
replanting. I
watch two
men sawing
planks using a
double-
handled saw,
horses pulling
out shaped
wood, and

planks being
piled up in ox
carts. At high
altitude the air
is cool, and I
spot
hummingbirds
and blue
parrots.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-17-
66 continued:

I must
have done
about 15 miles
over these
rough tracks,
climbing out of
the valley into

the coniferous
forests and
then into the
pasture lands
and maize
milpas. I had
no idea it
could be so
beautiful.

Last night I
had a meal
with David
Harvey, his
American wife
and her friend.
David lectures
in Geography
at Bristol
University and

has just
finished a year
in the US on an
exchange.]

**Oaxaca
Bound
Wednesda
y, August**

17, 1966

The Pan-
American
Highway runs
north from
Comitán on
the
Guatemala-
Mexico border
via San

Cristóbal to
Oaxaca. I
experience the
breathless
descent to
Tuxtla and
notice a great
deal of erosion
at the base of
the maize

fields,
especially on
the steep
lower slopes
(Fig. 1.1).

After
leaving Tuxtla
the journey
becomes
increasingly d

ull—and hot—
as we pass
through the
scrubland and
semi-desert
vegetation,
some of it
grazed by
cattle , typical
of the Isthmus

of
Tehuantepec.
In the rare
places where
agriculture is
possible,
campesinos
are ploughing
with *yuntas de*
bueyes (ox-

teams) while others are weeding the *milpas* and piling up soil against the base of the stalks.

About
150 miles

south of
Oaxaca City
we begin the
long climb
through
innumerable
mountain
ranges with
the road
winding first

one way and
then the other
(Fig. 1.9). As
the aridity
increases,
cylindrical
cactus and
thorn scrub
become
dominant, and,

as we drop
into the Valles
Centrales de
Oaxaca
(Central
Valleys of
Oaxaca),
plantings of
agave for
mescal, often

intercropped
with maize ,
fill the
landscape .
Arriving on
the floor of the
basin in the
tierra
templada
(temperate

zone) at about
1650 metres, I
am aware of a
sea of maize,
the green
illuminated by
an
unforgettable
sunset (Fig. 1.

10). What a
vast country!

A taxi
whisks me
down through
the colonial
town, past the
elaborate
railings
outside the

cathedral, and
deposits me in
my hotel
behind the
Alameda. After
a meal, I
wander out
into the warm
evening air
and make my

way to the
tree-lined
zócalo , where
marimbas are
being played
in the
bandstand to
the pleasure of
crowds of

tourists and
locals.

Oaxaca City and the Centra l Valleys

**Thursday,
August 18,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-17-
66 continued:
In
contradiction
to what I

wrote about
San Cristóbal,
Oaxaca City
does have
some fine
colonial
buildings,
especially
churches and
town houses.

This morning I
went to my
first *ejdo*
(land-reform
unit), Cinco
Señores, and I
have been
promised a
day in the

countryside on
Saturday.]

The DAAC
in Oaxaca is
comparatively
helpful, and I
set out almost
immediately
with the
Supervisor of

the Zona
Ejidal, Señor
Arnulfo
Carrasco Puga,
to visit an
ejido on the
southern edge
of the city,
created on
part of the site

of the
hacienda
Cinco Señores
(Fig. 1.10).
Here there are
31 *ejdat arios*
living in a
community
with a school
and a church

built recently
by cooperative
effort. In
addition, they
have a
basketball
court and a
children's
slide—and an
escritorio

publico to
provide a
writing service
for the non-
literate.

It is
explained to
me that the
ejdo is run by
a Comisario

Ejidal which in turn is overseen by a Vigilance Council. Both organizations have a president, secretary, and treasurer. The

ejdo consists
of
123 hectares
of land, giving
on average
4 hectares to
each member
or family. It
was created
after the

Revolution by
the break-up
of the
hacienda,
whose
crumbling
walls can still
be seen.

Most of the
holdings of

three to four
hectares are
scattered in
parcelas
(parcels),
growing maize
, beans on
sticks, alfalfa,
chickpeas, and
tobacco;

90 percent of
it for home
consumption.
Most of the
ejdat arios
have one or
two Fresian
cows
producing
milk for home

use and sale.
They pay a
nominal tax of
5 pesos per
annum to the
government.

**Friday,
August 19,
1966**

First on my list
for a visit is
the imposing
Iglesia de
Santo
Domingo, a
Dominican
foundation
dating from
the early

1500s, with a
baroque
interior and
exquisite gold-
leaf altar. I
then walk
about a mile to
Colonia
Reforma and
admire the

handsome
facade of a
Porfirian ruin,
now occupied
by new
hospital
buildings.

Back in the
city I look at
the church

dedicated to
the Virgen de
la Soledad,
walk
through the
Mercado
Central, and
visit the
Museo de Arte
Prehispánico d

e
México Rufino
Tamayo,
located in an
attractive
patio house
right in the
colonial city
centre.

In the
evening, I am
drawn back to
the *zócalo* and
the marimba
band. I make a
more careful
note of the
playing
arrangements,

and record
that there are
two marimbas,
one with four
men the other
with three,
backed up by a
double bass
and a man on
the drums.

**Saturday,
August 20,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-20-
66:

I did two
interesting
things this

morning. I
went to the
Indian market
and then to
see an *ejdo*
about 7 miles
outside the
city. The
market was
vibrant. Stalls

had been set
up in the
streets
surrounding
the official
market in the
city centre,
doubling its
area. A
wonderful

selection of
provisions was
on sale—
tomatoes,
apples,
peaches,
plantains,
pineapples,
sugar cane,
beans and

maize , and
clothing,
shoes, pottery
and tinware.
The *ejdo* was
interesting
and
surprisingly
prosperous,
though I was

struck by the
absence of
ground
provisions
both growing
in the
ground and in
the market.
Oaxaca is the
most engaging

provincial
town I have
seen in
Mexico.]

In the
middle of the
morning I
make my way
through the
market

thoroughfares,
hung with
canvas against
the sun and
rain, passing
one Indian
woman after
another selling
cut sugar cane,
rubber tyres

for sandals,
and clothes of
all
descriptions,
until I reach a
small country
bus station,
where men
were passing
goods up to

the top of the
vehicles. I take
the bus down
the northern
Etna arm of the
Central Valleys
to San
Sebastián,
where Señor
Puga has

invited me to
see his rancho
—he is an
independent
pequeño
propietario
(owner of a
small post-
reform estate)
(Fig. 1.10).

He tells me
that he owns
10 hectares
under maize ,
alfalfa, and
chickpeas. The
maize is
flourishing,
with three or
four heavy

pod to each
plant,
intercropped
with beans
and squash .
Originally the
rancho was
much larger,
but on his
father's death

it was divided
among the
sons. This is
high-quality
land with
access to
cooperative
irrigation from
the river in

spring and
early summer.

They
grow equally
good crops on
the *ejdo* on
the opposite
side of the
road (carved
out I imagine

from Señor
Puga's father's
pre-
revolutionary
estate), where
there are
about 50
beneficiaries
of the land
reform, each

with
5 hectares.
Here the crop
selection is
similar to
Señor Puga's ,
except that
some sugar
cane is grown
for a local

factory and for
manufacture
into *panela*
(heads of
sugar).

Journey to Mexico City

**Sunday,
August 21,
1966**

I leave Oaxaca
City on Sunday
at 7.30 am and
reach Mexico
City via the
Pan-American

Highway at
6.00 pm.
Between
Oaxaca City
and
Huajuapán de
León in the
Mixteca Alta,
and especially
around

Yanhuitlán , I
witness the
most
devastated
landscape I
have ever seen
(Fig. 1.9). The
level of soil
erosion is
terrible, with

red-gashed
hillsides and
extensive
gullying on a
regional scale.
The
lifeblood of
the
countryside
seems to be

draining away,
and there are
no obvious
attempts at
prevention or
cure. Over a
distance of
160 kilometre
s I see no more

than one or
two terraces.

Huajuapán
is a poor,
sleepy town
with a lovely
church, big
plaza, and the
inevitable
wrought-iron

bandstand. A
brass band is
leading a
parade of
schoolchildren
in support of a
literacy
campaign.
Maize is
grown

everywhere
around here,
and the roads
are filled with
poor
campesinos
going to and
from the
Sunday
market.

During the
remainder of
the journey I
fell into
conversation
with two
Swiss girls
who had been
teaching at a
work camp

near Toluca—
one was a
teacher , the
other a nurse.
In the Toluca
area, they told
me, *peónes*
(landless
labourers) are
getting less

than 8 pesos a
day, though
the poorest
are widows
with children,
who might
depend on the
sale of maize
tacos at one
peso for 20.

Plaiting straw fans is also a woman's job, yielding 1.5 pesos per item, of which 10 items can be made each week.

They
commented on
the poverty of
many of the
rural homes
they visited,
only increased
by unwanted
children sent
back to

grandparents
in the country
by mothers
working as
servants in
Mexico City. In
the absence of
rural hospitals
and doctors,
most of the

poor are
dependent on
folk remedies,
such as
treatment for
mal de ojo
(evil eye)—
though there
has been an
active

programme of
vaccination
against
smallpox. One
of the Swiss
girls
mentioned
Mexican
hypocrisy vis-
à-vis the

Indian, police
acceptance of
bribes, and
corruption at
the top.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-22-
66:

The Swiss
girls gave me a

real insight
into country
life, and told
me many
things that
reminded me
of our work in
Trinidad.¹⁵
They got to
know and love

the people
they were
helping, and
had
themselves
received that
wonderful
experience of
close contact
and

understanding
which we
enjoyed.]

En Route to the Bajío

**Monday,
August 22,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-22-
66 continued:

In most
Mexican
towns, you can

walk off the
bus and
straight into
any hotel you
choose; but in
Mexico City
yesterday that
was
impossible.
With the

continuation
of the airline
strike in the
US, American
holidaymakers
are flocking to
Mexico in
droves. I was
fortunate to
get a good

room, but by
the time I had
done that,
booked my
ticket to
Guadalajara
and had a
meal, it was
11 pm.

After the
terribly
eroded
hillsides of
Oaxaca's
Mixteca Alta, a
disaster zone
if ever there
was one,
today's trip

was through
comparatively
good country.
We sped along
a modern
highway in an
air-
conditioned
bus, cruising
at about

60 miles per
hour, and were
served with
occasional
coffees by a
uniformed
stewardess. I
kept looking at
my watch and
wondering

why we were
not scheduled
to reach
Guadalajara
until the late
afternoon (Fig.
[1.1](#)). After La
Piedad, I
discovered the
answer: the

now un-
surfaced road
was a mass of
potholes, and
the bus took
three hours to
cover the last
100 kilometre
s.]

Our route
out of Mexico
City followed
Avenida
Camacho
through an
industrial
district
interspersed
with shanty

towns—some
boasting TV
aerials. On the
northern
outskirts, we
passed Ciudad
Satélite, a
depressing
suburban
sprawl like the

bigger cities of
the Hispanic
Caribbean. We
then entered
an area of
mixed land
use, maize
fields,
factories
(Corona Beer),

and suburbs
all competing
for space.
Some 3 to
4 miles
beyond the
built-up area
we came upon
an industrial
zone: here

Ford and
Bacardi have
vast factories.
And beyond
them still an
area of steel
and chemical
manufacturing
.

After this
we travelled at
pace through
pretty good
agricultural
land, though
with much
scrub and
savannah
interspersed,

and reached
Querétaro ,
famous for its
aqueduct and
the
assassination
of Emperor
Maximilian . A
similar flat
landscape

stretched out
to Celaya , but
near
Salamanca we
came across
another
industrial
complex
notable for
petrochemical

s and fertilizer,
before we
entered an
irrigated zone
of intensive
small-fruit
cultivation
around
Irapuato ,
where

quantities of
strawberries
were on sale
both fresh and
as jam.

After
Irapuato , the
quality of the
land for
agriculture

declined
sharply, giving
way after La
Piedad to
stony scrub,
stone walls,
and an
appalling road,
all of which
suggests that

the massive
city of
Guadalajara
with a
population of
one million is
seemingly
kilometres
from

anywhere (Fig.
1.1).

Guadalajar
a turns out to
be both sordid
(the evening
streets are
awash after a
heavy storm)
and delightful.

I am entranced
by the layout
of the plazas
around the
cathedral, but
the colonial
centre is much
too small for a
city of a
million, and

part of the old
town has been
redeveloped
as a shopping
centre—
Avenida Juárez
is infinitely
more varied
than any
similar street

in Mexico City.
Once again,
the poorest of
the poor—the
beggars—are
Indians.

Landscape s and

E idos in
Michoacan
Tuesday,
August 23,
1966

This morning I
left by bus for
Morelia ,
travelling

slowly on
winding roads
(Fig. 1.1). We
skirted the
mountain-girt
Laguna de
Chapala , and
everywhere
there was
maize and a

new crop to
me—sorghum.
Around
Zamora—a
grubby,
undistinguishe
d town—we
again entered
good quality
land,

intensively
worked for
strawberries
and onions.
There was a
great deal of
ploughing
going on in the
fields and I
caught sight of

two tractors.
Near Quiroga
the
agricultural
system
changed to
cattle rearing,
and there
were penned
Friesians and

herds of
Herefords.

The
landscape
between
Quiroga and
Morelia was
densely
planted with
eucalyptus

trees, though
there was
ample
evidence of
sheet and
gully erosion.
We passed the
Laguna de
Pátzcuaro
looking as

Tenochtitlán
must have
appeared to
the Spanish
Conquistadore
s.

I cannot
help but
comment on
the

outstanding
difference
between the
areas north
and south of
Mexico City in
the quality of
the land—and
level of living.
The Mexico

City-
Guadalajara
axis is notably
more
prosperous in
both
agriculture
and industry
—no wonder
it was chosen

for the
conference
trip after the
IGU meeting
ended.

**Wednesda
y, August
24, 1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-24-
66:

My visit to
Morelia has
been most
enjoyable, and
I have come
across the
most

cooperative
DAAC . This
morning the
agent detailed
to guide me
took me out to
an *ejdo* about
5 miles out of
town, and I
had a long talk

with one of the
village
teachers.]

The *ejdo* is
called Morelos
Tenencia. I am
told that only
about 5
percent of the
land is fertile,

and this is
cropped with
maize
followed by
chickpeas; 60
percent is less
fertile and is
rotated using a
sequence of
wheat, beans,

cauliflower,
cabbage,
carrots, and
lentils. Other
crops are
strawberries
and gladioli,
with peaches,
apples,
lemons,

oranges, and
grenadines
grown in
backyards.

Morelos
Tenencia has
135 *ejdat arios*
, the average
holding being
4 hectares per

family (though
20 *ejdat arios*
have
6 hectares
each). The
community
has a
population of
2100, which is
growing at a

rate of 3.4
percent per
annum, and is
large enough
to support an
Escuela
Primaria with
469 pupils.
Four of the 11
teachers in the

school live in
the
community
(one is also an
ejdat ario),
and the others
come out from
Morelia each
day.
Interestingly,

in contrast to
my visit to
Veracruz, the
school has no
garden plots
and gives no
agricultural
training.

The
proximity of

Morelia is a
major factor in
the life of the
community,
and there are
five buses per
hour in each
direction.
About 60
percent of the

working
population,
notably those
with the
smaller farm
holdings, have
jobs in the city,
and many are
no more than
part-time

farmers . The
community
has no
pharmacy ,
clinic, or
doctor, and
alcoholism is a
major
problem. Only
five

households
have TVs, and
many children
go barefoot, so
there is some
class
stratification ,
despite the
overall pattern
of deprivation.

Major
problems are a
shortage of
fertilizer, the
lack of a
tractor
cooperative,
poor school
attendance
during the

crop season,
the absence of
a purified
water system
(worms and
intestinal
diseases are
endemic), and
a pervasive
dependence

on the
government.
The governing
class is
capitalistic
and pro-
industry.

The
community is
deeply

conservative—
I am told that
only university
students know
anything
about
socialism or
communism .
The federal
and state

syllabus for
teaching in
schools
involves a
great deal of
rote learning,
and there is
little emphasis
on training the
imagination.

The school provides a 20-cent breakfast with milk , bread, and candies, and twice a week bananas are served. The cost is covered

by the
government,
but this is not
very common,
and it is not
well
organized. If
you try to
organize
people they

say you are a
communist.
Freedom in
Mexico is to
say what you
like, but not to
do what you
like.

When I
returned to

Morelia from
Morelos
Tenencia , I
went for a cup
of coffee and
chanced on
two young
researchers,
Cynthia
Hewitt, a

doctoral
student at
Cornell
University, and
Sergio
Alcantára
Ferrer from
the Centro de
Investigacione
s Agrícolas.

They tell me
that there are
good
institutional
links between
agricultural
agencies at the
local level and
the central
government,

though it
seems to me
that this does
not apply to
the DAAC.

Sergio and
Cynthia are
concerned
about a local
sugar factory ,

owned by the
Banco Ejidal,
that forces
campesinos to
plant cane by
restricting to
this crop alone
the capital it
makes
available for

investment in
agriculture. In
addition,
social security
benefits are
being awarded
only to those
agriculturalist
s who plant
sugar. The

pattern of coercion is mitigated by the contribution cane-growing has made to the local rural economy. Until 10 years ago,

old *cacique* s
(rural bosses)
ruled the
countryside,
having
instigated and
controlled the
land reform
during the
1930s.

Apparently,
the PRI is not
strongly
organized at
local level. It is
voted in
because it is in
control, and is
closely
associated

with the
bureaucracy.
An ex-
president of
the PRI is
attempting to
form a new
party, but
perhaps
change is best

effected within
the party? It is
not clear
whether the
PRI creates its
own *cacique* s
(bosses), or
whether they
exist in their
own right.

A beggar
passed us
while we were
talking and
asked for
money—and
for the crusts
of bread off
our table. He
was back in

the evening
(plus a little
boy), and
produced
tacos into
which, with
my consent, he
placed the
remains of my
meal.

[Letter to
Gillian 8-24-
66 continued:
Fortunately
, the *ejdal*
agent who
accompanied
me today, Sr
Rodriguez
Espinósa , is

prepared to go
to some
trouble on my
behalf, and
tomorrow we
are off to
Zamora for the
day. Crazy
though it may
seem, the

DAAC has no
vehicles for its
officers, so we
have to travel
by bus—
leaving at
5.30 a m.]

***E ido* near
Zamora
Thursday,
August 25,
1966**

[Letter to
Gillian 8-27-
66:

My last day
in Morelia
proved
interesting,
and I got quite
a lot of
material from
an *ejdo* near
Zamora. It was
very cold

when I left my
hotel at 5 am.
At the bus
station the
campesinos
were all
wrapped in
ponchos, for
which my
anorak was a

poor
substitute.]
When Sr
Espinósa and I
eventually
arrived at our
destination in
Zamora the
Presidente of
the Comisario

Ejidal gave me
an interview
and described
the operations
of the
community
(Fig. 1.1). I
was
immediately
struck by the

high level of prosperity in the Bajío. For example, the president's house was not a shack, but a substantial lower-middle-class dwelling

with fairly
good
furniture.

The *ejdo* ,
established in
1932 and
expanded in
1936, consists
of 375
ejdat arios ,

each with an
average
holding of
5 hectares,
making
1875 hectares
for the whole
community.
There is no
communal

agricultural
machinery,
though there
are ten
tractors in
individual
ownership. No
cooperative
selling takes

place for the
local market.

Key to the
success of the
ejdo is the
availability of
water, and
1675 hectares
are irrigated
by river water

managed on a
regional basis
by the
Secretaria de
Recursos
Hidráulicos. It
is impressed
on me,
however, that
without

fertilizers
from
Guanamex
there would
be no harvest,
and that the
economy has
been secured
by the opening
of a new

fertilizer
factory in
Zamora.

Intensive
market
gardening of
strawberries,
potatoes, and
beans is the
dominant

agricultural
strategy, with
supplementar
y crops of
tomatoes,
chickpeas,
maize , onions,
cauliflowers,
broccoli, and
wheat. In

addition, there
are 25 cattle .
Investment
loans are
available from
the Banco
Agrário, but
are restricted
to seed with

only a little for
fertilizer.

By far the
most
important
crop is
strawberries,
which are
exported to
the US, the UK,

Germany, and
South
America, or
made into jam
for which
there are
seven factories
in the area and
two more
elsewhere.

Other export
crops are
onions and
potatoes for
the US market.
Vegetable
canning takes
place in Nuevo
León. Road
and rail links

to the US are
good, and
refrigerated
rolling stock is
available in
Zamora for the
journey north.
Some
producers
have contracts

with frozen
fruit
companies.

A vital
ingredient of
the economy is
wage labour,
drawn from
Zamora , for
the

strawberry-
picking season
stretching for
six months
from January
to July. A
major
constraint is
the shortage of
good quality

land, so some
ejdat arios let
their land and
work in
Zamora ,
though
technically
that is not
permitted.

I am told
that country
people in the
Bajío don't
want to go
down to the
tierra caliente
(tropical
lowlands) to

take up empty
land.

**Return to
Mexico
City
Friday,
August 26,**

1966

Leaving
Morelia by bus
, I head
northwards to
Celaya and
then take the
toll road to
Mexico City. I
travel through

rolling
countryside
characterized
by volcanoes
and lakes
under an
overcast but
beautiful sky
—here there
are poor

villages and
isolated
towns. In
conversation
with my
neighbour on
the bus, who
turns out to be
an
occupational

therapist from
Morelia , my
attention is
drawn to
Octavio Paz's,
*El Laberinto de
la Soledad*
*(The Labyrinth
of Solitude)*
which he

describes as a
brilliant
meditation on
the Mexican
national
character.¹⁶

**Saturday,
August 27,**

1966

[Letter to
Gillian 8-27-
66 continued:

My bus
from Morelia
arrived in
Mexico City in
the middle of
yesterday

afternoon, and
I was able to
confirm my
ticket to New
York with Air
France. It was
marvellous
seeing John
again—a
bronzed, slim

version of
John, who had
recently spent
four days in
hospital in
Merida
recovering
from gastro-
enteritis.

Hotel
María Ángeles
has given us a
cheap but
almost
sumptuous
room called a
junior suite.
We've spent
most of today

making
contact with
bookshops
from which we
hope to make
purchases
directly from
England.

We are
planning to go

to the Instituto
de Geografía at
UNAM on
Monday to
meet the
Director, Dr
Soto Mora ,
and we have
been invited to
dinner on

Sunday with
Peter and Mali,
who have been
looking after
our surplus
baggage. We
are also going
to try and visit
a squatter
settlement on

the outskirts
of the city near
the
international
airport. It got
press
headlines
when it was
partly
destroyed by a

small
hurricane a
month ago.

This
evening we
are having a
meal with
David Fox. It's
strange, but
after all the

travelling,
Mexico City
has become a
substitute
home. I am
glad to be
static for a few
days, and to
have only air
travel ahead of

me in the near
future.]

**Sunday,
August 28,
1966**

Early in the
morning John
and I went

back to the
Mercado de
Ladrones
(Thieves'
Market) in the
Tepito District
of Mexico City
(Plate 2.3). On
one side of the
street there

are rows of
second-hand
bookshops,
and on the
other stalls
selling
brassware,
antiques,
church
effigies,

priests'
vestments,
records, and
lovely
apothecary
jars.



Plate 2.3 Tepito
Market , Mexico
City—the
thieves' market,
where one can
buy today what
was stolen
yesterday. The
illegal, informal
sector is common

in Mexican and
Caribbean cities

After
lunch, we
catch the bus
to the
international
airport and
take some
photographs

from a hill in
Refugio—
across the
airport and
Lago Texcoco .
This is the
area struck
some weeks
ago by a dust
storm or

twister, but
despite the
damage it is
nothing like as
ramshackle as
the slums of
Kingston ,
Jamaica. Most
of the squatter
housing is

made of
concrete
blocks and
there are
considerable
signs of
material
upgrading. I
think of
Buñuel's film,

Los Olvidados,
when I see the
squatter
settlements of
the Lago
Texcoco
area.¹⁷

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Footnotes

1 Belief that the
remains of the
Aztec Templo
Major lay
beneath the

cathedral in
Mexico City was
shown to be false
when a chance
find led to new
archaeological
excavations being
carried out in the
late 1970s and
early 1980s. They
revealed that the
temple complex

was essentially
intact beneath
buildings on the
opposite side of
the street from
where it was
thought to have
been located—
that is, diagonally
across from the
cathedral and the
parish church.

See Eduardo
Matos
Moctezuma, *The
Great Temple of
the Aztecs:
Treasures of
Tenochtitlan*,
1988.

2 Humboldt
gained the

permission of the
Spanish Crown to
travel and
explore in Latin
America in the
late 1790s and
early 1800s, and
in 1803–1804
was in New Spain
(now Mexico),
visiting
government

departments,
collecting data
that had
previously been
kept secret,
noting Aztec
artefacts, and
observing the
silver mines of
Guanajuato . His
book, *Political
Essay on the*

Kingdom of New Spain, 1811, led to 'the rediscovery of Mexico.'

3 Oscar Lewis,
*The Children of Sanchez:
Autobiography of
a Mexican Family,*

1961. Though
acclaimed for its
account of the
way in which
urban poverty
was passed from
generation to
generation, it was
later criticized
by
anthropologists
and sociologists

on the political
Left for
emphasizing the
trapped, non-
revolutionary
traits of the Latin
American urban
poor. Even in the
1960s it was
dismissed in
Mexican political
circles as an

irresponsible and
erroneous exposé
of the failure of
the revolution.

4 The Aztec
Calendar or sun
stone was found
during
renovations to
the central

square in 1790,
buried under the
zócalo in Mexico
City.

5 The Reforma
was associated
with the liberal
reforms
introduced by
President Benito

Juárez in the
1850s, and
extending
thereafter. The
key idea was to
abolish
corporations that
engrossed
resources, such
as land, and both
the Catholic
Church and the

Indian
communities
were deeply and
negatively
affected.

6 Dick Lawton
was a senior
colleague at
Liverpool
University, and

later Professor
and Head of the
Geography
Department.

7 Dr Jock
Galloway ,
Professor of
Geography at the
University of
Toronto, a

specialist on the
Historical
Geography of
Brazil and a
friend; Dr David
Watts, Lecturer
and later Reader
in Geography at
the University of
Hull, a specialist
in the

biogeography of
the Caribbean.

8 Dr Ángel
Bassolls Batalla
(1925–2012), a
significant
Mexican regional
and economic
geographer.

9 Professor Sir
Dudley Stamp,
Emeritus
Professor of
Geography at The
London School of
Economics, was
one of the most
distinguished
British

geographers of
his day.

10 My paper was
based on my
doctoral
fieldwork and
was entitled
'Problemas de
Planeación
Urbana en

Kingston ,
Jamaica,' Union
Geográfica
Internacional,
Conferencia
Regional
Latinoamericana,
Sociedad
Mexicana de
Geografía y
Estadística,

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11 Dr Majorie
Sweeting, one of
my Oxford
lecturers in
Geography, and
Gillian met in
Jamaica in 1964
when we were en

route for
Trinidad and
Marjorie was off
to study the
limestone in
Luidas Vale.

12 David Fox,
Lecturer and
later Senior
Lecturer in

Geography at the
University of
Manchester, a
specialist on
Mexico and
Bolivia.

13 My friend
Silvana Levi de
López, a young
researcher and

teacher in the
Instituto de
Geografía at
UNAM, was in the
lift with Sir
Dudley, and later
told me about the
difficulty of
coping with his
sudden death on
the campus. At
the time, she was

pregnant with
her daughter
Liliana , who is
the young girl
referred to in my
1978 journal
(Sunday,
September 10).

14 Gillian and I
had visited

Puerto Rico in
January 1964 en
route to research
in Trinidad.

15 See Colin
Clarke and Gillian
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16 Octavio Paz,
*The Labyrinth of
Solitude: Life and
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17 *Los Olvidados*
(*The Forgotten*
Ones) was
directed by film-
maker Luis
Buñuel and
screened in 1950.
It deals with
youth
delinquency and
violence in the
impoverished

shanty towns of
Mexico City.

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Colin Clarke, *Mexico
and the Caribbean
Under Castro's Eyes,*
Studies of the
Americas

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3. The Caribbean

in the Late 1960s

Colin Clarke¹ 

(1) School of
Geography
and the
Environment,
University of
Oxford,
Oxford, UK

✉ Colin Clarke

Contents

*Introduction—
Haiti 1968—
Dominican
Republic—
Puerto Rico—
St Thomas,
American Virgin*

Islands—int
Maarten—Anguilla
St Kitts—
Guadeloupe—
Dominica—
Martinique—t
the entire area
—Trinidad—
Guyana—uba
1969

Introduction

My first journey to
the Caribbean
came through a
Visiting Assistant
Professorship in
Geography at the
University of
Toronto in 1967–
1968 and
postdoctoral
follow-up research
in Kingston ,
Jamaica, in July and

August 1968. The purpose of my Caribbean trip in September was to visit the Spanish- and French-speaking islands as well as the British territories, which, in the aftermath of the break-up of the West Indies Federation in

1961–1962, were
en route from
colonialism to
associate
statehood (and
probably
independence).
The intention was
to extend my first-
hand experience
beyond Jamaica
and Trinidad,
collect materials

such as official statistics and local books, and make contact with development specialists and local scholars.

I visited all the Greater Antilles (Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico)

except Cuba, which
you could reach at
that time only via
Mexico and Spain ,
and many of the
British (Anguilla ,
St Kitts and Nevis ,
Dominica , St
Vincent , and
Grenada) and
French territories
(Guadeloupe and
Martinique) as

well as one of the
Dutch units in the
Lesser Antilles
(Sint Maarten)
followed by a
revisit to Trinidad
and side trip to
Guyana
(independent in
1966). Once I
returned to the
University of
Liverpool in

September 1968, I
was committed to
teaching a
substantial part of
the first-term
course dealing
with Latin America
and the Caribbean,
while my colleague
John Dickenson , a
Brazilian specialist,
was travelling in
Hispanic Latin

America—he had
held the fort while
I had been in
Canada the
previous year.

The Haiti of
Papa Doc Duvalier
was much as I
expected, though
the physical sense
of terror was less
tangible, and the
dangerous state of

the infrastructure,
was worse than I
had imagined as I
encountered
Haiti's version of
Black Power. As a
visitor I was
protected by the
dictatorial regime
itself, and even the
informer who
accompanied me
on my walks

around Port -au-Prince was benign, even helpful at times. Post-Trujillo, post US-invasion Santo Domingo was quite different—chaotic, with Dominican Republican armed troops on the streets, a curfew, and a general

strike in the offing.
It was a relief to
get to the calm and
order of Puerto
Rico, despite the
rampant
Americanization of
the quasi-colony. In
the neighbouring
US Virgin Islands, I
had my first
encounter with
Black Power, but

essentially US-style
and retailed to me
by an American
white woman,
rather than of the
variety soon to
break out in the
Rodney riots in
Jamaica.

I found my visit
to Anguilla, which
had unilaterally
declared

independence from
St Kitts in 1967,
especially
interesting, since I
was able to meet
almost all the
leaders of the
insurgency, and
some of their
rivals, and make an
assessment of a
situation which V.
S. Naipaul termed

‘The Shipwrecked
Six Thousand’
(1972). As Anguilla
went from bad to
worse in 1969 and
there were
rumours of mafia
meddling, I
published a paper
based on my visit
(Clarke 1971b).
Equally intriguing
was my visit to St

Kitts , where I
came across some
of the same
situations and
characters as V. S.
Naipaul had
described and
analysed in ‘Papa
and the Power
Set’—radicals
using Black Power
to challenge the
authority of

otherwise
unassailable
politicians (1972).
In Dominica , the
challenge of Black
Power had already
driven the
government into a
deeply
authoritarian
mindset.

During my
return visit to

Trinidad I picked up with many of our 1964 friends and immediately clued into the sociopolitical scene. The 1966 election had been a familiar racial affair with the Creoles taking the election from the East Indians,

whose leadership,
as in the past, was
Hindu and high
caste . An attempt
by the Trinidad
Marxist C. L. R.
James to oust
Williams with the
Workers and
Farmers Party had
failed to gather the
interracial support
that James had

believed
possible/inevitable
, and left the
country trapped in
a post-colonial
racial bind.

Discussions of race
and religion in San
Fernando provided
a coda to our 1964
journal (Clarke and
Clarke [2010](#)).

Guyana was

fascinating, and the
Creole -Indian
violence that had
prevented me from
going there in
1964 had eased
sufficiently for
independence to
be achieved under
Forbes Burnham in
1966 and for me to
visit in 1968.
Nevertheless, in

Georgetown I had
my sole experience
of being challenged
as a CIA operative!
Chaos was soon to
return, and by the
1970s, Burnham's
Guyana (BG once
more) was a
violent, dangerous
pseudo-Marxist
state and once

more virtually
unvisitable.

In early 1969 I
was invited by Dr
Vera Rubin, whose
Research Institute
for the Study of
Man in New York
had funded my
Trinidad fieldwork
, to present a paper
on the Trinidad
research at the

annual conference
of the Society for
Applied
Anthropology
which was meeting
in Mexico City in
April under her
presidency.
Realizing that this
might provide a
rare opportunity to
visit Cuba,
returning to the UK

via Madrid , I
eventually
arranged to travel
back with a friend
and colleague,
Bryan Roberts, a
sociologist at
Manchester
University, who
was also attending
the meeting. We
were able to visit
Cuba without visas

and to see,
accompanied by a
minder, a range of
higher education
institutes and a
variety of projects
and activities
including a new
town, polyclinic ,
sugar plantation ,
sugar warehouse,
and peasant
farming. This trip

enabled me to
place Cuba into the
broader Caribbean
jigsaw within a
year of my first
pan-Caribbean
journey, to arrive
at my own
independent
evaluation of the
Cuban Revolution,
and to incorporate
Cuba into my

Caribbean teaching
and writing.

Haiti: 1968
Wednesday,
August 28,
1968

The Pan Am
evening flight from
Kingston , Jamaica,
to the tiny François

Duvalier
International
Airport touched
down at 7.40 pm. A
contact in Kingston
had advised me to
ask for a taxi driver
called Scottie ,
which I did. Our
trip into the centre
of Port -au-Prince
was on a good
highway, but in the

outskirts we encountered some poor-quality housing and shops, rather like the British Caribbean (Fig. 1.3). Soon we were driving down La Grande Rue, a broad street crowded with people and street sellers, lined by

concrete buildings
with piazzas.
Skirting the
Presidential Palace,
we threaded our
way to the Syrian-
owned Park Hotel.

After the
evening meal in the
hotel I talked to
Jean-Claude and
Danielle Uvet from
the University of

Sherbrook in
Quebec, Canada,
both of them
French. They find
Haitians more
French than French
Canadians . Later I
walked towards
the palace and saw
the statue of
President
Christophe, and
some illuminated

scaffolding
declaring 'François
Duvalier Président
à Vie' (President
for Life).

**Thursday,
August 29,
1968**

My taxi driver
doesn't arrive—
there has been a

mix up. I notice a man checking the hotel register. I walk with my informal minder—a Tonton Macoute (or member of the secret police) who attaches himself to me—to the Pan Am office via the white-painted Presidential Palace.

My minder warns
me that no one is
allowed to walk on
the pavement
surrounding the
President's
forbidding
residence.

We pass
various
government
departments and
the prison—Fort

Dimanche—then
reach an area of
dilapidated
housing with wood
and concrete
buildings squeezed
into what must
once have been
back gardens, like
the Kingston
tenements . Here
there are
dressmakers and

tailors; *camionettes*
(vans) with
painted sides and
seats; English,
French, German,
and American cars;
sellers of motor car
parts; and car
workshops actually
on the pavements.

Passing the
main post office,
we eventually

reach the quayside.
Ships are tied up at
one of the finger
piers; there are
fishing boats, and
beyond I glimpse a
wholesale market.
The city looks as
though the slums
of West Kingston
have spread over
the whole of Port -
au-Prince. But this

is not the whole
truth, because
Boulevard Truman
sports modern
offices, shops, and
embassies.

From the
waterfront, I view
the flat-topped
mountains that lie
inland behind the
city; clouds rest on
the summits.

Houses line the hill
that climbs steeply
up to the elite
suburb of
Pétionville.

An interesting
aspect of the
commercial area is
the plethora of
Syrian shops. I
discover that there
are many art
galleries with

typical Caribbean
paintings of
landscapes , and
masses of wooden
carvings that
mesmerize me—
some imported
from Jamaica
because of their
cheapness.
Perhaps the most
arresting building
in downtown Port -

au -Prince is the
cast-iron market of
Hypolite. Like
Kingston's
Coronation Market,
it is a fruit and
vegetable
emporium, with
mounds of
potatoes and
tomatoes.

Apart from my
Tonton Macoute

shadow, the
Haitian state is not
greatly in evidence:
my suitcase was
not even opened
on arrival at the
airport. Another
surprise is the lack
of antagonism to
whites compared
to Jamaica.
Generally speaking,
Haitians will take

no for an answer. A
Scot I meet at
lunch, however,
tells me that
Haitian women
continually pester.
With
unemployment
endemic, most are
prepared to
prostitute
themselves for
money—or so he

claims. One woman
walked half way to
Pétionville and
back trying to
persuade him and
his cousin into a
liaison.

In the
afternoon, unable
to escape the
attentions of my
Macoute guide, I go
to both the

Catholic and
Episcopalian
Cathedrals. In the
Catholic Cathedral,
I witness a funeral
cortège with an
elaborate casket.
All the men and
women were in
black attire. The
Episcopalian
Cathedral is
decorated with

primitive murals
and has a modern
organ, the gift from
an American
benefactor. Hardly
any buildings in
the capital date
back before 1900
—earthquakes and
hurricanes have
taken their toll.
The streets are
metalled, but

broken and rutted,
and manhole
covers are more
likely to be missing
than in place.

I decide to
leave the city
centre and my
Macoute and I take
a *camionette* to the
suburb of
Pétionville . There
are good houses en

route, and in
Pétionville elite
housing without
the architectural
flare of Kingston
were observed.
Peugeots go with
respectable
housing and light-
coloured people.
Pétionville has a
Parc Central, some
big hotels, and a

produce market.
On the way back
down to the city,
we make a detour
along a stone-and-
dirt road where
there are some
shanties cheek by
jowl with good
housing and, above
the road, wattle-
and-mud huts with
thatched roofs.

Once more
downtown, I notice
alleyways between
the buildings
leading to yards—
all very densely
built up and
populated, but
calm. After dinner,
I go to Habitation
Leclerc, now
owned by the
folklorist and

dancer Katherine
Dunham , to
witness a staged
vodun ceremony.
The dancing,
singing, and
drumming were a
revelation, and two
or three women
'got the spirit.'

Friday,
August 30,

1968

With Scottie , I go up to Kenscoff via Pétionville and find that the hillsides at high altitude have been ravaged by soil erosion (Fig. 1. 3). Red soil has been stripped off, and the bedrock shows through in patches. White

stripes mark the
lines of gullies
gouged vertically
into the limestone,
and some are deep
enough to form
water shoots.
However, there is
some cultivation
along the contours,
using the hoe.
Houses are poor,
were beehive-

shaped with
wattle-and-daub
walls and thatched
roofs.

Hillsides are
now deforested
and eroded, but
plump carrots,
beetroots,
potatoes, and
lettuce are to found
in the Kenscoff
market at

1300 metres in the
swirling mist. The
market is confined
to a narrow road,
with dry goods
sold higher up the
slope. I have never
seen so many
women in one
place. Many are
young girls, and
they carry huge
baskets of

provisions,
firewood, or hens
(Plate 3.1).



Plate 3.1 Teeming
peasant market:

Kenscoff , Haiti.
Peasant markets in the
Caribbean had their
origin in agricultural
marketing by slaves
who raised produce on
the backlands of their
owners' plantations

When I get
back to the hotel to
check out and
depart for the
airport I see again

the obnoxious man
in the lobby, a
dramatist allegedly
with contacts in
Montreal. He lives
in the north of
Haiti, so he says,
and every day he
claims to be
leaving but never
goes. He must be a
member of the
secret police.

Scottie , my
driver, tells me that
Haitians draw a
veil over politics
and try to live
without lifting it.
They never know
the answer to any
question put to
them—it is safer
that way.

Dominican Republic

Arriving at the international airport for Santo Domingo, located between the capital and San Pedro de Macoris, I was subjected to intense scrutiny by the immigration

officials who were
confounded by my
closely shaven face,
which bore little
relationship, they
thought, to the
bearded
photograph in my
passport. Escaping
their inexperienced
attentions, I met an
American, Arnaud
Castell , who is

trilingual (knows French, Spanish, and English)—fluent in each, but perfect in none—as he puts it. We decided to share a taxi from the airport to the capital city (Fig. 1.3).

After a long drive through the

cane fields we
reached the
outskirts of Santo
Domingo, crossed
the Rio Ozama, and
passed through a
zone of poor
housing with
wooden houses
painted green and
brown. Finally, we
checked in at the
Hotel

Panamericano on
Calle Conde, right
in the commercial
centre.

Hungry, thirsty,
and tired, we rush
out to find a
restaurant, only to
discover that a
curfew has been in
force since
10.00 pm.
Although we are

surrounded by
neon signs and
shops selling
American goods,
only one bar is
permitted to be
open—principally
for foreigners—
and at each
intersection
throughout the city
centre there are
machine-gun nests

and soldiers in
marine-style
camouflage armed
with rifles and
pistols. With the
right wing in
control of the state
after the US
intervention in the
mini-civil war of
1965, it amuses me
that the principal
drink in the bar—

there is no food —
is a revolutionary
Cuba libre (rum
and coke).

**Saturday,
August 31,
1968**

The atmosphere in
Santo Domingo is
tense. There is
dense traffic

(mostly American
cars) on Avenida
George
Washington,
accompanied by
large crowds of
whites, lights, and
blacks, who mix
freely everywhere.
But the Jaragua
Hotel seems
virtually empty.
West of

Independencia
good-quality
housing begins and
runs down to the
park. There are
many boutiques,
and the articles
they sell are chic.
People look well-
dressed, and
visitors from
neighbouring

Puerto Rico
particularly so.

Arnaud and I
visit the colonial
core of Santo
Domingo, the
oldest European
city in the
Americas, with the
majority of the
religious and
administrative
buildings dating

from about 1500
(Plate 3.2). The
Cathedral contains
the tomb of
Columbus , and is
located only a
short distance
from the Alcázar
de Colón, the
Viceroy's Palace.
Santo Nicolás de
Bari (1503–1506),
the first hospital in

the New World, is
also located in this
historical complex,
as is the
Monasterio de San
Francisco (1508)—
both now in ruins.



Plate 3.2 Statue of
Isabel la Católica (on

right) to
commemorate the
joint sponsor of
Columbus's first
voyage to the
Caribbean, plus
refurbished colonial
housing in the historic
core of Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic.
Santo Domingo was
the first European
settlement in the
Americas

Beyond the
historic area, the
rest of the capital
was disappointing.
We discovered only
three cinemas, and
there was no
theatrical life.
During the
dictatorship of
Trujillo people
were afraid to go
out at night, and

the current curfew
is extending the
tension. The
atmosphere is
sombre. Not
hostile, just dead,
and rather
frightening
nonetheless.

Arnauld tells
me about his friend
Rivière , a frogman
who was killed by

US soldiers on
Calle Conde near
our hotel. This
occurred during
the American
military
intervention in the
civil war between
left- and right-wing
factions of the DR
army in 1965 to
prevent the Castro-

leaning left from
taking power.

Early in the
evening we try
another bar, where
the white
proprietor
entertains us with
the story of the
curfews imposed
by the dictator
Trujillo ,
assassinated in

1961, who in the
1950s used to
wander on his own
through the empty
streets of the
capital, then called
Ciudad Trujillo,
and shoot anything
that moved.

**Sunday,
September 1,**

1968

A general strike
has been called.
Everything is
closed down, and
there are no taxis.
We manage to get
two dubious-
looking young
men, one with a
heavily scarred
forehead, to drive
us from our hotel

to the airport—a
hair-raising dash in
a wreck of a car
with next-to-no
brakes.

We had
prepared ourselves
—in a secret
conversation
carried on between
us in French—for
their attempt to
rob us on the

empty road
through the
canefields, only for
the car to break
down within sight
of the terminal
building. With
cases in hand we
had to walk the last
few hundred yards
in the midday sun,
but that was far
preferable to

having a tussle
with the two men,
which we were
glad we had
somehow avoided.

The strike, of
course, created
chaos at the
airport, where the
boxes of
possessions and
cargo carried by
Caribbean

travellers blocked
the gangways and
departure lounges.
After a three-hour
wait Arnaud and I
caught separate
flights to Puerto
Rico, where he
teaches at the
University of San
Germán.

I loved the
beautiful old

colonial buildings
of Santo Domingo,
and regretted
missing the rural
areas, which I had
intended to visit.
The roads are far
better than in
Haiti, but the
atmosphere was
simply terrible,
and I was glad to
get away. Yet we

had been free to wander around unaccompanied and, for the most part, unsolicited—an improvement on Haiti where you need an internal passport to get to the provinces.

Puerto Rico

San Juan—at last a
real international
airport (Fig. 1.3)!
My taxi takes me
downtown, at
some speed, via
the Avenida
Baldorioty and
Avenida Laguna
del Conde; we pass
the Caribe Hilton,
and finish up at the
Plaza Baldorioty or

plaza de armas
(parade ground)
where the Hotel
Central is located. I
meet Arnaud.

In the evening,
we look at the
carefully restored
old town, its
colonial streets full
of life, big
American cars, and
exquisitely

preserved Spanish
buildings.

**Monday,
September 2,
1968**

Today is Labour
Day and a public
holiday, so we
return to the
colonial town,
looking at the

Capella Cristo and
the Fortaleza or
Governor's palace,
and taking in the
Museo Nacional
del Arte.

Particularly
striking is the
fortress of El
Morro , which
protects the
enormous harbour
or puerto rico (rich

port), a word
mistakenly
swapped by an
early cartographer
with the island's
original name of
San Juan.

Tourism is
taking over the
colonial town,
where there are
bookshops,
boutiques, and art

galleries, some
with American
girls serving in
them who speak no
Spanish. Arnaud
tells me that
Americans in
Puerto Rico are
clannish and often
speak only English.
In his estimate, US
forces personnel
number 100,000

and occupy one-tenth of the land area of the island.

In the distance, we could make out the Condado Beach and the high-rise developments of Santurce .

Arnaud is very critical of Americans, who are preoccupied

with life insurance,
new cars, new
furniture, new
gadgets, and lots of
TVs so that the
family can choose
which to watch—
always in a dash,
they have no time
for life. They have
to spend their
spare cash on
tangible goods.

The US
financial
penetration
of Middle
and South
America
(and
Europe) is
alarming.
Jamaica, it
seems to
me, will
hardly be

able to
handle the
money that
the US will
provide in
loans.

**Tuesday,
September 3,
1968**

Arnaud has gone
back to San

Germán to teach,
so I decide to travel
to Mayagüez and
back in a day along
the north coast
road to the west of
San Juan (Fig. 1.3).
The outskirts of
San Juan are very
American—
throughways,
shopping plazas,
and car lots. The

suburban housing estates are clearly the models for the modern mass - housing I have seen previously in Jamaica, such as Mona Heights and Harbour View, using identical methods of prefabrication on site. But Puerto

Rican housing
looks better than
the Jamaican
equivalent—it is
bigger and more
varied with two-
storied buildings
and apartments as
well as bungalows.

The coast road
is flanked with
limestone haystack
hills, known locally

as *pepinos*
(cucumbers), some
shaped like
beached whales,
but the coastal
plain itself is under
fields of sugar, and
occasionally
pineapples, the
former supplying
about half a dozen
centrales or
enormous sugar

factories . There is
no sign of life,
however, because
the harvest is
finished and this is
el tiempo muerto
(dead season).

Wherever there
is sugar cane,
housing is of
poorer quality. But
there is better
housing in many of

the rural areas, and especially on the outskirts of the major cities such as Quebradillas and Mayagüez . Both have garment industries associated with the Fomento (Development) Programme, which attracts US capital.

The population is predominantly white and mulatto with few blacks—the reverse of the situation in Haiti, which is predominantly a black society, and quite different from the mulatto Dominican Republic. African

aspects of folk
culture so typical
of Jamaica are
notably missing.
Puerto Rico is
decidedly Spanish
—it was a Spanish
colony until 1898.

We pass
through Aguadillo ,
where small, old
houses line the
main street, and

shacks and huts
occupy the *pepinos*
on the periphery.

I find Mayagüez
disappointing. It
contains nothing
old, and its ferro-
concrete is
charmless. I am
trapped for ages in
the post office by a
heavy rain storm.
As I leave for San

Juan, my eye is
taken by numerous
protestant
churches including
the Church of God,
all rivals to
indigenous
Catholicism.

**Wednesday,
September 4,
1968**

Today my excursion is going to take me from San Juan to Ponce, the second city of Puerto Rico, on the south coast (Fig. 1. 3). We cross the bridge over the Canal de Martín Peña, on either side of which there are poor squatter

shacks, and soon
catch a glimpse of
the clock tower of
the Universidad de
Puerto Rico at Río
Piedras. On the
outskirts, there are
the inevitable
shopping plazas
and the odd field of
used, broken cars.
On either side of
Caguas hills of

shale rise up
steeply and are
under pasture or
abandoned, with
eroded patches in
each side.

The road south
of Caguas winds
through the
pepinos; Tuxtla is
an undistinguished
small town; sugar
plantations occupy

the flatter lands
and there is a
sugar factory .
Cayey's houses are
either on stilts or
constructed like
wooden sheds, the
larger ones having
shutters or louvres
(the latter as
improvements).
Some of the newer
houses were

originally built on
stilts and then the
ground floor was
filled in—as is so
commonly the case
in Trinidad. The
countryside
between Cayey and
Salinas is drab,
before the land
drops dramatically
to the coastal plain,
which is largely

under sugar cane
cultivation. Much
of the rural
housing here is
very poor—just
shacks on the bare
grassless ground.

Big *centrales*
cluster around
Ponce , which
developed with US
capital after 1900,
and a few inner

neighbourhoods of
the city contain art
nouveau gems.
Some of the sugar
production is
irrigated and
mechanized. As in
Mayagüez there
are many
protestant
churches—La
Iglesia de Dios, La
Iglesia de la

Nazarene, and La
Iglesia Pentecostal.

The winding
road back from
Ponce to San Juan
is very busy, with
SeaLand
containers and
carriers
everywhere. But
the villages and
towns are clean
and the children all

have shoes, unlike
children in Jamaica
and Haiti.

American
influence and
values, which are
becoming
increasingly visible
in the British
Caribbean, are
here writ large as a
surface
encrustation. Since

the late 1950s,
Puerto Rico has
been not only an
electoral
democracy with
parties affiliated to
their US
equivalents, but a
self-governing
Estado Asociado
Libre
(Commonwealth or
Free Associated

State) of the US,
having previously
been a
dependency.

**St Thomas,
American
Virgin Islands
Thursday,
September 5,
1968**

I checked out of my hotel in San Juan at 5.30 am and prepared to leave for the airport, from which my flight took off over the north-east coast of Puerto Rico (Fig. 1.5). Hills and mountains soon gave way to islands, and after a

mere 20 minutes I touched down on St Thomas in the American Virgin Islands, finishing up in a glorified hanger (Harry S. Truman Airport). The College of the Virgin Islands, my destination, is housed in a former naval base, and the

former submarine
installation is now
an industrial
estate.

I walk to the
bus for Charlotte
Amalie, formerly
the Danish colonial
capital (Fig. 1.4).
American,
European, and
British cars cruise
by on the right-

hand side of the
road, as they do in
Haiti, the
Dominican
Republic, and
Puerto Rico, but as
they do not in
British colonies
past and present
(Jamaica and
Trinidad and
Tobago became
independent in

1962, Barbados
and Guyana in
1966).

The population
is as mixed as the
cars. I am told that
20 percent of the
American Virgin
Islands residents
are from the US,
the rest locals from
the American
Virgins,

immigrants from
the British Virgin
Islands (BVI) , plus
chachas (poor
French whites) and
Danes. English,
Spanish, and some
Danish and Dutch
are spoken.

Charlotte
Amalie is
architecturally
distinctive but

most of the historic
buildings have
been taken over by
US-owned freeport
shops of various
kinds, selling
jewellery, liquor,
perfume, clothes,
cameras, radios,
and other portable
duty-free luxuries
that have
intrinsically

nothing to do with
the Caribbean. I am
told that people
come from Puerto
Rico just to shop.
The tourist trade is
everything—
cruises can be
arranged, and
deep-sea-fishing
boats await in the
harbour. Newer
buildings in the

centre consist of a
produce market
with a corrugated-
iron roof and a US
post office. Fish
and provisions are
sold at the
quayside.

I get into an
altercation with
the bus driver who
almost failed to
stop for me at the

bus stop outside
the post office.
Later a Dane on the
same bus told me I
was 'the wrong
colour for the
driver.' The bus
drops me off at the
minute, hilly
campus of the
College of the
Virgin Islands,
where Mrs Carlson

—an American—
the co-ordinator of
research, fills me in
on the local scene.
She says that anti-
white feeling is
strong. Taxi drivers
are influenced by
US Black Power of
the Stokely
Carmichael and
Eldridge Cleaver
variety; when she

worked in a local bank she suffered discrimination.

White children of expatriates go to local private schools . All school leavers with good grades go to US colleges, or to the College of the Virgin Islands, which gives two

years of
preliminary
training before
departure to the
US.

Mrs Carlson
claims that there is
no shortage of
public funds for
development
purposes in the
Virgin Islands, but
the cost of living is

very high, and
most of the food is
imported.

My purpose in
coming to the
College is to talk
with Dr Ed Towle ,
a contact of David
Lowenthal's. Ed is
a marine biologist,
and concerned
about
developments on

the BVI territory of Anegada , a coral limestone island with a maximum elevation of 25 feet, for which the British firm of Bates Hill has negotiated a 199-year lease from the British government (Fig. 1.5).

Ed tells me that
Bates Hill's plan is
to create a reserve
for Anegadans, to
develop the
remainder of the
island for tourism
and freeport
manufacturing ,
and to construct a
runway (for jumbo
jets it is rumoured)
and airport on the

white limestone,
from which
tourists and
businessmen can
be distributed to
the other Virgin
Islands by
hovercraft.

Ed admits that
the Anegadans
have so far been
won over by Bates
Hill, but he

believes that their
enthusiasm is
waning—the
people have a good
standard of
education . How
will they take to
this change, and
will the
development of the
runway not wipe
out a rare colony of
iguanas?

It seems that
the current
settlement on
Anegada is poorly
located, and that
there is an
endemic water
problem.
Conservation of
the island's stone
field boundaries,
fossil features from
the era of cotton

and slavery, is also required. Ed wants to get a UNESCO grant for me to go out to the BVI as a government consultant to report on Anegada , as well as doing an urban analysis of Road Town, Tortola .

St Thomas was Danish until 1917 when it was sold to the US to guard one of the key approaches to the Panama Canal. It was once a pirate lair, close to Puerto Rico, and the British, Dutch, and French Caribbean islands (Fig. 1.5).

There are not
many signs of
Danish rule, except
the colonial
buildings and place
names.

Sint Maarten/Sain t Martin

My mid -afternoon
flight from St

Thomas to Sint
Maarten took
between 60 and
90 minutes, and we
made a brief
stopover on St
Croix (also in the
American Virgin
Islands), which is
so dry that it
supports only
cattle (Fig. 1.5).
From the air, you

can make out the
limestone
chimneys of
abandoned sugar
factories and the
limestone bases of
the derelict
windmills. The
field colour—dark
green—indicates
where sugar was
probably once
grown—it was

being planted until
a couple of years
ago.

Juliana Airport,
on the southern—
Dutch—side of the
island, has no
customs, so I am
immediately
whisked away by
taxi to the China
Night Hotel in
Philipsburg (Fig. 1.

4). My driver offers the reassuring advice, 'no killings and no trouble here.'

Tourism and administration seem to be the mainstays in Dutch Sint Maarten and French St Martin , the latter being

separated from the former by the only land border in the Caribbean with the exception of the fractious frontier between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Here the line of demarcation is harmonious to the point of being non-existent.

Nothing is
growing on this
dry, mountainous
island, whose
raison d'être was
for long the salt
pond at Great Bay.
The pond has been
abandoned for
10 years, and is
now being filled
with quarried
stone so that

Philipsburg , the capital, can expand inland.

Philipsburg is located on a sandbar: to the front is the harbour and the Caribbean Sea; to the rear, the defunct salt pond, where the made ground is being

used as a football
pitch and an
additional road.
The town is
cramped, with only
two roads—Front
Street and Back
Street, each
between 800 yards
and a mile long.

Front Street has
the best houses,
the freeport shops,

churches, and
administrative
offices. Back Street
is much poorer,
with a few houses
for the middle
class, shops, and
churches—such as
the Anglican
Church and the
Church of God.
Most houses
here are poor with

shingle walls on a brick base, though their interiors have easy chairs, radios, and a few have TVs.

There are fine old colonial buildings on Front Street, such as the Administrator's Office and the Methodist Church. Cars are American,

continental
European, and
British: Dutch and
English are used in
official
publications and in
schools , though
English is the
lingua franca of
everyday life.

Private funding
for tourist
development is

coming from
international
sources: Dutch
money is going
into one hotel,
while in two others
US funds are
involved. Freeport
goods are cheap—
a half bottle of
Mount Gay rum is
sold for little more
than half a dollar. I

note a Jewish star
over one building,
and there are
Indian-owned
shops downtown.

Philipsburg is a
quiet, slow, easy-
going community
—not yet fully
orientated to
tourism , and many
people are dirt
poor, as their

housing and yards
indicate. Rain is
collected from the
roofs and stored in
large concrete
cisterns—very
common I later
discover in the arid
north -east
Caribbean.

In their sitting
rooms many
people have

photographs of
Queen Juliana and
Prince Bernhardt
(like the Queen
and Prince Philip
in the British
territories), and
there is a plaque at
the jetty
commemorating
Princess Juliana's
inspiring visit in
the dark days at

the end of the
World War II.

On a clear day,
from Sint Maarten
you can see Saba ,
St Eustatius , St
Barts , St. Kitts and
Nevis —a mixture
of Dutch, French,
and British
dependencies. I
think Sint Maarten
is more

international than purely Dutch, an interpretation borne out by the source of TV programmes received from Antigua, St Thomas , and Puerto Rico (Fig. 1.5).

**Friday,
September 6,**

1968

I take an early
morning walk
around Philipsburg
and go to the jetty
to see fish and
ground provisions
being unloaded
from a small boat
from Dominica —
they are sold in an
alleyway near the
sea. Later, en route

to the airport, I
notice a string of
middle -class
bungalows
following the
alignment of the
main road. My
driver tells me that
he had worked in
the oilfields of
Curaçao , where he
earned enough to
build a house and

buy his large
American taxi.

At the airport, a
girl at the bar asks
me if I can to order
my drink in French
—I imagine she is
an immigrant from
one of the
neighbouring
French territories.

Anguilla

The main purpose of my stopover in Philipsburg has been to catch a Windward Islands Airline flight, in this case with just two other passengers, to Anguilla (Fig. 1.5). We soar high over

Marigot , the capital of French St Martin , and cross 12 kilometres of open sea to our destination.

Anguilla is a flat limestone slab rising to a height of 65 metres at its maximum (Fig. 1. 6), which makes it almost impossible

to see from St
Martin . We cross a
white sand beach,
but the green scrub
conceals the
interior
settlements from
the air.

When we are
over the runway,
the pilot has to
avoid a steamroller,
swinging the plane

to one side and
landing on the dirt
strip. I am the only
person to check
through
immigration and
customs at the
minute airport
terminal—one
official deals with
both issues. I am
then whisked off
by a taxi driver

who urges me to
see something of
the *country* during
my stay—it is only
91 square kilometr
es in extent.

According to
my taxi driver,
petrol prices have
gone up from
60 cents to one
British West Indian
dollar per gallon

over the last year,
since supplies from
St Kitts were
replaced by those
from St Martin .
Esso-owned tanks
at Crocus Bay were
requisitioned by
the Antigua
Council after Esso
in Puerto Rico had
heeded the
Kittitian warning

not to fill them in
June 1967.

The May 1967
rupture between
Anguilla and the
other two islands
in the tri-island
colony , St Kitts
and Nevis , had
been triggered by
the move from
colony to
associated

statehood, which
left the UK
responsible for
overseas
representation and
defence, and
granted self-
government to the
three islands,
dominated by the
larger and more
populous St Kitts
(34,000

population).
Anguilla has a
population of
6000, and some
tiny dependencies
such as Sombrero,
where there is a
lighthouse.

In the new
circumstances,
Anguilla Airways
maintains flights to
St Croix and St

Thomas , and one flight comes from Puerto Rico each week to collect lobsters and bring in consumer goods. Provisions are also imported by schooner from Puerto Rico.

After a hearty late breakfast at Lloyd's Guest

House, I set out to explore the main settlement, known as The Valley, which runs east from Crocus Bay towards the centre of the island (Fig. 1.6). Houses are located at the side of the road in a discontinuous ribbon with yards

stretching back
behind them, and
with houses and
more yards after
that in a higgledy-
piggledy fashion.
The earth is dry—a
mixture of sand,
white stones, and
scrub, with
plantings of red
peas waiting for
the rain to come.

I walk past the
Agricultural
Department, the
Church of God, the
secondary school ,
and the playing
field before I reach
the American
Bank, where the
girls in green
uniforms look
more like models
than bank clerks.

The Valley also
boasts a Barclays
Bank, two bars, a
few groceries, two
of which are
supermarkets, and
dry goods shops.
Most of the goods
on sale are of
American origin—
as were the canned
and bottled food I
ate at the guest

house. I find a bookshop and go in; there are a few shelves, each thinly covered with books—mostly devoted to James Bond. They also sell Havoline motor oil.

Further on I encounter the funeral of a 40 year

old woman. There is a mauve casket in the back of a jeep. This is followed on foot by a group of women and girls with a few men, plus a cortège of cars. Everyone is dressed in black or white.

Anguillans are very welcoming. I meet Mr Hughes , Headmaster of the Secondary School , who tells me that he has a BA in French, Latin, and English, and an MA in Education from Carleton University in Ottawa. He has been at the school

since 1963. There are 265 children on the roll and 11 staff, but only 2 (including the head) have university degrees. Conditions seem to be much worse in the Valley Boys Primary School , where there are 340 children in

eight classes, all
being taught in one
room.

Mr Hughes
explains that, as
there is nothing for
the children to do
in Anguilla once
they leave school ,
many go to
England, where
there is a
concentration in

Sloughbucks [*sic*],
St Thomas , the
other islands, or
the US—a large
colony already
exists in New
York.¹

Back at my
lodgings, Mrs Lloyd
explains that she
won a scholarship
for advanced
nursing training in

the UK and, after her return, worked at the Anguilla hospital. She and her husband left the island when the trouble with St Kitts broke out last year. Her husband David Lloyd had been the Anguillan representative to the St Kitts Council

. Mrs Lloyd lost her job after her departure, and is now employed as a district nurse in ante- and post-natal clinics on the island.

Another person who fills me in on local politics is Lynne Moorling, a British Voluntary

Service Overseas
(VSO) worker who
is in the Caribbean
with her husband.
He is an engineer
working on the
runway, while she
is a teacher at the
secondary school .
Lynne claims that
Jeremiah (Jerry)
Gumbs, one of the
1967 anti-St Kitts

leaders, is disliked
on the island
because he is
thought of as
dictatorial and an
outsider: he lives
in the US and is a
naturalized US
citizen.

David Lloyd,
too, is critical of
the present
situation. He

concedes that
many people were
dissatisfied with
the former
relationship with
St. Kitts , but now
that associated
status has been
granted and the
Kittitian
authorities have
been forcibly

expelled, what
next?

I gather that
Anguilla has an
Interim Council of
seven members,
chaired by Ronald
Webster . He is said
to have been the
houseboy and later
manager to a
wealthy woman on
French St. Martin

who left him all her money when she died. Now he owns hotels and property on St Martin , and is rumoured to have put half a million BWI dollars into the kitty to launch quasi-independent Anguilla.

Jeremiah
Gumbs is in the oil-
fuel business in
New Jersey, and is
the Anguilla
Representative to
the United Nations.
He devised the
Anguilla flag, and is
in some way
associated with the
postage stamp and
coinage schemes,

both of which are
supposed to raise
revenue for the
Lilliputian
government.

I ask myself
what the leaders of
the revolt stand to
gain personally
from Anguilla's
secession from the
Associated State of
St Kitts , Nevis ,

and Anguilla? Mr
Lloyd tells me that
he thinks the
Council's aim is to
get some form of
association with
the US, along the
lines of St Thomas
—Mr Lloyd is
strongly pro-
British, however.

Mr Lee is the
UK Administrator

on Anguilla and it
is his job to try and
clear things up.

**Saturday,
September 7,
1968**

As far as I can
establish, the
series of events
associated with the
break-up between

St Kitts and
Anguilla in 1967
developed like this:

1. Britain set up
the Associated
State of St Kitts ,
Nevis , and
Anguilla (out of
the three-island
colony) in
January 1967
under veteran
Kittitian

politician

Robert

Bradshaw;

2. Anguilla's revolt took place, the Kittitian police were asked to leave on May 29, cars were driven up and down the airport landing strip and oil

barrels
deployed to
prevent
airborne
reinforcements
from St Kitts ,
70 miles away,
from landing;

3. St Kitts halted
all mail
deliveries, froze
individual bank
accounts,

ceased payment
of government
salaries and
local services,
and seized
development
funds;

4. In July a
referendum on
Anguilla opted
to secede from
the Associate

State by 1813 to

5. ~~five votes~~ ^{Conference} were held in two recently independent Commonwealth Caribbean countries— Barbados (July 1967) followed by Jamaica (August 1967)

—to resolve the
issue;

6. Overprinting of
postage stamps
and
commemorative
coinage were
proposed as
fund-raising
gambits. In the
case of coinage,
the San
Francisco Group

lodged
proposals with
the Numismatic
Society, but few
coins reached
Anguilla, and
that was equally
true of the
proceeds;

7. Sales of
honorary
passports were
broached;

8. Internal local government was established by the United Nations as Anguilla was offered 'interim status' for one year by the UK, although technically speaking it was

no longer
supposed to be
involved in the
internal affairs
of the
Associated
State. St Kitts
agreed to
release the mail
that had been
embargoed, and
the UK
consented to

help with
economic
development in
the shape of
roads, the
runway, and
agriculture.

It seems that
discontent with St
Kitts in Anguilla
now focuses on the
following issues:

1. neglect of
infrastructure
—there is no
port or paved
airfield, only
3 miles of
paved roads,
no telephone
or electricity;
2. Anguillans
were not
properly
consulted

prior to the
introduction of
Associated
Statehood;

3. the airfield has
been extended
too close to
homes;
4. Anguillans are
not permitted
to plant crops

on unused
Crown Land;

5.

Anguilla has
been turned
into a neo-
colony of St
Kitts ;

6.

neglect by St
Kitts —the
former head of
government,
Paul Southwell

, didn't visit the
island for
7 years;

7. Anguilla's
representation
in the councils
of St Kitts is
weak, because
it is in
opposition to
the St Kitts
Labour Party,
which forms
the core of the

government.

Mr Lloyd
introduces me to a
male cousin of his
from Trinidad, and
I am party to their
accurate and open
discussion of the
role of East Indians
in Trinidad life and
politics. They are
joined by a near-
white lady from

the Dominican Republic, the widow of another of Mr Lloyd's relatives—a former sugar worker in the Dominican Republic. The purpose of their gathering is to discuss a piece of family land in

Anguilla in which
they all have an
interest.

Talks with
locals suggest that
the historic cotton
industry died in
the last 10 years—
vestiges of the
cotton works are
still visible; sheep
and goats are still
raised as well as

cattle that graze
the island's
pastures.

The main local
activities are
associated with the
salt ponds,
building boats and
schooners, lobster
fishing , tourism ,
services and
administration,
and 'taking in one

another's washing.'
Services in
Anguilla are at best
rudimentary: there
is no electricity
(other than that
generated by small
privately owned
turbines), no
sewerage, no
properly made
road—only tracks

beyond the main
settlements.

In the early
evening, I walk up
Crocus Hill (just
over 65 metres),
the highest point in
Anguilla, to watch
the golden sunset
spread blue
shadows across the
largely flat
landscape (Fig. 1.

6). I encounter a young shepherd and his small flock of goats and sheep. He tells me that he is glad to be back in Anguilla from 'Sloughbucks' because he was homesick for the island.

After dinner with the Lloyds,

David Lloyd opens
up to me and tells
me what has been
happening in
Anguilla. Peter
Adams was the last
councillor to
represent Anguilla
in St Kitts , though
he has now signed
a document
relinquishing his
office—Mr Lloyd

had warned
Anguillans that he
was a
troublemaker.

David is
worried, I think,
that the revolt will
be seen not so
much as against St
Kitts as against the
UK. He says that
Jerry Gumbs tried
to swap poor-

quality land near
the hospital for
good land near the
airport, on which
to build a bank.
Two of the banks
have been here for
only the last
2 years—until
recently Barclays
was run on a part-
time basis from St
Kitts .

Apparently,
David Lloyd was
the Anguilla
Councillor in St
Kitts from 1948 to
1958. From 1958
to 1962 he was a
Federal MP for St
Kitts , Nevis and
Anguilla with
Robert Bradshaw ,
and he suggests
that Bradshaw ,

who is God-fearing,
kept the
Federation
together—literally
so as Minister of
Transport. When
they were serving
together in the
Federal Legislature
based in Trinidad,
Bradshaw used to
remind David to

say his prayers at night.

In David's view, insularity broke up the federation in 1960–1961, with the Jamaican referendum against it and Trinidad's subsequent withdrawal. He expresses his fears

about racial feeling
in Anguilla, and
remarks that the
island is too small
for internal
dissentions—‘I
treat you manly
and I expect you to
treat me manly.’

**Sunday,
September 8,**

1968

The Lloyds arrange
for Claude
Richardson, a
young insurance
agent and
politician, to drive
me to some of the
key locations on
the island, during
which I glean quite
a bit of interesting
information and

meet several
important players
in the secession.

The landscape
reminds me of
Provence, with
bare limestone,
gnarled trees and
bushes, luminous
air, intense heat,
blue skies, bleating
sheep and goats,
and scattered

housing. Most houses are comparatively new, because the entire stock was damaged by Hurricane Donna in 1960.

The VSO complement is six: two teachers (one about to arrive), two civil engineers working on the

runway, and two nurses. The mobile clinic is currently immobile. No council minutes are being kept, so people are not properly informed about its deliberations.

At the minute settlement of Sandy Ground

which, like
Philipsburg is
situated on infill, I
see the only
commercial salt
pond still
operating on the
island—it exports
to Trinidad (Fig. 1.
6). The blue-red
colour of the pond
indicates that it is
maturing towards

ripeness. Here I
meet Emile Gumbs,
the manager, who
is light coloured
with European
features—his wife
is Canadian .

We drive to
Paul Randall's
hotel at the idyllic
Maunday's Bay,
which has been
open since January

1968 but has
virtually no guests.
I am told that the
lobster business in
Anguilla has not
been properly
regulated since the
secession. This is a
serious lapse in
resource
conservation,
because the
Agricultural

Department should ensure that spawning lobster, when caught, are returned to the fishing grounds.

We visit the attractive beach at Mead's Bay, and the Rendez-Vous Hotel owned by Jerry Gumbs. I wonder whether

Ronald Webster
and his sidekick
Atlin Harrigan
triggered 'the
revolution' in the
hope of taking over
the island? They
fired the first shots
in the air on the
occasion of the
'Miss Associated
Statehood' beauty
competition in

January 1967.
Webster is
described to me by
Claude Richardson
as a millionaire,
but Harrigan is an
electrician and
odd-job man.
Basically, they are
similar men,
separated by
Webster's chance
fortune.

Webster , who
is currently
building a
supermarket and
cinema, owns a
half-completed
hotel at Island
Harbour in the
north-east of
Anguilla (Fig. 1.6).
His critics
comment that he
never finishes

anything, and that it will be the same with Anguilla. It is rumoured that Webster supports Anguilla's association with Canada, but the majority of islanders are said to want associated statehood with the

UK or UN
trusteeship.

We meet
Webster in the
garden of his
sister's home, next
door to his house
and immediately
opposite the
warehouse and
grocery that now
occupy a former
hotel of his. He is

not in the least
imposing or
impressive. He has
the air of an East
Indian Trinidadian
who has struck it
rich.

Claude
Richardson takes
me to meet Atlin
Harrigan, who
appears
straightforward,

but
undistinguished.
Claude also
mentioned Peter
Adams, who was
the political
representative of
Anguilla at the
point of transition
from colonial to
associate status. He
is thought to have
sold out to St Kitts

when the going got
difficult—though
he is still on the
island.

I reflect that
Richardson ,
Webster , Harrigan
, and Emile Gumbs
are essentially
mulatto (and think
back to David
Lloyd's comments
about racism)—I

gather that the people of the north-east end of the island are 'light coloured.' In my view, the current leaders of Anguilla, Ronald Webster (chairman of the Council), Atlin Harrigan, Claude Richardson—my guide—and Emile

Gumbs (Jeremiah's cousin) have the good of the island at heart, though no clear idea about how to achieve it.

In the evening, I go to the cinema to see *Arabesque* , a film starring Gregory Peck and Sophia Loren. Most of the audience are

teenagers,
predominantly
boys. Judging by
their engagement
with the exciting
and violent
conclusion, they
must have been the
ones who secured
the beaches for the
Anguillan
'revolution' last
year.

**St Kitts
Monday,
September 9,
1968**

I have a three -
hour wait to get
out of Anguilla—
Windward Islands
Airways failed to
turn up—but I
manage to swap

my ticket for an
Anguilla Airways
flight (owned by
Jerry Gumbs) to St
Martin , and then
pick up a
connection to St
Kitts. As we
descend the
landscape of St
Kitts beneath my
plane consists of
volcanic cones,

with steep slopes
smoothing off to
the sea, and sugar
cane grown
everywhere, except
in the far south of
the island (Fig. 1.
4).

Scattered over
the countryside are
chimneys of long-
abandoned sugar
factories and the

bases of derelict
windmills. Yet
some plantations
are still active.
Now there are
about 50 estates,
all locally owned,
but only one sugar
factory , operated
by a firm based in
London. No cane
farming by small
cultivators takes

place, but three estates on the windward coast have been bought by the government to use for land-settlement schemes.

The island's 50 estates are organized into a series of syndicates producing sugar

but no rum. Cane
has been loaded
mechanically for
the last three
crops, and taken by
tractor to depots
from where it is
transported by
narrow-gauge
railway to the
sugar factory .
Women weed the
cane by hand, and,

unlike Jamaica,
there is no burning
before cutting. The
molasses residue
from the
manufacturing
process is put back
on the fields for
fertilizer, while the
bagasse is used for
generating the
electric power
needed by the

central factory .
The factory is
making just under
40,000 tons of
sugar per annum,
which is well
below capacity.

The guts and
rivers running
down from the
volcanic peaks
often form the
boundaries of the

estates.

Traditionally they have been used by plantation workers for their provision grounds. Similar provision crops of sweet potato, eddoe, and cassava are also planted on estate land once the cane has been cut, and cane trash

is used as mulch
for dry farming.

Sugar
plantations run
down slope from
the interior
mountain to the
sea—originally,
they had their own
wharves on the
coast. Settlements
are currently being
relocated from the

high land to the island-encircling road following the seashore. In some cases, houses are being carried down intact. Villages are to all intents and purposes estate villages, and bear the name of the property or original owner—

such as
Challenger's.

Stretching from
mountainous
interior across the
plain to the coast,
sugar cane reaches
down to the road
and sometimes
crosses it. Village
houses are
generally on the
coastal side, but

the quality of
housing in this
discontinuous ring
of settlement—one
huge street village
—is highly
variable. There is
some adequate
private and
government
property for rental,
but there are also
impoverished

tenements and shanties, the latter located in yards with peppercorn rents.

St Kitts is a classical plantation economy now transformed from being one unit in a tri-island colony into a fractured two-island

associated state
with the
outdated motto
'Liberty in Trinity.'
I am much
impressed by the
fortress at
Brimstone Hill.
Developed to
provide protection
for the island in the
eighteenth century
—its guns had a

range of 10 miles
—it was
abandoned as a
military
installation in the
middle of the
nineteenth century.
I think it should be
left as a ruin.

Basseterre , the
capital, was rebuilt
after the fire of
1866, but a few of

the original
Georgian buildings
survive with
lookout windows
in the roof from
which merchants
could follow
shipping. Much of
the new concrete
housing on the
outskirts is of the
Caribbean 'box'
type. Some of the

poor-quality yards on the edge of the city centre are shocking, and College Street has an open drain that runs down to the sea.

I enquire about the location of the afternoon football match that begins at 4.30 pm—it is

between two self-
styled teams
Benfica and Santos.
I meet up with
Vanetta Ross, a
schoolteacher in
Basseterre , to
whom I was
introduced by
David Lowenthal in
New York in 1966,
on my way back to
the UK from

Mexico. Once the game is over and dusk is falling, the crowd makes its way back to Basseterre , where it disperses at the wharf at about 6.30 pm. There is something unpretentious about the Leewards.

According to
Vanetta, the
average Kittitian is
not much bothered
about the Anguilla
crisis . However,
one of my taxi
drivers earlier
today claimed that
the rupture would
deprive St Kitts of
tourism revenue. It
seems that

Bradshaw's
government
cannot afford to
lose face over
Anguilla.

Vanetta tells me
that a new hospital
has just been
opened in
Basseterre , for
which the
Canadian
government has

provided
equipment. The
Canadians have
also carried out a
survey for the
proposed deep-
water harbour,
since lightering is
used at present.
New schools have
been opened
around the island,
and many estates

now provide
medical care for
their employees.

**Tuesday,
September
10, 1968**

I glean a bit about
Dr William Herbert
of the People's
Action Movement
(PAM) and Leader

of the Opposition.
His father was
secretary of the
Sugar Board and at
loggerheads with
the former sugar
trade unionist and
black politician,
Robert Bradshaw.
PAM is the only
party in opposition
to continue to

function after the last election.

It seems that after his party's electoral defeat in 1966, Herbert was nominated by the two PAM representatives of St Kitts and Nevis . His nomination was disallowed by the constitution,

because he had
contested a seat at
the election—
unless it could be
shown that there
was a precedent.
Claude Richardson
had told me, when
I met him in
Anguilla, that at
the Barbados
Conference
convened to

discuss the
Anguilla crisis,
Robert
Lightbourne of
Jamaica had
revealed that a
defeated candidate
had been
successfully
nominated to the
Legislative Council
in Jamaica in the
early 1950s—and

this was a
precedent.

The recent
political crisis on
St Kitts (quite
separate from the
defection of
Anguilla) began
with an attack on
June 10, 1967; it is
said that the aim
was to kidnap
Bradshaw —

perhaps that is
why he went
around wearing a
gun. A State of
Emergency was
declared, but the
conspiracy trial
failed, largely
because the
government tried
to make too much
capital out of it,
and witnesses lied.

Herbert was
abroad on 10 June,
but after he
returned he held a
public meeting,
despite the fact
that they had been
banned. Later the
ban was shown to
be unconstitutional
—this lack of legal
clarity is a bad

trend in the
Caribbean.

I am told that
the people of St
Kitts don't want to
work in the sugar
industry . Cane
cutters used to
come from
Anguilla, and more
recently from the
other islands. Most
locals with any

money have made
it elsewhere—
especially in the oil
industry in
Trinidad and
Bonaire —and
returned to farm or
open a business.

I took the ferry
to Nevis in the
afternoon (Fig. 1.
4). The boat was
packed and many

of the young
children were
seasick. At the
Nevis wharf when
we docked at
Charlestown the
goods unloaded
were Trout Hall
orange juice from
Jamaica and
supplies of tinned
food . Nevis has a
cotton ginnery and

abundant coconut
groves , which
export their
produce to
Trinidad, since the
local copra factory
has failed. High up
on the hillside I
notice abandoned
estates, similar to
the ones in St Kitts.
Nevis went out of
sugar in the 1840s.

In the evening, I had a long talk with Vanetta about social mobility in the Caribbean. She thinks that most people who have made it out of the working class have done so through education or by earning money abroad—the places

of opportunity
being Trinidad,
Bonaire , St
Thomas , the US,
and the UK. Most
taxi drivers and
small contractors
have this overseas
background.

The social
distance between
the middle and
lower class is

nothing like as
great in St Kitts
compared to
Jamaica. St Kitts
and the other small
islands have
developed the
ideal of 'poor but
respectable,' and
have none of the
degrading poverty
and ostracism that
typifies Jamaica.

Nonetheless, until
ten years ago
church secondary
schools wouldn't
accept illegitimate
children in
Antigua, where
Vanetta is from,
though they
represented about
80 percent of
births.

Mobility into the middle class is most difficult in Jamaica, where there are many more outward symbols of status than elsewhere in the Caribbean, with the possible exception of Trinidad—people ask ‘where does

that person really
come from?' In
Antigua, the
development of
tourism has made
upward mobility
quite rapid.
Vanetta told me the
story of the light-
coloured daughter
of a part-time
prostitute and a
visiting sailor, who

won a beauty competition after leaving primary school at the age of 15, and then got a job with an airline as a 'ground hostess.' She is now accepted in the Antigua middle class, but rarely sees her mother.

While a student
at UWI in Jamaica
in the late 1960s,
Vanetta was in
contact with some
radical discussion
groups in West
Kingston , which
contained
members of the
Ras Tafari
movement (there
was also a link to

Brown's Town in East Kingston). All participants were alienated from the two-party system. Several of the leaders of the New World group at UWI had a race problem and were married to European women.

Vanetta
complains to me
that Antigua, as an
island, has been
prostituted. It now
has a US National
Aeronautics and
Space
Administration
(NASA) tracking
station, a casino,
and the Mill Reef
Club with about 30

homes for
Americans (one
needs a pass to get
in)—the locals are
encouraged to be
servile to tourists.

Vanetta, who is
doing a doctorate
in history at UWI
Mona , comments
that the free
people of colour—
the antecedents of

the present
coloured middle
class—in the
Leeward Islands
largely evaporated
after slave
emancipation in
1838.

Barbuda never
had sugar, and
Vanetta tells me
that it was
essentially a stud

farm for Antigua.
With only 3 whites
and about 600
slaves, it produced
provisions for slave
consumption on
Antigua, and
recorded few if any
insurrections. It
was known as a
nèr erie.²

**Wednesday,
September
11, 1968**

Despite what
Vanetta says about
the evaporation of
the coloured
middle class after
emancipation, it
seems that many of
the estate owners
in St Kitts are still

light coloured. She
has arranged for
me to meet Mr
Challenger , a local
historian, who is
the scion of an old
Kittitian family—
an olive European
with straight hair.
He lives in a
ramshackle house
with shingle walls
built, so I am told,

in 1870. He has
many children by
the woman with
whom he lives.

The original
Challengers
who were Welsh,
signed the death
warrant of Charles
I, and were
deported after the
Restoration of
Charles II. One

brother went to
America, another
to Nevis , and a
third somewhere
else. In 1750 or
thereabout the
Nevis descendant
took a concubine of
mixed African and
Amerindian
descent, and their
son was ousted
from Nevis by the

white side of the family. He came to St Kitts and took a job looking after slaves awaiting auction.

After emancipation one of his sons became a Stipendiary Magistrate, and the family bought land in what is now

Challenger's
Village.³ All Mr
Challenger's
brothers now live
abroad; he tells me
how his branch of
the family was
tricked out of land
and a retail
business by rival
inheritors. He also
adds that his
family was robbed

in the early 1900s
by a clique in
government who
didn't want
coloured people to
succeed in
business. Mr
Challenger adds
that it is
impossible for
whites to live in St
Kitts 'without

associating with
the blacks.'

Later in the
morning I visited
the PAM
headquarters and
met Dr Herbert , a
light-skinned man,
with a self-
confident,
authoritarian
personality.
Herbert tells me

that he studied law
at University
College London,
from which he has
a doctorate, and
practices in
Basseterre . He lost
to Paul Southwell
in the last election,
but polled
surprisingly well.
Vanetta had
warned me that

PAM makes the
right noises but
really has nothing
to say.

You have to be
black to appeal to
the electorate, I
imagine, and there
Bradshaw wins
hands down, since
he claims to be
pure Ashanti . It
must also be

admitted that the
St Kitts, Nevis , and
Anguilla Labour
Party has made
great
improvements
here. Moreover, St
Kitts had agreed to
the following
developments in
Anguilla before
UDI : an ice factory
, runway

improvements, a telephone system, road upgradings, and had granted a local council.

In the afternoon, I take a Leeward Islands Air Transport (LIAT) flight to Guadeloupe via Antigua where I am stranded for

two hours because
of a breakdown
(Fig. 1.5). I meet
and chat to a Miss
Daniels from Nevis
while LIAT comes
up with a solution.
She is working as a
switchboard
operator in St
Croix , and
obviously enjoys a
better level of

living than would
be possible at
home. She is
friendly, wears
immaculate
clothes, and tells
me that Nevis
wants
independence, too.

While I am
waiting for my
flight, I look across
to the nearby NASA

tracking station,
the oil refinery, and
oil tanks, and
reflect that much
of the central plain
of the island, which
was under sugar
cane when I was
last here in 1964
en route to
Trinidad, is now
fallow and the red
earth looks

scorched. Further south towards Nelson's Dockyard there is cane, but it is obviously being phased out, and then Antigua will be dependent on tourism .

The airport has doubled in size since I was here before and it

contains lots of shops, most of which are tourist orientated. There is an enormous amount of air traffic, and a Caravelle and VC10 are just moving through. This is the principal airport of the Leewards, and will soon take

jumbo jets. Vanetta
claims that tourism
is exacting a new
kind of
subservience after
sugar: and Antigua
seems badly
hooked—it is
depressing.

Guadeloupe

Before nightfall I
reached
Guadeloupe and
settled into a hotel
on the Place de la
Victoire in Pointe-
à-Pitre, the capital
(Fig. 1.4).
Guadeloupe is
metropolitan
France, and the
island is not a
dependency, but a

département . My
taxi is a Citroen,
and the police
caps, bars,
restaurants, and
window shutters
are all
unmistakeably
French. Squares
are to be sat in or
wandered through
—even at night.

After dinner, I go for a walk, but the streets are by now so empty and the shops so shuttered that it is impossible to locate the downtown area. In daylight, the main street is like that of Santo Domingo—concrete buildings

with apartments
above. Unlike the
towns of the
British Caribbean,
those in the
French- and
Spanish -speaking
territories retain
many well-to-do
residents in their
centres.

**Thursday,
September
12, 1968**

There is one main street in Pointe -à- Pitre, though there are commercial enterprises on the others. The port is small, with import-export houses concentrated near

the harbour. To the north of the commercial area are located very poor tenements and yards, the large sheds in the latter located one behind the other so that the intervening alleys run directly into the heart of the

housing complex.
Probably the worst
area in the capital
is located near the
bridge over the
Rivière Salée, or
salt-water channel,
separating the two
islands which
make up
Guadeloupe —
Basse Terre and

Grande Terre (Fig. 1.4).

However, there is some good housing on the road in from the airport, and the city contains some of the biggest and best blocks of apartment housing I have seen in the Caribbean or

Mexico with the exception of the Nonoalco project in Mexico City (Chap. 2). Some of it is middle class, but the bulk is not, and must be the equivalent of *habitation do yer modéré* (HLM)—state-owned residential

property in France.
Compared to
Britain in the
associated states,
France seems to be
spending a vast
amount of money
on housing and
roads.

The population
of whites is much
more substantial
here than in the

British Caribbean
ex-colonies with
the exception of
Barbados . Whites
are prominent in
commerce and
retailing, as are
Syrians (Lebanese
). There was a
minor race riot a
month ago in
Pointe -à-Pitre
when a Syrian is

alleged to have set
his dog on a black
pedlar, and some
property was
burnt in
retaliation. But
race relations
nevertheless seem
easier than in the
British Caribbean,
perhaps because
the white bias is
more secure. One

feels that whites
have a place here,
which is not always
the case in Jamaica.

Guadeloupe is
having some of the
heaviest rain I have
experienced this
year—and the
Windwards are so
much wetter than
the Leewards.
Some of the streets

are flooded. From the water's edge on the Place de la Victoire I get a glimpse of Soufrière, the volcano.

I take a minibus to Abymes , Morne-à-l'Eau, and Moule, and sit next to an East Indian couple (Fig. [1.4](#)).

We drive through
sugar cane past
small villages with
spacious,
carpentered huts.
Morne -à-l'Eau and
Moule are tiny
towns with central
squares. By St
François almost
half the passengers
are East Indian and
prosperous-

looking—one or two are in modern clothes, another is in a traditional ankle-length dress with a gathering above the waist. This is a sparsely populated area, and I see no *handi* (prayer flags). I suspect that most of the East Indians

here are Catholic,
but clearly they are
substantially
endogamous.

Later I make a
short excursion to
Basse Terre, and in
particular to Petit
Bourg , which is
minute and
surrounded by
sugar cane (Fig. 1.
4). Looking into

the mountains,
however, I am
aware of the
dominance of
bananas.

Dominica

Later in the day I
catch a flight to
Dominica, crossing
Marie Galante (Fig.
[1.5](#)), which was

named after
Columbus's ship,
and touch down at
dusk at Melville
Hall airport.

During the
three-hour drive to
the capital Roseau
it rapidly becomes
clear that this
beautiful island is
mountainous,
rugged, and

densely overgrown
with vegetation
(Fig. 1.4). We are
held up on a
hairpin bend by a
crash involving a
jeep and a taxi on a
narrow bridge. The
road is full of
banana and
breadfruit trucks
that are nigh
impossible to pass.

In the middle of
the journey access
roads have been
cut into the forest
to left and right to
facilitate Dom -Can
logging. Eventually,
we cross the fast-
flowing Roseau
River and enter the
town. At the Kent-
Anthony Guest
House I have a light

meal with two
American
residents, Don
Monks and Bob
Johnson.

**Friday,
September
13, 1968**

Don Monks tells
me that he is
working for

Communitary
Socialism , which is
associated with the
ideas of Erich
Fromm, and has
many centres in
the developing
world.⁴ It has some
kind of Catholic
tie-in, and his
commitment is to
start a community
project in northern

Dominica
associated with
bananas and block-
making.

Don has been
refused permission
to import two dogs
—only cabinet
ministers seem to
be exempt. There is
said to be a lot of
US-Canadian
hostility in

relationship to
Dominica, because
the Canadians are
taking over.

Dominica
became an
associated state of
the UK at the same
time as most of the
other small British
colonies in the
Caribbean in
January 1967. The

Governor is Mr
Cools -Lartigue.
French Creole is
near-universally
spoken in
Dominica, because
it was a French
colony until the
end of the
eighteenth century,
and visitors from
Guadeloupe can
use it to

communicate with
out a problem. The
only Carib Reserve
in the Caribbean
islands is located
near Marigot , on
the way to the
airport.

The capital,
Roseau , with
about 13,000
residents, is poor
and higgledy-

piggledy. The property next to my guest house is on the verge of collapse. There are two-bit retail stores, Nassif's and Astaphans', the latter located on the main street. The town looks like a description of Kingston ,

Jamaica, in the
depressed 1850s.

When David
Lowenthal visited
Gillian and me in
Jamaica in early
July he had told us
about the current
sad state of affairs
in Dominica. A
Canadian lumber
firm has a
pushover

agreement with
the Dominican
government for
felling hardwood.
There are no
protective clauses
relating to road
repairs, felling
procedures or
replanting, and the
government made
no request for
expert advice from

the British
government—or
any other
government. The
same rejection of
outside opinion
applies to the
pumice industry,
though Jamaica
offered two
specialists.
Apparently, Le
Blanc's

government is new
and considers that
it will be thought
incompetent if it
consults outsiders.
The old problem in
the Caribbean was
to get developers
to take an interest;
now the problem is
to preserve the
islands from
developers,

especially the
shady operators
working out of the
Bahamas.

The Le Blanc
administration is
totally dominant (it
has 11 out of 13
seats in the
legislature), but is
so afraid of
criticism that on
Friday, July 5 it

passed three
readings,
empowering the
Home Minister to
ban all
publications
regarded as
seditious. This
resulted in mass
protests in Roseau ,
attended by David
Lowenthal ,
involving the

Waterfront
Workers Union, the
Employers'
Federation and
people from all
walks of life, which
were addressed by
three newspaper
editors—all in
opposition to the
Bill.

There seem to
me to be two

tendencies in
Dominican society:
authoritarian
government under
the older
generation—
witness the
Subversive
Publications Law,
which may be used
to protect the
government from
well-targeted and

appropriate
criticism in the
press; and Black
Power which is in
the hands of youth
—the freedom
fighters.⁵

A couple of
activities have
attracted my
attention: bananas
are lightered at
night to the Geest

boats for shipping
to Europe; Dom-
Can, the timber-
extracting
company, owns a
sawmill in Roseau .

According to
Anselm, my taxi
driver from the
airport, the
government wants
an individual, R, to
go ahead with the

Sunday Island
port-development
scheme, and in fact
gave him the land.
R's days are
numbered unless
he delivers the
goods. Although a
phantom project,
David Lowenthal
told me that
hundreds have
already signed up

to work on this
ephemeral scheme
in the north of the
island.

On my return
journey to the
airport I was
struck by the
tangle of
vegetation—
bananas, cocoa ,
coconut,
breadfruit, citrus,

mangoes , and
tree-high ferns and
the impossibility of
distinguishing
between the ridges
on the horizon
because of the
masking green
vegetation. The
island has the very
air of mystery
recently evoked by

Jean Rhys in *Wide
Sargasso Sea*.⁶

Just as dusk
was falling two
small planes came
in to land at
Melville Hall: they
had arrived to take
us north to
Guadeloupe where
our LIAT flight was
running so late
that it would have

been unable to touch down in Dominica, where the runway has no lights. LIAT eventually got me from Guadeloupe to Martinique , overflying Dominica on its way south (Fig. 1.4).

Martinique
Saturday,
September
14, 1968

Martinique seems
to me even more
French than
Guadeloupe —they
say that
Guadeloupe
considers itself a

continent
surrounded by
French islands. The
Frenchness of Fort
-de-France is
expressed in the
architecture of the
Hôtel de Ville
(Plate 3.3), the red
pantiled roofs, high
iron gates, and
grille work. It is

more chic than
Pointe -à-Pitre.



Plate 3.3 Town Hall,
Fort -de-France,

Martinique . A replica
of French provincial
civic architecture,
befitting a former
colony, now an
incorporated
département . The
historic built
environment of
Caribbean cities
reflects metropolitan
values and styles,
whether French,
British, Spanish, or
Dutch

The main axis
of the capital is the
Boulevard Général
de Gaulle; fishing
boats concentrate
opposite it near the
Marché aux
Poissons; new
housing is in the
French
metropolitan not
the Puerto Rican
style; there is a

craft centre at La Savane; and there are all kinds of people shopping in the city centre, notably lots of whites.

I take a taxi trip along the west coast to the former capital at St Pierre via Schoelcher and Case -Pilote (Fig. 1.

4). The route winds through scrub until we reach the lovely fishing village of Bellefontaine , where huge nets are drying by the side of the road. We then strike inland and climb 330 metres through enclosed

fields of sugar,
vegetables, and
pasture until we
meet the Morne -
Vert, an impressive
wall of bare rock
capped by a
volcanic cone of
green. The village
of the same name
lies beneath the
scarp.

From there we
plunge downhill to
Le Carbet, where
Columbus is said to
have landed, and
then on to St Pierre
—the tiny stone-
built relic of the
former capital of
Martinique ,
destroyed by the
lava flow and gas
produced by

Montagne Pelée in
1902 (Fig. 1.4). I
observe the
extensive ruins set
in lava, and the
beautiful ruins of
the old theatre—a
scene of utter
destruction set off
by the beautiful
green of the
volcano above the
town with the back

wall of lava
hanging over it.

Returning to
Fort -de-France, I
set out in the
afternoon via
Ducos and Petit
Bourg to Rivière
Salée, and back via
Le Lamentin—all
small, provincial
towns, but with a
definite French

flavour (Fig. 1.4).
This is sugar
country set in a
rolling landscape
of small villages
and cane factories .
Here there are East
Indians, but less
obviously so than
in the sugar areas I
visited in
Guadeloupe .

In addition to the Indians there were many mulattoes and blacks in the population. Martiniquan blacks seem to resemble their counterparts in Guadeloupe , but with features rather different from those

common in the
British Caribbean.

**St Vincent
Sunday,
September
15, 1968**

I flew over St Lucia
(Fig. 1.2), where
banana plantations
occupy the

lowlands and the
black peasantry
are scattered
widely over the
mountains of the
interior, and then
on down the east
coast of St Vincent,
passing over large
arrowroot, banana,
and coconut
plantations . The
northern

mountains, which
were swathed in
cloud, were
virtually
unoccupied, but
the southern
uplands were given
over to the
peasantry—
beautiful, open
country
reminiscent of
Christiana in

Jamaica. Then we dropped down to Kingstown, the capital (Fig. 1.4).

Imagine my surprise at meeting John Fermor, a colleague of mine over the summer in the Geography and Geology Department at

UWI in Jamaica,
who was checking
out of the
guesthouse as I
was checking in.
John set off to join
the *Federal Maple*,
which was in port.⁷

Kingstown is
compact and
simple, with a front
and a back street,
separated by stone

buildings framed
by heavy pillars,
piazzas, and round
arches. The capital
has a deep-water
pier, and large
import-export
warehouses, but
precious little
industry. I found
the people friendly
and enjoyed the
Revival service on

the square on
Sunday night.

St Vincent is a
beautiful but not
gripping island,
lacking the
simplicity of St
Kitts or Anguilla or
the mystique of
Dominica . John
Fermor claimed
that Ebenezer
Joshua's party

(People's Political Party) is communist , and had promised to subdivide at least one plantation for the workers on it, had he won the last election. In the event, Joshua didn't have the support of the police and he lost

the election—since there were outside scrutineers. It is alleged that Joshua killed the sugar industry.

Miss Paynter, who runs the guesthouse, does voluntary work for Save the Children Fund, partly supported by

Oxfam. Oxfam also supplies at least one nurse for the hospital.

Apparently, Save the Children Fund provides school equipment for 'underprivileged children.' How I hate the word underprivileged, when it should

read
disadvantaged or
even exploited.

Grenada
Monday,
September
16, 1968

Having failed to get
a confirmed
booking to

1503

Grenada for 17
September, I
decided to stick
with my original
schedule and leave
immediately. I am
glad I did, because
Grenada is special.
We flew over
Becquia (visible
from St Vincent
and administered
from there) and

the other
Grenadines—
luminescent coral
islands , some little
more than reefs. A
few, such as
Cariacou and Petite
Martinique , are
part of Grenada.
Banana groves
grow everywhere,
usually in hollows
or sheltered fields

surrounded by
bamboo thickets.

The 20-mile
drive from the
airport was
winding and
beautiful, as we
passed banana
plantations , cocoa
groves, and
nutmeg-and-mace
trees. Ridges rose
up everywhere, but

rarely exceeded
700 metres. We
passed the Grand
Etang, an extinct
volcanic crater, and
the home of the
Governor General,
Mrs Bynoe , before
the taxi deposited
me at Green
Gables, from which
I have a view of St
George's (Fig. 1.4).

Island in the Sun
was filmed here.

Eric Gairy, the
PM of the
associated state of
Grenada, is
responsible for the
police, agriculture ,
and tourism , while
the British
government
remains
responsible for

overseas
representation and
defence. The
British
Development
Division,
specializing in the
recently created
associated states,
is located in
Barbados (Fig. 1.2)
—an independent
Commonwealth

country. The Caribbean Free Trade Area's headquarters is in Antigua, but its secretariat is situated in Georgetown , Guyana.

St George's has a spectacular location surrounding the

Carenage , a
horseshoe bay,
from which the
buildings rise
almost vertically
up the surrounding
slopes—the
harbour occupies
the caldera or
blown-out empty
space in the stump
of a volcano, one
side of which has

been breached by the sea (Plate 3.4). The town's brick and stone houses, steep winding streets and ochre roofs are reminiscent of the south coast of England.



Plate 3.4 Carenage , St
George's , Grenada. The

tiny capital of Grenada
(7k population) with
inter-island schooners
tied up at the wharf. In
the distance, suburbs
climb the sides of the
volcanic crater now
occupied by the
harbour

The colonial
grid to the north of
the Carenage is
more like other
miniature

Caribbean capital cities. Many buildings are made of bricks brought out as ballast from Britain. The main square is full of schoolchildren in colourful uniforms catching country buses home. There are a few Syrian dry goods shops.

Mercantile
houses cling to the
narrow wharf at
the head of the
Carenage , where
hand-operated
cranes on the
schooners are used
to lift the cargo to
shore. Barbados is
the most regular
source of trade .
There is schooner-

building, and
fishing boats sell
their catch of silver
and red fish at the
Carenage in the
afternoons. There
is also a banana
boat in harbour
from the Geest line,
a service shared
with the rest of the
Windwards,
though Grenada is

the smallest
banana producer
of the four.

**Tuesday,
September
17, 1968**

Grenada's
agriculture was
diversified after
Hurricane Janet in
1955. A British

government
rehabilitation
grant introduced
bananas to the
Windward Islands
to provide the
shade for new
plantings of cocoa
trees, which would
take 6 years to
mature, and would
then be expected
to bear for

60 years—2015
would seem to be
the end of the
cycle. So the
economy, formerly
dependent on
cocoa and nutmeg,
is now equally
reliant on bananas.

I am told that
the Agriculture
Department is
physically split in

two, and that there is a major problem getting reports and official letters typed. This is a specific example of a general problem of organization and skills in a developing country. Another issue of the same kind is that so

many nurses leave
Grenada to work in
the UK that Peace
Corps
replacements from
the US are needed.

There is a great
deal of
intercropping
among the
peasantry, because
the small producer
cannot afford

fertilizer for single-crop fields or replanting with cocoa. Banana yields among peasants in Grenada are only 3 tons per acre, compared to 10 in Guadeloupe and Martinique , though similarly high yields are

common among
plantation growers
in Grenada.
Sometimes
peasants get one or
one-and-a-half
bags of cocoa per
acre, whereas new
(but expensive
plantings) could
raise the crop
tenfold.

Even estates in Grenada are small, and most people own land. But many peasant holdings are too small, and young people are leaving the land. Most requests for land settlement in the north of Grenada are coming from

older people. But
as Mr Noel , deputy
director of
agriculture said to
me, 'What is the
point of putting
poor people on
poor land?'

Mr Strong, a
specialist on
cooperatives, says
that credit unions
are replacing *susu*

(rotating credit) as systems of raising funds. In agriculture there are two major cooperatives—among banana and cocoa growers. The cocoa cooperative is in the parish of St David and involves a 180-acre estate and 80

cultivators. They have found that the major problem is creating a large enough return to make the project attractive to each participant, balanced against the need to hold back sufficient funds to enable the

scheme to continue
to develop.

It is good to
hear that, for the
first time in
15 years,
agriculture is back
on the school
syllabus!

I go to see
Westerhall Bay, a
residential
development for

North American residents. Large properties, with sea frontages and careful landscaping, sell for upwards of £7000. But why does the government want these communities of foreigners isolated from

Grenada? For the value of the investment in the house—or for other possible investment spin-offs?

Grenadians are a friendly and proud people, but it is beginning to strike me that they share many of the

problems of other
Caribbean
islanders I have
encountered on
this trip, living in
small semi-
independent
Commonwealth
states of less than
one million people
—usually less than
100,000
inhabitants (Table

1.1). Everyone knows everyone else; politics can split the population in highly personalized and dangerous ways; trained locals are not accepted as experts.

**Trinidad
Wednesday,
September
18, 1968**

As we approach
Trinidad I make
out the coastal
mountains of
Venezuela, then the
Dragon's Mouth
and the islands,

and finally the
northern range of
Trinidad. We cross
Maracas Bay and
descend over
Mount St Benedict,
with the suburbs
stretching out to
the west towards
Port of Spain .
Piarco Airport lies
in the middle of the
cane fields. It is a

wonderfully
'geographical'
return—my first
since researching
here throughout
most of 1964 (Fig.
1.4).

The baggage
dispenser still
doesn't work! In
fact, Trinidad is
much the same as
before. George

Sammy meets me
at Arrivals and
takes me to his
home on the UWI
campus at St
Augustine . It is
wonderful to find
him, Myrtle and
the children
unchanged.

George, a
lecturer in
chemical

engineering, has just come back from a food technology course in Russia , and he seems very impressed by what he saw. George was in Dominica earlier this year, reporting on the setting up of a potential canning industry. He sits on

a section of the
Trinidad Industrial
Development
Corporation
dealing with food
preserving, and on
a commission
looking at cane
farming (which
hasn't met).

George tells me
that the 1966
elections were

rigged by the PNM
government to
reduce the political
scene to two
parties—the PNM
and the
Democratic Labour
Party (DLP) . The
Liberals and the
Workers and
Farmers Party
were both
squeezed out by

alleged
government
manipulation of
the voting
machines.⁸

During the last
couple of years, the
DLP has
contested the 1966
general elections
and boycotted the
bye-election
caused by the

government's
withdrawal of the
leave of absence
given to Dr
Rudranath
Capildeo. As leader
of the opposition in
parliament, he was
allowed to live in
London, lecture in
Mathematics at
University College
London, and get on

with writing his
important book.

In Capildeo's
absence, the
government
persuaded
Bhadase Maraj —
the old-time leader
of the Hindus —to
go up for election,
and he forced as
many people as
possible (on a

meagre 20 percent turnout) to vote for his People's Democratic Party (PDP), since the DLP itself did not want to get involved. He won.

As the opposition was remaining silent during Capildeo's last months as DLP

leader, Bhadase's arrival on the political scene has been timely for the PNM government. Currently, so I am told, Bhadase is occupied sponsoring a bill to make cockfighting legal. I assume that this will benefit his betting interests.

Trinidad is superficially cleaner and more prosperous than in 1964. But no new economic development is taking place to create sufficient job opportunities. British Petroleum (BP) is doing no more than land-

based exploration,
and the oil
industry looks set
for slow
contraction.

**Thursday,
September
19, 1968**

Early in the
morning George
took me to Curepe ,

where I picked up
a pirate taxi to San
Fernando (Fig. 1.
4). There is a new
double-track road
past Chaguanas ,
but it reverts to
single track long
before Couva .
Otherwise, the
route is much as
before, with lots of
handi (prayer

flags) adjacent to
houses in the sugar
belt.

San Fernando

My heart begins to
beat with
excitement as we
drive into San
Fernando. To my
surprise, we swing
down St James
Street, pass our old

house
(number 67),
which has been re-
painted (our half
now being used as
a beauty salon),
and then turn up
the hill to Harris
Promenade, down
to the Bowl and
Broadway,
eventually
dropping me near

the Mucurapo
Street market.

I walk up
Prince Albert
Street and look at
the two mosques—
and Jaleel's
bottling works—
plus the small
mandir (temple)
which is still being
built. Mrs Deabi
Persad's house is

just as it used to
be; three pundits
(Bissoon and two
others) are talking
in Hindi on Mr
Binie Maharaj's
verandah.

When I reach
the Todd Street
mandir, my
immediate
reaction is that it
has been pulled

down, but I find
that Mr
Bhattacharya's
Tagore College has
been built on top of
the Ghandi Ashram
—with a new
lower floor leading
off the *ashram* at
right angles to the
original structure.
There are two
large teaching halls

in the school which
will eventually be
divided into
classrooms.

Mr
Bhattacharya has
his headmaster's
cubicle upstairs.
He is much the
same as before,
perhaps a little
older and more
tired. Having

arranged to meet
him again later in
the day, I walk via
Prince of Wales
Street to the
Coffee. Quite a few
of the old wooden
houses have been
replaced by
substantial
concrete
structures. I pass
Roy Joseph Street,

wondering
whether Mrs
Rajkumari Maharaj
still lives there.

Susumachar
Church is
celebrating the
centenary of the
Canadian Mission,
though I gather
that Canadian
funding is now at
an end; Dr Ada

Date -Camps still
has her surgery in
her old place; the
Chinese have given
a clock which
stands in the
centre of the road
at Library Corner;
the old rum shop
has been replaced
by Persad's —a
jewellers; and a
few new

pharmacies are
located at the top
of High Street.

Harris

Promenade has
had a bit of a face
lift; it is well kept,
and a walk-through
has been
constructed for
pedestrians. The
Town Hall, facing
the police courts

and lawyers'
offices on the
opposite side of
the road, has been
painted an
attractive cream
colour.

As I walk past
the Catholic
Primary School I
catch sight of Mr
Arthur , one of the
enumerators for

our 1964 survey of
San Fernando. He
tells me that Mr
Wong Wai, another
of our
enumerators, is
now a headmaster
in Tobago. Mr
Arthur has
completed the first
year of a BA
General degree
through the UWI

Extra-Mural
Department, and is
going to attend the
College of Arts and
Sciences for the
final two years to
study Spanish and
Economics.

As part of the
winding up of the
US government's
land-lease
agreement with

Trinidad, which involves their bases at Chaguanas and Waller Field, US\$10 million has been granted to UWI to found Kennedy College, which will house the College of Arts and Sciences.

Continuing
along Harris

Promenade, I drop
down to Robert
Gunness's surgery.
Robert (our former
GP) has just come
back from a round-
the-world trip,
based on a visit he
made to Australia
to attend an
international
conference on
behalf of the

Trinidad Medical
Association . While
in Fiji he stayed
with a *swami*
(Hindu religious
teacher) in an
ashram. He says he
can still speak
some Hindi, and
the experience
reminded him of
his childhood in
Débé . Robert and

Jean have
separated, and
Jean has gone back
to England with
the two children—
not altogether
surprising, but sad.
Every time I see
Robert I am
impressed by his
ability and its
misapplication.

As soon as I go
outside I bump
into Myrtle Ma
(George Sammy's
mother-in-law and
Robert's mother). I
arrange to visit her
later in the
afternoon. I walk
back along Harris
Promenade to
Library Corner and
then go to Grell's

Office Supplies,
which is still
managed by Ena
Scott -Jack, our
former landlady.

Ena was
surprised to see
me, largely
because she had
failed to get a
response from our
home on the Wirral
earlier this

summer—by
which time Gillian
and I and our two
children were in
Jamaica. Ena had
been in
Washington and
London, visiting
Ellis Clarke and
Andrew Rose, each
of them a Trinidad
and Tobago
Ambassador or

High
Commissioner. Ena
tells me that the
tenants who are
renting our old flat
are Indians. She
complains that
they do not look
after it, and she is
annoyed that the
wife did not tell
her she wanted to
open a beauty

parlour. Ena has
put the old china
cabinet in her own
flat!

Leaving Ena, I
take a walk to St
Joseph Village. San
Fernando Hill, one
of the most
distinctive
landmarks in
southern Trinidad,
is being

destructively
quarried by the
sugar company to
make access roads.

At the Health
Department, I meet
a member of staff
who telephones
Frank Cleghorn
and calls him over
from the Town
Hall. Frank and I go
for a glass of rum

together. Frank and Myrtle are still at Penal, but plan to start building a house at La Romaine next year. Frank is now Dr Abidh's right-hand man and is studying architectural drawing. Frank and Myrtle have a sixth

child called
Catherine, and
Frank is proud that
his eldest son has
passed the 11+
exam to go to
Naparima College.

After lunch,
Frank gave me a lift
to Myrtle Ma's
house near the
Todd Street Hindu
Temple. Ma spent

much of my visit
jumping out of her
seat to tell the
workmen what to
do. According to
Myrtle , Ma is
constantly having
housing
improvements
carried out.

I was
introduced to a
friend of Ma's—a

Mrs Warner, who
claims to have had
a French mother
and a Scots-
Barbadian father,
and is herself
married to an East
Indian who works
at Texaco. Three of
her four children
live away from
Trinidad;
nevertheless, she

tells them 'not to
mix up with nigger.'
Her youngest
daughter claims
she is prejudiced,
but she retorts that
that is the way she
is! Ma still wears
the *oronhi* (veil
worn by married
Hindu, Muslim, and
Christian Indian
women), and won't

go out or see
friends at home
unless she is
wearing it.

Later in the
afternoon I walked
the short distance
to Tagore College
to talk to Mr
Bhattacharya. Soon
after our departure
from San Fernando
in September 1964

he left Gopaul's
school near
Princes Town and
went back to India,
later returning to
start a new
institution for Dr
Avatar at Cross
Crossing in San
Fernando. Both
these secondary
schools still
survive, but the

former is no longer
on Gopaul's
property, and it is
headed by Mr
Sookhoo , who has
recently
graduated from an
Indian university.

Mr
Bhattacharya had
threatened to
return
permanently to

India , but the ladies from the San Fernando temple persuaded him to stay. Local business people have put up \$40,000 BWI for the school : half by way of a mortgage, and the remainder to be paid off by Mr Bhattacharya's Indian show called

Sacrifice, which has recently been put on at the Queen's Hall.

People behind the new Tagore College are Jang and Lal Bahadoorsingh, Mr Binie , Mr Gopie, and other well-to-do Hindus . The fees seem to be

about \$30 BWI per student each term. Mr Bhattacharya claims that this is his last battle—and he will not lose. In 4 or 5 years' time he will go back to India to retire. He tells me he still gives the Gita class in the San Fernando *mandir*.

Frank proposes to take me down to Débé and Penal (Fig. 1.4). As we leave San Fernando we stop at Harry Maharaj's gas station. Harry is busy behind his desk—he is currently maintaining two children who are

studying in
London. Sonny , his
younger brother,
still works with
him. Harry tells me
he has bought
some property on
the Oropouche
Lagoon; he is
selling some and
keeping the rest to
build or plant on.

We progress
through Duncan
Village, passing the
road to Esperance
and Diamond. Here
the main road
south runs along
ridge tops, and
gives me a good
view of Usine Ste
Madeleine's cane
fields. The road has
been resurfaced all

the way to the
other side of Débé ;
but there have
been two bad
landslips, and after
the bridge on the
far side of Débé
broke it was
replaced by a
Bailey bridge.

As we drive
into Débé we cross
the disused railway

line and pass the
fruit stalls. The rice
is green, but I have
been told that
there has been too
much rain this
year. Jankieprasad
Sharma is walking
towards his house
at this moment.
The Seunarine
Temple is still
there. The old

market, which
used to house the
school on a
temporary basis, is
now the
community centre.
The Presbyterian
School and Church
have been rebuilt
on a ridge
overlooking the
village.

Frank takes us
on to Penal to see
Myrtle, and the
children. The
house is
completely
unchanged;
Catherine, the new
baby, is very sweet;
and Myrtle tells me
that they plan to
have no more
children.

Returning
through Débé we
stopped in the
centre to see
Francis Seepaul
and his wife. He is
now a head teacher
, but in another
village. He tells me
that Mr Sukal is
married, has a
child, and still
teaches at the Débé

Presbyterian
School. Both men
were enumerators
of ours for the
Débé sample in
1964.

Concluding this
whirlwind visit to
the countryside
south of San
Fernando, Frank
dropped me off at
the Todd Street

mandir to meet our
old friends
Bramadath
Maharaj and
Hansar
Ramsamooj. To my
surprise we drove
to Bram's new
address at Union
Hall, an attractive
house on stilts just
beyond where
Robert Guinness

used to live. And even more to my surprise, Mrs Rajkumari Maharaj came in and started to prepare food . I recognized her daughter, and her little son who used to have long hair.

Bram tells me that his oldest son

is studying
Mathematics at
UWI, St Augustine .
Tara , his oldest
daughter, is a
teacher . Clearly,
Bram no longer
lives on Farah
Street, nor with
Dorothy Ganga.

Hansar's oldest
daughter, Rosalind,
and oldest son are

in the UK. The remaining eight children live with him and his wife at home. He has set up a workshop to teach his boys various crafts. Although he has been playing cricket, he has had heart problems and is quieter than

before, and more
concerned with
political and
economic
problems. Selfless
Service Divine
Mission continues,
and is currently
preparing for
Diwali. Diwali and
Eid ul Fitr were
made national
holidays just

before the last
election in 1966.

Mrs Rajkumari
Maharaj, whom
Gillian and I knew
quite well in 1964,
tells me that her
son, Mahendranath
, is studying
geology at UWI,
Jamaica, while her
older daughter is
training in the UK

to be a nurse.
Mahendranath is
married to a
Chinese-Indian
girl, and they have
a baby. Mr Gaya is
still getting by with
his business and
looking after the
two girls.

While we sat
looking at a red-
green sunset over

the Gulf of Paria,
conversation
drifted from
personal matters
to more standard
Indian themes—
the government's
pension plan;
rising
unemployment
and the
contribution that
immigrants from

the small islands of
the Caribbean
make to it; rigged
voting machines.
Frank Cleghorn has
already told me
that, at the polling
station where he
was the returning
officer, the ballots
cast and the
machine reading
for each party were

the same, but the overall machine total was 10 too many.

Harry Maharaj, generous as ever, sends his car to take me back to St Augustine . Bram, Hansar, and I chat all the way. They tell me that James Millette , a Creole

and lecturer in
history at UWI is
the new leading
light of Trinidad
politics. The major
Trinidad figure of
the New World
Group, he may
have some appeal
to blacks
disgruntled with
the PNM and
Indians tired of the

DLP . They explain that such well-known figures as Peter Farquhar, Stephen Maharaj , and Lionel Frank Seukeran have been discredited for changing sides, or attempting to do so.

Bram is, I think, against Millette ,

though Hansar,
always more
conciliatory, says
he may be good.
Bram claims that
the Indians should
forget about the
recent DLP
campaign and start
afresh; he is
confident that
Capildeo is still 'the
man.' Looking

beyond Trinidad to analogous racial politics in Guyana, Hansar tells me he is impressed by Jagan—and Jagan's opposition to borrowing funds from the US.

Just as we reach the UWI campus, Bram interrupts the

conversation to tell me that he and Mrs Rajkumari Maharaj have been together for just over a year. The house is theirs. Well, even if she is an Arya Samajist, they are both high-caste Hindus . On personality and other grounds, they are probably

well matched,
though I didn't say
so. Hansar
Ramsamooj took
all this in his
stride!

It was a
wonderful
sentimental
journey. And I was
amazed how
Gillian and I are
still remembered

—the welcome
everywhere could
not have been
warmer.

**Friday,
September
20, 1968**

This is the last day
of my whistle-stop
tour of Trinidad, so
I decided to go into

Port of Spain ,
which appears
quite unchanged
after 4 years away.
Vincent Bailey is
very helpful at the
Central Statistical
Office. Clifford
Sealy at The
Bookshop (now on
Upper Frederick
Street) remembers
us. I spend some

time in the
National Museum,
where I see some
interesting Carib
artefacts, carnival
costumes, local
paintings, and
jewellery given by
India and made by
Ramesar of Couva.

We have a
delicious Indian
dinner in the

evening in St
Augustine, and
meet four Indian
engineers, all
colleagues of
George's. They are
quite shocked that
Myrtle has invited
them without
consulting George.
After dinner, we
look at George's
slides of Russia.

After the guests
have left, George
begins to tell me
about the Pasea
controversy,
relating to a small
community of
Indian squatters
who live near
Tunapuna .
Apparently, the
government wants
to 'put them out,'

but George says
that, if that
happens, why not
expel the Creoles
of John -John and
Shanty Town? It
seems that the
property in
question at Pasea
was sold to the
government by
Bhadase Maraj in
1961, and the

squatters have
been there long
enough to be
tenants-at-will.
Numbers have
increased rapidly
since it became
government land,
and the DLP is
supporting the
Indians. Michael
Als of the Young
Power Movement

(a local variant of Black Power) has said that they will support the Indian squatters.

Als , speaking at Diamond Village near San Fernando, recently rebutted the branding of the Young Power Movement as 'a destructive force

and a Communist
movement. ... Here
more than
anywhere else we
have extreme racial
discrimination
where the granting
of jobs is
concerned and the
only type of
freedom we have is
the freedom to
starve, to become

criminals and to
degenerate into
immoral and
wanton living'
(*Trinidad*
Guardian, August
19, 1968).

George shows
me the green cut
glass earrings that
his mother brought
from India . They
are the only

mementos he has
that link his
parents to India .
George thinks that
the East Indians
and Creoles will
eventually merge:
culturally at first
but later racially.

Kitty, George's
daughter, whose
lifestyle in many
ways resembles

that of a Creole girl, eats with her fingers in the traditional Indian way. Myrtle says that the children regret that they have lost as much Indian culture as they have. How *do* you handle the situation in Trinidad?

George tells me more about his background. His name is George M. Sammy , but he was originally called Arjun Moon Sammy. He was born in Duncan Village, San Fernando, but his parents separated, and his mother

died when he was
about 10. He was
taken by his sister
to Canaan School
(where Hannah
Boodoo's father
later became
headmaster), and
the master, when
told George's
Indian name,
retorted, 'What
kind of name is

that?'⁹ George
Beckles, a black,
had been enrolled
just before him, so
Arjun's sister gave
his name as
George.

George left
school at 12 and
worked loading
cane and doing
general work
around the estate.

Later he worked
for a gas station.
He read widely,
and passed the
vocabulary test to
be employed as an
assistant in the
Texaco Research
Laboratory, then
owned by the
British firm
Trinidad
Leaseholds. At

night, he worked towards his matriculation; he married Myrtle, a teacher , in about 1950; and studied for a BSc at Sir John Cass College, London from 1953–1957. When George came back from England, he fell out with

Bisram Gopie over
a village election.

I wonder if
George will go into
politics? He is
pondering exactly
the same question.
George explains
that 'East Indians
don't think of
themselves as
being Christian,
Muslim or Hindu.

The situation is fluid, especially in the countryside, and varies with the context.' To stay with George and Myrtle was a privilege and a pleasure.

Guyana

**Saturday,
September
21, 1968**

Taking off from
Piarco in the
afternoon, we were
soon flying over
the forests and
citrus groves of
central Trinidad.
Crossing Mayaro
Bay and the coastal

strip of coconuts , I was able to look westwards over the elongated peninsula forming the south-west of the island towards Venezuela (Fig. 1. 4).

The plane headed for the delta of the River Orinoco, which I

glimpsed through
the green-orange
rays of the setting
sun. From
10,000 metres, I
could still see the
south of Trinidad,
while in the
opposite direction
the wide
distributaries of
the huge delta
became clear, and I

could make out the
densely wooded
areas between the
rivers—a good
introduction to the
enormous scale of
South America.
Here rivers are the
routeways, and I
spot the ribbons of
agriculture that
follow their lines
close to the Guyana

-Venezuela border.
Masses of slender
rivers meander
through the flat
and densely
forested coastal
area.

Later we
descend over the
vast Essequibo
River, with estates
confined to the
coastal strip.

Inland there are
forests with some
clearings and, near
the rivers, houses.
Then we cross the
Demerara River,
and I recognize a
Demba (Demerara
Bauxite Company)
ore boat going up
to McKenzie for a
load of bauxite .
Finally, we land at

Atkinson Field and
coast to the old
airport terminal.

I am pleased to
be met by Leslie
Cummings , to
whom I had
written about my
visit, and Mike
Wagner, whom I
know already. Mike
was a master's
student in

geography at
Toronto University
where I spent the
academic year in
1967–1968, and he
is now a lecturer in
geography at the
University of
Guyana . Leslie,
who is the Head of
the Geography
Department, drives
us through the

forest and past
estates until we
reach Georgetown
on the coast at the
mouth of the
Demerara River. In
the gloom, I make
out a Hindu temple
with men wearing
white *dhoti*
(loincloth) and
kurta (shirt).

Leslie took us
to meet his wife
Coralie and son
Ricky . Then he
gave us a lift to 4th
Street, where I am
going to share a
flat with Mike and
another Canadian,
Mel , a volunteer
with the Canadian
Universities
Service Overseas

(CUSO), who is
teaching maths at
the university.

Having
unpacked, I was
marched off to a
birthday party,
which turned out
very much like a
Creole fete in
Trinidad. Mike tells
me that CUSO
offers to pay for

the contraceptive
pill for girl
volunteers if they
require it.

Sunday,
September 22

In the morning, I
go for a walk
around
Georgetown ,
which is
beautifully laid out

on the lines of
former sugar
plantations . The
old canals have
mostly been filled
in, leaving a green
central band in the
centre of the
streets. I am
entranced by the
broad avenues,
straight streets,
and large white-

painted houses.
With its
carpentered buildings —witness the
Town Hall (1888)
and the Church of
the Sacred Heart
(Plate 3.5)—it is
the most elegant
capital in the
former British
Caribbean.



Plate 3.5 Victorian
carpentered Church of

the Sacred Heart,
Georgetown , Guyana.
The predecessor
colony of British
Guiana was developed
as a sugar economy
after the ending of
African slavery in
1838. It boomed in the
late nineteenth
century with the
introduction of Indian
indentured labour,
producing a fine urban
townscape developed

over the site of pre-existing plantations

Everyone uses bicycles or motor bikes. The town is clean, and the best housing concentrates in the east of the built-up area towards the sea wall, in the direction of New Amsterdam. Poor

housing dominates
the south of town,
where tiny homes
are built in yards
one behind the
other. Like Port of
Spain , Georgetown
is a Creole city,
with few Indians.
Guyanese Indians
closely resemble
the Indians of
Trinidad. Large

UK-owned cartels
are very much in
evidence,
especially Bookers
McConnell and
Sandbach Parker,
whose tentacles
stretch from sugar
into retailing and
taxi services.

In the evening,
we were invited to
a reception for

three overseas
specialists who are
looking into
University of
Guyana finances. I
met Vice
Chancellor Earp ,
who surprised me
by apologizing for
not having the time
to talk properly
with me during my
stay. Professor

Cameron, Emerita
Professor of
Mathematics,
complained that
you are never left
alone to be an
individual in
Guyana; she
specifically
mentioned that the
political system
forces you to take
sides.

I was
introduced to Mr
Kissore, the
university
librarian, Mr Jones,
the bursar, who
owns a house in
Cheshire, and Mr
Goodland of
Bookers, a
governor of the
university. When I
met Dr B. R. B.

Persaud and
explained the
research that I had
done on Trinidad
East Indians, he
immediately asked
whether I had been
financed by the
CIA. Everything
here seems
politicized to a
degree as yet

unknown in
Trinidad.

**Monday,
September 23**

I accompany Mel to
the university,
which is really a
series of huts in
the grounds of
Queen's College. I
note that there are
East Indian market

gardens near the
railway line. I make
a brief tour of
various
government
departments that
might have
material of interest
to me—as in
Trinidad, most are
African (or Creole)
strongholds. In the
afternoon, I go to

the firm of
Sandbach Parker to
see Les Wynter,
who last night
offered to lend me
his car. Les tells me
that Prime
Minister Burnham
is giving them
pressure, because
a party supporter,
who cannot
maintain his hire

purchase
payments, has
asked him
(Burnham) to
intervene.

At the US
Information
Service I look at a
1968 film
catalogue. Two
films catch my eye:
Your Neighbour
with a Beard—

presumably an
introduction to
Castro's Cuba and
his geopolitics; and
Chicken Little. The
synopsis of the
latter is sufficiently
interesting for me
to write it down: 'it
retells the story of
Chicken Little,
Cocky Locky and
Foxy Loxy and how

the latter started
an upheaval in the
barnyard by his
insistence that the
sky was falling
down.' It is
described as an
animated cartoon
to expose and
counteract
totalitarian
methods,' no doubt
like those set out in

Jagan's People's
Political Party
(PPP)
headquarters. The
latter is located at
the Michael
Howard Bookshop
on Robb Street,
and is full of Jagan
pamphlets, and
communist, Soviet
and Chinese
publications,

especially works
on Lenin and Mao,
plus a good
collection of books
on contemporary
issues.

There is a huge
US Aid for
International
Development (AID)
Programme in
Guyana, with an
enormous staff,

presumably to
combat
communism .

In the evening,
a friend of Mike
and Mel comes to
the flat for a chat
and drink. He is
either East Indian
or dougla (Indian-
black), and highly
creolized. He tells
us that he would

never marry a
white girl (by
which I think he
means a Canadian
) , though plenty
seem interested,
because none of
them would put up
with his Guyanese
ways. According to
him, Guyanese
chaps give up one
night a week to

their wives,
otherwise they are
out with the boys
(and girls). He
thinks North
American and
British men 'are
more decent,' but
he cannot escape
the toils of his
Creole culture.

**Tuesday,
September 24**

Les lends me his
car, so the three of
us drive east down
the coast to
Rosignol and back.
We miss the ferry
across the River
Berbice to New
Amsterdam, and
the timetable

shows that it is
pointless waiting
for the next one.

The road out of
Georgetown is, of
course, flat and
straight. Leaving
the town by Kitty
and the better
suburbs , we soon
pass the site of the
new university. We
see surprisingly

little cane: villages
follow rapidly after
one another, but
they stretch deep
inland before the
cane begins—
perhaps half-a-
mile back from the
road.

Beyond the
immediate
outskirts of
Georgetown there

are several housing areas made up of board buildings, each situated in a plot divided from its neighbours by a picket fence. Most property here is East Indian, possibly occupied by 1964 refugees from the racial violence that was

unleashed by the
Burnhamites. Most
of these housing
areas are located
on mud flats and
look desperately
impoverished.

Further east
the countryside
becomes arid, and
given over to rough
grazing. Some
villages are

predominantly
East Indian, others
black. Fifteen miles
from Georgetown
there is precious
little traffic. The
rural Indians are
dirt poor, and,
judging by the
forest of *handi* ,
devoutly Hindu.
There are no signs
of the

Presbyterians , but
plenty of Church of
God buildings,
some delicate
pagoda-like
temples, and many
mosques. We
scarcely saw a
middle -class
Indian, though we
came across
several groceries
and parlours.

Buxton , a post-
emancipation
village, is mostly
black.

Beterverwagting is
also black in
population; we
walk through the
settlement to the
cane and drainage
canals, and
photograph a
sluice gate in the

sea wall. Near
Litchfield houses
are placed on
artificial
embankments.
Here the ground
floods, and blacks
can be seen fishing
in the water.

Wherever it is
dry there are
barren mudflats
and sparse

vegetation,
sometimes with
grazing cattle . In
one field the cattle
(with egrets on
their backs) are up
to their shanks in
water. In general,
however, where it
is wetter or there
is irrigation , the
land is under rice.
The coastal strip

produces some
coconuts , but it is
a drab landscape ,
and infinitely
poorer than
Trinidad. Mr
Bhattacharya had
warned me that
the East Indians
are more indigent
and less
pretentious in

Guyana than in
Trinidad.

Cuba: 1969

Contents

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El Cordón de
la HabanaPinar
del Río —Matanzas
and Cienfuegos—
TrinidadSanta
Clara and Varadero*

Havana
Sunday, April
13, 1969

Bryan Roberts, a sociologist from Manchester University, and I reached Havana after what seemed an interminable turbo-prop flight from Mexico City,

where we had both
been attending the
annual conference
of the Society for
Applied
Anthropology .
Told to check in at
an out-of-the-way
part of the airport
between 10.30 and
11.00 am on
Sunday, our
clandestine flight

eventually got into the air at about 2.00 pm. 'Cubana de Aviación es algo especial' (Cubana de Aviación is something special) we were informed, and for some hours it was by no means clear that it would leave at all.

Before we
eventually
embarked, we
were lined up, and
each traveller was
carefully
photographed for
the US authorities
and our passports
stamped with
'Salido para Cuba.'
Only a couple of
dozen passengers

braved the flight—
including three
Russians, who
spent most of the
time ordering Cuba
libres (rum and
coke).

Arriving in
Havana in the late
afternoon sunlight,
our documents are
carefully
scrutinized and

our passports
removed for four
days (Fig. 1.3). We
are quizzed as to
why we have come
to Cuba—
Britishers require
no visas. So, we
reply that we have
come to experience
the Revolution, and
want to see schools
and sugar

plantations to gain
an impression of
how things have
developed under
communism . Our
money is changed
for us into US
dollars at the
official rate, and an
arrangement made
with the Instituto
Nacional de
Información y

Turismo (INIT) for
us to stay at a
seafront hotel in
Havana.

This is the
weirdest hotel, that
exists more for the
waiters than the
clients: most of the
waiters were
associated in some
way with the
Batista regime that

Castro overthrew
and are serving
time before they
can get a passage
of good conduct to
the outside world.
Tables are
elaborately laid for
non-existent
guests, though we
ourselves seem to
be on a good deal
through our INIT

plan (full details
yet to be revealed).
There is a
swimming pool on
top of the building,
a bar, and a dance
band—what more
could a tourist of
Cuban socialism
want ?

***Monday, April
14 to Tuesday,***

April 15, 1969

Havana was, under Batista's dictatorship , a fun city (some called it 'the whorehouse of the Caribbean'), but the Spanish architectural heritage is impressive: stucco facades, huge public buildings

like the
governmental
Capitolio (now the
Academy of
Sciences), parks,
squares,
boulevards, and
national heroes—
everyone seems to
approve of Martí .
But this capital city
of a million
inhabitants is

extremely run
down after a
decade of Castro's
dictatorship . Most
of the downtown
housing is in
multiple
occupancy, with
Comités de la
Defensa de la
Revolución (CDRs)
—informer
networks among

other things—on
each block.

Everywhere we
go the traffic (near-
vintage American
cars) appears to
have been frozen at
the date of the
Revolution—
January 1959—
when Castro
entered Havana
with his band of

rebels. Since then
hardly a vehicle
has been imported,
other than a few
Soviet cars and
lorries. We make a
brief excursion to
the Havana Libre
(ex-Hotel Hilton),
where INIT in
Havana has its
headquarters, to
enquire after the

progress of the
'programme' which
is being devised for
us—only to be told
that it will not be
ready for us to join
until Wednesday
morning.

Walking
beyond the old
colonial town we
come to Vedado, an
elegant late

nineteenth-
century/early
twentieth-century
residential area
with massive,
attractive houses,
some in multiple
occupancy, others
turned over to
institutions such as
schools .

Boys we meet
on the street,

imagining we are
Russians, call us
tovarish (comrade)
and ask for *chicle*
(chewing gum) or
my ballpoint pen.
One man—the son
of Jamaican
parents—thinks
we are sailors on
leave, and wants to
do some trade with
us; another young

man from
Camagüey offers to
pay me US\$80 for
my infinitely less
valuable watch.
Brian and I decline
both offers.

Communist-
world influences
are everywhere:
Vietnamese girls at
the university;
Russian, Czech, and

East German
equipment on the
docks; Soviet-block
shipping; Russian
equipment at the
university; Russian
soldiers in trucks
in the countryside;
Czechoslovakian
Airlines. Patriotic
slogans cover the
walls and
hoardings: Patria o

Muerte
Venceremos (Our
Country or Death
—We Shall
Overcome); Hasta
la Victoria Siempre
(Ever Towards
Victory); Los
10 Milliones Van
(The 10 million
tons of sugar [the
target for 1968–
1969] are on the

way); Semana
Infantil del Girón
(Children's Week—
celebrating the Bay
of Pigs, 1961).

There are
virtually no regular
police on the
streets, though
there are traffic
wardens and a few
traffic policemen.
The Stock

Exchange and the
foreign banks are
boarded up; much
of the neon lighting
has been removed
or no longer
functions;
churches are
closed for most of
the day; and there
are few consumer
goods in the shops.
White and black

mix freely on the streets and a few dine together in our hotel. But teenage and married couples are usually of a similar shade. Like Puerto Rico, Cuba is essentially a white society with black and mulatto enclaves. Bill

Quantrill, whom
we meet at the
British Embassy,
seems to know
most of the foreign
research workers
who are here.

After two days
on the loose in
Havana we have
been offered an all-
in tourist package
for 6 days (with

driver and guide).
It will take us to
the Cordón de
Habana (Havana
green belt)
tomorrow, and
then to Pinar del
Río in the west and
Cienfuegos in the
east, before we
leave on what is
essentially a Cuban
refugee flight to

Madrid with Iberia
on Monday
evening.

**Cordón de
Havana**
*Wednesday,
April 16, 1969*

We leave Havana
via a
neighbourhood of
large houses which

are now used as
dormitories for
beqados
(scholarship
holders). Our goal
is the Havana
green belt, the area
around the capital
that was formerly
neglected and has,
since the
Revolution, been
turned into a zone

for nurseries and coffee production (Fig. 1.3). Much of the cultivation is associated with agencies such as INIT and the Habana Libre, which supply volunteers from their staff to work in their free time.

A coffee farmer
and his wife—both
of them white—
show us their
house, which is
simple but of good
quality with beds, a
refrigerator, and a
radio (Plate 3.6).
The husband was
originally from
Pinar del Río. They
tell us that things

are better than
under Batista, and
that as *pequeños
propietarios* (small
farmers) they
receive fertilizer
and implements as
well as more
general help from
the government.



Plate 3.6 Coffee
farmers , Cordón de

Habana, Cuba —an agricultural development sponsored by the Cuban government after the 1959 revolution. There is a substantial white presence in the Spanish Caribbean, and both Cuba and Puerto Rico have white majority populations in urban and rural areas

In the
afternoon, we are
taken to see some
nuevas ciudades
(new towns)—
small
concentrations of
suburban-type
houses for rural
labourers working
in scattered
locations. The
quality of the

housing is good,
and each
nucleation
contains a few
basic shops and a
jardín infantil
(children's
playground).

We visit the
technical wing of
the university,
where students do
3 years' military

training with rifles
on the campus as
part of their
studies. It appears
that the
architectural
students are
politically
organized and said
to be close to their
teachers
(ideologically? I
ask myself). They

are preparing
plans for the Tokyo
World Fair, and for
high-rise
developments in
the Cuban
countryside, to
concentrate
population and
abolish the
traditional *bohó*
(hut).

We also see a school specializing in physical education , which is producing teachers for the whole island. Ideological commitment is an important aspect of the training, though the lecturers warn that

it is too short a
period of time
since 1959 for the
Castro regime to
claim everything
for the revolution.

Pinar del Río

Thursday,

April 17, 1969

Most of the day is
spent driving to

and looking
around the
province of Pinar
del Río in the far
west of the island
(Fig. 1.3).

Henequen fields
give way to sugar
cane as we travel
west, and we see
children making up
bundles of sugar
that are then

loaded
mechanically—I
doubt that child
labour has been
used on
plantations in the
cane fields of the
British Caribbean
since the World
War II. We also see
a lot of new cane
being planted,
presumably to

boost the 1969–
1970 sugar crop.

At Saroa we call
in on an orchid
garden and a
recreational centre
which incorporates
a house that had
once belonged to
Ernest
Hemingway; and in
San Andrés we see
a secondary

boarding school
with an excellent
day nursery for
working mothers,
taking children
aged from 4–
5 months to
6 years (Fig. 1.3). I
am impressed by
the way the
organizers have
divided the
children into small

groups, and
provided them
with cots and
books as well as
food —especially
eggs and fruit. Last
summer in Jamaica
I was told by social
workers that an
egg a day is the
essential minimum
for a child, and that

yardstick seems to
be exceeded here.

Pinar del Río is
a specialist
tobacco-producing
region, supplying
high-quality leaf
for the Cuban cigar
industry . Tobacco
drying sheds
roofed with thatch
are a key element

in the rural
cultural landscape .

**Matanzas and
Cienfuegos**
*Friday, April
18, 1969*

We made a 7.30 am
start for Matanzas
on the north coast,
crossing the
harbour by tunnel.

Passing through
Havana del Este,
various seaside
settlements, and
extensive arid
areas given over to
scrub vegetation
and henequen
plantations , we
reached Matanzas ,
a fine little town
(Fig. 1.3).
Provincial Cuba is

attractive, and
while the outskirts
of many
settlements are
similar to those of
a poor Mexican
town, the buildings
in the town centre
are often
handsome, and the
streets clean and
busy.

Crossing the
island, we travel
through plains
given over to
pasture and dotted
with cattle and
royal palms, and
make a short
recreational visit to
the Laguna Guama.
Here we are
isolated on a boat
with our guide for

an hour or so, and
are given the inside
story about life in
Castro's Cuba.

Later we are taken
to two major south
coast battle fronts
associated with the
Bahía de Cochinos
(Bay of Pigs)
invasion of 1961.

The mass of thorn
scrubs, backed by

swamplands,
provided the
perfect setting for
'la primera derrota
del imperialismo
en America Latina'
(the first rout of
imperialism in
Latin America)
(Fig. 1.3).

Cienfuegos
further west on the
south coast has a

large Russian ship
in harbour when
we arrive (Fig. 1.3).
It has for long been
a prosperous sugar
port, as the large
houses with
magnificent
columns on the
main street testify.
On the seafront
near our hotel
there is also a row

of handsome
houses—
indications of the
wealth of the sugar
trade after Cuba
came under the full
influence of US
capitalism (and
with access to the
enormous US
market) in 1902.

***Saturday,
April 19, 1969***

During the early morning, we visit a sugar warehouse and bulk loader in Cienfuegos, supplied by trains drawing Romanian-made trucks. It is able to handle

100,000 tons of
sugar annually
(five times the
output of
Hampden Estate in
Jamaica).¹⁰ Each
consignment of
sugar amounts to
15,000 tons, which
is roughly the
quantity we are
looking at in the
warehouse, and

the labour force
amounts to 240
workers, employed
in three shifts with
a relief shift in
reserve. Half are
described to us as
'good workers,' and
we are told that 30
are Communist
Party members.

We also see a
fertilizer factory

which has been
built with UK
cooperation, a
power station, and
the industrial zone
of Cienfuegos.

At this point I
ask our guide to
take me to a doctor,
since my stomach
had been giving me
problems since I
was in Mexico City,

and to my
amazement I am
immediately
rushed off to the
local hospital. The
hospital is
dilapidated and
overcrowded, but I
am well received
and treated by one
of the doctors, and
able to rejoin
Bryan fortified by a

diagnosis and a
packet of tablets.

In the
afternoon, we visit
the sugar factory at
Pepito Tey—
named after a
Fidelista
revolutionary
martyr.¹¹ It makes
about 20,000 tons
of sugar a year, and
employs 400

workers including
cane loaders and
field supervisors.
Many are old-time
workers who go
back beyond the
Castro period.
Nowadays they get
some schooling for
three years during
the dead season—
the *tiempo muerto*.

Before the
revolution the
administrator, to
whom we talk, was
the estate chemist.
He explains that
cane is brought to
the Pepito Tey
factory by the
plantation's
narrow-gauge
railway; after
crushing and

boiling the sugar is sent to Cienfuegos for shipment. The *casa grande* (great house) and plantation had been American-owned since the mid-nineteenth century, but the family left in 1961 after the Bay of Pigs invasion

orchestrated by the
CIA.

Trinidad

Sunday, 20

April 1969

We head for
Trinidad, a colonial
town founded in
1514, located a few
miles inland from
the south coast,

and therefore
relatively safe from
pirates and
invaders (Fig. 1.3).
The narrow,
cobble streets
and houses with
shuttered windows
and handsome
grilles remind
Bryan of highland
Guatemalan
colonial towns.

This delight
was followed by a
stiflingly hot trip
by lorry to the
Escambray
Mountains—a lair
of guerrilla *focos*
during the
revolutionary war
of 1958–1959—
where we are to
see second-year
primary school

teachers under training. In fact, we are addressed by a Communist Party official instead.

To my relief, we are returned to Trinidad with its beautiful colonial houses in the centre and poorer homes on the periphery—very

Mexican. The CDRs
seem thinner on
the ground here
than in Havana .

We spend the
evening in
Cienfuegos and
have dinner with
an American rabbi,
who has been
allowed by the
regime to conduct
services in Cuban

synagogues —a
Rabbi Everett from
Princeton.

**Santa Clara
and Varadero**
***Monday, April
21, 1969***

We travel via
Sancti Spíritus to
Santa Clara, and I
see grapevines by

the side of the
road. We visit the
Geography
Department at the
Universidad
Central de Santa
Clara. I am told
that there has been
little student
involvement in the
election of the
rector, and that it is
essentially a

political
appointment.

The
Department of
Geography is in the
School of
Education, but the
department has
good books in its
library and the
small staff show
remarkable
enthusiasm. The

Head of
Department
confides that,
although he is from
a wealthy family,
he goes to the
country to cut cane
with the students
to fulfil their
labour
commitments.

Back in the
centre of Santa

Clara, I notice the
bullet holes on the
facade of one of the
buildings: it was
here during the
revolution that a
Batista armoured
train was
ambushed and
derailed by Ché
Guevara and
Camillo Cienfuegos

.

Our return journey becomes fast moving as we head north to the beach resort of Varadero with its white sands (Fig. 1.3). Coastal sugar plantations can be tedious, but in the centre of the island we encounter the quintessential

Cuban landscape of
rolling country,
rough pasture ,
limestone hillocks,
and scrub, with
royal palms
scattered in
clumps here and
there, alternating
with tobacco plots,
and papaya and
citrus groves.

I have been
most impressed by
the enthusiasm of
Cubans for the
Castro regime ,
bolstered though
by the US trade
embargo : the
sense of
mobilization
towards a common
goal; the focus on
agriculture; the

reduction of urban-
rural differences;
and the
concentration on
simple but good-
quality housing—
all so very different
from my 1968
journey through
the rest of the
Caribbean. My
reservations focus
on the fact that we

have been able to
speak only to
Communist Party
members; the sole
advisers here are
from communist
Eastern Europe;
and it is
obvious that the
Communist Party
membership is the
new elite.

Our departure
from Havana
airport was
perhaps the most
extraordinary
experience of the
visit to Cuba, since
we were
accompanied by
several hundred
well-heeled Cuban
refugees who were
desperate to get

out of the country.
After waiting for
ages to obtain
permits, for which
most would have
done years of
service for the
state, the
passengers were
determined to take
as many valuables
with them as
possible.

To prevent this
from happening,
our baggage was
placed in a large
customs hall prior
to check-in, and
each case was
minutely inspected
for its contents and
secret hiding
places where
jewellery or other
small luxury items

might be
concealed. The
tension in the air
was electric, as
every single bag
was examined,
passed, and then
released for check-
in and boarding.
Body searches of
the passengers
followed as a
matter of routine,

with a great deal of tension associated with each one. The process took hours to complete.

Once we were on board, Bryan commented that it was rare for anyone to want to migrate to Spain because of the Franco

dictatorship ; for
the previous
30 years, the
pattern had been
of Spanish out-
migration to Latin
America, especially
to Cuba and
Mexico.

Nevertheless, a
cheer went up on
take-off, and
prolonged clapping

broke out from the
Cubans as Iberia
touched down in
Madrid.

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Footnotes

1 Sloughbucks or
Buckinghamshire, UK.

2 For disproving of
the myth of slave
breeding in Barbuda
see David Lowenthal
and Colin G. Clarke

'Slave-Breeding in
Barbuda : The Past of a
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3 Stipendiary

Magistrates were appointed by the British government to be independent of the local judiciary in the British Caribbean during Apprenticeship (1834–1838) and after slave emancipation in 1838; in other words, to be less influenced by planters in their dealing with the ex-slaves than regular

magistrates.

4 Erich Fromm
(1900–1980) was a
German-born
psychoanalyst and
philosopher, interested
in the interaction
between psychology
and society, focusing
on human nature,
ethics, and love.

5 These young people were essentially the offshoots of Walter Rodney's Black Power Movement in Jamaica —and the other British Caribbean territories. For an account of Black Power in the Caribbean at this time see Walter Rodney, *The Groundings with My Brothers*, 1969.

6 Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, 1966.

7 The *Federal Maple* was one of two ships (the other being the *Federal Palm*) given by Canada to the British West Indies Federation when it was set up in 1958–1962. The purpose of the two ships was to provide an integrated service

of inter-territorial shipping, which had previously been piecemeal, when it had been run on a purely commercial basis.

8 The fact that the turnout of voters at the Trinidad 1971 general election, which the DLP did not contest, was recorded as low as 33 percent

suggests that voting machines were not being used by the Creole government to fix results (Colin Clarke, 'Society and Electoral Politics in Trinidad and Tobago,' in Colin Clarke (ed.), *Society and Politics in the Caribbean*, 1991, 47–77).

9 Hannah Boodoo was a student at Liverpool University, and in my tutorial group in geography in 1964–1965.

10 For an account of Hampden Estate, Jamaica, see Colin Clarke, *Race, Class and the Politics of Decolonization: Jamaica Journals, 1961*

and 1968, 2015, 179–
182.

11 Hugh Thomas,
*Cuba or the Pursuit of
Freedom*, 1971, 897.

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and the Caribbean
Under Castro's Eyes,*
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4. The Caribbean in the Early 1970s

Colin Clarke¹ 

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Oxford, UK

 **Colin Clarke**

1773

Contents

*Introduction—
Jamaica 1972—
Haiti—Puerto
Rico—Trinidad
1972 and 1973*

Introduction

After more than
three years back
at the University
of Liverpool,
during which
time I had been
invited to join
the Latin
American and
Caribbean Field
Committee of
Oxfam in Oxford,

I was able to
travel through
the Caribbean
once more, and
to build in
targeted visits to
Oxfam-related
projects in
Jamaica and
Haiti. My
jumping-off
point was

Montreal, where
I attended the
International
Geographical
Union
Conference and
presented a
paper on my
research in San
Fernando,
Trinidad.
Jamaica, at the

beginning of the
PNP's term in
office led by
Michael Manley,
already provided
a radical
contrast to the
JLP government
of 1968, which I
wanted to
experience, since
I was then

working on,
Jamaica in Maps
(1974b). In fact,
the train journey
across the island
from Montego
Bay to Kingston
was a deliberate
attempt to see
parts of Jamaica
that I had not
reached in either

1961 or 1968.
High spots were
a visit to
Operation
Friendship in the
slums of West
Kingston (first
seen in 1968)
and
conversations
with friends,
Owen Jefferson

and Barry
Higman, about
Black Power and
the Rodney riots
of 1968.

By 1972 Papa
Doc Duvalier
was dead and
had been
succeeded as
Président à Vie
of Haiti by his

son Baby Doc: he
promised, 'my
father made the
political
revolution, but I
will make the
economic
revolution.' What
struck me,
however, was the
subjugation of
the mulattoes ,

the elevation of
the black elite,
and the
subordination of
the black
masses. Through
the US-based but
French-speaking
Oblate Fathers,
who had a hand
in most of the
projects I visited,

I was issued an
internal passport
in Port-au-Prince
and allowed to
travel south to
Les Cayes, where
I visited a
housing project,
nutritional
centre, and
village
(Maurency), and

then went north
to Cap Haïtien
(the former
colonial capital).
There I saw rent
yards, spent a
day at the
regional
development
project at Centre
Rural de
Développement

de Milot
(CRUDEM), went
on horseback to
the ruined
fortress of La
Ferrière, and
stopped by an
old people's
home in Cap.
Back in the
capital I was
taken to a

squatter
settlement, and I
talked to one of
the Catholic
sisters about
alleviating urban
poverty.

I revisited
Puerto Rico and
was taken to
lunch with a
white family in

the centre of the
island (rural
whites of
Spanish origin
provide the core
of Puerto Rican
identity), and I
had some
encounters with
the fantasy
world of the
Marxist Left at

the University of
Puerto Rico
(UPR). In
Trinidad, I found
that the country
was still reeling
from the trauma
of the real-life
Black Power
disturbances of
1970. Creoles
who had

previously been
pro-Williams
were
disillusioned,
while my Indian
friends had
become
convinced that
Creole political
dominance with
Eric Williams in
charge was

infinitely
superior to the
unknown world
beyond a black
coup d'état. In
San Fernando
black was
beautiful, and
Afro haircuts
were much in
evidence, but
among Indians

traditional East
Indian culture
was fading—
despite being
valued in
opposition to
Creole blackness.

Less than a
year later, in July
1973, I was back
in Trinidad again
—taking a side

trip from a
conference in
Calgary, Canada
—to collect from
the Statistics
Department
specially
prepared
printouts of
census data
relating to race
and religion for

the enumeration
districts of San
Fernando in
1970, in order to
compare them
with the 1960
data purchased
as a prelude to
my 1964
research.
Comparison of
these two data

sets enabled me
to evaluate the
changing social
ecology of San
Fernando during
the decade of
decolonization
(1960 to 1970)
straddling
independence in
1962.

The main
event taking
place in the
Caribbean
during my short
stay was the
conference in
Guyana on the
formation of the
Caribbean
Community
(CARICOM) out

of the Caribbean
Free Trade Area
(CARIFTA) . But
in Trinidad the
ripples created
by the Black
Power
disturbances of
1970 had not
dispersed. I
enjoyed my
usual round of

visits with
Creole and
Indian friends—I
was based in San
Fernando —and
my enduring
impression was
of the
abandonment of
North Indian
peasant culture
and the

importation and
acceptance of
contemporary
Indian dress,
music , film and
popular culture ,
a harbinger of
the visit I made
years later in
1985 with my
wife and co-
researcher

Gillian (Clarke
1986).

**Jamaica:
1972
Saturday,
August 19,
1972**

The Eastern
Airlines flight

1800

out of New York
crossed the
centre of Cuba,
dipped its wings
over Montego
Bay, and headed
for Kingston
(Fig. 1.3).

Interior
settlement in
Jamaica seems
denser from the

air than I
remembered it
in 1961, but that
may be an
illusion, since I
know that the
towns have
absorbed most
of the population
increase since
then. I can see
that the new

Kingston
suburbs north of
Washington
Boulevard now
fill up the
Liguanea Plain.¹

The
immigration
officials in
Kingston were
most unpleasant
—possibly

1803

because I was
carrying a huge
map roll for
Elizabeth
Thomas-Hope,
who is about to
do fieldwork in
Jamaica.

Flying back
to Montego Bay
—my
destination, so

that I can take
the train across
the island—I had
a superb view up
the Yallahs
Valley from the
coast into the
Blue Mountains ;
and I could see
clearly the
growth of
settlement at

1805

Beverley Hills
(as we left East
Kingston).

Montego Bay

The Montego
Bay central
business district
is constricted
and the wharves

derelict, hence
the Urban
Development
Corporation
(UDC)
redevelopment
project. To the
south of the
Montego River
the Montego Bay
Freeport has
been

established.
Looking in that
direction from
Hotel Pemco, I
make out two
apartment
blocks, some
Esso oil tanks
and cargo sheds.

Mo Bay
shows signs of
both prosperity

and dereliction.
Insurance
offices, banks,
and stores
abound. But the
tenements are
poor and come
almost into the
city centre. Touts
on the streets
promise the
visitor 'an

exciting time,'
yet the majority
of pedestrians
are sullenly
indifferent to
outsiders.

Dressed in
walking boots
and khaki
trousers and
carrying my
anorak over my

shoulder, I
hardly look like
the average
tourist.
Nevertheless,
there are plenty
of men to shout
or murmur
abuse, to
demand that you
'come here,' or to
wheedle some

coins out of you.
Some of the
people,
especially the
middle-aged
women, are well-
disposed, but
many are
abusive, and the
majority are
certainly aware
that you are

white. Everyone
assumes whites
are American.

Barnett
Factory is a ruin,
and the western
exit from the
town is now
marked by the
Westgate
Shopping Plaza
—such is

modernization.
Doctor's Cave
still stands at the
centre of the
tourist area, and
there are many
additional airline
offices and shops
around the Casa
Montego Hotel—
especially
freeport shops

selling perfume,
jewellery, china,
cameras, and
alcohol. Shops
and hotel rooms
are air-
conditioned.

Tourism
seems to have
taken over most
of the north
coast. Doctor's

Cave is obviously
a white enclave,
and so is the
tourist area
generally. Rose
Hall—a ruined
sugar plantation
great house in
the 1960s—is a
completely
rebuilt project. I
am sure I could

see the
Hampden Estate
factory chimney
across the sea of
cane which fills
the Queen of
Spain's Valley—
the last place I
visited on my
1968 visit to
Jamaica.

**By Train to
Kingston
*Sunday,
August 20,
1972***

I took a taxi to
the station at
6.30 am, leaving
me half an hour
before the train

was due to
depart. There
was a long
queue, most of
the travellers
carrying
enormous
cardboard
cartons. The
departure time
came and went,
while the ticket

office
laboriously
processed each
passenger,
writing the
purchase price,
time, and date
on each
cardboard ticket.
No one was left
behind, and we
eventually got

under way by
eight o'clock.

We have a
slow and cool
climb out of
Montego Bay to
Anchovy and
Montpelier , with
its dense food
forest , and then
travel on with
grinding metallic

turns to
Maggotty and
bauxite , then
Appleton where
I catch sight of
the sugar factory
. During the
section of track
covering
Appleton , Siloah
, Balaclava , and
Kendal (the site

of the railway
accident many
years ago) some
Pentecostal
preachers come
on board. Then,
having spread
their message,
they get off (Fig.
1.3).

By the
middle of

morning the
temperature is
sweltering, and
the hard seats
are almost
impossible to sit
on. We pass
more swiftly
from Porus and
Clarendon Park,
where there are
mangoes ,

breadfruit, and
ackees, down to
May Pen, Old
Harbour, and
Spanish Town,
with shacks on
the outskirts and
tenements in the
urban centre.
Finally, in the
early afternoon
we chug into

Kingston:
Moonlight City
(a squatter
settlement)
looks larger, and
the Industrial
Development
Corporation's
estate is built up
(Fig. 1.3).

I share a taxi
with some black

Americans on
their way to New
Kingston. As we
leave the railway
station, located
in one of the
most decrepit
parts of West
Kingston, I note
that the city
centre still looks
run down; large

properties
around Half Way
Tree are being
subdivided;
apartment
complexes are
being inserted,
and commercial
invasions are
taking place
along the main
routes to the

northern
suburbs ; and
the one-way
system operating
in much of the
downtown grid
is being
extended to the
Constant Spring
Road north of
Half Way Tree.

Having
dropped the
American
visitors at their
destinations, the
taxi driver is
astonished (and
grateful) when I
get out a map of
Kingston to
direct him to an
address on

Skyline Drive,
one side of
which looks out
over Kingston to
the sea, the other
inland towards
the Blue
Mountains . I am
staying on the
Blue Mountain
side with Barry
Higman, one of

my doctoral
students, who
has just been
appointed
lecturer in
History at the
University of the
West Indies
(UWI).

There is no
one at
home when I

1832

arrive, so the taxi
driver and I walk
across to the
property
opposite to see if
anyone has the
key. The maid,
who is alone, is
nervous about
being
approached by
two men in such

an isolated spot,
but comes out of
the house talk to
us, and in so
doing
absentmindedly
allows the
kitchen door to
shut behind her,
leaving her
stranded with
us. She becomes

more frightened.
I suggest we
remove some
glass louvres
from the kitchen
window, and the
rather portly
driver then helps
me to climb
through the
aperture. Now I
am inside and

the even-more-
terrified maid is
outside with the
driver. I open the
kitchen door and
exit; the maid
enters and locks
the door; I fix the
louvres and pay
the driver. This
charade
concludes

shortly before
Barry comes
home with the
key.

Kingston
Monday,
August 21,
1972

I go with Barry
to UWI, and
spend most of
the morning
talking with
George Roberts,
now Professor of
Sociology, whom
I had first met in
Jamaica in 1961.
He tells me that
the Eastern

Caribbean 1961
census is a
model for the
1971 census of
Jamaica. The
initial analysis
will be by
enumeration
district, and then
for ever larger
spatial
aggregations—

but how much
aggregation and
cross-tabulation
will be
attempted
depends on
finance. George
reminds me that
the money for
the analysis of
the 1960 census
was provided by

the UK
government.

George fears
that the 1971
census will be of
a much lower
standard than
the 1960 version
—some 1960
material is still
awaiting
publication. I

fear that we shall
not get small-
area data for
colour and racial
categories, but
George
comments that
very few people,
apart from me,
have ever used
enumeration
district data

from the 1960
census.

After lunch in
the SCR
(changed beyond
all recognition,
and for the
worse) Barry
drives me down
to Beaumont
Road, August
Town, where I

quickly locate
Miss Clara.
Though patently
still poor, she
doesn't look
much older. She
has a number of
lodgers (in a
two-bedroom
house!) to
provide
company and

make ends meet
now that her
partner Mr Fitz
is dead.²

I give her £5
—a pretty
hopeless
gesture. Many of
her neighbours,
who have rebuilt
their houses
since 1968, now

own substantial
structures. I
shall try to see
Miss Clara again
later this week.
Ricky , son of
Miss Clara's
nephew, has
gone to England
to join his father
who works in a
hospital. Ricky's

mother is in
England, but
with another
man. Miss Clara
tells me she is
glad Ricky went,
as he was
absconding from
school and
smoking ganja.

***Tuesday,
August 22,
1972***

Barry and I visit
a welder's yard
in Papine to get
his car repaired.
Papine is now
almost
completely made
up of concrete

buildings; in
1961, they were
entirely wooden.
We then drive
from Papine to
the St Andrew
Library, Tom
Redcam Avenue
to look at the
Kingston
Centennial
Exhibition

Commemorating
its 100 years as
capital city.³

At the
Central Planning
Unit I meet
Phyllis Mensah
(another
doctoral student
of mine) who is
working there.
Phyllis tells me

that there is a
tourist slump at
the moment, and
great concern is
being expressed
about the
viability of the
hotel in the
Kingston
waterfront
redevelopment.

Phyllis and I
visit the city
together and
note that a great
deal of small-
scale land-use
change is taking
place in central
Kingston. The
Gleaner Building
has opened, as
well as a new tax

office. The
telecommunicati
ons firm Jamintel
has a building
under
construction.
Jamaicanization
of banks and
insurance
companies is
also going ahead
apace—I am no

longer surprised
by the name of
the Bank of Nova
Scotia Jamaica.
Harbour Street,
which in 1961
contained row
after row of
manufacturers'
agents, is now
being invaded by
travel agents and

airline offices.
King Street on
the west side
seems almost
unchanged since
1961, but on the
east side
cafeterias and
dry goods shops
have sprung up.
Retailing has
declined, and

Barclays Bank
now has
branches on
both sides of
King Street
where there was
only one in 1961.

***Wednesday,
August 23,
1972***

I sleep in at
Barry's house,
catch up on
some reading
and reflect on
Jamaica. The
Gleaner carries
news that the
writings of
Malcolm X,
Stokely
Carmichael, and

Elijah
Mohammed—all
US Black Power
leaders—are no
longer banned in
Jamaica. Michael
Manley's PNP
government ,
elected earlier
this year to great
popular acclaim,
has also

removed a host
of communist
publications
from the
prohibited list.
Red and black
are now more
acceptable than
at any time since
I first visited
Jamaica in 1961.

***Thursday,
August 24,
1972***

Phyllis meets me
and takes me
downtown to the
Urban
Development
Corporation,
where Mrs
Demetrius

shows me
around—I think
she is on the ball.
She talks to us
about the plans
for Hellshire —
300,000
population, with
120,000 in the
short term at
Portmore. There
are to be houses

on the flat ridge
tops and green
belts following
the valleys.

The UDC also
has some ideas
for Montego Bay,
tying up the
disparate
elements, such
as the freeport,
the poor-quality

downtown
sections, and the
tourist area. The
key strategy is to
build a road
along the
seafront,
reclaiming land
for tourism on
the foreshore.

At Operation
Friendship,

1863

which I had
visited in 1968,
the Revd
Edwards shows
Phyllis and me
over their new
building, much
of it financed by
Oxfam.
Operation
Friendship
contains a

dispensary and
surgeries for
doctors and
dentists on the
ground floor, and
rooms for family
planning
consultancies
and adult
literacy classes
on the first floor.
I meet a doctor

1865

and nurse from
the US, and a
nurse in charge
of the family
planning service.
Apparently,
many men get
contraceptives
from the clinic.
The service
seems to be
booming

compared to
four years ago.
An American
doctor tells me
that pregnant
women cannot
get onto the
antenatal list at
Jubilee Hospital
unless their
boyfriends
donate a pint of

blood—and
possibly also
make some kind
of payment.

Phyllis and I
have lunch at
Kinhead's on
King Street—a
light-coloured
clientele—
before heading
west down the

Spanish Town
Road. Between
the Parade and
Coronation
Market, the
streets seem
even more
densely
populated than
in 1961, and
commodities for
sale on the

1869

sidewalks spill
over onto the
road. But further
to the west the
road has been
resurfaced and it
looks less
depressing than
it did a decade
ago. The JLP
slum-clearance
projects at Tivoli

Gardens and
Trench Town
represent
housing
improvements in
a sea of poverty .
Payne Avenue
and a small
scheme on the
southern side of
the Spanish
Town Road are

1871

the only other
developments of
note.

Phyllis takes
the causeway to
those
depressingly
situated new
settlements at
Edgewater and
Independence
City, where the

basic house costs
about £5000
including fitted
carpets and air-
conditioning. It
seems that the
Kingston and St
Andrew
Corporation
(KSAC) will not
take over
responsibility for

the causeway
bridge, because
it does not meet
their building
regulations.

We return
across the
causeway and
then turn west
away from
Kingston town
centre along the

two-lane Spanish
Town Road; it
seems that
roadworks have
been held up
because of
labour disputes
after the election
—presumably
PNP-affiliated
labourers want
the job of

finishing the
road off. Then
we drive through
the suburbs via
the Washington
Boulevard,
Duhaney Park,
Hughenden , Red
Hills Road,
Constant Spring
Road, and Hope
Road to Half Way

1876

Tree.
Condominium
apartments and
town houses for
purchase, and
apartments to
lease and rent,
have been
inserted
throughout these
suburbs.

Half Way
Tree has been
transformed by
the invasion of
offices—both
government and
private—and
retailing, which
have penetrated
the respectable
roads adjacent to
the main

1878

arteries. 'Old'
middle-class and
upper-middle-
class
neighbourhoods
have been
blighted by these
processes, by the
obsolescence of
the original
properties and
the addition of

pirate houses on
the plots.

Shop prices
seem to be on
par with
equivalent goods
in the UK, and
the Agricultural
Marketing
Corporation has
some good retail
outlets.

Supermarkets
and
shopping plazas
have sprung up
everywhere,
many at
Matilda's Corner,
with a noticeably
light-coloured
clientele. After
driving for so
long through the

downtown area
which is almost
totally black, I
was surprised to
see so many of
the old brown
middle class still
living, and
shopping, in the
'golden triangle'
formed by the
Hope, Old Hope,

and Half Way
Tree Roads.

Friday,
August 25,
1972

I have a long talk
with Blossom
Adolphus: she is
in charge of the
Physical

Planning Unit,
which is
pressing ahead
with a land-use
survey of
Kingston carried
out in 1970.
Virtually nothing
had been done
on that front
since 1961. She
tells me that a

quick survey of
squatting in
Kingston was
carried out using
air photographs
for Orlando
Patterson, a
member of
Michael Manley's
advisory panel.
Riverton City has
dense squatter

camps, and
squatting occurs
on the periphery
of many
residential areas
in the suburbs.

The Town
Planning
Department still
exists, its
primary concern
being with

processing
planning
applications. Mr
Hodges , my
1961 contact,
still has a role
there, and he is
trying to catch
up on those who
evade the
change-of-use
restrictions.

According to Ms
Adolphus the
urban situation
has not been
monitored with
care: town
houses have
mushroomed,
especially along
the Hope Road.

I make my
pilgrimage to the

Bolivar
Bookshop and
Gallery, and then
keep an
appointment
with Sir Philip
Sherlock (former
vice chancellor
of UWI) at the
Association of
Caribbean
Universities and

1889

Research
Institutes. We
talk about urban
issues and the
Caribbean more
generally. I
mention the
review I have
recently written
of David
Lowenthal's
West Indian

Societies, and Sir Philip comments that, in his opinion, the book does not fully reflect the anti-white feeling in Jamaica. He adds that the black Governor

General is more
than a symbol.

Sir Philip
tells me about
the culture shock
he suffered when
he came to
Calabar College
in Kingston just
before World
War I: in the
countryside,

1892

where he grew
up, people said
'good marning
me darling.' Mike
Smith had
reported the
same thing to me
in 1961, and
then had added
that the gulf
between
primary school

and Jamaica College, which he experienced in about 1932, was the same as that between the lower and middle social sections (social strata) of his plural society model.

Sir Philip
adds that
Trinidad is fed
up with Eric
Williams ,
though no
alternative to
him has emerged
yet—Lloyd Best
is an interesting
analyst, but not a
popular leader.

**Reflections
on Black
Power**

***Saturday,
August 26,
1972***

I have arranged
to visit Owen
Jefferson, who
was a fellow

graduate student
in Oxford and a
friend during my
1968 stay in
Jamaica . He has
just been made a
senior lecturer
in economics. He
tells me that he
is very
interested in
Cuba, and in two

fundamental
questions: (1)
Can
Westminster-
style democracy
bring about
economic and
social
development?
(2) Is
dictatorship of
the left or right a

more viable
developmental
path?

Owen tells
me that Black
Power has been
in the melting
pot since the
1972 election,
and the ideas of
the New World
Group now have

a wide currency.
The Manley
government has
taken over the
rhetoric of Black
Power but not
yet implemented
change.
Whenever
changes have
been mooted,
and the private

1900

sector has
enquired into
them, the latter
is usually
assured that all
will be as before.
Owen adds that
New World is a
heterogeneous
group which
incorporates
Black Power.

During the
afternoon, I
watch the cricket
match between
UWI Staff and
Melbourne
Cricket Club
played on the
university pitch.
Melbourne
supporters are
mostly black.

According to
Barry Higman,
the cricket
crowd at Sabina
Park for the test
matches is still
segregated by
colour and
income.

We talk
about the
current situation

of whites in
Jamaica (Barry is
Australian). In
his view, whites
still receive
considerable
benefits from
their colour, but
the benefits and
disadvantages
come whether
you want them

or not. There was no problem for Barry during the Rodney riots (October 1968), but he was a graduate student among other students and a known quantity. Barry emphasizes that

the colour
problem in
Jamaica is highly
situational. But
as a white
among coloureds
and blacks you
have to 'prove
yourself' and put
in a good deal of
hard work and
hard talking.

1906

**East End of
the Island
Sunday,
August 27,
*1972***

Barry and I go
out for the day to
the university's
Lyssons Beach
near Morant Bay,

taking with us
Merle Johnson
and a colleague
of hers from the
census
programme in
sociology. The
mouth of the
Yallahs River is
still a dry ford,
and the whole
eastern end of

1908

the island
remains
desperately poor.
We cross the
Bustamante
Bridge into
Morant Bay and
then swim and
have a delicious
picnic lunch at
Lyssons,

1909

prepared by
Merle (Fig. 1.3).

Driving via
Port Morant ,
Golden Grove,
and
Manchioneal, we
pass many
wattle houses
with children
poorly dressed
and barefoot.

Towns are small and have scarcely grown in this zone. Port Antonio is the same as it was four years ago—or 10 (Fig. 1.3).

Taking the junction road from Annotto Bay, we follow

the incised
course of the
Wag Water River
to the Botanic
Gardens at
Castleton . The
vegetation is a
tangle of
breadfruit,
coconuts ,
bananas, and
bamboo, with

food forest ,
including
mangoes , on the
lower slopes.
The road
improves before
degenerating
into a corrugated
surface,
depending on
the availability
(or not) of

roadwork for
manual
labourers
seeking
unemployment
relief. The
corrugations
must put years
on the cars.

During the
last ten years,
the coastal

1914

landscape near
Port Antonio has
been
transformed by
lethal yellow
disease into a
primateval forest
of dead coconut
trees.

1915

***Monday,
August 28,
1972***

I go to see Miss
Clara at
Hermitage for
the last time
before setting
out for Haiti. She
tells me that her
house is

registered in the
name of a
woman called
Dixon.⁴ Miss
Clara also says
that she (Clara
Armstrong) had
another surname
many years ago.
She lived in
Greenwich Farm
and Trench

Town at an
earlier stage in
her life.

Miss Clara is
a lifelong JLP
supporter, like
her late partner
Mr Fitz . She says
that the political
parties check on
you to see which
way you vote—

perks depend on
your support.
Even if your
party gets in you
may not get any
benefits.

She walks me
round to see her
immediate
neighbour, who
remembers
coming with us

in 1961 to the
East Kingston
rally in
celebration of
Haile Selassie's
birthday.

Miss Clara
has recently
become a Roman
Catholic.⁵

Haiti: Port- au-Prince

I am met at the
airport in Port-
au-Prince by
Father du Plessis
and Father
Armand Bedard,
Oblate Fathers
from the US,

1921

through whom
Oxfam is
carrying out
developmental
work in Haiti
(Fig. 1.3). They
take me to Hotel
Splendide (new
name, same old
building), where
I stayed in 1968
—a heavy,

concrete hotel
with verandahs,
arches, and
balustrades.

Only six
guests are in
residence, and
the pool has a
film of dust on it.
A taxi driver
hovering at the
gate desperately

tries to tempt
the clientele
with 'a Spanish
girl'—I assume
from the
Dominican
Republic
—'fifteen or
sixteen; she
would be good
for you.'

The inmates
are an odd
bunch: an
aggressive
French woman;
an abrasive
American; a lone
Cuban with an
American accent,
and so on. And I
should add a
man from the

Casino, who
insists that there
are rich Haitians;
that rich
Haitians treat
poor Haitians
abysmally; that
being a young
man, I could
make a fortune
in Haiti if I had
US\$50,000 to

invest in a shirt
factory.

As in 1968 ,
the immigration
check at the
airport was
perfunctory and
customs hardly
bothered to open
my suitcase.

**Tuesday,
August 29,
1972**

Father du Plessis
takes me
downtown in his
car. Our first stop
is at the newly
completed Red
Cross building to
see Sister

1928

Maureen, who
looks after the
blood bank. She
tells me that
they never have
much stock,
because there
are constant
emergencies.
While we are
there, blood is
needed for a

baby undergoing
surgery, so
Father du Plessis
gives it.

Luckner
Cambronne is
the right-hand
man of Jean-
Claude Baby Doc
Duvalier (who
like his dead
father, Papa Doc,

is Président à
Vie). Cambronne
runs a racket
taking blood for
a fee before
selling it on to
the state hospital
at a vast profit. It
is neither
checked for
quality, nor is it
matched with

the blood type of
the recipient.

Sister

Maureen tells me
that she does
some health
work in
Brooklyn, a
shanty town
with about 1100
houses and
perhaps as many

1932

as 9000
residents. It
sprang up to
rehouse people
driven out of the
squatter camp at
La Saline when it
was bulldozed
by the
government
about three
years ago. I am

1933

told that the
Centre Haïtien
d'Investigation
en Sciences
Sociales (CHISS)
has been doing
survey work in
Cap Haïtien and
Port-au-Prince.

It is said that
there is one
radio for 13

people in Haiti,
but ownership is
heavily
concentrated in
the capital.
Although there
are several radio
stations, only
one covers the
entire country
and it is run by
the Baptists. As

the rate of
illiteracy in
French is about
95 percent, the
radio is a
potentially
significant
means of mass
communication
in Creole.

We go down
to a bank, where

the Deputy
Director rapidly
exchanged my
travellers'
cheques into US
dollars. Father
du Plessis says
that the
Governor of the
National Bank is
both straight and
able—a rare set

of attributes in
Haiti. Airmail
postage is
atrociously
expensive: an air
letter to the UK
costs about
3 shillings and
postcards are
the same.

On my behalf,
the Tourist

1938

Board (primed
by Father du
Plessis) has
requested a pass
for me to go to
Cap Haïtien , and
makes a special
plea to have my
two photos
waived. Visiting
the Ministry of
the Interior to

sort this out is
an extraordinary
experience. The
letter about me
is taken in by a
policeman. We
wait. More
enquiries are
made. I shake
hands with
Cambronne's
deputy in the

Ministry of the Interior. Finally, the pass and a letter to the Préfet of Cap Haïtien are produced and handed over.

It seems that everyone in the Ministry of the Interior is afraid

of everybody
else. The
employees
scuttle around
the corridors
shaking hands,
consulting,
working in their
offices, and
diving back into
the corridors,
and so the round

of activities goes
on. Father du
Plessis leans
over to me and
dryly observes,
'Have you
noticed that they
all carefully keep
their backs to
the walls as
though they are
afraid of being

attacked from
behind.'

Port-au-
Prince is very
much as it was in
1968—but it has
a greater air of
prosperity. Baby
Doc's slogan is
'My father made
the political
revolution. I will

make the
economic
revolution.'

There
are certainly
more cars, more
people on the
streets, and
commerce seems
brisker.

But falling
down manholes

1945

—which I barely
avoided in 1968
—and through
sewer grids is
still a possibility.
The roads are
potholed, the
streets densely
built up, and
minor streets
remain unpaved.
After storms,

1946

shoals of mud
are deposited
near the
harbour.

However, some
new building is
going on—in
1968 it was
confined to the
Red Cross
headquarters.
Around Hotel

Splendide, there
are some good
houses,
including
examples of
gothic revival.
Haiti is
thoroughly
Caribbean in
buildings, roads
and tempo of
life.

My
reflections on
Haiti so far
suggest that,
despite the
death of Papa
Doc last year, the
Duvalierists are
still in power,
and surface
changes deceive.
The ruling clique

around Baby Doc
are extortionists,
fastening on to
any money that
is available—
taxes, kick-backs
from foreign
investors, any
external funds
that crop up. A
double system of
national

1950

budgeting is
maintained.

The
government
eschews
development
schemes, unless
it is the
controlling
element and
secures an
immediate

financial benefit
for itself.

However, the
government
doesn't object to
the ameliorative
work of the
missions.

François
Papa Doc
Duvalier has
elevated the

position of the
blacks and the
standing of folk
culture , though
it seems to me
that folk culture
is being
manipulated as
an additional
means of social
control. The
Church has had

1953

to come to terms
with folk culture
—drumming and
folk music are
incorporated
into the Catholic
liturgy. Creole is
spoken by all the
missionaries and
is used in
sermons and
services—Latin

disappeared in
the mid-1960s.

The French
language
problem persists
in the schools .
French is the
official language,
but children do
not understand
it. The
consequence is

1955

rote learning,
early drop outs,
and low school
attendance.

Most small-
scale
developments
are in the hands
of missionaries.
However, there
are a number of
government

departments
with know-how
but no funds,
and it may be
possible to
supply them
directly with
assistance for
specific projects.

Father du
Plessis and I
have lunch with

1957

Carlos Pereira.
He owns a
business selling
auto parts; his
wife has a shop
in Port-au-
Prince. Carlos
contends that
little is
happening in
development in
Haiti unless the

missions are
doing it.

However, I have
seen adverts for
both UNDP and
FAO schemes.

Le Rond-
Point, the
restaurant
where we ate,
used to be
frequented by

senior army
officers, such as
Tassy, who rarely
paid their bills.
Now its non-
military clientele
is coming back—
a surprise, since
it takes us at
least two hours
to get lunch.
Haitian

mulattoes and
blacks frequent
the restaurant,
plus US and
other foreign
businessmen. I
am introduced to
Mr Shrewsbury ,
an American and
the former head
of the electricity
company which

has been
nationalized.

Duvalier
seems to have
driven out the
mulatto elite by
using brute force
against them.
Now I imagine
that the ruling
clique
incorporates a

1962

wider range of
shades of colour
than before
1957. I am told
that some
Haitians
consider that
*'nous sommes en
voie de sous-
développement'*
(we are in the
process of

1963

underdevelopment).
nt).

The Oblates
come mostly
from the cotton
towns of New
England, where
they served the
immigrant
French-Canadian
mill workers in
the past. Father

Beaudry , with
whom I am going
to spend the
afternoon, is
from Montreal.
He is in charge of
the Communauté
Sainte-Marie, a
settlement of
poor people
located just off
the Pétionville

1965

Road on the
outskirts of Port-
au-Prince.

Started by Mme
Hernández and
friends in 1960,
it consists of a
small housing
scheme (there
are other houses,
too), a credit
union, church,

1966

school , canteen,
reservoir,
agricultural
project, sisal
goods factory,
and baseball
factory —so
some
employment is
created.

The
community has

1967

produced a
booklet of Creole
chants, which I
believe is one of
the first
examples of its
kind in print.
The central
feature of the
chapel is a cross
lying over a
drum. Indeed, a

drum is used as
an altar in one
room. Father
Beaudry uses
Creole and
drums, but
rejects the
superstition of
vodun . Father
du Plessis tells
me that Haitian
folk are very

1969

suspicious—and
that only
education will
change that.
Every death or
misfortune has a
malevolent
cause; if
hardship strikes
a region, then
God wills it.

1970

I am taken to
meet Mme
Hernández . She
and her
daughter are
very light, and
the newly born
grandchild looks
white.

The
Communauté
Sainte-Marie is

1971

certainly well
worth
supporting. But
as everyone
admits, you can't
bring about real
change without
an overall
change in the
political
environment.

1972

**Wednesday,
August 30,
1972**

The main roads
leading out of
Port-au-Prince
are terrible. For
short stretches,
you can do
48 kph; then you
are down to 16

1973

to 24 kph and
driving to left
and right across
the dirt and
stone road to
avoid potholes.
There are many
fords, some
deep; and in the
mountains you
drive over rock
ribs. It is said

that the
government will
not improve the
roads, because
that would
encourage
invasions. Some
believe no
contractor
would take it on,
since the
government is so

1975

short of funds
that even
schoolteachers
have to wait
weeks for their
salaries.

The 196-
kilometre
journey to Les
Cayes on the
south coast takes
seven hours (Fig.

1976

1.3). Father
Fortin , the
Superior of the
Oblates , drives
the Land Rover.
The road out of
the capital is
followed by a
long line of
ribbon
development
consisting of

1977

poor—but not
deeply
impoverished—
dwellings.
Brightly painted
camionettes
jostle for
position on the
road. Soon we
are clear of the
city and on a
gravel track,

though the road
is surprisingly
built up with
houses. Where
the route runs
through lowland,
the soil looks
fertile and the
crops are good.
Sugar, rice, and
bananas are on
the best soil.

We pass
through a
number of police
checks. Father
Fortin hands in
the typed list of
passengers—I
am travelling
under the
protection of the
Oblates , since
my interior pass

1980

does not include
Les Cayes . Most
of the
settlements are
minute: Petit
Goave, Fond des
Nègres, Aquin ,
Cavaillon , and
Les Cayes are the
only substantial
places (Fig. 1.3).
Each of these

settlements has a large market, stores, a police station, a large church, and houses. In each case, ribbon developments extend an urban fringe along the road. In the towns there are

piazzas, and the
first floors of the
shops and
houses are
supported on tall
pillars.

The road
remains busy—
especially with
people walking
or riding
donkeys. We

must have
passed scarcely a
few dozen
vehicles en route
from Port-au-
Prince to Le
Cayes . Father
Saint Cyr, one the
other
passengers,
points out that
many people do

not regard road
improvements as
essential; in
many rural areas
only the priest
has a motorbike
or car.

Father Saint
Cyr met Graham
Greene when he
was in Haiti in
the early 1960s.

1985

He regards *The Comedians* and the book by Burt and Diederich as accurate depictions of Port-au-Prince.⁶ The peasantry are scarcely touched by the regime: culturally and

economically
they remain the
same as ever.
The Catholic
Church makes no
breakthrough;
country people
attend church,
but still go their
own way.
However, the
priests do

provide a group
ordinary
people can trust.

The
mountains,
when we get to
the south, are
badly denuded;
perhaps 30 to
50 percent of the
slopes are
seriously eroded,

and all suffer to
some degree.
The hilltops in
particular are
bare, and the
only trees are in
the food forest of
breadfruit,
mangoes , and
coconuts down
in the valley
bottoms. Wood

is sold for
charcoal-making,
and there are
one or two small
factories that
purchase
firewood
used for
distilling *clairin*
(bush rum).

Poor Haitians
seem to have

1990

two sets of
clothes: an old
one for everyday
work and a
newer, brightly
coloured set for
best occasions.
The markets we
passed were full
of lengths of
cloth and items

of dress of many
hues.

Ley Cayes
Thursday,
August 31,
1972

I am staying with
Father Roland
Lussier , priest-

1992

in-charge of one
of the two large
churches in Les
Cayes, and a
development
agency in his
own right. He
takes me to see
'La charité s'il
vous plaît,' an
old people's
home, school

and workshops
run by nuns and
partially funded
by Oxfam.

Then we
press on to the
hospital for
Father Lussier
to get an
injection. Here I
meet some
Canadian nuns,

1994

and a surgeon
who is also head
of the hospital. I
am shown the
nurses' training
school , surgical
wards, the
children's wing
and maternity
ward. Although
there is only one
surgeon, there is

no
overcrowding. I
suspect that the
majority of the
sick never get
near a hospital
at all—probably
because they
can't pay.

Oxfam has
funded a series
of nutritional

centres in the
vicinity of Les
Cayes. We drive
in Father
Lussier's jeep to
Laurent , a
neighbouring
village, where I
talk to the young
Haitian woman
in charge. It
appears that

they select the
30 most
malnourished
children and put
them on a
special diet,
weighing them
each week, and
teaching
mothers what
food to give
them. Most

1998

children are
breastfed for
18 months, but
at the end of that
time they need a
'hard' protein
intake—they
lack vegetables,
eggs, meat, and
vitamin C.

Mothers
themselves

attend
irregularly, and
many struggle to
provide the
correct food
anyway, unless it
is given to them
by the centre. As
in Jamaica,
people do not
attribute the
symptoms of

2000

kwashiorkor to
malnourishment
but to colds or
influenza. The
children seem to
me to be rather
listless, but the
bigger ones form
a ring and march
round and round
chanting as they
do so. Can they

2001

not be given
something to
play with? Toys
are rare
commodities in
the Caribbean.

Father
Lussier is
concerned about
follow-up work
once these
schemes are

2002

complete. On the plus side, however, it seems that the budget will support a home visitor—which strikes me as a good idea.

Father Lussier explains that he is keen to

be involved with
projects that:

1. show
tangible
results;
2. do not
disintegrate
once the
development
programme
is over;

3.
can be
carried on in
an
unchanging,
even hostile,
government
environment.

By these
criteria, the

2005

Oxfam Housing Scheme in Les Cayes—Union City—is an example of successful development (Plate 4.1). It is being sponsored jointly by the Catholic Relief Service and the

US Embassy, as
well as by
Oxfam, with
some additional
support from the
German NGO
Misereor . Oxfam
is involved with
the two-
bedroom houses;
Misereor with
the three. The

2007

basic Oxfam
house costs
US\$800—with
walls around the
yard, a latrine
and electricity
the cost is about
US\$1400, or just
under £600 at
the current rate
of exchange.
Applicants

2008

deposit US\$101
and pay off the
remainder in
10 years. Vetting
of candidates
and the detailed
organization of
the financial
arrangements
are left to
Monsieur Sicart ,
a local

2009

businessman
who is in charge
of the Credit
Union.

2010



2011

Plate 4.1 Union
City, Les Cayes,
Haiti. Low-income
housing for the
privileged working
class. Some
connection between
resident and the
sponsor, be it
government or a
charity, is essential
—which explains
the prevalence of
alternative types of

housing, such as
rent yards in the
Caribbean and
squatting in Mexico

The houses
are well
constructed,
with no
communal
facilities—even
water will

2013

eventually be
delivered to each
house. It is
hoped that the
community hall
will also function
as a training
school.

Father
Lussier knows
most of the
beneficiaries.

2014

Indeed, they
attend his
church. The
scheme is just
within his parish
—on land he
has reclaimed.
We look over a
couple of houses
together, and
find that both
are well

2015

maintained. Half
the site is just
finished and
about to be
occupied. I note
that, as in
Kingston , people
in housing
projects are
expected to
provide their
own outside

2016

kitchens, usually
separated from
the house
because of the
danger of fire.

One woman
in the scheme
with whom we
talked has a baby
and was recently
married through
plaçage

2017

(concubinage).
Another woman
tells us about her
small shop. It
seems to me that
the housing
beneficiaries are
generally the
better-off
members of the
lower class .
Father Lussier

understandably
wants to help
those he knows
to be reliable.

I gather that
some of the
Oxfam staff, such
as Reggie Norton
(Secretary of the
Latin American
and Caribbean
Field

2019

Committee) and
David Carter
(Oxfam Officer in
the Caribbean),
would like to
have a scheme to
cater for the
really poor—
though most
people here are
needy, of course.
But on what

2020

financial basis
could it be set
up?

Father
Lusssier is
clearly unwilling
to be involved
with people
whose behaviour
he cannot
guarantee. But
note that

repayments for
Union City are
US\$130 a year,
and a dollar-a-
day is regarded
as fair wage in
Haiti. Probably
really low-
income schemes
will have to
await the
government and

will
probably involve
site-and-service
schemes.

Father
Lussier and I
look at the
dispensary to
which it is hoped
to attach a Red
Cross blood bank
for Les Cayes. I

speak to a nun
 who is a
 laboratory
 technician and
 another who is a
 nurse and
 doubles as a
 doctor, sending
 the more
 complicated
 cases to the
 hospital.

2024

At the end of
the afternoon I
meet a French-
German lady
who is going to
leave her
property to the
Oblates , where
they hope to set
up a trade school
for boys using
Haitian teachers

. It seems that
there is a good
supply of
Haitians with
skills, who can
be called upon if
finance is
forthcoming. All
the priests I have
met are against
importing
foreign experts

—probably with good reason.

Reafforestation is potentially a good scheme for this part of rural Haiti , and there is a government department which might cooperate—

though the funds
would be
controlled by the
Oblates . Any
such project,
however, would
have to depend
upon legislation
to control the
cutting of timber.

***Friday,
September
1, 1972***

I enjoy a talk
with Father
Daudier about
the language
problem in Haiti
and ask whether
the elite are
intent on

keeping people
in ignorance by
insisting on
French as the
medium of
instruction? He
replies that the
Duvalierists are
cynical about
language, the
peasantry, and
folk culture.

Father
Daudier explains
that Papa Doc
largely
eradicated the
mulatto class,
either by
exterminating
them or driving
them abroad. Yet
there is still the
same elite

cultural group as
before, but now
black with
brown affiliates.

Haiti has too
many problems.
Priests feel
strongly that
some form of
family limitation
is essential. But
they are

constrained by
the official
teaching of the
church against
contraception,
and the
opposition of the
Haitian folk to
birth control .
The life of people
of low status is

at variance with
church teaching.

Father
Daudier points
out that there
are more Haitian
doctors in
French Canada
than in Haiti.

Father
Lussier is keen
on the

reafforestation
project; and I
think he could be
persuaded into a
really low-cost
housing scheme
—but what kind
of return would
Oxfam want?

I spend much
of the day
walking around

Les Cayes. The upper class live in large houses near the city centre—a typical preindustrial pattern. Many of the women in this class are ‘pass-as-white.’ Two main streets lead

down to the sea.
The central plaza
has the cathedral
and the Bishop's
palace located
on it. The port
looks almost
moribund,
though I spot
sacks of cement
being pulled
away from the

harbour by a
man with a cart.
I find there is
also a fishing
harbour, fish
market, and an
area of decrepit
yards. Union City
is near some
very poor
tenements . In
the market, I am

nauseated by the
smell of animal
entrails—which
reminds me of
Mexico. There
are one or two
cinemas and gas
stations; retail
outlets are
mostly selling
dry goods;
artisans are

largely tailors or
cobblers.

An
arrangement has
been made for
me to meet
Monsieur Sicart ,
who runs the
finances for
Union City. He
thinks that the
really poor

would be bad
risks in a
housing scheme,
and he has a
strongly middle-
class perspective
on local affairs. I
am beginning to
form the opinion
that this housing
scheme at Union
City is being set

up for Father
Lussier's hand-
picked
parishioners,
and that the
beneficiaries,
while needy, are
the chosen few.

***Saturday,
September***

2, 1972

I set off with
Father Lussier in
his jeep to
accompany him
on a parish visit
to the village of
Maurency.
Halfway there he
stopped to
collect a horse

and visit a sick man. This duty completed, we turned off the main road—such as it was—and took a winding steep track over the ridge tops until we reached the sea. The

view was
stunning.

At one point,
we stopped to
visit an old lady
—reputed to be
94. Her house
was a typical
bohó , with a
concrete base,
thatched roof,
and stone and

mortar walls
covered with
plaster and lime.
It was clean but
bare inside—
two rooms, no
furniture, and
only a mattress
on the floor for
her bed. Some
neighbouring
houses were of

wattle or wattle
covered with
daub.

I am taken
around
Maurency by a
young man—one
of the few in the
village able to
speak French. He
points out the
damage caused

by the recent
floods that killed
60 people,
destroyed boats,
damaged houses,
and dumped
stones and other
debris in the
fields. We come
across mounds
of sweet
potatoes; and

then a *combite*
(communal
labour group)
wielding
pickaxes in a
rocky field and
planting
potatoes.

Later we visit
a cane mill (like
the one I saw in
Jamaica in

1961), being tended by three tattered men (Plate 4.2). After the cane is crushed, the juice is boiled to a syrup to make cheap alcohol. I am told that a great deal of sugar cane is

grown for this
purpose.



2052

Plate 4.2 Horse-driven sugar mill and rural workers, near Les Cayes, Haiti. The mill has wooden moving parts and is used to grind sugar for sale in the peasant markets as a coarse, brown sugar loaf. Peasant mills were common

throughout the
Caribbean

The village
consists of
scattered houses
(*bohós*) and
yards. It has no
formal
coherence; no
community
cohesion; no

electricity; no
school to
mention, except
a Protestant fee-
paying version
among nominal
Catholics. Water
comes from a
stream; and
there are few
latrines—the

rest defecate on
the beach.

My guide is a
26-year-old
tailor/cultivator,
the rest of the
villagers
being either
peasants or
fishermen . With
land given to him
by his father, he

supports his
own and his
wife's parents.
He earns US\$6 to
7 per week, is
married with
two children,
and is clearly
one of the
better-off people
in the village.

Father
Lussier says that
Haitians are
deeply religious
—but
superstitious.
Many become
involved with
Pentecostal sects
or vodun : ‘you
can’t turn them
into Americans.’

Father Lussier
claims that
French priests
used to give their
sermons in
French, but he
works and
preaches
entirely in
Creole.

Father
Lussier baptized

six babies in
Maurency
yesterday, four of
them legitimate.
He tells me that
only about 15
percent of births
are legitimate in
Haiti—a figure
close to the
Jamaican
average.

***Sunday,
September
3, 1972***

A driver,
Raymond, has
been contracted
by the Oblates to
drive me back to
Port-au-Prince in
an old jeep,
leaving Les

Cayes at 6.30 am.
First the brake
won't come off;
then it won't go
on. Finally, the
wiring in the
engine catches
fire near Aquin .
Seeing flames
lapping around
my feet, I
immediately

jump out, taking
my camera and
Father Lussier's
letter to the
Mother House in
Port-au-Prince
with me. Next I
haul my case out
of the back of the
vehicle,
anticipating an

explosion at any
moment.

To my
amazement,
Raymond and a
passing peasant
wrench open the
engine cover,
chop up the
earth with
machetes, and
throw handfuls

of dirt onto the
burning wires.
Raymond then
proceeds to re-
wire what has
been damaged,
re-starts the
engine, drives
me to the capital,
and with barely
a word of
farewell sets out

on the return
journey—say
another eight
hours.

Memorable
features of the
last part of my
trip as we
neared Port-au-
Prince are
peasants leading
cows to market;

men with
hooded fighting
cocks;
Pentecostal
churches —
L'Eglise de Dieu
Vivant; children
collecting water,
not from
standpipes, but
from dirty ponds
and ditches.

***Monday,
September
4, 1972***

Father du Plessis
takes me to see
some densely
crowded
tenements at Bel
Air, before
checking out
flights to Cap

Haïtien , my next
destination.

They are all full,
so I shall have to
go by bus.

In the
afternoon, I have
an appointment
with Hubert de
Ronceray, the
recently
appointed

Minister of
Education. He
has come back to
open up his
institute, the
CHISS, because
he believes I am
Colin Clark, the
famous
Agricultural
Economist and a
don at Oxford!

We talk about
CHISS's studies
in Cap Haïtien
and Port-au-
Prince, and
about my
research in
Jamaica and
Trinidad. CHISS
would certainly
assist me with a

project here in
Haiti.

De Ronceray
tells me that all
Haitians are
associated with
vodun , but in
surveys 85
percent say they
are Catholic.
There is some
doublethink

about language
—no upper-class
Haitian will
openly admit
that Creole is the
national
language, or that
vodun is the
basis of Haitian
culture . Yet de
Ronceray
stresses the

strength of
Haitian identity.
He also
emphasizes that
the race problem
of black against
mulatto has been
solved for the
middle classes
by Duvalierism ;
but the black
lower class have

still to feel the
benefit.

Father

Bedard tells me
that there are a
few families still
speaking French
at home, largely
for the benefit of
their children.

But once you get
to know Haitians

and can yourself
speak Creole,
they will use it
with you in
intimate
conversation.
Everybody uses
the familiar 'tu'
form.

***Tuesday,
September
5, 1972***

In the early morning, I set out north for Cap Haïtien, the former French colonial capital of Haiti (Fig. 1. 3). We depart

through an
industrial
suburb , driving
past firms such
as Caribbean
Mills, which
produces flour,
and Ciment
d'Haïti.

At the
seemingly
deserted satellite

settlement of
Duvalierville
there is some
middle-class
housing (not
unlike Mona
Heights in
Jamaica). Here
the president
has a beach
house.

We leave
Port-au-Prince
by a fast road
with a goodish
surface that
continues into
the mountains.
The region is
sparsely
populated, with
dry scrub and
cactus giving

way to sisal
fields. North of
St Marc there are
extensive rice
fields, but the
road
deteriorates and
the marketplaces
seem to be in the
middle of
nowhere. There
is little traffic

apart from the
buses.

We stop at
Gonaïves for a
rest and food ,
and then climb
through the
northern range
of mountains
before dropping
down to the

coast and Cap
Haïtien (Fig. 1.3).

Everyone
agrees that
circumstances
have worsened
in Haiti in the
last 20 years.
Small ports are
now rarely
visited by boats,
because flour

and cement
come from Port-
au-Prince, and it
is not worth
importing other
goods on their
own. Other
factors
undermining the
situation are
population
increase, soil

erosion , and
disintegrating
roads—only
aspirations are
increasing,
especially for
consumer goods,
such as radios.

Cap Haïtien

***Wednesday,
September
6, 1972***

The town of Cap
Haïtien was
originally
divided into
square blocks by
the French
colonists. Each
block was

occupied by a
house with a
central
courtyard. These
have
subsequently
been subdivided
to form shops
and tenements .
Cap Haïtien is
still an elegant
colonial town,

with narrow
streets,
overhanging
verandahs, thick
stone walls and
heavy shutters.
Each week on
Mondays and
Tuesdays two
cruise ships dock
in Cap Haïtien.

The
commercial elite
live at the west
end of the town,
and many have
seafront
locations. There
is a substantial
Syrian trading
community, too.
Many of the
upper-class

families—*les
blancs mulattos*
—have been
decimated by the
Duvalier regime.
Last night there
was loud
drumming in the
streets to
celebrate the
literacy
campaign, which

I discover is in
French not
Creole.

With my
guide, Monsieur
André , I visit La
Fossette , a slum
district by the
river at the
eastern end of
Cap Haïtien. La
Fossette is

divided into
three localities,
La Banane, La
Porte Bouteille,
and L'Abattoir. La
Banane is the
most rustic
section and
people are still
constructing
houses.
L'Abattoir is the

most urban in
character, while
La Porte
Bouteille (where
my papers were
checked by the
police on arrival
yesterday)
contains some
solid-looking
houses, owned
by better-off

people like my
guide and
teachers . Here
they own their
own land and
their own
houses.

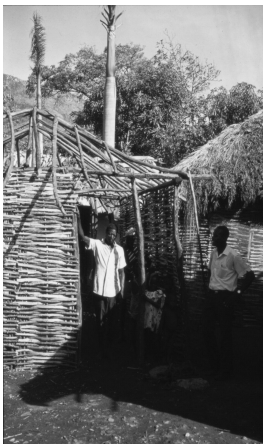
Elsewhere in
La Fossette
tenure takes two
forms: people
pay a ground

rent to the
government and
build their own
house; people
are room tenants
of speculators
who rent the
ground from the
government and
build wooden
tenements to let.
In fact, many

ground-renters
let part of their
accommodation,
so that the two
categories are
not totally
distinct (like the
rent yards of
Kingston ,
Jamaica). This
use of ground
rental is typical

of the Caribbean
and atypical of
mainland Latin
America, where
squatting is
more or less the
norm, though
ciudades
perdidas (lost
cities) in Mexico
City are
analogous to

rent yards (Plate
4.3).



2099

Plate 4.3 Rent
yard, Cap Haïtien.
The yard, where
basic shelter is
provided for rental
either by the owner
of the land, or more
commonly by the
person who rents
the ground-spot and
erects a flimsy
dwelling. It is one of
the classic forms of
residential tenure in

the cities and towns
of the Caribbean

I find out
more about La
Fossette. There
is one public
standpipe in the
area for more
than 20,000
people. Most
draw water from

the river. There
is no sanitation,
though the
church has built
a latrine
platform for
schoolchildren
over the river.
Water for
washing is taken
from wells that
reach water level

at a depth of
about 4 feet.
There are
several churches
and chapels in
the area. Houses
are located close
together, and in
La Banane many
are made of no
more than wattle
and daub. In

more urbanized
(consolidated)
neighbourhoods,
the walls are
made of wooden
planks, and the
roofs are
covered with
corrugated iron.

I am told that
few children go
to school , and

that no more
than 5 percent
speak French.
Like my guide,
people have a
multiplicity of
jobs; and many
women run food
shops. There is a
cinema on the
other side of La
Fossette; clubs

are scattered
around; and
there are bakers
and furniture-
makers in the
area. Many of
these features I
have already
written about in
my journals
based on
fieldwork in the

poorer parts of
West Kingston
(Clarke 2015).

The situation
is deeply
insanitary: pigs
are kept in sties
near the river,
but still adjacent
to the houses.
Little boys
urinate

wherever they
want; babies
play in the same
water as the
piglets. It is
Kingston's
Moonlight City
all over again.

In the
afternoon, André
drove me inland
to Milot to see an

agricultural
development
project being run
by the Centre
Rural de
Développement
de Milot
(CRUDEM),
under the
guidance of
Father
Beauséjour and

Father Paradis
(Fig. 1.3). The
complex of
buildings in the
CRUDEM centre
consists of a
management
office, canteen,
dormitories,
electricity
generator and
line, woodwork

shop, garage,
école normale
(teacher training
college), primary
school with nine
classes under
construction,
hospital (to be
located in the old
school in Milot),
and an

experimental
farm.

It appears
that the land has
been provided
by the
government,
some of it
irrigated.

Agricultural
enterprises focus
on poultry, pigs,

citrus, and sugar.
I am shown over
everything, but
at the end I ask
myself whether
the entire
project is a
growth or a
graft. The money
comes from
overseas—
largely Canada;

the technicians
are foreigners,
though the
agronomist is
Haitian. My fear
is that it is a
Canadian project
that has been
imposed on
Haiti. The
villagers of Milot
are not engaged

other than as
passive
recipients of
Canadian bounty.

One of the
best things I saw
was a filtered
river stream to
provide
drinkable water
—a vital
ingredient of

development
projects the
world over, and
certainly in Haiti.

***Thursday,
September
7, 1972***

Having spent the
night in the
dormitory at

CRUDEM , I was
met at 6.30 am
by Monsieur
Maurice and
taken on
horseback up the
mountains to
Citadelle
Laferrière,
constructed by
the black
Emperor

Christophe , and
beloved of
Haitians as the
eighth wonder of
the world.

High up on
the back of the
horse, I have a
clear view of the
ochre-coloured
houses, and
then, as we climb

higher, of
peasant
cultivation—
taro, corn,
cassava , and
bananas all
intercropped.
And there is
coffee growing
under the shade
of banana trees.
Coffee is Haiti's

main export
crop. Both the
landscape and
the system of
cultivation are
highly
reminiscent of
central Jamaica.

The Citadelle
is much more
impressive and
intact than I had

imagined. What
an extraordinary,
mediaeval
building it is for
the early
nineteenth
century.
Christophe's
castle says a lot
about the
embattled state
of Haiti's post-

revolutionary
leaders. The
castle is still full
of cannonballs;
and many
cannon are still
mounted on
their trolleys.

The view
from the
Citadelle at a
height of

900 metres is
superb: range
after range of
mountains
succeeds
eastwards
towards the
Dominican
Republic; to the
north I can make
out the broad
coastal plain,

with haystack
hills and
cultivation in the
foreground and
Cap Haïtien in
the distance;
closer to me I
glimpse the
meanders of the
Grande Rivière
du Nord.

On the way
down from the
Citadelle in mid-
morning I decide
to walk because
riding the horse
is so painful. We
stop at
Christophe's
ruined Palais de
Sans Souci. It
looks perfectly

French in
inspiration,
though it was
built after
independence in
1804, and was
reduced to a ruin
not by battle but
by a nineteenth-
century
earthquake.

Haitian
country folk are
especially
friendly. I waited
for more than an
hour in the
afternoon heat
for the bus to
take me from
Milot back to
Cap Haïtien, but
when it arrived

the passengers
were polite,
making room for
me and saying,
'Bonjour mon
Père.'

Newcomers
greeted the
entire bus as
they climbed
aboard.

Monsieur
André was
waiting for me at
the bus stop in
Cap Haïtien.
Despite my
protest that I
was exhausted
by the morning
trip and didn't
want to go with
him, he whisked

me off to the
Asile de
Vieillards (Old
People's Home).
This turned out
to be one of the
most humbling
experiences of
my life. Sister
Rachel and an
older colleague
showed me over

the home,
pointing out how
much Oxfam had
contributed, and
thanking me in
particular for a
large stove on
which the
residents' meals
are cooked.

Sister Rachel
must be quite

the most
'beautiful'
person I have
ever met. She
has devoted
30 years of her
life to the Haitian
poor, and treats
all the people in
her care with an
affection and
strong humour

that dispels all
sense of
sentimentality.
The home is full
of sad cases—a
paralysed man; a
girl without the
use of her legs;
many blind men
and women ; a
man of just over

100 and a lady of
103.

One rarely
meets people
with Sister
Rachel's
qualities unless
they are filled
with religious
inspiration.

***Friday,
September
8, 1972***

I intended
leaving Cap
Haïtien by plane,
but it turned out
to be a false
move. At the
airport, a Tonton
Macoute, who is

involved in the
tourism boom,
slotted some of
his clients into
the queue for the
flight ahead of
me, leaving me
to return to town
by taxi.

I spent the
afternoon
walking around

the densely
populated
central
tenements of Le
Cap, and
planning my
departure to
Port-au-
Prince tomorrow
by road.

***Saturday,
September
9, 1972***

For the return
journey with a
bus called Les
Trois Bébés (The
Triplets—
propitious, I was
told) I was
placed in the

care of a Haitian
Baptist minister,
who spoke to me
loudly all the
way back in
exaggerated
French. This
riled many of the
passengers
including one of
my neighbours,
who complained

that he was
showing off by
not speaking
Creole—as if I
could have
understood it!

I am once
more staying
with the Oblates
in Port-au-
Prince. They
communicate

with one another
across Haiti by
radio, and I get
the impression
that the priests I
have been
staying with in
rural Haiti have
approved of me.
They all like the
fact that I speak
French.

***Sunday,
September
10, 1972***

I go to morning
service in the
Episcopal
(Protestant)
Cathedral and
admire once
again the murals

by Haitian
primitive artists.

***Monday,
September
11, 1972***

This is my last
day in Haiti and I
spent the early
part of the
morning at the

Caravelle
Bookshop and at
CHISS . Later I
had an
appointment
with Sister
Maureen , who
took me to visit
Brooklyn—just
beyond the
government
housing project

at Simone O.
Duvalier.

Brooklyn has
only one source
of water and that
is a long way off.
Sister Maureen
and her
associates have
built a school
and a
dispensary, and

persuaded the
government to
hand over the
land, so there is
security of
tenure. Houses
are big shacks,
rather like La
Saline used to
be.

Sister
Maureen tells me

that their plan is
not to build
houses, but to
concentrate on
infrastructure
that individuals
cannot provide
for themselves—
water, sanitation,
and basic health.
Their hope is
that land

belonging to the
community can
be built upon,
and that a
factory , located
on the land, can
be leased to fund
development.
Sister Maureen
runs a gravel
lorry and makes
about US\$40 a

day—a sum she
uses to build
houses for the
people at
US\$500 each,
which they
repay.

Father
Bedard took me
to the airport
and saw me off
to Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico
Tuesday,
September
12, 1972

I have installed
myself in the
visitors'
residence at the
University of
Puerto Rico, Río

Piedras. The campus is overrun by students—25,000 day and 15,000 night students are enrolled. All this would make for a vibrant scene, were it not for the constant

strikes and the
sharp
polarization
between those
who want the
Estado
Asociado Libre
(Free Associated
State) to become
an integrated
state of the US,
and those who

want Puerto Rico
to become fully
independent.
Young women
predominate on
the campus and
most of them
look well-to-do.

Puerto Rico
resembles Cuba;
Haiti is
unmistakeably

French
Caribbean. In
Puerto Rico,
there is a
Hispanic style,
and people have
an eye for good
taste, in art for
example.

**Wednesday,
September
13 to
Saturday,
September
16, 1972**

I am shown
around the
island by a
former student

of mine at
Liverpool
University,
Héctor , a Puerto
Rican graduate
who is studying
law at the UPR .
We visit all the
major towns—
for me these are
mostly second
visits (see my

1968 journal)—
and see a good
deal of the
interior
mountains.

I also have a
number of
discussions with
contacts I have
made at the
university in Río
Piedras.

Although there are many students on the campus, the dropout rate is about the US norm of 50 percent—so I am informed by Farouk el Gamal, the former Head of Geography.

Jim Blaut , a
geographer, tells
me that Puerto
Rican farmers
are correct to
refuse advice
from extension
officers on
channelling
water; farmers
construct them
diagonally,

whereas the
officers want
horizontal
troughs.

I spend a lot
of time talking
with Arturo
Meléndez, a
Marxist member
of the Partido
Socialista
Puertorriqueño.

He drives a big
American car.
Intellectual
hostility to
Puerto Rico's
dependent
status vis-à-vis
the US has no
direct link to the
class structure .
Professors are
social isolates—

impotent
politically, they
retreat into a
fantasy world
with their
subject matter
and students.

Arturo and
his wife kindly
invite me to
dinner on the
Saturday

evening. Arturo insists that 'all Puerto Ricans are politicians.' Later, when discussion gets onto the subject of national identity, he argues that Puerto Rican culture is most

fully expressed
by *par* os, the
country folk in
the hills, not by
the urban
intellectuals
(like him) who
are so keen to
define what that
culture amounts
to.

**Sunday,
September
17, 1972**

Arturo, his wife
and three boys
take me out by
car for the day so
that I can
experience the
real Puerto Rico.
We go up to

Barranquitas in
the central
highlands (Fig. 1.
3), where the
steep
mountainous
interior is very
like that of
Jamaica—
everywhere
there are ground
provisions and

bananas. We
have lunch with
their white
relatives, and
then drinks with
a friend who is a
businessman
with
investments in
the Dominican
Republic.

I begin to
appreciate that
Puerto Rican
identity has to
do with the
Spanish
language,
Catholicism and
being white or
pass-as-white,
plus a family
history as

agriculturalists,
either peasants
in the nineteenth
century or cane
workers in the
twentieth. In the
coastlands,
especially after
1898, peasants
were rendered
landless by the
US sugar

companies and
turned into
proletarians.

**Trinidad
Monday,
September
18 to
Wednesday,**

September 20, 1972

April 1970 has
changed
Trinidad. Several
Black Power
groups
coalesced; some
defined Black
Power as anti-
white, others as

anti-brown and
anti-white; some
included Indians
in the black
group, others did
not. Some Black
Power groups
wanted a
political
takeover; others
only wanted to

act as an
irritant.⁷

Two of the
Black Power
leaders, Raffique
Shah and Rex
Lassalle,
arrested under
the State of
Emergency in
April 1970 have
been released

from prison.
They claim that
their revolt was
about the
unsatisfactory
military
organization of
the Defence
Force (army), in
which they were
officers. But it
seems probable

that had the
Coast Guard and
Police not
intervened, Shah
and Lassalle
would have
linked up with
the Black Power
activists.

George
Sammy , with
whose family I

am staying on
the university
campus at St
Augustine, says
that a critical
factor in politics
is the
relationship
between the
Oilfield Workers'
Trade Union and
the Sugar

Workers' Union
—black and
Indian,
respectively.
Political stability
in Trinidad
depends on their
separation, since
it was their
coming together,
in the context of
Black Power, that

precipitated the
State of
Emergency in
April 1970.

Black Power
has opened a gap
between the
black lower class
and other
elements in the
Creole segment
of society (white

and brown). Carl
Bertie in Port of
Spain told me
that ‘attitudes
have been
revealed which
were never
expressed
before’—that is
to say anti-
brown. Carl, a
Carnival judge in

1964, left
Trinidad and
flew to Tobago
during Carnival
in 1972. It seems
to me that the
brown middle
class is trapped
between the
historical white
bias of society
and the recent

eruption of Black
Power.

Mrs Norma
Abdullah at UWI
St Augustine
tells me that
A.N.R. Robinson
has ruined the
political career
of Vernon
Jamadar by
refusing to allow

the DLP to run in
the 1971
elections—the
PNM is a
government
without an
opposition.
There are now
two Democratic
Labour parties—
one under
Jamadar and the

other under
Bhadase Maraj .
The Hindu Maha
Sabha is also
split, one
faction led by
Simboonath
Capildeo and the
other by Jang
Bahadoorsingh.
East Indians are
currently not

represented in
politics for the
first time since
1946—
legislative
politics and
Black Power are
both Creole
prerogatives.

There is
great pessimism
in Trinidad not

only about
politics and
Black Power, but
also about
education , jobs,
and population
increase. It
touches even the
upper classes,
since the
secondary
schools and

university are
under great
pressure to take
more students.
The upper
classes (Creole
and Indian) fear
the fall of
Williams
through a coup;
but they no
longer believe in

him. I think
Williams sees
himself as a
defence against
chaos.

Vicki Mendes
, at the Planning
Department in
Port of Spain ,
tells me that
Alderman Lans
is keen on a

US\$10 million
scheme for
dredging the
Gulf of Paria and
making land for
San Fernando to
grow into the
sea. The entire
town council in
San Fernando is
People's
National

Movement, and
Carlyle Kangaloo
is mayor. At
Point Lisas, on
the coast south
of Chaguanas
(Fig. 1.4), the
government has
a project to
create a port and
industrial
complex serving

the west of
Trinidad.

When I take a
shared taxi
down to San
Fernando (Fig. 1.
4), I travel on the
old highway; but
the new
northbound lane
is complete and
comparatively

straight. Ena
Scott-Jack, who
is away on
holiday, has
arranged for me
to stay with her
friend Joan Chin
Aleong on
Chacon Street.

In San
Fernando , shops
on High Street

such as
Montanos, had
their windows
broken during
the Black Power
disturbances. A
girl in the bank
told me, 'They
attacked people
with skin like
mine' (light
brown). The

Young Power
Movement in San
Fernando is run
by Michael Als
(as in 1968).

Susamachar
Church is
celebrating its
centenary
(1872–1972).
1872 is the year
in which the

Canadian
Presbyterians in
Princes Town
extended their
mission to San
Fernando . All
the children at
Grant
Presbyterian
School are said
to be Indian.

There have
been very few
changes in San
Fernando since
we lived here in
1964: more
banks on High
Street; more
housing beyond
the bypass; and
government
housing at

Pleasantville is
expanding.

Frank and
Myrtle Cleghorn
now live with
Myrtle's father,
Mr Khan, and all
six children are
at school . Frank
is a qualified
draughtsman,
and is in charge

of the privy
programme.
Frank and
Myrtle have been
on holiday in
Barbados and
seem moderately
prosperous. I
couldn't draw
them on the
social situation,
though it is clear

from the way
they talk that
strict parental
control over
children is fast
dissolving.

My major
recollection of
walking around
San Fernando is
of groups of
unemployed

youths (mostly
but not
exclusively
black), either
trying to mock
me or to get
money out of me
for drinks or
cigarettes. Afro
haircuts are 'in'
in San Fernando ,
even more

noticeably so
than in Port of
Spain.

**Encounters
in San
Fernando
*Thursday,
September
21, 1973***

I have an early morning talk with Robert Guinness , who has lost so much now that his wife and children have settled in the UK. He is currently living in a bachelor flat in San Fernando.

He tells me
that Williams is
appointing East
Indians to top
civil service
posts. This has
the double
advantage that it
cannot be
claimed that he
is anti-Indian,
while feeding

their insecurity
—they are
essentially ‘yes
men,’ and
encouraged to
report on other
Indians.

Robert thinks
that racial
discrimination is
rife: out of 25
nurses to whom

he gave
academic tests, 2
were Indian with
7 GCE O Levels,
while the
remainder were
blacks with only
3 or 4 O Levels.

Brown
Creoles are
increasingly
terrified by the

chaotic political scene. During the Black Power emergency in 1970 flights to Barbados were packed. Als was gaoled. Williams is manipulating the situation by importing black heroes, such as

Pelé and the
football team
Santos from
Brazil, and the
boxer Cassius
Clay from the US.
But how long
will the current
situation last?

Robert adds
that Indians are
still

discriminated
against, yet at
the same time
are onlookers at
a struggle in the
Creole camp—as
I have been
imagining. Now
tensions have
gone
underground for
a while.

Robert fears
that the Indians
may be used as a
scapegoat; and
many people
fear a repeat of
the plight of the
Indians in
Guyana, who
have been
subordinated to
the Creoles by

electoral
manipulation—
despite their
status as a
majority—or
even Uganda ,
from which they
were expelled by
the dictator Idi
Amin a month
ago.⁸

Leaving a
dispirited Robert
Gunness, I go
down to Débé
and discover
that Mr Seepaul
is now head of
the Presbyterian
School in
Barrackpore ,
and that their
five or six

children are
studying in
Canada. Mrs
Seepaul would
happily emigrate
there herself.
Débé looks
unchanged in
eight years:
there are a few
more concrete
houses rather

than wood on
the main road—
that is all (Fig. 1.
4).

Returning to
San Fernando, I
find that Mr
Bhattacharya is
still on Padmore
Street, but his
family situation
has deteriorated

—one of his
daughters in
India has died,
and his son is a
Maoist and
dropout, having
got a first in
engineering at
the University of
Toronto. Mr
Bhattacharya is
still at war with

the Trinidad
pundits, who
fatuously ask
him, for example,
whether a girl
should sit on the
left or right of
the groom before
the wedding. As I
leave he reminds
me that 'Indian
culture is only

skin deep in
Trinidad.'

Mr

Ramsamooj
recently lost his
mother, and one
of his sons
through
leukaemia, and
he and his wife
have taken this
badly. The boy's

fiancée, a
Chinese girl and
bank clerk, still
lives with the
Ramsamooj
family. At the
girl's request her
fiancé was
buried in the
Anglican
cemetery in San
Fernando.

There are
signs of greater
inter-religious
activity, and at
least some
coming together
of leaders of
various faiths on
special
occasions. Hindi
is a language in
decline; the

Maha Sabha
schools certainly
have not taught
it effectively, and
even Indian films
now have
English subtitles.

The old
marriage
situation also is
breaking down,
with children

increasingly
making their
own choice of
marriage
partner. Rosalind
Ramsamooj, now
separated from
her husband
(who is still in
the UK), is living
with her parents
in Corinth

together with
her daughter of
five or six years.
The oldest
Ramsamooj son
works as a car
salesman, and
his girlfriend,
too, lives in the
family home. On
my reckoning,
not one of the

Ramsamooj
children has
been married by
Hindu rites—yet
their father is a
pundit.

Bramadath
Maharaj is still
living in Coconut
Drive with Mrs
Rajkumari
Maharaj . His

three
oldest children
are at UWI St
Augustine ,
doing science
subjects, while
the youngest are
primary teachers
. Tara has not
done well at UWI
and has just
accepted a

marriage
proposal from an
Indian boy living
and teaching in
Canada. To
Bram's surprise
she wants a
Hindu wedding,
whereas Bram
himself was
married in
church. Living

with Bram are
two girls and a
boy belonging to
Mrs Maharaj ,
and a baby called
'Sugar' who
seems to have
been orphaned
or abandoned in
some way.

Both Bram
and Hansar are

clear on several things:

1. A very small amount of intermarriage is occurring;
2. An increasing number of people are interested in the

philosophical
aspects of
Hinduism;

3.

Mr Gopie is
following the
same course

—

manipulating
the Indians to
support the
PNM;

Mr Gopie is

4. Mr Gopaul is still toying with the idea of an *ashram* for Brahmins;
5. Indians, sandwiched between Black Power and the PNM, are on the horns of a dilemma

antenna.

Discriminate
d against by the
PNM , the
Indians feel
unavoidable
victims of Black
Power, but which
one do you
appease?—the
more violent of
the two

according to
Hansar. I am told
that many
Indians attended
Black Power
rallies in 1970 to
establish their
bona fides with
the movement.
'Who we go put?'
is the critical
political

question, but
Indians prefer
Williams to
Black Power.
Bram and
Hansar believe
that scholarships
were offered to
Indians at UWI
after the 1970
disturbances as

a gesture of
reconciliation.

Indians have
been leaderless
since the
departure of
Rudranath
Capildeo for the
UK in 1968.
Jamadar and
Robinson pulled
out of the

general election
in 1971,
allegedly
because of their
suspicion of
voting machines.
In the general
election of there
were massive
abstentions,
because of the
withdrawal of

the Indian vote,
the disaffection
of the black
lower class from
Williams, and
the uncertainty
introduced by
the Black Power
disturbances.
Muslims seem to
be falling in line
with the Hindus

—but that is
nothing new at
the grass-roots
level. It is the
Muslim
leadership which
is pro-PNM.

I track down
Peter Dubé,
whose marriage
has broken up.
He has one

daughter in
Canada, and
another married
to a medical
student in
Canada. The rest
of his children
are being looked
after by him at
home. Peter
views Black
Power as

essentially
destructive, but
adds that the
Indians might
well have joined
in after the
march to
Chaguanas if
Williams had not
imposed the
State of
Emergency. A

major Indian
figure in the
Black Power
movement is
Chan Maharaj ,
Stephen
Maharaj's
nephew. Makhan
and Vilma Dube
are now in
Vancouver.
Makhan was

with C. L. R.
James a prime
mover in the
Workers and
Farmers Party
during the 1966
election.

Back in St
Augustine,
George Sammy
tells me that an
interest in Indian

culture is
growing and that
there is a
student society
devoted to it at
UWI. A
lectureship has
been established
in Indian history.
Perhaps it is a
sign of the times
that Hansar

Ramsamooj is
now giving a
regular Hindu
service at the
Junior Secondary
School in Penal.

Yet
traditional
Indian culture is
slowly fading in
Trinidad,
because of

secondary and
higher education
, the
emancipation of
women,
changing gender
relationships,
and the decline
in parental
authority,
especially over
marriage. The

newly acquired
motherland-
Indian culture of
Trinidad is a
badge of
Indianness and
is politically
inspired; it has
nothing to do
with the
lifestyles and
beliefs that were

brought from
India by the
indentured
labourers.

**Trinidad:
1973
Wednesday,
July 4, 1973**

I arrived late last
night after a
flight from
Canada
following a
Conference of
Latin
Americanist
Geographers in
Calgary. The
purpose of my
visit is to pick up

a special
tabulation of
racial and
religious data for
the enumeration
districts of San
Fernando in the
1970 census.

All the talk is
about the
signing today of
the Caribbean

Community
Treaty to
transform
CARIFTA into
CARICOM . The
signatories are
Barbados ,
Guyana, Jamaica,
and Trinidad and
Tobago, and it is
hoped that the
community will

also include the
Lesser Antilles,
Suriname , and
Cuba.

San
Fernando
Friday, July
6, 1973

Having collected
my census data
in Port of Spain
yesterday, I once
more make my
way south by
taxi through the
cane and rice
fields of County
Caroni, taking in
the new shops in
Chaguanas ,

Couva, and
California. There
is an Allum's
Supermarket at
the roundabout
in Marabella ,
just north of San
Fernando, and a
shopping plaza
in Pointe-à-
Pierre (Fig. 1.4).

I meet Duffy
Mohammed ,
who still works
for the Public
Health
Department. He
gives me the sad
news that Peter
Dubé died of a
heart attack last
December. Duffy
claims that Black

Power is
submerged, not
dispelled. On the
wall of the Grant
Memorial
Presbyterian
School there is
the slogan: 'No
imperialism ,
capitalism, neo-
colonialism or
fascism.'

***Saturday,
July 7, 1973***

San Fernando
(where I am
again staying
with Joan Chin
Aleong) is very
busy. There are
crowds on the
streets, jewellers
on the

pavements, boys
and girls with
plaited hair—
sometimes worn
under
headbands or
tammies. The
girls wear their
plaits in different
shapes—some
stand up in a
peak at the back.

Walking
around the town
I discover that
the mosque and
mandir on
Prince Albert
Street look
thriving, as does
the mandir on
Todd Street,
though there is
little

maintenance of
property—or
even repainting.
The big, old
house on the
corner of St
James Street (the
former furniture
factory) was
burnt down a
couple of weeks
ago.

It strikes me
that San
Fernando does
have distinct
social areas,
despite its small
size, though
there is mixture
by race and
religion within
each
neighbourhood.

Almost
everywhere you
find old houses,
shacks, yards
(with frames for
drying washing),
hen coops, and
vegetated empty
lots—some
wooden houses
are too decrepit
to be occupied.

At Marsang's
restaurant,
where I have
gone for lunch
with Ena, we
meet Carlyle and
Barbara
Kangaloo . He is
now mayor of
San Fernando,
and clearly
enjoys it. It is

fairly easy for
urban Indians to
mix with Creoles
provided they
adopt a Creole
lifestyle.

Ena tells me
that two boys
from the Chinese
laundry (behind
the house on St
James Street

when we were
living there in
1964) are now at
university and
studying to be a
doctor and an
engineer.

The *Trinidad
Guardian* for July
4 carries a list of
500 students
who have

achieved places
at the new
teacher training
college in
Corinth. About
40 percent have
Indian names—a
figure consistent
with the Indian
presence in the
population of
Trinidad.

After lunch
Frank and
Myrtle Cleghorn
take me out with
Myrtle's brother,
Mervyn, and his
Canadian wife to
visit the Texaco
Club at Pointe-à-
Pierre, the Wild
Fowl Trust, and
the Yacht Club.

Mervyn, a lawyer
at Texaco,
complains about
'locals' who are
letting the
Pointe-à-Pierre
club slip. There
are more guards
than ever on the
Texaco
compound. It
contains a model

farm and is
virtually self-
sufficient, with
the local
shopping plaza
providing what
is missing.

Later in the
afternoon
Bramadath
Maharaj and
Hansar

Ramsamooj
collect me and
take me to see
some of their
family and
friends. First of
all, we go to see
Rosalind,
Hansar's eldest
daughter, with
whom Gillian
and I were

friendly when
we lived in San
Fernando. She
has a rented
shop (for
dressmaking)
and a room at
Marabella . She
is in a
relationship with
an Indian lawyer,
and has a baby

who is being
looked after at
her parents'
home, as well as
a daughter aged
six at Grant
School . Rosalind
was upset at
meeting me. The
last time I saw
her was in 1964
when she was

leaving for the
UK with high
hopes. Now she
has a broken
marriage and
two children.

Next, we
visited Elsie
Bissoon and her
family. Elsie,
must now be in
her mid-20s,

works for the
government in
Princes Town, as
well as being
Hansar's
principal
assistant in the
Selfless Service
Divine Mission.
As a modern
Hindu, she
dresses

fashionably in a
trouser suit,
with expensive
jewellery and a
watch. In
contrast to her
daughter, Elsie's
mother has
Hindi script
tattooed on the
top of her chest.

Our principal
port of call is
Hansar's own
home in Corinth.
Mrs Ramsamooj
looks years
younger than
she did—her
youngest child is
about nine. She
brings out
photos of her

dead son; while she is too upset to talk about him, she clearly wants to do so. Hansar's brother is in the UK to see his daughter and to do some business. Hansar also has a daughter in

Canada. Two of
Hansar's
younger
daughters aged
16 and 19 are
striking—the
younger is at
Naparima Girls'
High School , as
is a cousin of
hers. The
family's teenage

girls are all
wearing
trousers, trouser
suits, or shorts.

The
Ramsamooj
family looks very
much more
prosperous than
they were five or
nine years ago;
nearly all the

boys have cars,
and Hansar has a
big van. They
also have a
massive
television (as
does Elsie). My
impression is
that the children
are far more
liberated than in
the past—and

are challenging
their parents'
values.

Hansar tells
me that Pearl
Rampat, who
was in Canada,
has come back to
Trinidad, sold up
and moved to
the UK where
she works as a

domestic cleaner
in a London
hospital.

Our final visit
of the evening is
to see Mr Gaya ,
the haulier, at his
home-cum-
business in San
Fernando. He
now has lots of
trucks and

compressors in
his yard, and a
well fitted-out
office.

Abandoned by
his wife when I
first met him, he
has taken up
with a
comfortable-
looking Indian
woman and has

a child of about
six. His half-
Chinese
daughters are
grown-up, and
Baby, now 19, is
friendly and
remembers
Gillian with
affection.

Later that
evening Bram,

Hansar, and I
have a meal
together in a
Chinese
restaurant. They
both opt for a
vegetarian meal,
and the
restaurant is
hard-pressed to
produce it.

***Sunday, July
8, 1973***

After breakfast, I
walk from my
lodgings to the
Todd Street
mandir, and find
that about 80 are
present for the
service,
including Bin ie

Maharaj—still sitting in the same seat he occupied 9 years ago. It is a memorable service, with stirring *bhajans* (hymns) and music provided by a harmonium, drum, and

cymbals. The
Selfless Service
Divine Mission
supplies the
choir, with Elsie
leading them.
Only one woman
—a Hindi
speaker—wears
a dress with a
hem below the
knee, while nine

years ago it was
always near the
ankle.

Rambalysingh
gives a bitter
sermon
attacking
privilege (caste)
and asking for
the foundation of
a college for

training Hindu
priests.

Hansar
speaks, urging us
to find happiness
within ourselves.
I am asked to say
something, but I
am so overcome
with emotion
that I can hardly
do so. I remind

them that much
has changed in
the last 10 years;
half a generation
of Hindus has
been born;
Hinduism has
been subject to
strain; yet the
doubling of the
congregation is a
sign of interest

especially among
children and
young adults.

In the middle
of the afternoon
I attend an event
organized by the
Hindu Stri Sevak
Sabha (Women's
Service League)
at the Lions'
Club on Circular

Road. The high spot is Indian dancing by a girl from Fyzabad who has won a scholarship to study dance in India.

Hansar tells me that Rampersad Bholai is the first

non-Brahmin
president of the
Sanathan
Dharma Maha
Sabha, but adds
that caste and
the priesthood is
still the big
issue. Bram is
not so
concerned, as a
Brahmin himself.

There is a
beautiful display
of saris, and a
fine exhibition of
dance with
Indian men and
mini-skirted
girls 'jumping
up' to drums; the
music is
supplied by
Muslim wedding

drummers—but
there is no
alcohol. In the
midst of all this,
Hansar tells me
that Mr
Bhattacharya
has lost a lot of
respect. Nobody
was willing to
take me to see
him.

Bram
describes a trip
he recently made
to Cedar Hill
with a cousin
from Chaguanas
to arrange a
girl's wedding.
But the girl has a
degree from
UWI, while the
boy has only A

Levels. Bram
feels that the
educational gap
is too big,
even though
both potential
bride and groom
are Brahmins!

In the last ten
years, a folk
culture has died.
Pujas are still

carried on—
witness the
handi —but
temple services,
temple weddings
and free-choice
marriages have
come about.
Hindus have
become more
like
Presbyterians .

The processes of
modernization
have achieved
what
creolization
alone could not.
Ganja smoking is
fairly common
among the
young, as is
taking the
contraceptive

pill among
teenage girls.

Moreover, the
Indians are fast
appropriating
imported,
present-day
Indian culture —
the sari, dancing,
recorded music ,
and film. In the
mandir on Todd

Street, Hansar
now teaches a
yoga class and
there are also
dancing lessons.

I finish my
Sunday in San
Fernando with a
visit to Ena's
home, in the
house we shared
when we lived in

San Fernando in
1964. Several of
her closest
Creole friends
are there,
including
Clayton and
Eileen Appleton
(who are
Indian). As the
evening wore on,
Ena and I went

with Joan (my
landlady) to visit
Girlie Gomes,
who has a food
shop and home
on Sutton Street
—a thoroughly
Caribbean but
sumptuous place
where we
enjoyed whiskies
Creole-style.

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[[Crossref](#)]

Footnotes

1 For an account of Kingston , revealed on earlier visits to Jamaica, see *Race, Class and the Politics of Decolonization: Jamaica Journals, 1961 and 1968*, 2015. The book contains maps that locate many of the townscapes mentioned here.

2 Miss Clara and
Mr Fitz had
substantial roles in
my 1961 journal—
smaller ones in
1968, when I was in
Jamaica with my
family.

3 Kingston became capital of Jamaica in 1872, the previous seat of government having been Spanish Town.

4 In 1961, Miss Clara told me that the house had originally been registered in her

niece's name, but re-registered in Miss Clara's name by 1961, because her niece had emigrated to the UK. This alleged re-naming of the occupant had clearly not happened. See Colin Clarke, *op. cit.*, [2015](#), 102.

5 I continued to write and send money to Miss Clara until her death in the mid-1980s.

6 Graham Greene ,
The Comedians,
1966; and Bernard
Diederich and Al

Burt, *Haiti and Its Dictator*, 1972.

7 For a first-hand account of the 1970 Black Power disturbances in Trinidad see David Nicholls, 'East Indians and Black Power in Trinidad,'

Race, 12 (1971),
443–459.

8 For inter-ethnic
political conflict in
Guyana around the
time of
independence in
1966, see Leo A.
Despres, *Cultural
Pluralism and
Nationalist Politics*

*in British Guyana,
1967 and Roy
Arthur Glasgow,
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Indians, 1970.*

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**5. Oaxaca,
Mexico,
and
Barbuda
in 1978**

Colin Clarke¹ 

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and the
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ent,
University
of Oxford,
Oxford, UK

✉ **Colin Clarke**

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Introduction

The objective
of this 5-month

visit to Mexico
was to provide
the
foundations for
my new
research into
Oaxaca's
peasantries —
the state of
Oaxaca
(2 million

population in
1970) is
roughly the
size of Wales
and even more
mountainous
and
altitudinous.
The project
was rooted in
my 1966 study

of Mexican
land reform ,
which had
included a visit
to Oaxaca.
When selecting
Oaxaca for a
pre-research
visit for
6 weeks in
1976, I had

been
impressed with
the
archaeological,
historical, and
ethnographic
richness of the
area revealed
by three
recently
published

books—John
Paddock
Ancient Oaxaca
(1970),
William Taylor
Landlord and
Peasant in
Colonial
Oaxaca (1972),
and Ralph
Beals *The*

*Peasant
Marketing
System of
Oaxaca, Mexico
(1975).*

Beals had
mentioned
Cecil Welte's
excellent
library on the
archaeology ,

anthropology,
and history of
Oaxaca, held in
his Oficina de
Estudios de
Humanidad del
Valle de Oaxaca
located in the
colonial centre
of Oaxaca City,
and I arranged

to visit it.
During my
1976 stay I
became friends
with Cecil and
his wife Patsy,
and he gave me
permission to
work in his
library and use
his map

collection. A former senior US naval officer, he had been trained as an engineer. After retiring to Mexico and taking a master's degree in

archaeology
and
anthropology ,
Cecil had
applied his
professional
skills as a
surveyor and
cartographer
to produce his
invaluable map

of the Valley of
Oaxaca
(redrawn for
me and
reproduced in
this book in
Fig. 1.10).

Surveying
the Central
Valleys (the
three Valles

Centrales
focusing on
Oaxaca City,
with arms
named after
the towns of
Etlá, Tlaxiaco ,
and Ocotlán)
had occupied
Cecel in the late
1960s and

early 1970s,
and given him
an
unsurpassed
knowledge of
the area (Fig. 1.
10). For many
years
afterwards, his
map was far
superior to

anything
published by
official
Mexican
cartography,
largely because
all his place
names were
correctly
located. Every
social scientist

who worked in
the Oaxaca
Valley bought a
copy of his
map, used his
library, and
received
research
orientation,
advice, and
practical

support from
him. He was a
fount of
information
about who was
researching
what and
where, and I
had the benefit
of innumerable
discussions

with him until
his death in the
early 1990s. I
was still using
his library, by
then placed on
a permanent
footing, during
my last
research visit
to Oaxaca in

1998, as a
prelude to the
publication of
my Oaxaca
book in 2000.

In the
acknowledgem
ents to that
book I
recorded that,
although I was

an urban
geographer, 'I
was rapidly
deflected from
my aim to
concentrate on
the social
geography of
Oaxaca City.
This was partly
because

detailed urban
research had
already been
carried out by
John Chance ,
Michael
Higgins, Art
Murphy , and
Alex Stepick .
Moreover, the
peasantries of

rural Oaxaca
were
compelling and
the materials
about them
rich' (Clarke
2000, xiii). I
did not
mention that I
had during
1977

developed a
substantial
project on
social structure
and social
interaction in
Oaxaca City,
which I
intended to
carry out with
the

collaboration
of my wife,
Gillian , along
the lines of our
shared
research in San
Fernando ,
Trinidad, in
1964.

The
rejection of a

grant
application by
the UK Social
Scientific
Research
Council was
decisive in
turning me
towards a
project for one
person, which

could be
carried out
with small
grants spread
over several
years—my
rural project
on Oaxaca's
peasantries
stretching from
1978 to 2000

involved 10
field seasons.
One
compensation
for the
reconfiguration
of my research
was that Gillian
and our two
children, Aidan
and Veronica

—both barely
teenagers—
were able to
spend six
weeks with me
in Mexico City
and Oaxaca in
1978, and
Gillian joined
me on most of

my subsequent visits.

During my 1978 stay in Oaxaca I read books and theses in English and Spanish in Cecil Welte's office, in the

library of the
Instituto de
Sociología at
the UABJO and
in the library of
the Instituto
Nacional de
Antropología e
Historia (INAH
), and consult
their extensive

collection of
offprints and
pamphlets.
Cecil also had a
substantial
collection of
maps, both
historical and
modern, of
Mexico and
Oaxaca, and I

took advantage
of his mapping
table to start to
draw my own
maps of Oaxaca
using data in
the censuses of
population and
agriculture.
While I was
working in his

office Cecil was
always at hand
to discuss
research
problems,
suggest new
sources, or to
point to new
avenues of
investigation.

For the
month or so
that he and
Patsy were in
the US from
late September
to late October
1978 I lived in
their house in
the Tlacolula
Valley and was

allowed to
drive his four-
wheel-drive
VW Safari, with
which I made
numerous
visits into the
more remote
parts of the
Oaxaca Valley
and the Sierra

Mixe. I also
organized two
expeditions via
the Isthmus of
Tehuantepec to
the Papaloapan
Basin in
northern
Oaxaca and
back through
the Sierra

Juárez to
Oaxaca City;
and via the
Sierra Madre
del Sur to the
Pacific coast
and back
though the
Mixteca de la
Costa and the
Mixteca Alta.

Despite
waiting until
the wet season
was over, on
my first trip I
was caught in a
terrible storm
crossing the
Sierra Juárez,
and on the
second I

encountered
landslips that I
passed through
only with
difficulty. I left
details about
both itineraries
with my friend
Margarita
Dalton in
Oaxaca City,

with
instructions to
send out a
search party
had I not
returned by a
set date.
Fortunately
this precaution
turned out to

be
unnecessary.

Once Cecil
and Patsy
Welte had
returned to
Oaxaca, I
moved to stay
with the
Vásquez family
in Oaxaca City,

where I
witnessed the
Days of the
Dead in early
November, had
informative
conversations
with American
friends Ross
Parmenter and
Scott Cook,

made a
memorable
journey to the
Coixtlahuaca
Valley in the
eroded Mixteca
Alta, and
experienced a
destructive
earthquake in
Oaxaca City

with its
epicentre in
the Pacific
Ocean just off
the Oaxaca
coast. At no
point was I
able to
penetrate the
state of
emergency

under which
Oaxaca had
been placed
since 1977,
though I was
well aware that
the main
UABJO building
close to Cecil's
office was
under armed

police guard,
and that a lorry
load of armed
soldiers from
the Federal
Army was
permanently
positioned
adjacent to the
cathedral.

When I
drove to the
Pacific coast I
had several
encounters
with army
patrols on the
lookout for
drugs, but,
even then, it
was impossible

to find out
precisely what
was happening.
I found that a
wall of silence
was
maintained by
the national,
state, and local
governments.
However, I

have attempted
to explain the
Caso Oaxaca
(Oaxaca Case)
in the
introduction to
this book,
where I have
set out the role
of the
university

students,
peasants, and
left-wing
agitators who
were involved.
A whole
chapter on the
theme is also
available in my
book on

Oaxaca (Clarke
2000).

At the end
of my Oaxacan
sojourn in
December
1978 I made a
short visit to
Belize in
Central
America to

scout out a
potential field
site for a
graduate
research
project, and
then flew from
Mérida to the
Caribbean
where I made
my way to the

island of
Barbuda,
which I had
been studying
in
collaboration
with David
Lowenthal
since 1972.
Originally
attracted to

Barbuda by the
myth of slave
breeding and
the large
volume of
Codrington
papers in the
Gloucestershir
e Record Office,
we published a
paper in 1977

dispelling the
myth, though
neither of us
had been there
before we
wrote it. My
chance came
on my way
back to the UK
from Mexico,
and the journal

I kept is the
only one in this
book that
records a
single-journey
visit that
follows, rather
precedes,
research and
writing.

The theme
of the visit to
Barbuda was
not, however,
slave breeding,
but the issue of
decolonization
leading to
political
fragmentation:
Barbuda

wanted to
separate from
its dominant
neighbour
Antigua, to
which it was
attached in the
mid-nineteenth
century, but
unlike Anguilla
in the late

1960s it had not been able to do so (see Chap. 3). The peculiarity of the Barbuda case is that, since the last leasees left the island in the late nineteenth

century, the
land has fallen
under islander
control, and it
is believed by
Barbudans that
it is held in
common—
rather like
rural land in

the *municipios*
of Oaxaca.

The threat
of Antiguan
interference in
these lands
that are used
for swidden
(rotational or
slash-and-
burn)

cultivation and
cattle rearing
was sufficient
for Barbuda to
ask the UK for
separation
from Antigua
before
independence
in 1983—a
request that

was turned
down by the
British
government on
the grounds
that
Barbudans,
unlike
Anguillans, had
no history of
legislative

independence.
The guided
walk to Darby's
Cave gave me
insights into
the land
problem of
Barbuda, and
many of my
conversations
with

Barbudans
focused on the
land
/secession
issue.

Tlacolula Valley and Ocotlán

**Valley
Interfluve
Thursday,
July 13,
1978**

I have become
friendly with
Scott Cook , an
American

anthropologist,
who like me is
living in an
apartment in
Señorita Olga's
casa grande
(big house) on
the Alameda
in the centre of
Oaxaca City. He
has organized a

journey for us
in his four-by-
four to find a
route from the
Tlacolula
Valley to the
Ocotlán Valley
across the
interfluve
straddled by
the Jalieza

villages .¹ As soon as we leave the Pan-American Highway in the Tlacolula arm of the Central Valley we are on to a dirt track. We drive through Rojas

de Cuaúhtemoc
and Santa Rosa
Buenavista to
San Sebastián
Teitipac, the
village where
Scott did his
doctorate, and
we pick up
Scott's
compadre (co-

godparent)
(Fig. 1.10).

The
compadre's
adobe house is,
like all the
others in the
head town of
the *municipio*,
set in a
compound

with a five-
metre deep
well,
surrounded by
roaming
domestic
animals—
turkeys, pigs,
chickens and
other small
stock. The

compadre's
son is
fashioning the
granite roller
for a
grindstone—
he is a trainee
apprenticed to
his father. In
San Sebastián
adobe is rare,

and reed huts
and square
cabins are the
norm.

With the
compadre on
board we set
off into the
fields to pick
up the
Presidente of

the *municipio*,
and the two
peasants speak
to one another
in Zapotec —
the lingua
franca of three-
quarters of the
municipio's
population,
though this is

unusual in the
Central Valley
where most are
Spanish
speaking. We
make our way
through the
large
settlement of
San Juan
Teitipac and

pass a colonial
period church.
Much of the
housing here is
of adobe.

Rising out
of the valley
Scott engages
the four-wheel
drive. Ox-
drawn ploughs

are to be seen
everywhere,
moulding the
maize-and-
beans milpas.
The road
descends into a
seasonal river
course, and so
we make our
way up the

dried bed
through the
fields. When
we pass a
Catholic shrine,
the *Presidente*
takes off his
straw
sombbrero out
of respect.

After many
false trails, we
reach Santa
Cecilia Jalieza,
now
accompanied
by a young
man with a
machete. Scott
buys some
handmade

wooden
spoons and
stirrers,
specialities of
the community.
Santa Cecilia is
an *agencia* and
ranks low in
the local
government
hierarchy; its

status seems to
be confirmed
by the poor-
quality dirt
roads, flimsy
houses, and
half-naked
dirty children
running
barefoot
through the

cow dung. The
men are poor,
too, their horny
toes peeping
out of decrepit
sandals.

 We push on
to Santo
Domingo
Jalieza, still in
the Tlacolula

Valley, where
we buy soft
drinks from a
grubby shop.
Here a boy is
weaving belts,
using a back-
strap loom, and
a woman is
grinding corn
for *tortillas*

(flat maize
pancakes). I
notice an ox
yoke
abandoned on
the ground.

We keep
climbing until
the track
peters out, and
continue on

foot to the top
of the ridge
following the
mule trail from
the Tlacolula
Valley to
Ocotlán. This
trail was in use
until about
1950, when
buses running

on surfaced
roads following
the valley
floors started
to transform
local
communicatio
ns. From the
ridge top, there
is a superb
view into the

Ocotlán Valley
across several
outliers, and
below us we
can make out
Santo Tomás
Jalieza , San
Juan Chilateca ,
San Antonino
Castillo

Velasco, and
Ocotlán.

I gathered
that, while
Scott was
buying the
spoons in
Santa Cecilia,
the San
Sebastián
Presidente was

trading guns
and
ammunition in
Zapotec , and
that the helpful
young man
with the
machete is a
professional
killer and free
only because

he arranged
terms with the
Presidente. So
Zapotec can be
used as a
secret language
and deployed
for clandestine
or unlawful
purposes.

The
Presidente
himself comes
from a line of
cacique s
(chiefs) who
have amassed
land and
power in San
Sebastián
Teitipac since

the Mexican
Revolution—
and before
1910. The
revolution
dispossessed
local
hacendados,
but not
cacique s.

(Note made
, 2018)

Gillian and
our two
children, Aidan
and Veronica ,
arrived in
Mexico City in
late July, and
we spent part
of a week in

the capital
before taking
the first-class
bus to Oaxaca
City 560 km
distant. There
we settled into
Señorita Olga's
casa grande,
which also

housed Scott
Cook's family.

**Ocotlán
Market
Friday,
August 4,
1978**

Patsy Welte
took Gillian ,
Aidan ,
Veronica , and
me to the
Ocotlán Friday
market. We
stopped en
route in San
Antonino
Castillo Velasco

(the flower-
growing
village) to meet
the Ron and
Carole
Waterbury,
anthropologist
friends of
Cecil's, who
were on the
point of

departing for
the US. They
had a carload
of possessions,
and there was
a lot of talk
about finding
back routes to
avoid military
roadblocks set
up by the army.

San Antonino
provides
flowers for the
Days of the
Dead: this is a
very
prosperous
settlement by
Oaxacan
standards.

Ocotlán
market takes
up the whole of
the *zócalo* and
occupies a
covered
building as
well. Fruit and
vegetables are
on a lesser
scale than in

Oaxaca City's market, and it is easier to get around. Straw goods are quite a feature of Ocotlán (Fig. 1.10).

The most memorable part of the

Ocotlán market
is the section
for cattle. This
is approached
down a dusty
unpaved street,
whose shady
side harbours
pigs large and
small and their
vendors.

Horses,
donkeys, and
cattle are all
penned in a
large yard,
tethered to
their owners
while awaiting
a sale. There
seems to be no
system for

auctioning the
animals.

On our way
back, we visit
the weaving
village of Santo
Tomás Jalieza
—the degree of
village
specialization
by commodity

is remarkable.
San Agustín
Yatareni , near
Cecil and
Patsy's home,
makes bricks.

Colonia Linda Vista

**Sunday,
August 6,
1978**

We are taken
by Michael
Higgins, his
partner Sandra
and the
children to join
the birthday

celebrations
for a little boy
called César,
who lives in
Colonia Linda
Vista, a
squatter
settlement in
Oaxaca City
that Michael
studied for his

doctorate and
book.² César's
grandmother,
María Elena, is
from Pochutla ,
and her
husband, who
was born in
Oaxaca City, is
a foreman in
the public

works
department
and therefore
sufficiently
privileged to
have *Seguro
Social* (Social
Security—free
health and
other social
benefits).

María Elena's
family has a
large house
with integral
kitchen, an
inside Catholic
shrine,
bathhouse with
toilet (no seat),
and a verandah
with a view of

Monte Albán—
la linda vista.

César's
mother, Chivela
, lives below
her parent's
home in a
house
converted from
a Pentecostal
Chapel. She is

separated from
her husband.
Her sister, Rosa
, works at the
check-out of
the La Lonja
supermarket
on the *zócalo* ,
and their
brother is
about to enter

the military
academy in
Mexico City.

The *piñat* a
celebration,
during which
blindfolded
children,
brandishing a
pole, take it in
turns to break

open a
suspended clay
pot containing
fruit, sweets,
and other
presents, is a
great success.
After tea, the
adults are
taken down to
Chivela's house

to celebrate
Rosa's
twentieth
birthday. A
music centre is
set up with
tapes of
Beatles music
and there is
general
dancing. We all

have a good evening, which ends with *abrazos* (hugs) for Michael and me from María Elena's husband.

Chiapas

**Monday,
August 7,
1978**

Gillian , Aidan ,
Veronica , and I
caught the
early morning
Cristóbal Colón
bus to San
Cristóbal in

Chiapas, a journey of about 800 kilometres (Fig. 1.1). At Matatlán on the southern edge of the Tlacolola Valley we passed fields of

maguey and
maize , often
the two
cropped
together.
Matatlán has
mescal (agave
alcohol)
factories (Fig.
1.9).

Climbing
out of the
valley system
we endure
hours of
winding
through
chaparral—
cactus and
thornbush—
before

dropping down
to the Isthmus
of Tehuantepec
and the three
towns of
Tehuantepec ,
with its lovely
square, Salina
Cruz, and
Juchitán—the
roads between

them are
packed with
traffic. Beyond
Juchitán we
passed a large
sugar factory
set in swampy
fields at La
Venta (Fig. 1.9).
Chiapas looks
more

prosperous
than Oaxaca.

First there
was a steep
climb from the
plains of the
isthmus, then a
swift ride
across the
plateau to the
oil-rich town of

Tuxtla
Gutiérrez, and
finally a
winding climb
through the
pouring rain,
cloud, and
darkness. The
visibility was
so restricted
until we

reached San
Cristóbal that
the baggage
handler had to
press himself
against the
windscreen
and shout
instructions to
the driver to go
to the right or

left to avoid
plunging off
the winding
road (Fig. 1.1).

San
Cristóbal has
changed a lot
in 12 years.
There are now
four banks
where there

was only one,
and the streets
are paved. But
it is the
enduring
presence of the
Indians—
Chamulas and
Zinacantecos—
that is so
striking.

**Wednesda
y, August 9,
1978**

We visit the
neighbouring
village of
Zinacantán ,
where there
are maize
milpas in the

valley fringed
at higher
altitude by
pine-oak
forests .

Tomorrow is
the fiesta of
San Lorenzo,
the patron
saint of the
township.

Turning the
corner by the
church we see
a mass of pink
set against the
green of the
fields—men in
pink tops and
women in
colourful
wraps, wearing

hats with
coloured
tassels.

The church
is decorated
with flowers,
and fresh-cut
grass had been
strewn on the
floor. San
Lorenzo

himself is
wound around
with coloured
ribbons, while
groups of men
holding
bunches of
gladioli make
offerings to a
white priest.

Outside the
church there
are visiting
groups of
Chamulas,
wearing
traditional
black
costumes. They
are listening to
the brass band,

or watching
the fireworks
and rockets
being set off, or
participating in
the fairground
rides, side
shows, and
games of
chance. But the
charms of a

mediaeval
pageant are
offset by a
pervasive air of
hostility to
outsiders.

We reach
San Juan
Chamula by a
road winding
through the

orchards, and
finally come
upon a big
open square
and decorated
church, where
the *topil*
(policeman) is
guarding the
saints,
wrapped up in

preparation for
their fiesta on
August 13.

**Thursday,
August 10,
1978**

Amatenango ,
traditionally a
village of

pottery, has
open-sided
huts for
cooking and
throwing clay
pots (Fig. 1.1).
Most of the
inhabitants
seem
impoverished,
and many of

the children
are suffering
from river
blindness .
What a sad
place.

We return
by overnight
bus to Oaxaca
City.

**Atzompa
Tuesday,
August 15,
1978**

Aidan ,
Veronica ,
Gillian , and I
walk out from
the Oaxaca city

centre to pick
up the country
bus that serves
Atzompa,
where the
Assumption of
the Virgin
Mary is being
celebrated at
the patronal
feast (Fig. 1.

10). The first bus comes, fills up, and leaves without us. Although family Clarke is at the front of the queue, we are outmanoeuvred by the other

travellers, who
quickly climb
in through the
windows and
back door.

Safely installed
in the second
service to
leave, we are
amused by the
ticket collector

who makes his
way down the
packed bus by
walking on the
seat backs and
over people's
heads.

Atzompa—
noted for its
green-glaze
pottery—is

widely
recognized as a
mestizo village
with scarcely a
Zapotec
speaker. Only a
handful of
kilometres
outside Oaxaca
City, it is
separated from

it by the bulk of
Monte Albán.

When we
arrive, the
fiesta is in full
swing and the
church is
decked with
flowers and
paper
decorations

(Plate 5.1). In the village centre a fairground is operating; the women are cooking; and the town council and brass band are dining.



2467

Plate 5.1 Church
decorated for the
fiesta in Santa
María Atzompa ,
Oaxaca. Folk
Catholicism is
universal in the
rural areas of
Southern Mexico
—here
exemplified by the
annual

celebration of the
Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin
Mary on 15
August

With
Michael
Higgins, Sandra
, and their
children, we go

off to visit
Señor León,
who has a
spotlessly
clean *solar*
(yard) and
house. He
shows us the
bedroom with
its TV and
shrine, and the

kitchen. The
centre of the
earthen floor
has been
disturbed,
leaving a
rectangle (like
a grave) with a
cross and a
bunch of
flowers, under

which a goat is
being
barbecued for
the patronal
celebrations.
Señor León is
prosperous: in
addition to his
two hectares of
ejdal land , he
is a potter,

making green-
glaze teapots
and liqueur
sets for a
dealer in the
20 de
Noviembre
Market in
Oaxaca City.

Later we
meet a poor

woman potter
who lives by
making big
dishes such as
casseroles, the
sale of which
enables her to
buy corn for
her
subsistence.

At the other
social extreme
from this lady,
and far more
successful even
than Señor
León, is
Teodora
Blanco, a
potter in her
early 50s. She

is a *commadre*
(co-
godmother) of
Scott Cook ,
and generously
invites us to
share her
delicious lunch
of pork, *mole*
(chile pepper
and chocolate

sauce), and
tortillas. She
models a clay
figure for us,
and Gillian
buys several of
her fired, but
unglazed,
monochrome
sculptures of
humanoids

metamorphosi
ng into
mysterious
animals.

Although
Teodora has an
international
reputation, she
is still very
much a village
woman. She

tells us that the
sources of her
inspiration are
the Indian
artefacts in the
archaeological
and
ethnographic
museums in
Oaxaca City

that she first
saw as a child.

**Wednesda
y, August
16, 1978**

We return to
Atzompa to
attend the
service in the

Catholic
Church
(conducted by
a white priest
as before), and
to see the
Virgin paraded
through the
streets. Once
the service has
finished, a thin,

straggling
procession
lurches out
through the
church door,
the band out of
tune, the Virgin
being carried
in a box about
eighteen inches
long. Most of

the villagers
fail to cast a
glance over
their shoulders
to see this
sight, so
enthralled are
they by the
basketball
derby on the
cancha (court)

near the village
square
involving the
youth of
Atzompa and a
neighbouring
municipio.

**Saturday,
August 19,**

1978

We hold a
birthday party
in our
apartment for
Aidan , who
will be 13 on
August 24,
involving all
the children

living in
Señorita Olga's
casa grande,
plus Margarita
Dalton's son.
We take over
the entire front
patio, where
food is served
and the *piñat a*
suspended.

Grown-ups and
children have a
great time. The
piñata,
purchased by
Señorita Olga,
is a great hit.

**Saturday,
August 26,**

1978

Patsy and Cecil
come to us for
lunch, and
Patsy
announces that
they want me
to live in their
house for
about 5 weeks

beginning at
the end of
September,
while they are
on holiday in
the US.

(Note made
, 2018)

From the
end of August
until the

beginning of
September we
were in Mexico
City visiting my
former
doctoral
student Peter
Ward and
enjoying a
day's visit to
Puebla with

María Teresa
Gutiérrez de
MacGregor and
her husband
Raúl
MacGregor .
Peter invited
the four
Clarkes to
dinner one
evening, and

suggested that
I might like to
move into his
flat for a few
days before
returning to
Oaxaca, once
Gillian, Aidan
and Veronica
had gone back
to the UK.

**Mexico
City
Sunday,
September
3, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-3-78:

Peter and
his research
assistant, Anne
Raymond ,
have been good
company in
Mexico City,
and Ian Baker's
house party in
San Ángel
turned out well

—Ian works
for the British
Council.
Yesterday I
spent most of
my time in the
Museo de
Antropología.
They have
many exhibits
from the

archaeological
sites in Oaxaca
—urns,
jewellery and
carvings—and
an even better
ethnographic
display than in
the Santo
Domingo
Regional

Museum in
Oaxaca City.

Being in
Mexico City is
wearing, noisy
and polluted. I
long to be back
in Oaxaca, and
only hope I can
get the
materials I

need to make
my stay in
Mexico City
worthwhile.

Peter has
had to fly off to
Baja California
in connection
with his
planning job,
so I have made

arrangements
to move across
to María
Teresa's house
in Coyoacán.
Indeed, I am
writing this in
her secluded
paradise.

**Monday,
September
4, 1978**

It is now
Monday
morning, and I
am about to go
off to UNAM
with Raúl and
María Teresa.

2500

Apparently,
there is a
symposium in
the Instituto de
Geografía, so I
shall look in on
that, as well as
trying to track
down Oaxacan
census data.]

[Letter to
Gillian 9-4-78:
Life has
taken on a new
dimension
since I moved
into María
Teresa and
Raúl's house in
the Callejón de
Chilpa. It is

cool, quiet, and
tasteful, with
the house set
in the middle
of a small
walled garden
full of lush
vegetation into
which it looks
from the
various rooms.

We all speak
Spanish
together, which
is perfect for
me.

At the
institute this
morning I
discovered that
they have
about three-

quarters of the
materials I
need—
population and
agricultural
census data for
the state of
Oaxaca from
1900 to the
present. I know
quite a few of

the institute
staff from two
years ago, and
now that my
Spanish is so
much better, I
am able to
strike up
warmer
relationships
with them. The

Director has
conferred the
title of Visiting
Professor on
me, which
means that I
can have free
run of their
library and
photocopy
what I like.

Anne
Raymond rang
while we were
having lunch to
say that the
guarantor of
her flat is out
of town and
she wondered
whether María
Teresa would

take it on.
María Teresa
was
marvellous and
quickly agreed.
Coping with
the legal
system in
Mexico seems
almost
impossible for

foreigners
without a
helping hand
from Mexican
friends.

Tomorrow I
am going to the
Colegio de
México at its
new site on the
outskirts of

Mexico City,
because María
Teresa thinks
that they may
have
historic census
data on
microfilm—in
which case all I
need is to make
a copy from

their negative.
If only!

I have been
invited out for
a meal with
Peter and
several British
Council folk
including Ian
Baker on
Thursday

evening, and
plan to return
to Oaxaca City
on the
overnight bus
on Friday 8
September, so
that I can
discuss house-
moving plans
with Cecil on

the Saturday
morning.]

**Wednesda
y,
September
6, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-6-78:

Yesterday
Raúl lent me
his car so that I
could drive to
the Colegio de
México—a feat
that I
completed
safely despite
getting lost and
then

discovering
that the next
vital motorway
exit had been
blocked by the
police. The
return journey
was no less
hazardous, and
I returned the
car keys to

Raúl with the
firm intention
of never
driving again in
Mexico City.

With my
friend Alan
Lavell abroad,
Sergio
Alcántara
working

elsewhere, and
the head of
sociology out
of the building,
I did well, on
my own, to get
into the
Colegio's
fortified library
and make a list
of their

Mexican
census
holdings. In
fact, they are
less complete
than those in
the Instituto de
Geografía at
UNAM , so I am
planning to
have the

geography
holdings
microfilmed.

Although
Mansell found
the Instituto
rather dull
when he was a
visitor, many of
the staff have
been very

generous to
me. Speaking
some Spanish
is a must. I find
I can now run
on in Spanish
for several
hours if need
be.

Tomorrow,
I have to see

Ian Baker at
the British
Council, and on
Friday I shall
be packing for
the trip to
Oaxaca City—
we don't finish
lunch until
4.30 pm.]

**Oaxaca
City
Sunday,
September
10, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-10-
78:

I got back
to Oaxaca City
at 6 am
yesterday
morning,
having slept
my way
through
Cuicatlán and
the dry,
tropical trench

called La
Cañada (Figs.
[1.8](#) and [1.9](#)). It
was lovely to
be back home
in our
apartment,
though the
potted plant
has wilted and
the rain has

soaked in
slightly and
brought down
flakes of
whitewash
over my desk.

Having left
all my clothes
to be washed at
the *lavandería*
de autoservicio,

I went around
to Cecil's office
and collected a
bumper crop of
letters from
you, John D,
Paul and Fred.³
It was super to
be in contact
with so many
people

simultaneously,
especially at a
point when I
am feeling
pretty
homesick.

Everyone is
asking after
you, including
the woman
vegetable

seller in the
market, the
waiter at the
Hotel Francia ,
who couldn't
believe I
wanted a table
for one, and
Señorita Olga,
who hopes you
will come back

and that we
shall all stay
with her again
in one of her
apartments.

I had a
wonderful visit
with Raúl and
María Teresa in
Mexico City. As
they have a

maid who
cooks, cleans
and washes, it
could hardly be
said that I was
a drag on them.
Next week, so I
am promised,
the Instituto de
Geografía and
the Instituto de

Estudios
Antropológicos
are going to
collaborate and
microfilm all
the Oaxacan
census
material that I
need to
underpin the
research I am

doing here. It
should cost
about £50, and
I aim to pick it
up in Mexico
City on my way
back to the UK
in December.
But what a
hassle it has
been to

arrange this,
even with
María Teresa's
helpful
intervention.

One night
in Mexico City
Raúl and María
Teresa took me
and Liliana, the
daughter of

Alberto López
and Silvana
Levi de López,
to a folk club
run by friends.
There were
good
performers,
many with
UNAM
connections,

and one of the
bands sounded
like Inti
Illimani .
Liliana and I
were
introduced to
everyone and
made to feel at
home—Raúl
and

MaríaTeresa
are marvellous
with young
people like her.

While I was
staying in
Coyoacán we
spoke Spanish
all the time,
and the ever-
lovable Raúl

helped me with
an occasional
explanation of
difficult words
and phrases. As
a consequence,
my ability to
think and
speak in
Spanish has
been

transformed,
and I can even
understand
95 percent of
what Antonio
says! María
Teresa has an
amazing hairdo
which involves
braids that are
said to take

more than an
hour to put in
place. While
she is doing
her hair in the
morning, her
two tiny
Chihuahua
dogs run onto
and off her bed,
using a ramp to

get them off
the floor.

On Friday,
before I left
Mexico City,
María Teresa
had a dinner
party to which
she invited Ann
Raymond. Ann
had just got the

keys to her
apartment (on
María Teresa's
recommendati
on) and was on
bubbling form.
I shall look
forward to
seeing them all
in December,
when I stay

once more in
Coyoacán.

I have
arranged with
Cecil to move
into his house
on 23
September for
a month. He is
as pleased as I
am over this,

and house-sitting will certainly help me conserve my funds. Olga seems quite happy about my moving out and says I can come back if I wish. But as I

should really
like to get
myself into a
Spanish-
speaking
household, I
shall try to
arrange
something
else.]

**Wednesda
y,
September
13, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-13-
78:

I got my
driver's licence

today (valid for
two years in
case I want to
come back), so
plans are now
well under way
for my move
out to Patsy
and Cecil's. It
was a spooky
experience

going to the
office of the
traffic police,
knowing that
students are
being routinely
incarcerated
(disappeared)
—and worse—
by the Oaxaca
state

authorities,
and I was more
than
intimidated by
the light
questioning I
was given
about the
nature of my
stay in Oaxaca
—I am here as

a tourist, not as
a researcher.

Cecil is
keen that I
should use his
VW Safari
(essentially a
four-by-four)
and go away
for a few days
at a time, so

that I can ask
his gardener to
stay (Cecil will
recompense
him for his
time looking
after the
place). This is
to make up for
the fact that I
shall be

looking after
the house in
the gardener's
stead, and
thereby
eliminating his
promised
bonus. So, I
shall be taking
off on a
number of

trips to
improve my
knowledge of
the
countryside in
the Central
Valleys and the
more far-flung
regions of
Oaxaca.

The centre
of Oaxaca is
looking lovely
at present.

Tourists are
few, the traffic
is lighter, and
the *zócalo* and
Alameida have
been
beautifully

decorated in
the national
colours green,
red and white
—lights and
bunting—for
the
Independence
Day
celebrations on
16 September. I

gather that the
governor gives
the *grito* (shout
or
proclamation)
of
independence
at midnight on
15 September
(all very
emotional), but

I will write
about that at
the weekend.

Despite the
removal of the
objects you
have taken
home, our flat
is still looking
attractive. I
have

carnations on
the table, and
the *piñat a*
remains to
grace the top of
the bookcase. It
has been a
good place to
live, but it
would help to
save some cash

—and the
centre of the
town is
beginning to
lose some of its
appeal.

The
material I am
reading on the
anthropology
of Oaxaca is

exactly what I
find
interesting.
Cecil is leaving
me not only his
house and car,
but also his
office, library
and post-office
box, so I shall
be well set up

for the next 5
to 6 weeks.]

Scott Cook
and I went out
for a meal and
had an
interesting talk
together at the
Asador Vasco.
He tells me
that Casa

Brena has a monopoly of the honey business in Oaxaca; they also have contacts with the prison service and derive many of the weavings

they sell from
the work of
prisoners, in
addition to the
men in their
own
workshops.

Several
firms located in
Oaxaca City
make pottery;

Casa Brena
produces
streaky,
multicoloured
ware. There is
one
acaparador
(wholesaler)
who deals in
black pottery,
only some of

which comes
from
Coyotepec —
he has his own
workshops.

Señor
Bustamante is
hardly a
businessman
any longer, but
he did have a

big impact on
the career of
Teodora
Blanco. Her
son is in the
loza
(earthenware)
business, and
her husband
turns up to seal
deals.

Enrique de
la Lanza has a
hojalatería
(tin-goods
workshop) in
the yard of the
apartment he
owns; the men
who work it
own the
business, but

sell only to
him. His shop,
Yalálag , is a
front for
massive,
worldwide
shipments. He
also supplies
FONART shops
in other states
of Mexico.

It is difficult
to understand
Oaxaca's drug
environment
and the extent
to which it
intrudes into
other activities.
The army has
taken over the
state in the last

year—has it
taken over the
drug trade as
well?

**Sunday,
September
17, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-17-

78:

Life in
Oaxaca has
settled to a
new routine. I
am spending
almost all my
time reading
books and
articles related
to the research,

working
through the
Oaxacan
newspapers,
and reading
*Azuela's Los de
Abajo*, my first
attempt at a
Mexican novel
in Spanish. I
have also

joined Patsy's
Biblioteca
Circulante,
since it has a
wide range of
books in
English and
Spanish—
novels,
histories, social
anthropology .

Now in my
last week at
Señorita Olga's,
I have swabbed
the floor and
am getting
ready to leave
next Saturday. I
am looking
forward to the
change of

scene, though I
have no idea
where I shall
finish up once
Cecil and Patsy
are back.
Although it's
lonely, I am
enjoying being
back in Oaxaca.
Mexico City

was dreadfully
cold and wet in
my last week
there, and the
greater
warmth here is
very welcome.
Moreover, my
work is
fascinating,
and I have such

a good base of
operations in
Cecil's library.

The event
of the week has
been the
Independence
Celebration.
The *grito* given
by Hidalgo was
on 16

September
1810, but it
took eleven
years of
struggle for
Mexico to
become fully
independent.
Anyway, the
night of
September 15

is the big thing.
The *zócalo* was
crammed with
stalls selling
food and
offering prizes
for darts and
bingo. There
were three
stages with

pop groups and
folk dancers.

At about
10 pm, after an
hour-long
procession of
soldiers in
military
vehicles filed
through the
city centre, a

procession was
formed by the
army, police
and state brass
bands, political
leaders, school
children and
floats
commemoratin
g
independence.

Just before
midnight the
military
governor, with
an entourage of
soldiers in
dress uniform,
appeared on
the balcony of
the
elaborately-

decorated state
palace, gave
the cry, 'Viva
México,' and
rang the
independence
bell.

There was
then a
fireworks
display. A

castillo (castle)
was ignited
and gave a
sparkling
display for five
to ten minutes.
First there
were bangers,
then revolving
coloured flares,
Catherine

wheels and
finally rockets.
As the finale,
fireworks were
lit on the
facade of the
State Palace,
creating a
cascade effect
right across the

width of the
plaza.

I still think
it's a great pity
we aren't all
here for the
year. Mexico is
so interesting,
and everything
is in high relief
—poverty and

affluence,
pleasure and
pain.]

**Friday,
September
22, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-22-
78:

I had lunch
at the Hotel
Francia with
Scott Cook
today. He is
living at
Enrique de la
Lanza's house
in Xochimilco
(the house
Cecil took me

to see as a possible home). The noise of the tin-workers at the back is apparently deafening, so Scott is driven out to his office all day long. I

find him
fascinating to
talk to, and we
are hoping to
make one or
two trips
together once
the rains stop.

The skies
have been
leaden for

days. It rains
for hours on
end, and for
the last two
nights I have
slept under a
blanket and
bedspread. The
white cotton
bedspreads
that we

admired so
much are
specialities
(now rare)
from the town
of Yalálag.

I am
convinced that
I can come to
grips with a
new study area

only by
immersing
myself in the
history, geogra
phy, sociology
and
anthropology
of Oaxaca,
reading for
hours at a time.
I have about

four items on
the go at any
one time, so
that I can ring
the changes
and avoid
boredom.

Oaxaca in
real life seems
just as
interesting as

ever, though
socially I feel
rather trapped
with the people
I first met here.
That's no
criticism of
them: rather it
is a comment
on the closed
nature of

Mexican
society—
compared
especially with
Trinidad. Scott
was making
the same
comment
earlier today,
so it's clearly
not just me.

To facilitate
my move to
Patsy and
Cecil's I have
posted six
boxes of books
to the UK, and I
have another
box to send
once I have
done some

more reading.
My plan is to
travel as light
as possible to
Mexico City at
the end of my
stay in Oaxaca,
so that I will
have room for
the census
microfiches

that will be
ready for me
before I set out
for the
Caribbean and
home.]

**Monday,
September
25, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-25-
78:

I moved to
Cecil's house
on Saturday. It
took ages to
get everything
sorted out,
because I was
determined to

leave the
mercenary
Olga with
nothing of any
value. My cases
and kitchen
things almost
filled Cecil's
Renault, and
loading it was a
laborious job

in the pouring
rain.

It has been
raining cats
and dogs for
the last week
or more—as I
know only too
well, because
one of my tasks
is to climb onto

the flat roof
every morning
at 8 am and
take rain-gauge
readings for
Cecil, who
operates his
own
meteorological
station. I
haven't done

anything like
this for twenty
years. The roof
is fascinating
on its own as a
feat of
domestic
engineering—
about half the
water used by
the household

each year is
collected on it
and piped to
underground
tanks.

Cecil and
Patsy were
lovely hosts
during the
handover
period, though

I am almost
reeling from
the welter of
advice on how
to run the
house. It was a
relief to wave
them off to the
US at 10 am
this morning.
Reina, the

maid, cooked
me a good
lunch and the
ubiquitous
Ricardo
(Reina's father)
is staying on
the property
for my first
three nights to
make sure I am

settled in. At
night, we are
both guarded
by Butch, a big
but essentially
gentle dog,
whose sheer
size is, I
imagine, the
deterrent.
Fortunately,

although I am
no dog lover,
Butch seems to
like me.

The
University of
Liverpool's
cheque for
£100 arrived
safely in Cecil's
postbox this

morning—to
pay for my visit
to the
Caribbean at
the end of the
Mexican
sojourn.
Stamped on
top is a
warning:
Please present

this draft to
your bankers
without delay.
But as my
guarantor left
Oaxaca two
hours before I
picked up the
cheque, I'm
stymied.
Tomorrow I

will go to my
usual bank and
explain what
has happened.
Since the
cheque was
issued by
Barclays, New
York, I hope
they will
negotiate it.

Yesterday
afternoon Cecil
took me out in
the pouring
rain to show
me how to
drive the
Safari. We had
a puncture on
the main road
to Oaxaca and

changed the
wheel in heavy
traffic. Finding
a repair shop
this morning
was a
performance,
because I
discovered that
Cecil's usual
repairer no

longer patches
tyres. It took
me much of
this afternoon
to put the
repaired tyre
back on the car,
only for me to
notice a pool of
oil oozing onto
the ground in

the yard. I
think the seal
has gone on
the wheel
suspension—
heaven knows
what that is in
Spanish, so I
shall have to
cope with that
mañana .

The house,
which stands
at about
2000 metres
on a hillock
raised up
slightly above
the valley floor,
has a
commanding
view down the

trench towards
Tlacolula . In
the morning,
the valley is full
of wispy
clouds, but
these are soon
dispelled by
the heat; by the
early afternoon
it is green with

maize and
tinged with the
blue-black of
the lowering
clouds. In the
middle
distance two
great knobs of
rock occupy
the centre of
the valley,

which is closed
at the end by
the bulk of the
mountain
Nueve Puntas.
When heavy
rain sets in,
usually
associated with
cyclones in the
Caribbean or

on the Pacific
Coast—
sometimes
together—the
clouds come up
to the back
wall of the
house.]

**Friday,
September
29, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 9-29-
78:

The car
problem was
settled quite
rapidly by

Cecil's
Japanese-
owned garage,
which took a
couple of hours
to fit a new
rubber sleeve
to part of the
back axle,
replacing a
perforated

version. As far
as the
Liverpool
University
cheque is
concerned, the
bank is
contacting New
York to make
sure that it is
genuine,

although it is
drawn on
Barclay's
International . I
should have
the cash in a
week or so.

My circle of
acquaintance
has widened a
little. On

several
evenings, I
have gone up
to the Centro
de Sociología
to consult the
excellent
collection of
books and
journals that
Margarita

Dalton , the
librarian, has
built up. Both
she and Reina
Mogel have
been very
pleasant and
talkative. And
Reina asked me
out for a meal a
couple of

evenings ago—
my first visit to
a Mexican
home in
Oaxaca.

Yesterday I
had a long
conversation
with Vidal Ruíz
, the student
who comes

once a week to
clean Cecil's
office, and thus
earns pocket
money to help
put him
through the
Politecnico.
Vidal is doing a
course on
tourism and

business
management,
and he is
pleasant, a
useful local
contact and
talkative in
Spanish. Vidal
tells me that all
the teenagers,
who left

secondary
school in the
same year as
he did,
emigrated from
their
community in
the Mixteca
Alta for further
education or to
look for jobs.

Tomorrow I
am going out to
Cuilapan again
—I think I
mentioned
Eleanor Sleight
, the American
who is doing a
photographic
and historical
study of the

Dominican
monastery.⁴
She is a long-
standing friend
of Cecil's, and
has offered to
show me
around.

News is
coming in thick
and fast now

that I can pick
up the Voice of
America and
the BBC. Most
surprising is
the death of
the new Pope
—Paul, and
Liverpool's
defeat at
football to

Nottingham
Forest . It is
strange that
Mexicans are
so ignorant of
the UK,
because each
day most
papers carry a
few items of
British news.

However, the
majority
probably don't
read a
newspaper.

While I
write this I am
listening to the
Weltes' tapes—
recordings by
Joan Baez, the

Beatles, and
some Elgar,
Vaughan
Williams ,
Chopin and
Scriabin. It is
strange to hear
this array of
music while
neighbouring
Tlalixtac de

Cabrera is
letting off
rockets for its
fiesta. Needless
to say, both
neighbouring
Yatareni and
Tlalixtac have
loud-speaker
systems that
send pulsating

rythms out
across the
countryside at
all hours of the
day and night.

The
weather is
drying up—no
rainwater for
me to decant
into my

measuring jar
when I check
the met.

station—so I
should soon be
able to make
some trips. The
temperature is
all over the
place, and last
night I had to

put on the
thick woollen
jacket I bought
in Mitla.

Patsy is an
amazingly
scatty person
—perhaps her
rational
irrationality
goes with

being a
Christian
Scientist. A
couple of days
ago I received a
telegram from
Puebla saying:
'Please remove
my socks from
the big oven'—
an afterthought

en route for the
US border. It is
a good job Cecil
is with her!]

**Central
Valleys
Sunday,
October 1,**

2643

1978

[Letter to
Gillian 10-1-
78:

I have
survived my
first full day in
charge of the
house—fed
myself and the

dog, and gone
out on my first
trip in the
Safari called ‘El
Navegante.’

This
morning I
visited the
weekly market
at Tlacolula
(Fig. 1.10)—by

far the best I
have seen so
far on this trip
to Oaxaca. The
cattle section
was notably
rustic, and
there were
yards set up for
feeding
donkeys and

oxen. Most of
the women
sellers,
including the
teenagers,
were wearing
Zapotec traje
(traditional
clothing), with
a silk over-
bodice in

different
colours.

Tlacolula
Church was all
decked out for
the Fiesta del
Rosario. The
Capilla de
Santo Cristo is
especially
attractive—

small,
elaborately
decorated in a
Dominican
Baroque style,
only marred by
the advanced
decay of the
gold leaf.

After the
market, I went

to Díaz Ordaz
and Santa Ana
del Valle (Fig.
[1.10](#)), both of
them villages
producing
maize , mescal
and sarapes (a
sarape is a
blanket or rug).
On my way

back home, I
gave a lift to a
family going to
the Tlacolula
market and
astonished
them by
refusing
payment.

Yesterday I
went to

Cuilapan (Fig. 1.10) with Eleanor Sleight, who showed me murals and carvings some of which I had missed on my previous visits. Eleanor also took me to

meet her friend
Chole who lives
in the
impoverished
section of
Xochimilco on
the northern
side of the city
centre in
Oaxaca.]

**Thursday,
October 4,
1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 10-4-
78:

I have
started taking
more trips in
the Safari.

Yesterday I
went to
Tlacoahuaya
in the Tlacolula
Valley, where
they were
holding a bull-
riding contest.
Then I then
drove on
through the

narrow tracks
that lead
through the
irrigated fields
(Fig. 1.10) .

Today I
went through
the Atoyac
gorge at
Ayoquezco
(Fig. 1.1),

where there
was mixed
cropping of
beans and
castor oil, and
on to Sola de
Vega almost
100 kilometres
south of
Oaxaca City
(Fig. 1.9). The

countryside is
vast and
mountainous
beyond the
walls of the
Central Valley.

 Last night I
went to see
Eleanor
Sleight's fine
photographs of

Cuilapan .
Tomorrow I am
driving Eleanor
and one of her
friends out to
Zaachila to
look at the
Zapotec tombs,
and then on to
try and find
one of the

more
inaccessible of
Cuilapan's
dependencias,
San Lucas
Tlanichico, in
the foothills
near the valley
edge.

A few days
ago, I went into

the Etna arm of
the valleys,
forded a couple
of streams and
drove into the
foothills
leading up to
the Mixteca. In
a hamlet near
the small town
of Etna on my

way back I
found San
Sebastián Etla,
where I took
several
photographs
twelve years
ago of
ploughing by
oxen on Señor

Puga's *rancho*
(Fig. 1.10).]

**Sierra
Mixe
Monday,
October 9,
1978**

2663

[Letter to
Gillian 10-9-
78:

Yesterday,
Sunday, I went
to two markets
at Ayutla and
Juquila in the
Sierra Mixe
(Fig. 1.1). This
involved about

nine hours of driving, mostly over rough roads in the sierra above Mitla (Fig. 1. 10). Vidal came with me and was excellent company.

Our trip led
through
beautiful but
almost
deserted
mountain
ranges. The
markets were
pretty
primitive, and
there were

unusual items
on sale—
money belts of
woven straw
for women;
balls of lime for
whitewashing
adobe houses.
Many of the
women were
wearing Indian

dress—long
blue skirts and
colourful
cotton-
embroidered
tops. Most of
the men were
in ponchos,
because it was
cold and wet.

Last week I
took Eleanor
and two of her
friends out to
see the Zapotec
tombs at
Zaachila , and
then we looked
for the church
at San Lucas
Tlanichico (Fig.

1.10). We found the place name on Cecil's map easily enough, but could we locate an access road? Eventually we discovered a track though the *milpas* that

led into and
along a river
bed, eventually
depositing us
in the village.
The church of
San Lucas is
old and with
intricately
carved wood.
But just as we

arrived
torrential rains
came on. I had
visions of being
stuck in the
back of beyond
with three
rather frail
pensioners, but
the Safari
scrambled out

of the river
bed, and
eventually
made it back to
Oaxaca City.

It seems
that Margarita
Dalton's
attempt to
place me with
a family has

failed; her
friend thought
I wanted to
rent her house
for the two
weeks of
November
when it will be
empty. So this
morning I went
to see Señor

Jaime
Hamilton, a
friend of
Eleanor's. He
runs a car
dealership, and
he and his wife
are said to have
a wide range of
contacts. He
was very

hospitable and
thought there
were several
people he
knew who
might offer me
a home as a
paying guest.

I
understand
that Paloma

Hamilton's
nephew is
Presidente of
the Oaxaca
municipio. He
has close links
with the leader
of the market
traders' union,
and I gather
that some deal

(probably financial) was done to get the market out of the town centre and relocated to the *periférico* (ringroad).

Scott Cook came for lunch

on Friday with
two of his
Mexican
associates. It
was a great
success—all in
Spanish—and
we enjoyed a
good meal
prepared and
served by

Reina. Life for
the middle
class in Mexico
must be a
pushover,
provided you
can get and
keep such good
servants.]

**Isthmus of
Tehuantepec,
Tuxtepec,
the
Papaloapan
Basin,**

2681

**and Sierra
Zapoteca
Saturday,
October
14, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 10-14-
78:

Mexican
air-traffic
controllers are
on strike.
Rumour has it
that they may
be out for
another month.
It's a
complicated
case involving

a fundamental
disagreement
with the
government.
No flights are
reaching
Oaxaca, but
newspapers
are arriving by
road a day late.
A few overseas

flights are
leaving Mexico
City daily, so
some mail
should
eventually
filter through.

I have just
got back from
an exhausting
trip to

Tehuantepec
and the
tropical
lowlands
around
Tuxtepec (Fig.
[1.8](#)). It took
four days,
driving at eight
to nine hours
per day to

complete the
journey. The
mescaleros of
Matatlán all
had smoking
stills when I
drove past. I
was held up at
Nejapa , where
there was a big
police check

(Fig. 1.9), but thereafter I found the tropical lowlands too hot and scenically repetitive.

I visit the free port at Salina Cruz and

Ventana beach,
and watch the
enormous
Pacific waves
roll in. In the
town of
Tehuantepec,
where I stay
the night, even
young girls
wear the

traditional
Tehuanta
dress, and
notably so in
adjacent San
Blas—what I
think of as a
'rurban'
community
with a mixture
of pigs,

hammocks and
beautiful
young people.
In contrast,
Juchitán is big
and rather
unattractive,
but
economically
thriving, and
politically a

hotbed of
radicalism (Fig.
1.9).

Leaving
Tehuantepec
the following
morning, I
drive north up
the isthmus to
rain-drenched
Matías Romero

; the French
railway station
is still there,
but 12 years
more derelict
than when I
saw it first (Fig.
1.9).

Beyond the
Palomares
turn-off I have

my first
experience of
land slips. The
police confirm
that the
notorious road
slicing through
to Tuxtepec is
clear for traffic,
and I drive on
(Fig. 1.10). It is

a region of
dense tropical
vegetation and
food forest . As
the journey
progresses, so
tree-clearing
by forest-
burning
becomes more
pronounced,

and many
areas consist of
toppled,
charred tree
trunks. As a
final stage of
exploitation ,
pioneer
farming is
giving way to
cattle ranching

as *pistoleros*
(gunmen)
drive out the
original
settlers to
create
sparsely-
populated
zones of
colonization.

Once I
reach Tuxtepec
, in the
Papaloapan
Basin, a
cyclone hits
and it pours
with rain for
four hours,
partly flooding
the town and

doing further
damage to the
potholed roads.
Despite being
paved, one
main road is
soon just a
mass of gullies,
with heavy
lorries lacing
their way along

it, trying to
keep to the
ridges.

My next
day's excursion
shows that
sugar is being
cultivated
around
Tuxtepec to
supply a

massive central
factory in
Veracruz near
Ciudad Alemán
(headquarters
of the
Papaloapan
Project) (Fig. 1.
1). The road
between
Ciudad Alemán

and Tierra
Blanca is
barely passable
having been
stripped of its
upper layers of
tarmac by the
recent storm. I
visit the
massive dam at
Temascal, and

conclude that
the Indians are
wise to fear the
construction of
the Cerro de
Oro Dam . The
accompanying
reservoir may
breach the
road between
Tuxtepec and

Ojitlán , and
will certainly
lead to
displacement
of the
Chinantec
Indians (Fig. 1.
1).

Leaving the
Papaloapan
Basin on day 4,

my journey
back to Oaxaca
City through
the high sierras
is the worst I
have ever
made. The
weather
around
Tuxtepec in the
morning was

fine to start
with, but as
soon as I drove
through the
tropical
lowlands at
Valle Nacional
and passed the
Tuxtepec Paper
Mill, which has
its

headquarters
in Oaxaca City,
I entered the
Sierra Zapoteca
(Figs. 1.1 and
1.8).

Immediately, I
was on rain-
drenched,
steep, winding
roads, in

second gear for
miles,
surrounded by
swirling mist
and faced with
the prospect of
mud and rock
slides. There
was virtually
no other traffic
on the road—a

blessing in
some ways, but
also a worry in
that there
could well be
impassable
obstacles
ahead.

As I drove
out of the
highest peaks

into the
headwaters of
the rivers
draining to the
Central Valleys,
I encountered
blue skies with
clouds hanging
below me in
the lower
valleys. I had

got through
thanks to the
warmth of my
pullover and
anorak, and the
qualities of the
Safari—a great
car for dealing
with mud and
potholes.

Unfortunat
ely, I have had
to face several
car bills: the
bonnet catch
broke in
Tuxtepec ; the
windscreen
wipers were
dilapidated
when Cecil left,

and are
inadequate for
the terrible
weather we are
now getting. Of
course, the car
is seven years
old and in need
of constant
attention.]

**Sunday,
October
15, 1978**

[Letter to
Aidan and
Veronica 10-
15-78:

Cecil and
Patsy's house
is very

comfortable to
live in, though
the heavy rains
of the last two
weeks have
made it cold. I
now have two
blankets and a
bedspread over
me at night.
The views

down the
Tlacolula
Valley from the
house are ever-
changing—
greens, blues
and greys and
shades in
between.
Today the skies
have been

clearer and I
hope the
weather will
remain dry for
my trip
through the
Sierra Madre
del Sur on my
way to the
Pacific.]

[Letter to
Gillian 10-15-
78:

This
morning I was
back on the
road, and went
south of
Ocotlán with
Vidal (Fig. 1.
10). We were

looking for a
big hacienda
called
Progreso, but it
was locked up
and the man
with the keys
was away. We
talked to the
Presidente of
the *municipio*

and looked
over the
outside of the
ruined building
—handsome,
elaborate, and
with its chapel
still in use as a
church.

Vidal is a
real find. He is

about 25,
articulate,
serious and
patient with
my Spanish. I
should add that
my peak time
for travelling
has coincided
with Scott
Cook's

commitment to
starting the
fieldwork for
his project, so
we are
paddling our
own canoes.]

Sierra Madre del

**Sur, Costa
Chica, and
Mixteca de
la Costa
Monday,
October 16
to
Wednesda**

**y, October
18, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 10-19-
78:

I returned
from the
Pacific coast
and Mixteca
Alta yesterday ,

24 hours ahead
of schedule.
The roads were
ghastly—even
worse than I
had feared.
After two days
of driving
continuously
over
disappearing

trails (officially
main roads), I
headed for
home. I was
physically
exhausted.
Moreover, I
was anxious to
keep Cecil's
Safari in one
piece. The first

part of the trip
down the
Ocotlán Valley
through
Ocotlán , Ejutla
and
Miahuatlán on
the Monday
morning
(October 16)
was quick

enough on a
properly-
surfaced road,
but the bad
weather had
taken its toll in
the mountain
sections, where
gangs of
workers with
heavy road-

making
equipment
were clearing
the land slips
and creating
access routes
(Fig. 1.9).

No sooner
was I in the
mountains
than I was

detained by a
mobile army
patrol that
descended like
goats down the
hillside to
check my
papers and
search the car
—only to set
me on my way

after a few
minutes.
Looking back
from the first
range of the
sierra, the
Miahuatlán
embayment is
rather like the
Yanhuitlán
Valley—big

and eroded,
and you can
see that it links
eastwards to
the rugged
scenery of the
lower basin of
the Río Atoyac
where it
becomes the
Río Verde.

The maize
milpas in the
mountains are
lush, but the
population
thins out as I
drive south
towards
Suchixtepec
(Fig. 1.9). A
peasant, to

whom I give a
lift, tells me
that prior to
1943 the
quality of the
road was so
bad that it used
to take three
days and nights
to take cattle to
market in

Miahuatlán .
My passenger
grows sugar
cane, and
speaks of the
so-called
improved road
as 'a blessing
from God.'

At
2800 metres

the cloud
comes down to
the front of the
car. Leaving the
highest peaks
behind, I
descend to
Candalaria
Loxicha, where
plantations are
growing coffee

under bananas.
Here I drop off
my sugar
grower, and
pick up a
young Zapotec
speaker. He
works as a
labourer on a
coffee estate,
has very

limited life
prospects and
has never seen
Oaxaca City.

From the
geographical
point of view
the journey is a
great success—
even more
interesting

than the
journey to the
north. The
sierras south of
Miahuatlán are
beautiful but
lonely, and I get
pretty close to
being stuck in a
bog in the
centre of the

road near
Pochutla.]

The mud
swamp
occupies the
entire width of
the road, so
there is no
possibility of
going round it.
Lorries and

buses have cut
a deep pair of
'bleeding' ruts
through the
middle, but
they are wider
than my
wheelbase.
Going into the
swamp in first
gear I get

halfway across,
and then begin
to lose control
as the rear of
the car slips to
the left and
down into the
mud. I
accelerate to
drive clear, but
the back drops

further in and
the front rears
up out of the
ruts. The
engine cuts out
—I am stuck.

There is not
a soul in sight,
and I fear I
might be
sucked deeper

into the blood-
red mud.

Suddenly, I
realize that I
should sit still,
try to re-start,
and drive out.

The engine
fires first time,
and to my
amazement

and relief the
Safari, with its
'differential
slip' under
slight
acceleration,
climbs slowly
but surely onto
the other side
of the swamp.

Pochutla is
a bit of an
anticlimax
when I arrive
in the
afternoon heat.
A small market
town with
banks, a
cinema, and
bus stations, it

is linked to the Pacific coast of Oaxaca at Puerto Ángel by an improved road and a good bus service (Fig. 1. 1). The fast Pacific coast road north-

west to Puerto Escondido (Fig. 1.9) follows the coastal plain between the sea on the left and low foothills backed by high sierras to the right—the

Costa Chica
(Fig. 1.8). The
population is
sparse, and the
land covered
with thorn
scrub, among
which
untethered
animals graze. I
come across

bodies of
animals—
horses
particularly—
that have been
struck by
passing lorries
and left to die,
often with
their intestines
hanging out.

The stench is
gut-wrenching.

Puerto
Escondido is
basic in the
extreme (and
therefore
unspoilt), with
a lovely bay,
cheap food and
accommodatio

n, and lots of
'dropout'
foreign
visitors. I stay
the night in a
simple hotel
that offers a
bed in a hut
and an evening
meal of fish.

At about
6 am next
morning
(Tuesday,
October 17) I
set out from
Puerto
Escondido
without
breakfast and
am

immediately
pulled over at
an army
checkpoint for
a thorough
inspection of
the car and my
luggage. The
soldier
carrying out
the forensic

inspection
clearly
imagines that
my suitcase is
suspect, and is
enraged to find
it free of drugs.
The
commanding
officer steps
forward and to

my
amazement,
politely asks if I
will take him to
my next port of
call, Pinotepa
Nacional (Fig.
[1.9](#)). When we
arrive, I pull up
cautiously at
the first

machine-gun
nest, only for
the captain to
climb out and
calmly wave
me through,
adding his
thanks for the
lift.

On the
coast between

Puerto
Escondido and
Pinotepa
Nacional, as we
enter the
Mixteca de la
Costa, there are
village houses
with conical
roofs, said to
reflect the

African
heritage of the
black groups
whose
ancestors
worked as
slaves on the
adjacent cotton
plantations
(Fig. 1.8).
Indeed, African

features are
marked among
the people
living between
the Río Verde
and Pinotepa
Nacional to the
west. There is
also a
substantial
Mixtec-

speaking
Indian
population—
men burnt a
deep red
colour, and
women
wearing
traditional
costume in

Jamiltepec (Fig.
1.9).

[Letter to
Gillian 10-19-
78 continued:

North of
Pinotepa
Nacional the
tropical
lowlands are
almost

uninhabited
and lonely for
the traveller.
Just beyond
San Sebastián
Ixcapa (Fig. 1.
1) another
enormous
mudslide
blocks the road
(geologically

related, in all
likelihood, to
the bog I
encountered
yesterday).
Fortunately,
when I arrive, a
group of lorry
drivers is
already filling
the oozing ruts

with large
stones to
create a
causeway
(Plate 5.2).
They
generously let
me go ahead of
them, and ask
me to give a lift
to a white

Catholic priest
who is
otherwise
stranded.]



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Plate

5.2 Mudslide
across main road,
San Sebastián
Ixcapa, Mixteca de
la Costa, Oaxaca.
Impassable roads
were common in
Southern Mexico
during the wet
season before
hard-surfaced

highways became
common in the
1980s

The priest
turns out to be
a trifle odd,
though friendly
enough and
talkative. He
gives me a

great deal of
information
about the
politics of the
Oaxaca
Bishopric, and
tells me that he
has been
dismissed
because the
Bishop thinks

he is building
his own home
out of parish
funds. This is
denied by the
priest, who
claims that his
accuser is the
'likely natural
son' of the

Bishop—what
a scene!

I like the
priest less and
less as we drive
on through
rutted gullies
towards
Amuzgos ,
beyond which
the state of

Oaxaca meets
Guerrero (Fig.
1.9). Finally, he
retails the
news that a
Polish Pope has
been elected by
the College of
Cardinals in
Rome. After a
couple of hours

on the road
together, he
asks me to stop
in the middle
of nowhere,
points to an
overgrown
house—his
house—at the
side of the
unsurfaced

road, and
without a word
disappears into
it.

Throughout
the hot, humid
Mixteca de la
Costa men
wear the
traditional
white cotton

calzónes
(trousers) and
shirt. The sun
is burning, the
air is dry, and
the road
breaks up into
multiple
channels
created by the
floods.

I reach
Amuzgos —
where the
names *gente de*
razon/mestizo
(people of
reason) and
naturales
(natural ones)
are still current
as descriptors

of the white
and Indian
populations—
the only
community of
the Amuzgos
ethnic group in
Oaxaca; the
remainder are
in
neighbouring

Guerrero . Until
a year or so
ago the
Oaxacan
Amuzgos
Indians were in
the hands of a
mestizo
cacique who
exacted tribute
from them.

Now he has
been removed,
but another
mestizo family
has seized
power.
Traditional
costumes are
worn by
Amuzgos men
and women,

and change to
western wear
is essential for
Indians
aspiring to
move into the
category of
gente de razon
—as in the case
of virtually all

Oaxaca's Indian
groups.

Beyond San
Pedro

Amuzgos the
tierra caliente
is virtually
uninhabited,
and there is no
traffic except
for the odd

cowboy. It is
unspeakably
lonely. Finally, I
reach Santa
María
Zacatepec, but
the main street
is so steep, and
so badly
maintained,
that I can

scarcely drive
up it (Fig. 1.9).
It's 2 pm, and a
woman in a
store tells me
that it's still a
three-hour
drive to Putla .
A man adds
that I can do it
in an hour and

a half if I drive
fast. It takes
me two hours.

I enter
another lonely,
unfrequented
and burnt-up
stretch of road,
winding its
way through a
fretted

landscape of
low mountain
crests and
valleys etched
by erosion. I
am summoning
all my energy
and strength to
get to Mesones
and a better
road (Fig. 1.1).

At Mesones I
overtake the
bus (how do
they manage to
run a daily
service?) and
pick up a
student
teacher . We
pass his pupils
going home on

foot and by
donkey. By
now I am very
tired—too
tired to speak
in *any*
language, and
my shoulders
ache from the
strain of
perpetually

hauling on the
driving wheel
and changing
the direction of
the Safari to
find the trail. I
aim the car up
the stony track,
pushing on and
on, over

endless minor
obstacles.

My
passenger tells
me that there
is a college for
training
primary school
teachers in
Putla ; it offers
a four-year

training
course, but
there are no
government
scholarships.
We reach a
paved road at
last and head
for Putla . The
young man
points out a

‘good’
restaurant, and
takes me to his
uncle’s
(primitive but
adequate)
hotel.

Putla , the
major
settlement of
the Mixteca de

la Costa, is a Spanish-speaking town located at about 400 metres, just above the lowlands (Fig. 1.9). The town is situated on a slope which

forms part of a
basin. Most of
the stores are
old-fashioned,
selling food
and hardware,
though there is
a
Conosupermerc
ardo. I discover
that there is a

small group of
Triqui Indians
living in the
town, and that
others visit
from their
main
settlement at
San Juan
Copala.

At the
restaurant, El
Conquistador, I
am entertained
by the brothers
Pérez, one of
whom is the
owner. He
purports to
offer European
and American

cuisine as well
as local fare,
but only *tasajo*
(beef) or *pollo*
frito (fried
chicken) are
offered to me. I
choose the
latter as the
safer bet; it
arrives fried to

a cinder—but
edible, my first
real meal in
24 hours.

The
brothers Pérez
both have US
citizenship and
oscillate
between
Mexico and the

US. Both work
as chefs. My
interlocutor—
the younger
one—is
currently
visiting Santa
María
Zacatepec
(which I
passed through

this afternoon)
and drives a
1968 Mustang.
He has wives
and families in
New Jersey and
Zacatepec , but
neither partner
knows
anything about
the other. He

seems to spend
10 months of
the year in the
US and 2 down
here. At the
end of the
evening he
insists on
driving me
back to my
hotel—with a

great flourish
—in his white
American
sports car.

Mixteca **Alta**

Early next
morning

(Wednesday,
October 18) I
head for
Tlaxiaco (Fig.
1.9), climbing
steeply
through the
tierra templada
and into the
tierra fría at a
height of

3000 metres,
where there
are cold, fierce
winds, and the
Indians in
traditional
costume wear
ponchos for
men and
blanket wraps
for women. I

drive through
some of the
Triqui
settlements of
the Mixteca
Alta—the tiny
communities of
San Isidro and
La Laguna and
then the larger
town of

Chicahuaxtla
(Fig. 1.9),
through high-
altitude pine-
oak forests of
great beauty
juxtaposed
with equally
squalid human
poverty .
Everywhere

there are
young women
and girls
wearing freshly
woven
traditional
costume, rolled
down to the
ankles for
warmth.

South of
Tlaxiaco I pass
traditional
terraces of
great
complexity, all
in good
condition.
North of
Tlaxiaco it
becomes very

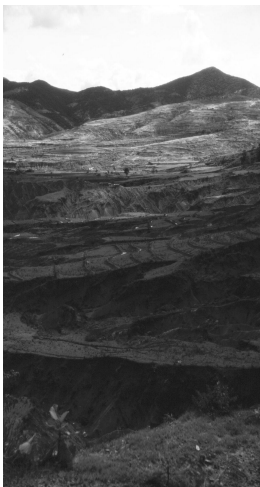
cold, and in
Yanhuitlán , in
the heart of the
Mixteca Alta, I
stop to put my
woollen jacket
over my thick
pullover (Fig. 1.
9). I see once
more the
sixteenth-

century
painting of St
Christopher
carrying the
child Jesus in
the ex-
Convento at
Yanhuitlán . St
Christopher's
left foot is
planted on an

eroded hillside
and I realize to
my surprise
that the
extensive
erosion of the
slopes and
valleys around
the town has a
long history
(Plate 5.3). The

Nochixtlán
Valley, through
which I drive
on my way
back to the
Central Valleys
and Oaxaca
City, has
extensive
terraces for
wheat

production,
many of them
age-old (Fig. 1.
9).



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Plate

5.3 Advanced
sheet and gulley
erosion: Mixteca
Alta, Oaxaca. Soil
erosion, and
environmental
degradation, is a
contemporary as
well as an age-old
problem in

Southern Mexico
and the Caribbean

Oaxaca City

[Letter to
Gillian 10-19-
78 continued:
I have
invited Stefano

Varese, a
Peruvian
anthropologist
at the INAH ,
his wife and
Margarita
Dalton to lunch
on Saturday
October 21—
my 40th
birthday. They

don't know it's
my birthday,
but it should
create a
pleasant
interlude from
my work.

I am a bit
concerned
about where I
shall be living

at the end of
next week. The
Hamiltons'
main hope for
accommodatio
n for me has
been frustrated
because the
people they
had lined up
have already

let their spare
room. I shall
probably end
up at the Hotel
Francia or the
Posada San
Pablo opposite
the Proveedora
Escolar.]

**Wednesda
y, October
25, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 10-25-
78:

Cecil and
Patsy came
back as
planned on

Monday
evening after a
1000 kilometre
round trip by
road plus a
flight to the US.
They have had
a marvellous
time, and for
folk in their
60s seem to

have coped
remarkably
well. Cecil has
insisted on
paying most of
the car bills, so
I'll put that
money toward
buying
presents. Patsy
has pressed me

to stay until
next Monday, a
typically kind
gesture to
spare me
spending a
weekend in an
'unknown
house.' I shall
move to the
Vásquez home

next Monday
afternoon.]

I got the
name and
address of the
Vásquez family
from the
Biblioteca
Circulante
(Lending
Library), since

they are known
to offer
accommodation
from time to
time to
English-
speaking
visitors. I
turned up at
their home in
the Privada de

Almendros in
Colonia Roma a
few days ago,
pressed the
doorbell and
asked the
young woman
who came to
answer it
whether they
would accept

an English
visitor as a
paying guest. I
was invited in
and told that
Señorita Netita
would consider
my request.
She is in her
60s, with an air
of quiet

authority—
and, having
heard who I
was and what I
was doing in
Oaxaca, she
immediately
said yes.

[Letter to
Gillian 10-25-
78 continued:

Now my
travelling is
over there is
not so much to
report, but I
am still
enjoying my
reading. I am
near the end of
a book on
Pinotepa

Nacional,
dealing with
many of the
settlements I
visited last
week. It talks
about the
hierarchical
relations
between
mestizos ,

blacks and
Indians in
terms highly
reminiscent of
the Caribbean.

The
weather is now
settling into
the dry-season
pattern. It is
cool at night,

but warmer
than when it
was raining
regularly.
Mornings are
sharp and
sunny, but by
midday the air
is hot. Oaxaca
must be lovely
at Christmas—

fortunately I
shall not see it
this year.

After a 4-
week delay, the
bank has
finally
negotiated the
cheque sent me
by the
University of

Liverpool, and
paid over the
cash in pesos.
Thank
goodness I
didn't need the
money quickly!
The air-
traffic
controllers'
strike is settled

(more or less)
and flights are
being resumed
to Oaxaca. The
loss to the
tourist trade
seems to have
been enormous
—but from my
point of view
the city has

been
delightfully
quiet.]

**Thursday,
October
26, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 10-26-
78:

Now the
International
Organization of
Air Traffic
Controllers is
asking airlines
to boycott
Mexico
because the
government
has allegedly

taken on
unqualified
workers as
part of its
strike-breaking
strategy. I
discover that
public service-
political
tangles of this
kind are

frequent in
Mexican life.]

**Wednesda
y,
November
1, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 11-1-

78:

The family I
joined on
Monday is
hospitable and
my room
comfortable
apart from the
faint smell of
pharmaceutical
s that pervades

the wardrobe.
In my double
bedroom I have
easy chairs, a
view across the
rooftops to
Cerro San
Felipe, which
looms up over
the town to the
north, and

freedom to
come and go as
I wish.

Today is the
first of the two
Days of the
Dead. On
Sunday the
Oaxaca City
market, which
has recently

moved out of
the city centre
to a purpose-
built site under
Monte Albán,
was full of *pan
de muerto*
(bread of the
dead), and
there were
stands selling

icing-sugar
skulls, pottery
skulls, and
figures of
viejt as (old
ladies) and
skeletons.

 Last night I
had a meal
with the
Canadian

author Ross
Parmenter at
his home—an
interesting
conversation,
with an
eloquent,
civilized and
warm person,
but not
enhanced by

the
impoverished
circumstances
in which he
lives.⁵

The best
thing that has
happened in
days was my
visit to the
family to whom

I was
introduced by
Eleanor Sleight
about a month
ago. Chole (or
Soledad) is an
elderly but
very sweet
person who
lives on the
edge of

Xochimilco.
She cleans for
several families
(which is how
Eleanor got to
know her), and
she lives with a
daughter, a son,
a daughter-in-
law and their
children

ranging from
13 (a daughter,
Marina)
downwards.

I went to
see Chole
because I
guessed they
would have an
elaborate
family altar in

their house
with food and
other gifts for
the dead. I was
not
disappointed.
When I
stopped by on
my way back
from the city
centre, I found

that they had a
house full of
friends and kin.
I was warmly
welcomed,
given a soft
drink and
mescal, and
pressed to stay
for turkey and
mole, which

was delicious.
During the
meal—for men
only—I
managed to
strike up a
good
relationship
with the others
—so I was
invited back

tomorrow to
witness the
rest of the
celebrations.

Chole has a
big altar,
dedicated to
the family dead
—with
photographs—
and covered in

bread, fruits,
saints,
chocolate,
panela (head of
sugar) and
cigarettes, all
set out in tiers
framed by two
bent canes of
sugar. There

are flowers
everywhere.

Eleanor
Sleight has the
highest regard
for Chole and
her family, who
have a large
room in what
is, I suppose, a
rent yard;

‘poor but
proud’ fits
them perfectly.
As they live no
more than ten
minutes’ walk
from me, I
hope to see
them from time
to time during
the next

month. I
should add that
Chole's son
works as a
baker for Pan
Bimbo.]

**Sunday,
N vember
5, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 11-5-
78:

Life has
picked up
again after the
dip a week ago.
I am nicely
settled in my
'digs' and Cecil
has given me a

key to his office
overlooking
the Alameida,
so that I can
come and go as
I like. As I eat
lunch in town,
the office is an
invaluable base
in the city
centre, as well

as housing
Cecil's library,
which is a
veritable mine
of information.

It turns out
that my
landlady is a
doctor's widow
—hence the
stockpiling of

packets of pills
around the
house. Señorita
Netita has
three
daughters
living at home.
Sara, whom I
met first, owns
an auto spare-
parts business

in which the
second, Mimi,
works. The
third, María
Elena, has just
qualified from
UNAM as a
dentist. They
are all
talkative,
though we are

together only
in the
mornings and
late evenings
over coffee and
dulces
(pastries)
either in the
kitchen or in
the
comfortable

seating area at
the top of the
stairs.

The Days of
the Dead were
disappointing.
On All Souls
Day, a bank
holiday, I went
to the main
cemetery and

photographed
the grave
decorations,
but there
seemed to be
no midnight
vigil. The
Vásquez family,
which is
admittedly
middle class,

did nothing to
mark the
occasion, and
the two older
sisters worked
in the spare-
parts shop
stocktaking.

Chole ,
however, had a
lot of friends

and family in
for drinks of
mescal before
and during a
mole lunch. I
must have
spent about six
hours with
them before
wobbling home
for a late siesta.

Chole's son,
Apolinario, and
daughter-in-
law, Efigenia ,
have two boys
and two girls. I
gave the girls
the little dolls
that Veronica
left behind; the
boys will get

my unused
crayons.

 This
morning I went
up to Monte
Albán and
visited the
outlying patios
and tombs that
I hadn't seen
before. The

surrounding
countryside is
now turning
brown with the
drought, but it
was
exhilarating to
be out of the
town and
looking into
the landscape ,

especially to
the north of the
archaeological
site where it
stretches up
towards the
Mixteca Alta.]

Saturday,
N vember

11, 1978

[Letter to
Gillian 11-11-
78:

Fortunately,
I have met
several
American
researchers
who are good

company and
interesting.
One Texas-
based group,
working with
Henry Selby,
invited me out
to Santo Tomás
Mazaltepec, the
only Zapotec -
speaking

community in
the Etla Valley,
located to the
north-west of
Etla (Fig. 1.1).
They are taking
a household
census and
measuring a
sample of
adults, both

being follow-
ups to surveys
carried out ten
years ago.

Mazaltepec is
picturesque,
quiet,
primitive, and
located in the
foothills of the
Mixteca. Cecil

lent me his
Safari for the
trip.]

**Friday,
November
24, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 11-24-
78:

In some
panic last
night, I drafted
a telegram
asking you to
transfer some
of my
Liverpool
University
salary to
Antigua, so

that I could
pick it up on
my Caribbean
leg of the
journey home
in December.
But the
problem is
solved. Sara,
my landlady's
daughter—

always full of
ideas—has
suggested that
my Barclaycard
Visa would be
accepted by
Bancomer in
Oaxaca City—
and so it was.
They advanced
me £70 on the

spot; it was
easier than
cashing a
traveller's
cheque.

Cecil and
Patsy had a
convivial
Thanksgiving
Dinner
yesterday, with

superb turkey,
the best
pumpkin pie I
have eaten, and
friendly
company—
Scott Cook, his
research
associate Alice
Littlefield, and
Mexican

colleagues of
Scott's. Also
present was
Peggy Sumner,
who is
studying child-
rearing in a
village near
Tlacolula.]

Scott tells
me that he has

discovered an
enormous
'putting out'
industry run by
embroidery
wholesalers
based in San
Antonino
Castillo Velasco
and extending
to adjacent

villages. There is also a large merchant in a neighbouring village: embroidery is supplied to retail outlets in Oaxaca City and nationally.

Some
industrial
mining took
place in Oaxaca
dating from the
late nineteenth
century, so
Scott informed
me. A textile
mill was set up
near Guelatao

in the Sierra
Zapoteca by
British
businessmen in
the late
nineteenth
century. There
was a smelter
outside Oaxaca
City, thought to
have been

Hamilton-
family owned,
to refine silver,
lead and zinc
from the mine
at Taviche . The
Navidad gold
mine in the
Sierra
Zapoteca,
where Señorita

Netita's
husband was a
doctor, is still
being worked.]

**Tuesday,
November
28, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 11-28-

78:

Cecil
allowed me to
take the Safari
up to the
Mixteca Alta on
my last Sunday
here
(November
26). I went
once more into

the lovely
church at
Yanhuitlán, and
then drove up
to the
Coixtlahuaca
Valley where
there is
another
enormous and
fine Dominican

church and *ex-convento* (Fig. 1.9). The plateaux around Coixtlahuaca are arid, treeless, and consist of white calcareous

deposits—
beautiful in
their own
terrifying way.
The sky is
crystal-clear,
and it is
possible to see
for about
130 kilometres
along the

Coixtlahuaca
Valley to snow-
capped Mount
Orizaba.

Cecil and
Patsy have
been
enormously
kind, and I
would have
achieved very

little without
Cecil's office,
books and
Safari. I had a
meal with
them after my
return from the
Mixteca, and
from their
house took a
last look at the

sunset over
Monte Albán.]

This
morning I went
to the INAH to
meet Stefano
Varese , who
introduced me
to Miguel
Bartolomé and
Alicia Barabas .

They told me
about their
research on the
Chatino
ethnolinguistic
group, which
overlaps
geographically
with the
journey I made
to the

mountains and
Pacific coast of
southern
Oaxaca.⁶ The
Chatinos form
an enclave,
displaced
inland by the
coastal cotton
plantations set
up by the

Spanish using
African slave
labour , though
fish is still
important in
their diet.
Although the
Chatinos have
become a
linguistic
enclave, at the

time of the
conquest they
were aligned
with the Mixtec
speakers. The
last census
gave fewer
than 20,000
speakers, but
Miguel and
Alicia think the

figure is nearer
30,000. Most
Chatinos speak
the same
dialect, though
there is some
differentiation
in the north of
the group.

Juquila and
Nopala are the

main Chatino
centres, and
Nopala and
Sola de Vega
are the focus of
movements for
seasonal
labour in
coffee.
Elsewhere
there is

communal land
, except where
coffee
plantations
give rise to
permanent
private
ownership .
Among the
Chatinos there
is a high level

of
monolingualis
m (unusual
among the
large language
groups of
Oaxaca, such as
the Zapotecs ,
the Mixtecs ,
and the Mixe),
and bilingual

teachers have
been keen to
sustain the
Chatino
language.
Mestizo
(Spanish-
speaking)
middlemen
occupy key
commercial

positions in
small-town
stores. It is a
self-contained
world with
marketing
weakly
developed,
mostly in the
shape of *ixtle*
(fibre from the

maguey cactus)
bags,
embroidered
bodices, and
pottery.

Among the
Chatino there
is a strong
sense of
territoriality,
the frontier to

the east being
especially well
demarcated.
But they
maintain
friendly
relations with
blacks coming
to visit family
in the district
gaol in Juquila ,

and some
establish ties of
compadrazgo
(co-
godparenting)
with them. The
Chatinos have
no ethnic
leaders and no
political voice
as a group. But

they say 'I am a
Chatino' before
they give their
municipal
allegiance,
which is their
secondary
affiliation.
Chatinos have
a strong
collective

memory, and
still refer to the
first inland
towns settled
by their
forebears
before the
Spanish
conquest.

I bumped
into Scott Cook

by chance later
in the day. He
has offered me
a lift to Mexico
City on
Thursday, so I
shall cash my
bus ticket this
evening and
travel with him

and a couple of
his friends.

Earthquak e

[Letter to
Aidan and
Veronica 11-
29-78:

2913

I
understand
that you have
both grown up
and are now
semi-adult! As
I was writing
that sentence I
had to break
off because I
was

interrupted by
an earthquake
while I was
working in
Cecil's office—
a terrible
experience.
The building
shook, so I ran
into the
corridor to get

under a
doorway. All
the girls in the
neighbouring
lawyers' offices
were sobbing;
everyone was
shaking and
grey-faced. The
shock lasted
about two

minutes; then
it stopped and
started again
for another
minute. I had
visions of the
building
coming down,
and dying in
Oaxaca—but
while colonial-

looking , it has
a steel frame
and great
resilience.]

**Saturday,
December
2, 1978**

[Letter to
Gillian 12-2-

78:

The
epicentre of
the earthquake
(6.8 on the
Richter scale)
was in the
Pacific
between Salina
Cruz and
Puerto

Escondido, and Oaxaca City was the worst-hit of the major cities (Fig. 1.9). Fortunately, no one was hurt in Oaxaca, though four people died in Mexico City. One

frightening
aspect was the
after-shocks—
going on for
sixteen hours
after the first
tremor. I shall
never forget
my last nights
in Oaxaca,
since several

members of
the extended
Vásquez family
turned up and
camped out on
the landing in
our
comparatively
modern and
physically
secure house.

The
journey to
Mexico City
was swift and
enjoyable, and
Scott dropped
me on the edge
of Coyoacan ,
only fifteen
minutes by taxi
from my

destination. As
usual, María
Teresa and
Raúl have been
most
hospitable, but
even María
Teresa's
mixture of
charm and
forthrightness

has been
unable to prise
my microfilm
out of the
clutches of the
Anthropologist
s. They say
they will send
it to me—
perhaps!
Anyway, the

Geography
Institute has
successfully
photocopied
for me quite a
lot of census
material and
several maps
which I am
about to
commit to the

post—my
fifteenth and
last parcel of
books and
photocopies
from Mexico
this year.]

(Note made
, 2018)

During a
period of about

10 days in
early
December I
flew from
Mexico City to
Mérida , and
crossed the
limestone plain
of the Yucatán
by bus before
spending the

night in
Chetumal on
the border.
Crossing into
Belize , I spent
several days in
Belize City,
visiting
Belmopan the
planned
capital, and

returning by
bus to Mérida ,
from which I
took a flight to
Puerto Rico in
the Caribbean.
After a stop-
over of a day or
so to change
planes and
recover, I flew

on to Antigua
where I was
able to pick up
a connection to
Barbuda.

Barbuda: 1978 Contents

*Codrington
Mag e —Trip
to Darby's Cave*

—
*Conversations
About Barbuda
My
Peregrinations
and
Perceptions—
Brother John—*

*Mr Milton
Beazer— ue
Joseph—
Johnnie Webber*

**Codringto
n Village
Wednesda
y,**

2933

**December
13 to
Tuesday,
December
19, 1978**

We were four
adults and one
child on the
flight in a two-

engined plane
from Antigua
to Barbuda
(Fig. 1.5). Most
of the trip took
place in the
clouds but, all
of a sudden, we
got a
wonderful
view along the

south coast to
Coco Point and
Spanish Point.
Crossing
directly over
Palmetto Point,
the coastal
sand cusps
were very clear
—with the
Martello Tower

to the right of
them; and then
we flew over
Codrington
Lagoon and
touched down
on the landing
strip to the
south of
Codrington

Village (Fig. 1.7).

The outstanding feature of Barbuda is its pancake-like flatness. The road from the village to River Landing on the

south coast is
without an
undulation and
with hardly a
kink. Red, or
less frequently,
black clay soils
are
circumscribed
by a pitted
table of bare

limestone.
From the
village, The
Highlands (at
16 metres) are
just visible,
though from
near Darby's
Cave, you can
see the lagoon
and the village

(Fig. 1.7).
Strangely
enough, from
River Landing
you can make
out Antigua
and several
other islands
on a clear day
(Fig. 1.5).

Seen from
the outskirts,
the village
looks orderly;
but the centre
is a web of
small lanes
flanked by dry
stone walls,
with cottages
of various ages

and qualities
set hugger-
mugger in
yards or
gardens. At the
centre of the
village is
Madison
Square which
boasts of the
homes of the

two big cattle
owners on the
island—Manny
John and Eric
Burton.

James
Punter , who
works in the
post office, tells
me that when
he was a boy,

the village was
completely
walled, and the
gates were
shut at night to
keep out the
wild animals
(Plate 5.4).

Houses
nowadays have
spread beyond

the dilapidated
walled
boundary, and
sheep and
goats come
back between
5.00 and
6.00 pm to be
penned in the
village. Modern
houses have

been added to
the outskirts in
recent years,
and a new
village has
been mooted at
Spring Vale
adjacent to the
hospital.



2948

Plate

5.4 Encircling
village wall with
simple houses by
tradition set
inside it:
Codrington,
Barbuda. Unique
though Barbuda
may be in the
Caribbean, since
all land is

communally
owned, its close-
knit community ,
formed since the
eighteenth
century, is akin in
its egalitarian
social values and
system of land-
holding to the
closed-corporate
municipios of

rural Oaxaca,
most of which
date back to the
post-Conquest
period

Major
buildings in the
village are the
Police Station,
the

Magistrates'
Court, four
churches, a
dozen small
shops, and the
school —Holy
Trinity Infants,
Juniors and
Secondary (to
16), the Post
Office,

Warden's
House,
currently used
to park
vehicles
belonging to
the Public
Works
Department
while being the
home of the

Police
Inspector, and
the old cotton
ginnery, now
used as a
library
downstairs and
for Barbuda
Council
meetings
upstairs.

Between the
school and the
Warden's
House are the
playing field
and duck pond.
With 1000
residents,
Codrington
looks like a
village, but by

Jamaican
standards in
the 1960s it
would have
ranked as a
small town.

I have been
introduced to
Codrington
village life by
Elrose Buntin

and Gilda
Harris (James
Punter's
stepdaughter),
both of whom
are about
13 years old.
Gilda says
everyone lives
in the village,
because they

are all one
family. Elrose
picked up my
copy of a late
eighteenth-
century map of
Barbuda and
instantly found
her way
around it
without

realizing it was
not
contemporary.
Elrose
mentioned
John
Codrington,
but there
seems to be no
collective
memory of the

Codringtons or
the infinitely
more
ephemeral and
obscure
nineteenth-
century
leasees.⁷ Of
course, that fits
with the
islanders'

claim that the
island has
always been
theirs.⁸

Brother
John of the
Pilgrim
Holiness
Church tells me
that the
Codringtons

gave the island
to the people
when they
departed in
1870. Like
others, he fears
that an
independent
Antigua will
make land in
Barbuda

alienable—
currently it is
held in
common by the
Barbudan
community.
There is some
concern about
Barbuda's
indebtedness
to Antigua and

the possible
need to sell off
a bay in order
to repay the
debt.

In many
ways, the
situation here
is similar to the
one in Anguilla
in 1968 (see

Chap. 3): all the
talk is of the
need for
Barbuda to
secede from
Antigua before
independence.
Barbudans fear
interference in
land and
fishing rights,

and they ask
how an
impoverished
Antigua can be
of help to
Barbuda. The
Barbudans are
a curious
mixture of
individual
independence

and collective
dependence—
openness to
outsiders and
clannishness.

They look
to the UK for
support; and
treat Antigua
like an
absentee

proprietor,
castigating the
government for
its omissions. A
few weeks ago,
a secessionist
meeting in
Madison
Square was
dispersed by
the police

(largely from Antigua), and two participants were gaoled. That was followed by another public meeting during which the police were

criticized, and
no one spoke
in favour of
Barbuda going
into
independence
with Antigua .
Eric Burton's
son seems to
think that I
have been sent

by the British
government. I
imagine the
Barbudans will
find the UK
very unwilling
to take on
another
Anguilla,
though they
must make

their fears
clear before
independence.⁹

It seems to
me that the
anthropologist
Riva Berleant-
Schiller gives
too much
emphasis to
traditional

aspects of the
economy at the
expense of
modern
developments.¹

⁰ Coco Point
Hotel employs
50–60
Barbudans in
peak season
(but only about

10 otherwise),
and its jeeps
are all over the
island. Indeed,
the island's
unique ecology
is the raison
d'être of the
hotel's lease. In
addition, the
government

farm and pens
are important
and produce
coconuts ,
copra, and
Brahman cattle
. James Punter
says that the
value of their
output is set
against

Barbudan
debts to
Antigua. There
are several
government
enclosures,
especially to
the south at
Guava, and in
the Highlands.
The latter is

bulldozed,
ploughed, and
planted with
maize—but not
for ground
provisions,
many of which
need ‘support’
from the
natural
vegetation.

Barbuda is
littered with
white
elephants:
Dulcima
(Barbuda's
early name)
Hotel at River
Landing was
started about a
dozen years

2978

ago but
remains
unfinished;
there is an
incomplete
mission church
located outside
the village and
a skeletal
public library.
In contrast,

some more
indigenous
things work:
roads in the
village are
repaired; there
is a dustcart
service; the
wells function.
The hospital
has been

opened and is
staffed by
nurses and
midwives; a
doctor comes
from Antigua
on Fridays, and
a dentist once a
month.

Barbudans
are a gentle

folk and easy to
talk to. They
speak good
clear English
when they
want to
(English is a
second not an
elite language),
but among
themselves use

an almost
incomprehensi
ble English
Creole. There
are no books
on sale on the
island, but
most families
have a radio
(even a tape
recorder) and

some a TV
(picking up the
signal from
American St
Croix).

 This
morning I saw
one of the
catching pens
for feral cattle
—a well and

water trough
surrounded by
a high wall. I
also spoke to
one of the
lobster
fishermen ,
who tells me
that they use a
noose to catch
lobster alive, as

well as lobster
pots. About 60
fishermen are
involved and
the catch is
sent daily to
Guadeloupe or
Puerto Rico by
Eric Burton
and Vernon
Joseph.

Trip to Darby's Cave

Probably the
most exciting
thing that has
happened to
me on Barbuda
was my 13-

kilometre
round trip on
foot to Darby's
Cave (Saturday,
16 December)
with Kenneth
Thomas, his
donkey (to
carry the
watermelon),
and Wally who

supplied the
two machetes
and did most of
the cutting
(Fig. 1.7).

We walked
up through the
Marginal Plain,
where there
were fretted
outcrops of

limestone,
black and red
soils, cactus,
dagger (an
agave) and
logwood, and
on past the
provision
grounds. These
are slash-and-
burn clearings,

fenced with
pig- and
barbed-wire,
resembling pea
sant plots in
Haiti and
mixed cropping
at Christiana in
Jamaica.¹¹

The tangle
of crops and

vegetation is
like a
wilderness—
peas, maize ,
taro, yam,
squash , and
cabbage; but
virtually no
fruit except
water and
musk melon. I

am told that
Barbudans pay
no rent for
their grounds,
though they
must be
registered.
Cattle , which
are also
registered at
6 shillings per

head, are
exported to
Antigua from
the wharf in
the lagoon.

We come
out at Highland
Pen, tether the
donkey, climb a
fence, and
make our way

up the slope.
The two men
then cut us a
path with the
machetes until
we join the
bridle path to
Darby's Cave.
What an
amazing tangle
of vegetation:

loblolly (like
lilac), pitchpine
(like
rhododendron)
, turk's head
cactus, dildo
cactus, thorny
shrubs, dagger
and holly. In
the sweltering
heat we walk

over pitted
limestone
pavements,
with red mud
and water in
the hollows,
until we finally
reach Darby's
Cave—a huge
sinkhole with a
steep rim (all

too easy to
topple into)
and luxuriant
protruding
vegetation
including palm
trees. I am told
that only one
person keeps
grounds in the
Highlands,

which are
essentially
given over to
wild cows,
deer, and pigs.

I feel tired
and thirsty
after the trip,
during which
we consumed a
whole

watermelon
between the
three of us.
Many
Barbudans
have never
been to Darby's
Cave, or so I am
told.

Conversations About Barbuda

On my return
to Codrington
Village I have a
number of
conversations
with James and

Olivett Punter
(Olivett, who is
Gilda's mother,
had arranged
my trip to
Darby's Cave),
Moses John,
and Elrose
Buntin.

James and
Olivett Punter

generously
invite me to
Sunday lunch.
They tell me
that virtually
everyone in the
community has
'ground,' and
last year most
cultivators
enjoyed a good

groundnut
crop. This
access to
vegetables may
explain why I
am having so
much difficulty
in getting hold
of food ;
indeed,
without Elrose

and Gilda
guiding me
around the
village to the
appropriate
shops (I think
they were
hungry, too), I
would have
been almost as
lost in the

settlement as I
was in the
Barbudan
undergrowth
without
Kenneth and
Wally.

Moses John
claims that
Barbudans are
especially big

and clever
because of
slave breeding
on Barbuda,
and can
therefore get
good jobs
elsewhere. I
am told there
was only one
death in

Barbuda last
year—a
squabble
between two
men that led to
a shooting that
was hushed up
by the people.
Elrose tells me
that her little
sister in

Antigua has
been ill and it
is rumoured to
be obeah
(black magic).
Every morning
Sister John
prophesies the
coming of
Jesus. Eric
Burton gave

the islanders
the present of a
People's Bus,
but it was
rejected by the
Barbuda
Council. Steel
bands practise
virtually every
night—there is
one for Coco

Point and one
for Codrington
Village.

There are
four churches:
Anglican,
Pilgrim
Holiness ,
Deeper Life
(meets in
school), and

Pentecostal.
Elrose and
Gilda insist on
taking me to
the Deeper Life
service on the
Sunday
morning. The
service is
conducted by a
Barbudan

pastor and an
Antiguan
assistant,
Sister Joseph.
Music is
provided by
guitars using a
fast, powerful
beat. There is
an emphasis on
sin and the Old

Testament,
though we are
reminded that
'the blood of
Christ saves.'
Like most
Caribbean
Pentecostal
services, it
stresses
salvation here

and now rather
than in the
afterlife.

I am asked
to testify, so I
stand up and
tell the
congregation
how I became
interested in
the slave

population of
Barbuda from
the
seventeenth to
the nineteenth
century, and
am fascinated
by the
continuities
over time in
the

relationship
between the
Barbudans and
the land of
their island
home.

Everyone
shakes hands
with me—the
visitor.

**My
Peregrinat
ions and
Perception
s**

One of my
favourite cafes
in Codrington
Village is

3018

Joyce's—
pronounced
Jayce's. It is
rough-hewn
and even the
butter comes
tinned from
Barbados . One
day I meet a
hunter there
who tells me

about deer
stalking:
apparently,
there are about
400 deer on
the island
(they have
been there
since the
nineteenth
century) and

several men
hunt full time.
He has a six-
shot gun for
buckshot, and
an adjustable
barrel for
concentrated
or dispersed
fire. I gather
that there are

two types of
deer—black
and fawn. The
hunter
grumbles that
if the
government
provided more
regular work,
hunting would
be less

necessary and
the herd
therefore
bigger—
another
complaint that
is at least
100 years old.

My
meanderings
take me down

to the wharf on the Codrington Lagoon , where heavy goods—petrol and cables—are being unloaded from a boat by sling (Fig. 1.7). Everything has to be imported:

canned food ,
chicken, soft
drinks, beer. I
notice lobsters
being stored in
cages near the
pier.

It seems to
me that while
Barbudans
constantly

inveigh against
outsiders for
their failings,
they are not
well organized
themselves.
Barbudans
keep to
themselves and
are secretive

and
manipulative.

I get the
impression
that the island
Council doesn't
work well.

James Punter
says that there
are factions in
Barbuda

following party
lines in Antigua
—and the
Barbuda Voice
(produced in
New York)
complains
about the
impact of
Antiguan
politics on the

island.

Councillors are
paid a stipend,
but James
Punter says
they do little
for it, and some
will lose their
seats in the
January 1979
island

elections.
Above all the
Barbuda
Council does
not liaise
closely with
the Antiguan
Minister for
Barbudan
Affairs.

It occurs to
me that there
is a marked
difference in
the quality of
houses
between the
north and
south sides of
the village.
Repatriated

Americans
concentrate in
the south, and
they have the
money for
comparatively
lavish house
styles. In the
poorer parts of
the village
there are six to

seven persons
per house, and
some homes
are very small
and
overcrowded—
with several
people to a
bed.

Like
Christopher

Bethell
Codrington
150 years ago,
I should
comment on
the excess of
Barbudan
children—it
was his
complaint that
set in motion

the mistaken
idea that
Barbuda was
once a site of
slave
breeding.¹² No
one here can
have heard of
contraceptives
—or if they
have, must

have rejected
them in favour
of
untrammelled
reproduction. I
have never
seen so many
children with
so little hope of
a local
livelihood.

Many
parents are 'off
the island' and
children have
fathers in or
from Antigua,
Montserrat ,
and St Lucia .
Olivett Punter's
father is in
Antigua; her

mother is in
the UK and
married to a
Jamaican
immigrant ;
her first
husband
(James is her
third) is in
Canada; and
her oldest

daughter is
being looked
after by her
(Olivett's)
second
husband;
finally, her
second
daughter is
with her first

husband's aunt
in Antigua.

Brother John

Brother John is
the second
oldest man on
the island. I

think he is over
80. He
remembers in
1903 watching
the cutting of
the boat
channel into
the lagoon by
Antiguan
prisoners,
though it soon

filled up with
sand and silt.
At 13 (in
roughly 1915)
he went to join
an uncle in
New York.
There were
very few
Barbudans in
New York at

that time; it
was a colony
settled by
seafarers. He
remembers the
Revd Cephas,
who died
young, and the
cotton boom
on Barbuda—a
man called

Hopkins
developed the
cotton
industry, but
he was put off
the island
because he
paid higher
wages than the
government.

Originally
there was only
the Anglican
Church on
Barbuda,
though now
there are four
—Pilgrim
Holiness is
Methodist.
Brother John

was in the US
for 51 years,
and while he
was there he
built his house
in Barbuda.
Now his
grandchildren
visit from New
York. 'Clannish'
is the word

Brother John
uses to
describe the
Barbudan
community in
New York.

He tells me
he is
concerned
about unlawful
withdrawals

from the
Antigua Bank
that opens only
once a week in
Barbuda—a
complaint
shared by
many.

Mr Milton Beazer

Mr Beazer
retired from
New York to a
bijou house on
the outskirts of
Codrington
Village. He tells

me that the
land at Coco
Point was
leased for hotel
development
for 99 years in
the late 1950s,
but that the
rates for Coco
Point Hotel are
being paid to

Antigua, not to
the Barbuda
Council.

Pens and
walls were
pulled down by
the Antigua
government
once the
British
presence began

to be phased
out. It
depended on
the Warden
how strictly
walls were
maintained
and cattle kept
out. According
to Mr Beazer,
there is still a

wall across the
neck of land
separating
Goat Island
from Barbuda
proper.

The
Barbudans are
getting up a
petition (this
has been going

on since slave
emancipation)
to support the
call for
separation
from Antigua
and the
retention of
colonial ties to
the UK. Mr
Beazer points

out ominously
that the
proceeds from
Barbudan
stamp sales go
to the Antiguan
government,
not to the
account of the
island.

Sue Joseph

Sue Joseph is British and a teacher in the secondary school. She says that there is a big problem with language—the

use of Creole
by the children
and English by
the textbooks
with the
teachers in
between—and
that a UN team
is currently in
Barbuda trying

to sort out the
problem.

Apparently,
two of the
married
teachers
provided by
the US Peace
Corps give
family planning
advice to

parents. They provide the contraceptive pill, but it tends to be taken only sporadically, and children are very much valued as

security for old
age.

It seems
that everybody
uses first
names in
Barbuda and
my sense is
one of equality
throughout the
community.

However, Sue
thinks that
class is
emerging in
Barbuda
through lobster
fishing and
emigration,
though few
people are
involved, and it

may not be
happening on a
large enough
scale or for
long enough
for enhanced
status to be
inherited.

Sue tells me
about some of
the more

prominent
Barbudans:

1. Eric Burton
made his
money
through the
lobster
business
and then
invested in

cattle and
shops;

2. McChesney
George was
born in New
York and
came to
Barbuda as
a child—he
is a lawyer

and
shopkeeper;

3.

Manny John
did contract
farm work
in the US
and
invested his
money in
cattle.

Sue says
that there is no
light caste in
Barbuda: light-
coloured
children are
prized, but the
evaluation is
individual. I
suspect
Anguilla is like

this, though
because of the
larger size of
the population,
the distinction
between
mulatto and
black may be
firmer and
socially more
significant

there. Sue
confirms that
the southern
part of
Codrington
Village is the
wealthiest
part, but there
is also some
stereotyping by
neighbourhood

; for example,
Mulatto
Quarter (a
colour term) is
thought of as
industrious
and thrifty.

**Johnnie
Webber**

I have arranged
to discuss the
crisis over
links to
Antigua with
Johnnie
Webber, vice
chairman of
the Barbuda
Council. He
points out that

the Council as a whole does not approve of the 'independence move' separating Barbuda from Antigua , though it is clear that Webber

himself clearly
does. He tells
me that
Council's
independence
is being
constantly
clawed back by
Antigua. Funds
from the tax on
Coco Point

Hotel came to
the council last
year—but not
this.

Premier
Vere Bird
informed the
Council that
the value of
Barbuda
stamps in 1977

was worth
Eastern
Caribbean
\$1 million, split
60 percent to
Barbuda and
40 percent to
Antigua, but
this sum has
never been
paid to the

Council's
account—just
5 or
10 thousand
dollar dollops
to cover the
labouring
wages of 200
people on the
council's
payroll. The

police (and
there are a lot
of them, I have
observed) and
the regular
civil servants
are
remunerated
directly by
Antigua.

Webber indicates that out of a Council of nine, the majority side with the Antigua Labour Party, the party of government in Antigua and Barbuda. The

Antigua
opposition is
said to be more
understanding
of Barbuda's
position,
though their
support is
contingent on
their not being
in power.

Barbudans
think that the
stamp sales
alone would
pay for
Barbuda's
outgoings,
cover the cost
of modest
improvements
in roads, and

support
tourism on a
limited scale.

Webber
fears that, with
the passage of
time, the
Antigua
government
will allow land
to be alienated

and sold. He
has read
Douglas Hall's
book *Five of the
Leewards*, and
knows about
the 1904
Ordnance and
the creation of
Barbuda as a
commons by

the British
after the last
leasee left.¹³

He
understands
how privileged
the islanders
are that there
have never
been sugar

plantations in
Barbuda.

I am told
that a petition
which is being
currently
prepared, sets
out Barbuda's
fears over land
alienation,
fishing , and

development
funds , and will
be addressed
to the British
representative
in Antigua,
Premier Bird,
and to the
Barbudan
senator and
representative

in the Antigua
parliament. It
is hoped that
Barbudans in
Britain
(predominantly
in Leicester
near the
Antiguan
concentration)
will mobilize

their British
MPs over the
Associated
Statehood
issue. Webber
fears that the
Barbuda
Council is
crippled by
lack of funds.

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Footnotes

1 For an account of the Oaxaca Valley see Scott Cook , *Land, Livelihood and Civility in Southern Mexico: Oaxaca Valley Communities in History*, 2014; for

the society of the
entire state of
Oaxaca see Colin
Clarke, *Class,
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2 Michael
Higgins, *Somos
Gente Humilde:
Etnografía de una
Colonia Urbana
Pobre de Oaxaca*,
1974.

3 Liverpool
friends: John
Dickenson and

Paul Laxton, both
in the Department
of Geography at
Liverpool
University, and
Fred O'Brien , my
neighbour in
Liverpool.

4 Eleanor Sleight,
The Many Faces of

Cuilapan, 1988.

5 At the time,
Ross Parmenter
was already well
known for his
book, *Week in
Yanhuitlán, 1964.*

6 Miguel Alberto
Bartolomé,
*Narrativa y
Etnicidad entre los
Chatinos de
Oaxaca*, 1979; and
Bartolomé and
Alicia Barabas,
*Tierra de la
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*Chatinos de
Oaxaca, 1982.*

7 John
Codrington was
the first son of
Christopher
Codrington, the
original leasee of
Barbuda (from the
Crown).

8 For a discussion of land issues and landownership , and especially the claim of Barbudans to be the joint owners of the island as a collectivity see David Lowenthal

and Colin Clarke,
'The Triumph of
the Commons:
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9 This issue is
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10 Riva Berleant
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research on
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'Subsistence and
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(President of
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Gustavo
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(President of
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Duvalier,
François Papa
Doc (President
of Haiti 1957–
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Doc (President
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Oaxaca 1920–
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(Emperor of

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William
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(Catholic
priest and
Father of
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Michael
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Sandra
Highland Pen,
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Higman, Barry
(Emeritus
Professor of
History UWI,

Emeritus
Professor of
History ANU,
Canberra)
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governor of

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Joseph, Sue
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Joshua,
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Juárez, Benito
(President of
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Edward (Chief
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Sonny
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Michael
(Prime
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Martí, José
(hero of Cuban
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Naipaul, V. S.
(novelist and
travel writer)
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Paz, Octavio
(poet and
writer)
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[1](#) Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

