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# "Free Negroes" - The Development of Early English Jamaica and the Birth of Jamaican Maroon Consciousness, 1655-1670

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“FREE NEGROES” – THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY ENGLISH JAMAICA AND THE BIRTH OF  
JAMAICAN MAROON CONSCIOUSNESS, 1655-1670

by

PATRICK JOHN NICHOLS

Under the Direction of Harcourt Fuller, PhD

ABSTRACT

The English conquest of Jamaica in 1655 was a turning point in the history of Atlantic World colonialism. Conquest displaced the Spanish colony and its subjects, some of who fled into the mountainous interior of Jamaica and assumed lives in isolation. This project reconstructs the historical experiences of the “negro” populations of Spanish and English Jamaica, which included its “free black”, “mulattoes”, indigenous peoples, and others, and examines how English cosmopolitanism and distinct interactions laid the groundwork for and informed the syncretic identities and communities that emerged decades later. Upon the framework of English conquest within the West Indies, I explore the experiences of one such settlement alongside the early English colony of Jamaica to understand how a formal relationship materialized between the entities and how its course inflected the distinct socio-political identity and emergent political agency embodied by the Jamaican Maroons. To this end, this study reconceptualizes the social and political foundations of the “negroes” who became the Jamaican Maroons removed from the teleology of the Maroon Wars and its resultant Treaty of 1738-1739.

INDEX WORDS: Conquest, Spanish and English Jamaica, Atlantic World, West Indies, Colonialism, Cosmopolitanism, Syncretism, Identity, Political agency, Marronage

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by

PATRICK JOHN NICHOLS

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2015

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December 2015

**DEDICATION**

*To my parents, for your unending love and support*

*To Christina, without whom this endeavor would be aimless*

*To Jonathan, my greatest source of intellectual inspiration and whose intelligence and compassion will forever be the unimpeachable standard of humanity and excellence*

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Additional thanks are due to those friends and members of my graduate cohort that provided their invaluable support and expertise throughout this process. To Zach Bates, Sean Phillips, and Alex McCready, each of you has assisted in the realization of this project in various manners. Thank you for your critical insights, encouragement, and friendship. To Christina, my partner and bedrock, your confidence and compassion provided unimaginable energy in moments of self-doubt.

To my parents and family, who have always encouraged my intellectual pursuits and without whose love I would be lost.

Finally, to Jonathan, my idol: I will forever strive to honor your life and the example you provided.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

*“In hourly expectation of the issue of a party now gone forth in conjunction with some negroes that have lately, and indeed miraculously, made peace with us.”<sup>1</sup>*

- Cornelius Burrough to Robert Blackbourne, February 22nd, 1660 - Port Cagway, Jamaica.

The transatlantic experiences of European kingdoms in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were guided by discovery, inflected by conquest, and elongated by colonialism. These inextricable and intertwined processes birthed empires, forged relationships, and initiated a mass migration of peoples unlike the world has ever known.<sup>2</sup> New World colonialism, which encompassed the entirety of the landmass stretching from North to South America and included the islands of the Caribbean, was predicated on concomitant processes of conquest and exploitation that forever reshaped the physical landscape and its indigenous inhabitants. The arrival of the Spanish to the New World in short order congealed into conquest and the establishment of vast colonial territories.<sup>3</sup>

Conquistadors and colonizers pursued quick returns on investments in New World enterprises and, as such, arrived to the Americas in search of gold, silver, jewels, spices, and dyes like indigo for the enrichment of themselves and the crown of Castile.<sup>4</sup> Through encounters with indigenous communities, Spanish conquistadors reported to the Crown that the New World

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<sup>1</sup> Calendar of State Papers, *America and West Indies*, ed. W. Noel Sainsbury, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 334.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Segal, *The Black Diaspora: Five Centuries of the Black Experience Outside Africa*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1995), 368.

<sup>3</sup> James Lochkart and Stuart Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 31-58. Foremost amongst these possessions were the mainland colonies of Nueva España and Tierra Firme, which included lands held by, or formerly incorporated within, the indigenous kingdoms of the Inca, Maya, and Aztec. Meanwhile, diffuse communities of indigenous Taíno, Arawak, and Carib populated islands that quickly became the entrepôt colonies of Hispaniola, Cuba, and Jamaica.

<sup>4</sup> Lochkart and Schwartz, 19.

possessed vast reserves of jewels and precious metals.<sup>5</sup> Mining endeavors thus came to form the backbone of the early colonial systems of the Spanish and Portuguese, which enterprises were reinforced by the belief of the Catholic conquistadors that God had deposited the gold and silver in the New World specifically for their benefit.<sup>6</sup> Mining was conducted by enslaved indigenous populations, which laid the foundation of the New World economy, to the sole benefit of the Europeans and the oligarchies that directed these efforts.

The hierarchical structure of New World Spanish colonial societies was predicated on a “neo-Aristotelian” conception of indigenous peoples as, ““Barbar’s, and thereby Natural slaves””.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, the produce of indigenous slave labor was almost exclusively exported back to Castile for the payment of debtors and to finance the schemes of the Spanish Crown. As such, the very structure of the Spanish colonial economy fostered the creation of oligarchs devoid of the intention to create domestic markets in New World territories.<sup>8</sup> Early Spanish colonialism was underpinned by brutal regimes of slavery and exploitation that, alongside the rampant diseases they unwittingly imported, had resulted in the widespread decimation of indigenous populations by the late sixteenth century.<sup>9</sup> As such, there was a consequential labor shortage that impeded further Spanish colonial efforts.<sup>10</sup> This labor dilemma, coupled with the writings of Bartolome de las Casas and his admonishments of indigenous slavery, drove the

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<sup>5</sup> Kendall Brown, *A History of Mining in Latin America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> Brown, 1.

<sup>7</sup> David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 93.

<sup>8</sup> Jay Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City: Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 109.

<sup>9</sup> Francisco Morales Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, trans. Patrick Bryan, Michael Gronow, and Felix Oviedo Moral, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), 152.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 153-154.

Spanish to request licenses to engage the Portuguese for access to African labor markets.<sup>11</sup> These markets, more than a century prior to the expansion and explosion of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, consisted of both slaves and servants. The individuals sold on these markets emanated from West and Central African kingdoms and were familiarized with European kingdoms through their experiences with the Portuguese. As these populations made their way into Spanish colonies, slowly and gradually, they became integral facets of the labor force. Whereas African slaves centuries later toiled away in fields in brutal obscurity, these Central and Western African laborers engaged in construction, hunting, and served in the armed forces.<sup>12</sup>

Over time, numbers of these African slaves – specifically within the Spanish and English colonies with which this study is primarily concerned – were able to attain freedom, while their “creole” children were not always subjected to enslavement.<sup>13</sup> The homogenous vision of Catholic Spain, which proselytized a “limpieza de sangre” (or, purity of blood) and that defined non-Catholics and the disenfranchised as heretical and inferior, was thus in reality far more nuanced in this period resultant of an intrinsic reliance upon indigenous labor and labor imported from Africa. This process gave rise to creole populations and sub-societies alongside the colonies. In spite of opposition from Spaniards, there emerged communities of disenfranchised “free blacks” who, in the case of Jamaica, occupied public lands.<sup>14</sup> Following conquest by England in 1655, these precarious communities, through constant resistance, negotiation, and open warfare, formed autonomous settlements as sites of resistance to the intentions of imperialism that daily threatened their existence.

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<sup>11</sup> Gerald Bender, *Angola Under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality*, (University of California Press, 1978), 12-17. “Increasingly the Kongo Kingdom was viewed as a repository for slaves, especially by the Portuguese in Sao Tome, who officially (through decrees) dominated the slave trade on the coast.”

<sup>12</sup> Padron, 153-157.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 156-157. “The presence of creole Blacks – that is, Blacks born on the island...”

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 77, 156-157.

These settlements, which evolved into the many towns that populate the Jamaican Maroon territory of Cockpit Country, persist with sovereignty and autonomy to the present day. However, this study avoids this teleology in the task of identifying and explicating the distinct experiences and interactions that informed Marronage upon Jamaica. Marronage was neither spontaneous nor homogeneous. It was the confluence of long-term processes of syncretism, negotiation, and defiance that were embodied by independent communities whose populations consisted of African, indigenous, and creole individuals throughout the era of early English colonialism. This study is therefore concerned primarily with the means by which these communities of Marronage pursued and maintained tenuous freedoms and autonomy.

The history of the Jamaican Maroons, with their rich cultural traditions, has been maintained over the centuries through Maroon oral historians. In recent decades, these oral accounts have been recorded for posterity through the pioneering works of Kenneth Bilby and Mavis Campbell.<sup>15</sup> However, these narratives inform this work only insofar as it attempts to comprehend the cultural composition, location, and traditions of early Maroon societies. This study instead analyzes the period just prior to the settlement of Maroon communities in Cockpit Country, for which there is an unfortunate lack of historical records. In lieu of such resources, it will endeavor to recreate the processes that precipitated Marronage through a subaltern analysis of the English Colonial Calendar of State Papers (CSP). The conquest of Spanish Jamaica by the English was a near-decade-long enterprise that established English control and facilitated colonization of the island. Interactions with, and accounts of, the “negroes” of Jamaica, in all of

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<sup>15</sup> See, for instance: Kenneth Bilby, “The Treacherous Feast: A Jamaican Maroon Historical Myth”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 140 (1984): 1-31; Kenneth Bilby, *True-Born Maroons*, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005); Kenneth Bilby, “Swearing by the Past, Swearing to the Future: Sacred Oaths, Alliances, and Treaties among the Guianese and Jamaican Maroons”, *Ethnohistory* 4 (1997): 655-689; Mavis C. Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796: A History of Resistance, Collaboration, & Betrayal*, (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1988).

their many iterations throughout the first decade of English conquest and colonization, will therefore provide the backbone of this inquest.<sup>16</sup>

The increased importation of African laborers to the New World by the Spanish Crown throughout the sixteenth century did little to forestall the wane of Spanish influence. As the result of expensive and untenable European conflicts, the Spanish kingdom was beset by creditors and faced a financial crisis as it entered the seventeenth century.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the first decades of the seventeenth century for Protestant England, the unmitigated religious and political rivals of Catholic Spain, featured a Civil War, a series of socio-political and economics “revolutions”, a religious Reformation, the execution of King Charles I, and warfare in Europe that incapacitated the monarchy and resulted in the institution of a Protectorate.<sup>18</sup> The English New Model Army, and independent and professional armed force, replaced the monarchy with a Protectorate that was imbued with an imperialist character through its Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell.<sup>19</sup> This undercurrent of the Protectorate would come to fruition in the attempted and realized conquests of 1655 through the aptly named *Western Design*, a campaign concocted to expand the territorial boundaries of England through direct warfare against the Spanish colonies.<sup>20</sup> The Cromwellian

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<sup>16</sup> The term “negroes” appears in the Calendar of State Papers to describe the inhabitants of island “Palenques”. These communities were, in actuality, populated by individuals brought as slaves from Africa, free and enslaved individuals of African descent born on the island, and those of mixed and indigenous descent. This thesis utilizes “negroes” to reflect the prevailing rhetoric that appeared in the English record and as representative of a difference that had yet to be enumerated by imperial forces: race.

<sup>17</sup> Barbara Hadley Stein and Stanley J. Stein, “Financing Europe: The European Diaspora of Silver By War,” in *Colonial Legacies: The Problem of Persistence in Latin American History*, ed. Jeremy Adelman (New York: Routledge, 1999), 52-58. “In the half century (1598-1648) following the reign of Philip II came repeated financial crises as the domestic and colonial resources were absorbed in what Spain’s political class envisioned as a winnable war when conflict with the Dutch Republic was renewed in 1621.”

<sup>18</sup> See, for example: Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution*, (London: Penguin Books, 1972).

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Samuel Feuer, *Imperialism and the Anti-Imperialist Mind*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 66.

<sup>20</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, “English Character and the Fiasco of the Western Design,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1 (2005), 1-31. Prior to the Western Design, England had conquered Ireland under Cromwell in 1649-1653. Cromwell sought to extend the territories and influence of the English through a calculated

campaign was pivotal for a variety of reasons both political and economic, but its most pertinent ramification in the context of this study lies in the social and political interactions it elicited between disparate populations upon Jamaica.

This study takes the island of Jamaica as its basic unit of analysis, incorporating the histories and actions of all those who conquered, planted, inhabited, and influenced it between 1655 and 1670 to better understand the foundations of Marronage and its parallel development alongside the Spanish and English – and later British – colony.<sup>21</sup> These interactions were part and parcel of a broader Atlantic World imbued by European rivalries and imperial intentions problematized by the delicate sub-colonial and inter-imperial networks upon which early English colonialism relied.<sup>22</sup> Early Marronage, much like early English colonialism, was a practice of social and political navigation and often dissimulation that offered a faint, transient hope of a peaceful co-existence and at least partial sovereignty.

The collision of the two European powers upon Hispaniola and Jamaica in 1655 was a turning point for the historical political composition of New World colonialism. Prior to the Western Design and its ultimate Jamaican campaign, the main threats to Spanish territories and their constituent colonies had been privateering and indirect acts of aggression by its English

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program of military expansion. Its successes and failures are of much contention, but had a monumental impact on the British Empire in the eighteenth century.

<sup>21</sup> Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). The Act of Union in 1707 created British Empire. England and Scotland were sovereign states until this point, despite the fact that James I ruled both through his personal union. Ireland and Wales had been annexed by England in the mid-sixteenth century, but the formal title of the “British Empire” cannot be said to have existed in actuality until the ratification of the Act of Union by the Scottish Parliament. Prior to this point, the only mutually recognized union was under the Commonwealth in 1657, when a common Parliament was established that included equal numbers English, Irish, and Scottish members. Imperialism was a project of the English prior to the foundation of the British Empire, but the distinction serves the purpose of understanding the scope of English colonial influence in the mid-seventeenth century.

<sup>22</sup> For more on the Atlantic World, see: Alison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); John Huxtable Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Christian Koot, *Empire at the Periphery: British Colonists, Anglo-Dutch Trade, and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1621-1713*, (New York University Press, 2011), 7.

rivals. England, with its preeminent navy and aforementioned New Model Army fresh off its conquest of Ireland under Cromwell, began an era of open warfare that directly challenged Spanish dominance.<sup>23</sup> The assault of Santo Domingo that followed plunged the European powers into an interminable conflict that was not resolved until decades later.

The English forces under William Penn and Robert Venables chose Hispaniola based upon a faulty conception that it lacked sufficient defenses.<sup>24</sup> The island, featuring the capital of Santo Domingo and its commodious harbor, served as a crucial juncture in the journeys of Spanish galleon fleets.<sup>25</sup> As such, the Spanish Crown invested in fortifications and maintained regular troop deployments that were tasked with defending Hispaniola from invasion. The English campaign against the capital of Santo Domingo, for its part, was a resounding failure. The English troops missed their landing point by a distance of several days' walk, suffered from dehydration and sickness, and was beset by ambushes on behalf of the "Negroes and Molettoes" on the island.<sup>26</sup> The ramifications of this defeat resonated most acutely in London, where the Lord Protector Cromwell was consumed by doubts about his holy ordained campaign, which purportedly haunted him until his death in 1658. The subsequent assault of Spanish Jamaica, which the English forces achieved almost without incident, was imbued with a more finite understanding of the structure and dynamics of Spanish colonialism: Spanish colonies in the islands of the New World were fortified based upon their immediate importance to silver fleets. Given the close proximity of much larger islands Cuba and Hispaniola, Jamaica was an outpost and predominantly an afterthought. However, even despite the situation and importance of Santo

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<sup>23</sup> Abigail Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015): 32-56, 74. Privateering, meanwhile, did not cease and was instead organized and encouraged by colonial governors. "Governor D'Oyley had invited buccaneers from the island of Tortuga to help protect the island in 1657, and in subsequent years, many of the English soldiers sent during the Western Design had joined their ranks."

<sup>24</sup> Padrón, 181. "... (Thomas Gage) gave the assurance that the Indies were defenceless."

<sup>25</sup> Swingen, 43-44.

<sup>26</sup> Edmund Hickerlingill, "Jamaica Viewed," (London, 1661), 86-87.



Domingo, the Spanish colony was partially reliant on the services of “free blacks” in armed service. This was moreover the case upon Jamaica, where the free blacks, creoles, mulattoes, and indigenous peoples who cohabitated upon the islands outnumbered the small Spanish population, “the cavalry (was) composed of mulattoes, free blacks, and young men drafted into service... The creole Blacks functioned alongside the town’s four militia companies...”<sup>27</sup> Such experiences were fundamental to the structure of political relations between the early English colony of Jamaica and its communities of “negroes”.

The colonial history of Jamaica can be claimed to have initiated with the arrival of Columbus in 1493. Its role in relation to the Spanish galleon fleets elevated its appeal to the English, who conquered the island as a means of disrupting these routes following the failure upon Hispaniola. Within this Jamaican landscape, these European kingdoms converged along with countless cultures and ideologies. Circumstances facilitated by the physical features of the island begot and influenced interactions, which in turn informed the development of the Spanish and English colonial projects. Likewise, the realities of all individuals upon Jamaica, whether enfranchised, enslaved, or somewhere in between, were defined by these surroundings. The arrival of Columbus linked it to the vast series of transoceanic economic connections that evolved into European colonialism and imperialism. However, despite more than a century of Spanish rule, investment into Jamaica was limited given its lack of precious metals.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, justification for its conquest by the English was a contingency of the Western Design and not the designed imperialist intention of Cromwell and the Protectorate.

The sites of English conquest – Hispaniola and Jamaica – were located amidst a region understood by a misnomer given it by Columbus, “West Indies”. Although this geographic term,

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<sup>27</sup> Padrón, “Statement of Captain Juan de Arencibia – November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1643 – Santo Domingo, Hispaniola” and “Information supplied by Don Juan de Retuerta – November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1643 – La Vega, Jamaica”.

<sup>28</sup> Padrón, 168-172.

however mistakenly, intended to differentiate the islands from the Indies, which were constituted by Southeast Asia and India, it was thereafter employed by European kingdoms to distinguish events and commerce that transpired in the island theatre from those on the mainland.<sup>29</sup> This study will therefore utilize the term “West Indies” as a heuristic device given its political and economic preeminence in the period of investigation. European experiences were understood through a West Indian lens that permeates the written colonial record. Moreover, the English and Spanish records that contribute the most significant primary sources for this analysis were formally organized under this moniker. As a result, these documents persist as relics of a consciously constructed imaginary of what this thesis defines as a West Indian World. This imagined context informed life within colonial systems and guided the development of the region. The use of the West Indian World is not intended to delimit and does not discount the broader transatlantic Atlantic World context within which it developed. However, it maintains a prioritization of those experiences within the “West Indies” as most acutely contributive to the interactions with which this study is concerned. In this way, it recognizes the strategic importance of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Jamaica within the Spanish system and for the early imperialist intentions of the English. Furthermore, by refining the analysis to this Europeanized region, it aims to elucidate the systematic realities confronted by Africans – both free and enslaved –, their descendants, and indigenous peoples that composed the vast majority of the West Indian labor force. This study is thus primarily concerned with those events that transpired within this West Indian World and attempts to reconstruct those actualities that imbued early English conquest and colonialism upon Jamaica.

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<sup>29</sup> Koot, 21-22. “While formal Dutch activity in the Americas originated with the establishment of the Westindische Compagnie – West India Company (WIC) – in 1621, individual merchants began to send vessels directly to Brazil in 1587 as an extension of Dutch trade with Portugal.”

Conquest – in the context of seventeenth century European kingdoms – was borne out of a process of acquisition derived from the Roman legal tradition established in Justinian’s *Digest and Institutes*. The exhaustive legal history outlined by Ken MacMillan in *Sovereignty and Possession* provides a thorough dissection of juridical arguments for conquest by England and rival European kingdoms, subdivided into three essential constituent parts: sovereignty, imperium, and dominium.<sup>30</sup> Conquest possessed a structure that necessitated the realization of each phase. However, over time, these concepts became fungible and were reconsidered to justify imperial projects and account for maritime preeminence, as was the case for England in the aftermath of its naval victory over the Spanish Armada (1588).<sup>31</sup> This thesis utilizes the Justinian definition of conquest to constitute a thematic structure to the inception of English Jamaica and its early predisposition, imperium.<sup>32</sup> The hierarchical structure of colonialism was forged through conquest, prioritizing Englishness and English interests in opposition to whosoever pre-emanated therein. The social and political identities that would eventually comprise the Maroons began to emerge along this same timeline upon Jamaica, as the former slaves, free blacks, creoles, and indigenous peoples remaining from Spanish colonialism pursued an existence in opposition to, and independent from, European forces. Alongside English conquest – and thus processes of sovereignty, imperium, and dominium – Marronage emerged and was incubated within the roughly defined physical boundaries of island “Palenques”.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ken MacMillan. *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). These three constituent parts of conquest are defined as: sovereignty – ability to exercise authority within the territorial jurisdiction; imperium – refers to internal and external sovereignty and the exercise of authority over the individual; dominium – absolute ownership and control of a possession, with the right to utilize and profit from and lands therein.

<sup>31</sup> Armitage, 100-124.

<sup>32</sup> Armitage, 30. “The Roman legacy of imperium to medieval and early modern Europe was threefold. It denoted independent authority; it described a territorial unit; and it offered an historical foundation for claims to both the authority and the territory ruled...Imperium in the sense of independent and self-sufficient authority offered a more generally applicable precedent to later polities...”

<sup>33</sup> This term was a holdover from the time of Spanish Jamaica and preceded “maroons” as a referent for settlements of runaway slaves that populated the mountainous, inaccessible regions of Jamaica. See, for example: CSP of John

However, to address and conceptualize the birth of these vibrant communities and identities that remain intact to this day, a succinct and precise definition of Marronage must be outlined.

Marronage – or, the total refusal of the slave condition – upon Jamaica is the focus of this thesis.<sup>34</sup> Within the emerging Atlantic World, individuals fled systematic subjugation to construct communities independent and autonomous from European colonialism. The theoretical foundation provided by Neil Roberts in *Freedom as Marronage*, which posits maroon communities as, “heretical, non-state actors (who) construct(ed) a clandestine series of hidden transcripts in opposition to the zones of governance and appropriation intrinsic to existing state regimes of slavery,” provides immeasurable insight into how such populations coalesced and asserted agency in the face of systematic oppression.<sup>35</sup> Roberts borrows from James C. Scott in his *The Art of Not Being Governed* to explain the “zones of refuge” constructed by these actors that allowed for Maroons to cultivate freedom “on their own terms within a demarcated social space”.<sup>36</sup> Each of these essential aspects of Marronage contribute to a more cohesive understanding of how such an existence was necessitated and what it represented in its temporal context. Marronage as the “liminal and transitional social space *between* slavery and freedom” succinctly recognizes the actualities of life for subjugated populations that emerged from colonial exploitation, as they progressed toward freedom.<sup>37</sup>

The intersection of processes of conquest and Marronage came to redefine social dynamics upon Jamaica. As colonialism matured into imperialism, Marronage was outlawed by the English through official proclamations and a rhetorical shift that demarcated the former “free

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Thurloe, Volume 6 (July 1657), 391. Also: *New English Dictionary*. 1st ed. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1888, 392. Details the root of the term “Palenque”, which was borrowed from Spanish and signified a defensive enclosure that contained an independent population based about subsistence farming.

<sup>34</sup> Neil Roberts, *Freedom As Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 13.

<sup>35</sup> Roberts.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 3-6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

negroes” as “Spanish negroes” and therefore separate and disenfranchised.<sup>38</sup> Left without recourse, the independent communities of “negroes” that populated the interior of Jamaica constructed strategic partnerships that intended to combat and diminish the influence of the colony in their demarcated sites of Marronage. These efforts were essential aspects of the Maroon Wars that resulted in the Maroon Treaties of 1738-39, the tenets of which enshrined the legality and political legitimacy of these settlements and echoed their shared experiences with Spanish and English Jamaica.

The pivotal concept in this study is not a binary of freedom and slavery, but rather the nuance provided in the analysis of the transition *between slavery and Marronage*. Marronage was not the inevitable result of an escape from slavery, insomuch as it was not an instantaneous or spontaneous. Escape from slavery did not enact Marronage; rather it was the conscious and purposeful rejection of systematic subjugation and the construction of alternative societies that demarcated Marronage. This thesis avoids causation as it regards the establishment of Maroon societies, positioning the analysis within the first fifteen years of English conquest of Jamaica to explain the fundamental preconditions of such an existence. Furthermore, this is not a history of the Jamaican Maroons. This is instead the careful dissection of the processes that facilitated and informed the movement of peoples toward a life of Marronage.

As the purposeful existence in opposition to the system by which colonial subjects were exploited, Marronage required the collaborative actions and demonstrated agency of diverse individuals. Maroon communities facilitated freedom through the construction of socio-political norms, often borrowed from African and indigenous cultural traditions. The dialectic of slavery and freedom belies the transformative process of Marronage, which – at its core – featured the establishment of non-normative identities that were both non-European in origin and indomitable

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<sup>38</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 7 (1669-1674), 704.

by European force. The colonial papers of England and Spain, which include informal correspondence, interrogation, and official actions, provide the substantive, primary analytical lens of this thesis. These documents, despite their hierarchical nature, contribute a conception of conquest, rivalry, and survival that, while not being taken at face value, outline some of the many realities confronting the inhabitants of Jamaica in the period of 1655-1670. Problematic terms like “black”, “negro(es)”, “creole”, and “mulatto(es)” are utilized herein as heuristic devices given the unresolved notion of race in this early modern era. Over time, the inability of European representatives to sufficiently grapple with difference and to accurately understand the ethnic, social, and cultural nuances of their many non-European populations begat the contrivance of racial distinctions. Such determinations and misunderstandings had only begun to emerge and had yet to overwhelmingly inform colonial decision makers. This fact is underscored by the abundance of Spanish and Taino words and place-names in the English record, like “Palenque”, “Varmahaly”, and “Liguanea”. The English yet lacked the vocabulary to communicate the multitudinous unfamiliar realities of Jamaica. A subaltern analysis of English conquest thus demonstrates how it facilitated the juncture, condensation, and transformation of historical processes that elicited the transition toward Marronage for those subjected, and then abandoned, by the former oligarchical Spanish masters of the island.<sup>39</sup>

Marronage and its syncretic coalescence of diverse individuals, is a process that finds its roots in the very inception of Spanish Jamaica. The experiences and traditions of the many indigenous peoples and African and creole individuals who populated both Spanish and English Jamaica precipitated the progress toward freedom and the agency by which it was realized. Insomuch as conquest was the naissance of colonialism, so too was it the incubator of new peoples, societies, and cultures in the early modern West Indian World. As the influx of colonists

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<sup>39</sup> Campbell, 15-16.

to the West Indies resulted in Europeanized enclaves that mimicked and adapted aspects of their homelands, agents were hired to oversee long-term agricultural projects upon the estates and the slaves and servants who composed the vast majority of residents of these properties.<sup>40</sup> The abuses of these peoples, as detailed by Bartolome de las Casas, would necessitate the reconsideration of the colonial labor force.<sup>41</sup> Over time, historical economic relationships between the Portuguese African colony of Angola and Central and West African kingdoms would coalesce to incite the rapid expansion of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The islands of the West Indies were therefore populated by an amalgam of European citizens and indigenous and African inhabitants throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries whose lives were dominated by colonial schemes.

To the end of reconstructing the experiences of Spanish and then English Jamaica from 1655-1670, this study attempts to reconstruct the meshed web of inter-European politics and conflicts that dictated life in the West Indian World and Atlantic World moreover in the seventeenth century. Contrary to the supposition of writers such as Susan Dwyer Amussen in *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society*, the many kingdoms that held dominion over the colonies of the West Indies made isolation impossible. The sentiment of competitive conquest that imbued seventeenth century West Indian colonialism was indicative of the interminable tensions between European kingdoms.<sup>42</sup> Colonists throughout the West Indian World were affected by, or in regular contact with, other European and non-

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<sup>40</sup> Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1997), 406. Such was the longing for the familiarity of European locales, that by 1770 an estimated one-third of estates in Jamaica were held by absentee landowners, which reflects broader colonial trends.

<sup>41</sup> Bartolome de las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*, trans. Herma Briffault (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

<sup>42</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *The Old World's New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 4-6.

European populations throughout the entirety of their experiences.<sup>43</sup> Primitive accumulation of capital drew the Iberians to the West Indies in search of gold, silver, and spices and incited the conquests of the New World. Religion and political rivalry protracted tensions amongst kingdoms as additional Europeans ventured into the New World. In the case of English colonialism, the success of colonies was inflected by these tensions and problematized the inter-colonial Anglo-Dutch trade upon which early English colonists relied.<sup>44</sup> Inter-colonial connections in the English West Indies were facilitated by this illicit trade and conflict in the form of privateering, which arose either explicitly or implicitly in response to those barriers imposed by colonial powers.<sup>45</sup>

Maritime travel in the seventeenth century, despite the regularity of transatlantic crossings, was time-consuming. Time spent in transit between European metropolises and the colonies of the West Indies varied widely and depended on the time of year, the quality of the vessel, and the weather, but most voyages lasted upwards of four months.<sup>46</sup> This physical and temporal dislocation from the sources of political legitimacy and capital backing exacerbated the tenuousness of life in the New World. Colonial officers upon English Jamaica in its earliest years persisted for months at a time without word from London and were often left to their own

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<sup>43</sup> Koot, 26, 30. “An important feature of early English activity in the Caribbean, especially for privateers, was their constant collaboration with the Dutch.”; “...the 1641 marriage of Charles I’s daughter Princess Mary Henrietta to Prince William of Orange, the son of Dutch stadtholder, William I...laid the foundation for continued Anglo-Dutch cooperation even after the Stuarts were forced from the throne during the English Civil War.”

<sup>44</sup> Koot, 14.

<sup>45</sup> Jean Olivia McLachlan, *Trade and Peace with Old Spain, 1667-1750*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 78-122. “British colonists from the mainland smuggled sugar and rum from the French West Indies in spite of the Molasses Act and the fury of the British West Indian planters, both mainland and island colonists joined in the illicit trade to the Spanish islands for mules, and to the Spanish American mainland for bullion. The Spanish colonists were equally ready to take advantage of this contraband trade...”; Koot, 25-26, 121. “The outbreak of naval warfare with the Spanish in 1585...brought a great number of English privateers, men who carried permits issued by Elizabeth I to harass Spanish fleets, into the Caribbean for the first time.”; “In short, it appears that in a variety of empires and colonies, illegal trade was a regular feature of the seventeenth century Caribbean.”

<sup>46</sup> Geoffrey Stead, “Crossing the Atlantic: The Eighteenth-Century Moravian Experience,” *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 30 (1998), 23-36. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Moravian missionaries were reporting transit times of four months and more between London and Jamaica, which reflects the length of voyages reported in the CSP.



devices. Edward D'Oyley, who assumed the role as Governor after serving as Colonel, sent regular correspondence, which on numerous occasions bemoaned the abandonment of the colony by the Protectorate.<sup>47</sup> The distance and those inherent communication issues promoted lawlessness and illicit trade through the resultant vacuum of authority in Jamaica.<sup>48</sup> Privateers under the employ of various European kingdoms to the end of harassing and disrupting Spanish galleon fleets took root in Jamaica alongside English conquest. Privateering and trade represent additional and non-official means through which inter-colonial interactions were fostered. Life for the English in the West Indies was imbued and informed by these supracolonial affairs.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, commerce, colonists, slaves, subjects, and political officials were not – in this early modern period - fixed upon specific islands. Instead, they traveled, interacted, conflicted, and transplanted throughout the many colonies of the Caribbean that comprised the West Indies. Noting the divergence of this thesis from that of Amussen, it will make use of her reflexive notion of the English experience in the West Indian World and the understanding that circumstances and events in England and West Indies did not persist in isolation from each other. Politics and ideologies traversed the Atlantic through the corporeal intermediaries of those who made the transatlantic voyage with increasing regularity over the course of the seventeenth century.

Life in the West Indian World for early English colonists was unmistakable in its tenuousness. Notions of want and necessity underline an essential theme of this thesis, which regards the manners employed by colonists, subjects, and others in response to the actualities of

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<sup>47</sup> For instance, see: CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 1 (1574-1660), 26.

<sup>48</sup> Koot, 224. “Throughout the seventeenth century, Anglo-Dutch trade allowed immature English settlements to survive exogenous and endogenous crises and spurred their internal economic development through the supply of needed goods and services.”

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 225. “Anglo-Dutch trade, as profitable as it was for some, was motivated by neither greed nor disloyalty alone, but instead by a colonial-centric view of empire which maintained that before there could be a successful empire, there must be successful colonies.”

their temporal and spatial context. Conflict was a perpetual force, as was hunger, disease, and natural disaster. This thesis will not, despite its notable impact on Jamaica and the broader Atlantic World, concern English North America. It will instead locate the English Jamaican experiences within the West Indian World and the transatlantic web of English encounters in the early modern period much in the way that Philip Stern positioned the East India Company in his work, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India*. Jamaica serves as the thematic fulcrum, contextualized within the West Indian World conceived by European force.

The primary epoch of Atlantic World colonization featured the discovery, conquest, and enslavement of indigenous populaces by the Spanish and Portuguese. Indigenous knowledge of the land was essential to early economic endeavors based around mineral extraction.<sup>50</sup> Egregious treatment, disease, and rebellion combined to initiate a sharp decline in indigenous population numbers as the Iberian kingdoms sought to exploit their conquered lands.<sup>51</sup> To support their growing empires and ever-increasing colonial aspirations, a solution to the mounting labor dilemma was imperative. Given historical economic connections between European kingdoms and counterparts in Africa – most notably Portugal and the Kingdom of Kongo – the African slave trade presented an attractive and formidable labor market. Although it would take until the eighteenth century for the transatlantic slave trade to become the prevailing force behind colonialism, small-scale transactions were commonplace as early as the early sixteenth century.<sup>52</sup>

The historical case of early English Jamaica offers a unique glimpse – both politically and developmentally – into the foundation and formation of a colony that would become the

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<sup>50</sup> Geoffrey Scammell, *The First Imperial Age: European Overseas Expansion, 1500-1715*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), 112.

<sup>51</sup> Padrón, 152.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 153-154.

jewel of British colonialism. Distinct, but discrete, processes imbued the early experiences of soldiers, planters, former slaves, merchants, and bureaucrats alike. Social and political processes that contributed to the establishment of English sovereignty, imperium, and dominium upon the island in turn consummated conquest, which defined the initial decades of the Jamaican colonial experience. The inability and unwillingness of the English armed forces – and the Spanish Jamaican oligarchy before it – to transform themselves into a landed agricultural class delayed the realization of a formidable settlement on the island and forestalled imperium and dominium. Throughout this process a trend of political ambiguity emanating from London dislocated and diffused authority throughout the English Atlantic World. The transition borne out in the Restoration shifted loyalties and dispossessed those commanders and provisional governors who had attained their position through the Cromwellian Protectorate – most notably in the personage of Scottish Presbyterian and Jamaican Governor Edward D’Oyley.<sup>53</sup> Despite this political upheaval in London, one constant upon English Jamaica throughout its nascent era was the incorporation of a social and religious “toleration” that allowed some to circumvent the social hierarchical structure that emanated from England.<sup>54</sup> Tolerance and intolerance, as expertly dissected by Alexandra Walsham, were indicative of an interdependent ebb-and-flow of socio-cultural reorganization in England throughout this period.<sup>55</sup> Until the establishment of English

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<sup>53</sup> The Restoration (1659-1661) refers to abolishment of the Cromwellian Protectorate and the return to a monarchical government under the rule of Charles II.

<sup>54</sup> Blair Worden, *God’s Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 63-90. Universal religious toleration was not a project of the Protectorate, but rather a trend of pragmatic conciliation toward Christian, but non-Catholic, religions was occasioned by the progressive and populist nature of the New Model Army. Oliver Cromwell was a devout Protestant, but was far more concerned with Catholic Spain and the expansion of the English kingdom than dogmatic orthodoxy and thus welcomed Presbyterians, Puritans, and Congregationalists, amongst others.

<sup>55</sup> Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500-1700*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

dominium and thus the finalization of conquest upon Jamaica, a palpable trend of negotiation and moderation allowed for the social engagement of disparate classes upon the island.<sup>56</sup>

Analysis of early English Jamaica through the lens of conquest provides considerable insight into the initial fifteen years on the island, 1655-1670. Thereafter, the Restoration government of Charles II took the reigns of English colonialism, which upturned the tentative order established within the nascent colony as a means of expanding its productive capabilities. For the first fifteen years of English Jamaica, it was not a foregone conclusion that it would remain a possession of the English Crown, as aspirant to the throne Charles II openly stated his intention to return the island to the Spanish upon his ascension.<sup>57</sup> Charles II moreover rigorously questioned the campaign of Generals William Penn and Robert Venables that acquired Jamaica, as they were the actions of a rebellious English regime. However by 1660, the newly restored King decided to retain the territory. In doing so, the Crown pursued imperium through the appointment of Royalist governors and officials who imposed institutions, laws, and imposts to promote colonial order. The colony of Jamaica, as an English entity, underwent a strenuous and wholesale reorganization of its bureaucratic and militaristic infrastructure. From 1660-1663, Charles II appointed governors, remodeled the army, and instituted new structures of governance meant to foment stability and increase productivity. Within this period, the English sought to reinforce their position on Jamaica by any means necessary. This quite often and remarkably included the efforts of privateers and the more inconspicuous roles of “free negroes”, for Jamaica from 1655-1670 was a struggling proto-colony.

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<sup>56</sup> Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>57</sup> Jon Latimer, *Buccaneers of the Caribbean: How Piracy Forged an Empire*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2009), 134.

The lack of material support as a result of the shifting political currents in London exacerbated the growth of Jamaica as an English colony and forced its pioneer colonists – those who held the greatest financial stake and most directly represented English interests – to seek alternative solutions to prevailing issues. As such, work was often outsourced to private individuals, who were utilized to construct the colonial infrastructure and to hunt and uncover the locations of Spanish guerrillas and former slaves alike who inhabited the northern shores and mountainous interior of Jamaica. When these efforts proved insufficient, the English were compelled to recruit assistance from even unlikelier sources.

After years of gradual, but minimal, success against the Spanish guerrillas, the English command on Jamaica was forced to reckon with their inability to confront all its enemies upon the island. The dual-fronts against the guerrillas and bands of former Spanish subjects were costly and unsustainable for the colony. Colonel D'Oyley, despite his notable deficits in force and arms, was compelled to reduce the non-English combatants of Jamaica. Years of campaigns against the Spanish and hostile bands of former Spanish subjects had failed to achieve the intended ends and led to the exploration of a strategic partnership with a notable Palenque of “negroes” under the command of Juan de Bolas. The articles of the eventual proclamation that formally established this relationship offered unprecedented rights and liberties to the former Spanish subjects. This moment provides a distinct example of the negotiations and incorporative cosmopolitanism that defined early English New World colonialism.<sup>58</sup>

The New World of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a confluence of disparate cultures, politics, and identities. For more than a century following the arrival of Columbus, Spanish conquistadors swarmed the shores of the American continents and the islands of the West Indies with limited competition from European Rivals. The establishment of colonial

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<sup>58</sup> Games, 10.

centers in modern-day Mexico, Peru, and Cuba facilitated Spanish efforts to exploit the vast untapped mineral deposits of its new territories. However, their myopic focus on mineral extraction blinded the Spanish to the immeasurable agro-economic potential of its New World territories. Islands in the West Indies, despite their bountiful arable lands, persisted in a state of underdevelopment and served mainly as provision stations for conquistadors and the convoy system.<sup>59</sup> In this context, English privateers operated in clandestine fashion to disturb the Spanish and extract a small measure of the vast wealth emanating from its American territories. These very same conditions – underdevelopment, a lack of investment by the Spanish Crown, and scant infrastructure – were likewise crucial to the experiences of those disenfranchised subjects of the Spanish. In the vacuum of social order and political authority that reigned in Jamaica – as well as throughout many of the Spanish West Indian territories – individuals of African, indigenous, and additional origins functioned alongside the colonies with varying degrees of independence and autonomy. Such experiences proved fundamental to the growth of Palenques upon the island and, alongside the cosmopolitan nature of early English colonialism, informed the development of the independent societies and socio-political identities known to history as the Jamaican Maroons.

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<sup>59</sup> Christopher Schmidt-Nowara and John Nieto-Phillips, *Interpreting Spanish Colonialism: Empires, Nations, and Legends*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 61-63.

## 2 CONQUEST AND SOVEREIGNTY – THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN THE WEST INDIES AND JAMAICA

By the turn of the seventeenth century, Spanish dominion over the New World had begun a long-term process of deterioration as state centralization, the defeat of the Spanish Armada at the hands of the English navy, and privateering efforts contributed to the destabilization of its stranglehold on transatlantic preeminence.<sup>60</sup> Spanish conquest of the New World throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was predicated on a facile concept of Catholic proselytization. Justifications for the enslavement and abuses of the indigenous were guided by forced conversion through the *Requerimiento*.<sup>61</sup> Affairs in Spain were overrun by the political absolutism of the Habsburg dynasty and the religious orthodoxy that followed the final victory of the Reconquista against the Moors, the reunification of the Crown, and the inception of the Spanish Inquisition, which era began with the expulsion of Jews in 1492. The exclusionary social practices that were part-and-parcel of the Inquisition had begun to seep into Spanish American territories by the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>62</sup> Such religious and social orthodoxy forestalled cooperation between Catholic Spain and its Protestant rivals in the Atlantic World and incited or prolonged tensions that exacerbated Spanish capital, both human and financial. Such practices were furthermore prohibitive of social enfranchisement for indigenous or African

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<sup>60</sup> Robert Hutchinson, "The Spanish Armada", (New York: St. Martin's Press 2013). Despite the disastrous failures in the North Sea in 1588 – which were, in large part, thanks to weather and poor navigation rather than the prowess of the English fleet – the Spanish Armada had begun a gradual descent. While the Spanish monarchy maintained and rebuilt much of the Armada thanks to its New World holdings, the exorbitant costs associated with the Thirty Years War in the first half of the century would overextend Spanish coffers, leaving the Armada bereft of the capital it had so long enjoyed. Any losses suffered thereafter would prove too costly.

<sup>61</sup> Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*, trans. Cedric Belfrage, (New York: Monthly Review Press 1997; Spanish original 1971), 11-15. "America was the vast kingdom of the Devil, its redemption impossible or doubtful; but the fanatical mission against the natives' heresy was mixed with the fever that New World treasures stirred in the conquering hosts."

<sup>62</sup> Charles Jago, "Habsburg Absolutism and the Cortes of Castile," *American Historical Review* 86 (April 1981), 307-326. By the 1640s, "absolutism...gradually triumphed" as the Cortes were isolated from the cities and became vestigial institutions.

individuals, who were to be “saved” through their Catholic tutelage and the cathartic qualities of brutal manual labor.

Habsburg Spain was further weakened by its involvement in the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) as the expensive campaign resulted in the recognition of an independent Protestant Dutch Republic and few – if any – gains made.<sup>63</sup> The formation of the Iberian Union (1580) with Portugal opened up the lucrative African slave trade routes to Spain, but the Crown was reticent to invest substantial capital in the endeavor. As a result of Spanish royal intransigence on the issue of the African slave trade, colonists were denied the labor supply they coveted. Dissolution of the Union in 1640 left the Habsburg Spanish Empire bereft of the labor source thereafter. These multitudinous preoccupations, missteps, and institutional practices combined to reduce Spanish preeminence after more than a century of near unchallenged dominance within the New World.

The sixteenth century kingdom of England grappled with unrelenting socio-religious and institutional reformations.<sup>64</sup> The renunciation of the Catholic Church by King Henry VIII in 1534 led to social polarization between Protestants and Roman Catholics, resulting in controversies regarding the role of Catholicism and the presence of “popery”. The nature of English society throughout the sixteenth century was indelibly affected by shifts in both religion and politics, including Henry VIII breaking with the Catholic Church and the shared-rule of Mary and Philip II from 1553-1558. The failed assault of Protestant England by the Spanish Armada would establish Catholicism and its constituents henceforth as the mortal enemy of the English state.

That same year, Elizabeth I ascended to the English throne in place of Philip II. Within the first

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<sup>63</sup> Peter Wilson, “Who Won the Thirty Years War?” *History Today* 59 (August 2009), 12-19. Spain maintained its imperial title and gained allies, but little was accomplished through the considerable bloodshed.

<sup>64</sup> Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1993), 103-184. England underwent a series of political Reformations in the early sixteenth century, including a number of administrative and bureaucratic reforms implemented by Thomas Cromwell.



years of her reign, Elizabeth set about the task of formalizing England as a Protestant state with the Act of Supremacy and Act of Uniformity in 1558 and 1559 respectively. Each of these developments in English history speaks to the indelible role of religious dogma within sixteenth and seventeenth century European governance. However, despite a historiographical tendency to understand the social and political upheavals of the 16th and 17th centuries in England through this broader religious context, the two are more accurately co-determinant in nature.<sup>65</sup>

At the turn of the seventeenth century, England was a kingdom consumed by change. The passing of Elizabeth I, the subsequent ascension of James I to the thrones of Scotland and England, and the temporary cessation of tensions with the Spanish gave way to two tumultuous decades that featured attempts to bring Scotland under the English banner. Violent religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants manifested as violent political plots and inflected domestic English politics throughout the first half of the seventeenth century. These religious schisms reached a crescendo after 1625 when Charles I, wedded to a Roman Catholic, took the throne.<sup>66</sup> The subsequent two decades were shaped by the protracted English Civil Wars, which embodied the growing social rifts between Parliamentarians – who accused Charles I of tyranny and absolute monarchism – and Royalists alongside popular resentment toward the Laudian ascendancy.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> John Guy, *Tudor England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

<sup>66</sup> Michael B. Young, *Charles I*, (New York: St. Martin's Press 1997). The 1620s and 1630s set the stage for the complex, contentious, and revolutionary developments of the 1640s. Young focuses his critical analysis on the 1620-30s, while others argue for a more 1640s-centric analysis.

<sup>67</sup> John Phillips Kenyon, *Stuart England*, (New York: St. Martin's Press 1978); David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 167-169. "The collapse of the Laudian ascendancy was one of the earliest and most obvious signs of revolution."

Revolutionary change was sparked in 1645 with the birth of the politically independent New Model Army.<sup>68</sup> Its victories in Ireland and Scotland brought social divisions in England to the forefront, leading to the eventual dissolution of the monarchy and the beheading of Charles I in 1649.<sup>69</sup> Continued unrest in Ireland and Scotland led the New Model Army to declare England a Protectorate in 1653, vesting executive power in a Lord Protector with the mandate to call triennial parliaments. Under Oliver Cromwell, an ardent Puritan, domestic reforms pursued by the Lord Protector and Parliament focused on the restoration of social and political order.<sup>70</sup> Outwardly, however, the gaze of Protestant England was cast toward Ireland and the transatlantic presence of Catholic Spain. The Protectorate sought to consolidate and expand the English sphere of influence in the North Sea and beyond as a means of financing its new armed forces.<sup>71</sup>

While England was swept up in the tumult of its early seventeenth century, Spanish colonialism was concerned with mining enterprises in the Americas. The Spanish West Indies were meanwhile concentrated in Santo Domingo and Cuba and organized around the transport of these precious metals. The early seventeenth century Caribbean world was – with few exceptions – dominated by Spanish interests. Hispaniola, Cuba, and lesser holdings like Jamaica were defined by their roles in transatlantic commerce. In lieu of external threats, Jamaica had few defenses. This fact was highlighted when, in the 1620s, English Privateer William Jackson invaded and plundered Spanish Town with just 500 men.<sup>72</sup> The conquest of Jamaica by the

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<sup>68</sup> Mark Kishlansky, *The Rise of the New Model Army*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Kishlansky argues that the New Model Army embodied an ideology of consensus after consensus politics had broken down in Parliament and therefore competed for dominance with the many factions that arose in the wake of this collapse.

<sup>69</sup> Sean Kelsey, “The Trial of Charles I,” *English Historical Review* 118 (2003): 583-616. The beheading of Charles I was not the desired outcome for the judges presiding over his trial. Instead, they hoped the deposed king would abdicate his constitutional authority, allowing a new government to retain some aspects of the old oligarchical order. In his own defense, Charles I was successful in exploiting the divisions within the ranks of his prosecutors, which ultimately proved to be a fatal victory.

<sup>70</sup> Peter Gaunt, *Oliver Cromwell*, (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 98-121.

<sup>71</sup> Latimer. The Western Design initiated a campaign aimed at seizing trading routes and territories from Spain in the Caribbean to help pay for the New Model Army.

<sup>72</sup> Hickerlingill, 86-87.

English in 1655 likewise met limited resistance as the Spanish inhabitants; drawing upon the Jackson episode, fled with the belief that the English invaders would abandon the island once victuals and plunder had been conferred. On the contrary, the English seized control of the island and at once set about establishing a long-term colonial presence, forcing the Spanish to abandon all possessions they could not transport to Cuba.

The establishment of sovereignty and the pursuit of a profitable settlement inflected the growth of a collaborative relationship between the English and a Palenque upon Jamaica.<sup>73</sup> Interactions between these distinct entities exercised a dynamic and amorphous understanding of Englishness and liberties in this early modern era. Experiences in the period 1655-1670 elucidate an emergent political consciousness within the Palenque engaged with by the English colony. This consciousness was informed by colonial experiences and maintained in isolation thereafter by the actions of communities that became the Jamaican Maroons.<sup>74</sup>

Marronage upon Jamaica arose through the collective actions of disparate individuals. African slaves taken during the earliest epoch of the transatlantic trade were almost exclusively from the Kingdom of Kongo and the Portuguese colony of Angola. These individuals were victimized by processes of, “conquest, factionalism, commerce, and colonization,” that led to the enslavement of hundreds of thousands of Central Africans throughout this period.<sup>75</sup> An extensive history of intimate engagement with European culture and religion that spanned much of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had transformed the populations of these regions into what Ira

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<sup>73</sup> The term “Palenque” was used by the Spanish to describe the palisaded settlements built by runaway slaves, free blacks, and indigenous persons throughout the Americas. Examples persist to the present day, including the town of Palenque in Mexico.

<sup>74</sup> Barbara Klamon Kopytoff, "Colonial Treaty as Sacred Charter of the Jamaican Maroons," *Ethnohistory* 26 (1979), 45-64.

<sup>75</sup> Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Berlin defines as “Atlantic Creoles”.<sup>76</sup> To the end of satisfying labor demands of Spanish territories, colonists engaged in illicit trade with privateers and merchants who acquired slaves through various unofficial means – a process that would be replicated in the seventeenth century to facilitate greater numbers of African slaves to English, Dutch, and French colonies. Regardless of their path to the New World, these Atlantic Creoles composed a relatively homogenous population.<sup>77</sup> Meanwhile, African slaves imported to the Caribbean through the transatlantic trade in the mid-to-late seventeenth century were far more heterogeneous and had far less prior interaction with Europeans. Moreover, the institution of slavery in early Spanish and English colonialism did not guarantee lifelong servitude in the early seventeenth century, evidenced by the lack of a fixed legal meaning of the word “slave” in the English language.<sup>78</sup> The coalescence of these populations along with the remnants of indigenous societies shaped the unique nature of Marronage in Jamaica and directly impacted its colonial development.

The early years of English colonialism were constrained by engagements with both the Spanish guerrillas and “negroes” who took root in the island interior. Until 1658, the English under the command of General Edward D’Oyley were fixated on the task of expelling the Spanish.<sup>79</sup> However, despite the English victory at Rio Nuevo, hostilities between the rival colonial powers did not cease. Jamaica endured as emblematic of the hostility between Protestant

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<sup>76</sup> Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 23-49. Atlantic creoles were the “Charter Generation” of the transatlantic slave trade in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. They arrived to the New World with long-standing experience with intercultural relations, European legal tradition, and commerce.

<sup>77</sup> Heywood and Thornton, 236-240. The overwhelming majority of slaves imported to the Caribbean before 1650 were from West Central Africa, had experience with Portuguese traders in coastal towns, and practiced Catholicism prior to their enslavement.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 320-321. During the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, English colonists utilized the term “slave” to signify a “total dependency”, rather than a lifelong term of servitude.

<sup>79</sup> Edward D’Oyley, “A brief relation of a victory, obtained by the forces under the command of Gen. Edward Doyley, commander in chief of his Highness's forces in the island of Jamaica,” (London, 1659).

England and Catholic Spain until 1670.<sup>80</sup> The implementation of the Cromwellian Western Design transformed Jamaica – and the Caribbean moreover – into the theater of this violent rivalry.<sup>81</sup> Warfare between the English and Spanish was the result of both religious animosity and competing economic interests in the form of conquest, slavery, mining, and agriculture. The years 1655-1670 represent a palpable shift in power relations between the European states, both within the Caribbean and across the Atlantic. The gradual trend in English colonial possessions toward a plantation-based economy coincided with the moderate gains by English armed forces to present a very real to Spanish preeminence. A tenuous state of affairs persisted between the two states until the signing of the Treaty of Peace of Madrid (or, the Godolphin Treaty), at which point English and Spanish colonists and functionaries in the Atlantic were able to achieve a tenuous peace.<sup>82</sup> In the interim, faced with the possibility of reprisal from the Spanish Crown, English colonists on the island of Jamaica endeavored in spite of persistent insecurities.

Life in Jamaica was beset by omnipresent preoccupations that ranged from disease and political instability, to the persistent nuisance posed by Spanish guerrillas that remained on the island.<sup>83</sup> The burgeoning colonial presence on the island from 1655-1670 was guided by the navigation of these multitudinous concerns and promoted a concept of survival. Meanwhile, resistance to colonial authority defined this nascent period of English Jamaica for those who

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<sup>80</sup> For example, see: Council of State. “Articles of peace, union and confederation, concluded and agreed between his Highness Oliver Lord Protector of the common-wealth of England, Scotland & Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging. And the Lords the States General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands.” 1654; Council of State. “Articles of Peace, Union and Confederation, concluded and agreed between England and France” 1655.

<sup>81</sup> Robert Venables, *The Narrative of General Venables: with an Appendix of Papers Relating to the Expedition to the West Indies and the Conquest of Jamaica, 1654-1655*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Library, 1900), 1-116.

<sup>82</sup> “The Treaty of Madrid (Godolphin Treaty)”. July 18 1670. Established the mutual recognition of sovereignty of English and Spanish-held territories in the Atlantic. It signified an end to hostilities that had defined existence in the Atlantic colonial world within the Caribbean islands.

<sup>83</sup> Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972), 51-94; Koot, 6-8. “The government officials; merchants, both Christian and Jewish; servants of many ethnic origins; and both free and enslaved African who populated these colonies faced persistent challenges of acquiring adequate supplies, cultivating and exporting viable staples, and protecting themselves from indigenous peoples and foreign empires. The political and economic weaknesses that all three places faced spurred interimperial trade...”

inhabited the independent Palenques. In its embryonic state, the survival of the colony wrested upon a successful adaptation to the actualities of life in the context of a tumultuous Jamaican existence. Strategies employed by the colony were derived from its prior experiences in the West Indies through the Western Design, which laid the foundations for the adoption of a Palenque as the “black militia” of English Jamaica.

The English forces suffered continuous setbacks at the hands of “Negroes and Molettoes,” during their march to Santo Domingo. English requests for information on the Spanish were rebuffed and the bands of “Negroes and Molettoes” ambushed the invading troops all along the way.<sup>84</sup> The foray was disastrous for the English as the troops were routed and driven back to their ships. Defeat was inevitable. Despite this unequivocal failure, the English were imparted with newfound knowledge regarding the “negroes” of the Spanish West Indies, which was invaluable to Jamaican conquest.

Jamaica, prior to 1655, was a Spanish territory marked by rough terrain, untamed wilderness, little infrastructure or development, and a scant military presence. Thanks in part to the destructive siege of English privateer William Jackson thirty years prior; it offered little initial resistance to the English forces under Penn and Venables.<sup>85</sup>

“10th of May, anchor'd in theis harbour off Jamico (Jamaica), a safe, secure ridinge for 500 saile of the greatest ships, landlockt sufficient. That night wee landed all our army in the teeth of the enemy at his very forte, where he had 9 peece ordnance severally placed, with 500 defendents, who seeinge our resolution, most cowardly forsooke, and gave us all without any bloodshed, with two smale vessells near the forte. The 11th May we entred this towne Jamico (Spanish Town), they haveinge conveyed all theire portable riches, with wives, children and servants, into the mountaines, from whence thinking wee came (as coll. Jacksonn formerly did) to victuall, plunder, and soe be gone.”<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Hickersingill, 86-87.

<sup>85</sup> Hickersingill, 40-41.

<sup>86</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 3 (December 1654 - August 1655), 498-513.

After taking Jamaica with limited bloodshed in May of 1655, the English generals agreed to allow the Spanish time to negotiate terms of surrender, which allowed the Spanish ample time to strip their settlements and abandon their slaves and subjects, leaving Jamaica bare of plunder.<sup>87</sup>

Empty-handed, a small contingent from the landing forces, alongside a few entrepreneurial planters from nearby colonies, set about establishing themselves in St. Jago de la Vega (later renamed Spanish Town). However, the three-year period of 1655-1658 was consumed by Spanish attempts to disrupt and retake the island under Cristobal Arnaldo Ysassi. The majority of Spanish Jamaicans having fled, Ysassi awaited reinforcements from troop installments in nearby Cuba and Hispaniola while he engaged in a protracted guerrilla campaign.<sup>88</sup> Spanish intransigence impeded the formalization of English sovereignty and strained already limited human and material resources. Countless letters written in this period exude a sense of dread and desperation in English Jamaica that persisted long after the success of Colonel Edward D'Oyley and his troops against the Spanish at the Rio Nuevo. As late as July 26, 1660, then Governor D'Oyley decried to the metropole that, "The island has a sense of being deserted by their own country, which fills the minds of the people with sad and serious thoughts...(of) this unsuccessful war with Spain."<sup>89</sup> This passage projects the palpable sense of insecurity that permeated life in early English Jamaica and informs the subsequent English actions regarding the incorporation of the black militia.<sup>90</sup>

Early English Jamaica lacked both the financial investiture and human capital necessary to defend the island and foment large-scale agricultural production. The years of 1658-1661 were

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 41-43.

<sup>88</sup> Sir William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy: a history from the earliest times to the present, vol.ii*, (London, 1898), 117-218.

<sup>89</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 1 (1574-1660), 26.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 11.

defined by these material deficits.<sup>91</sup> Colonel D'Oyley, who received his official Commission from Charles II to serve as Governor of Jamaica in February of 1661, underlined these deficits amidst the political turmoil in the metropole in his correspondences with the Admiralty of the Navy in early 1660:

“(D’Oyley) has made a hard shift to keep the seamen alive these five months, selling whatever they could spare to buy them provisions... Finds by the distractions at home little hope of provisions... The want of shoes and all things necessary for soldiers has this summer given such heart to the negroes that they have done more mischief than in the past two years.”<sup>92</sup>

This passage is illuminating for both its bold depiction of the Restoration as “distraction”, as well as its reference to a settlement of “negroes” – which was, in actuality, a heterogeneous mixture of non-European former subjects of Spanish Jamaica. Following the victories over the Spanish colonists in 1655 and the guerrillas in 1658, D’Oyley fixated on reducing troublesome settlements of “negroes” one of which was discovered to have established, “a town... planted (with) about 200 acres of provisions,” in the inaccessible, mountainous interior of the island.<sup>93</sup> This juxtaposition of realities, of the English colony in desperate want of provisions and the town of “negroes” with its bountiful crops, underlines the fragility of English Jamaica, despite the victories. The erosion of the Protectorate following the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 threw the English colonial system into disarray. Political dislocation undermined the hierarchical command structure and left colonial councils and commanders with little recourse, as borne out in the delicate situation of Jamaica as of 1661.

The reign of Edward D’Oyley, the Protectorate Colonel turned Royal Governor, was not to last despite his efforts. In August of 1661, less than a year after his receipt of the

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<sup>91</sup> Hickersingill, 18-28.

<sup>92</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 329, 332.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, 332.



Governorship, a Royalist bureaucrat from the English gentry replaced D'Oyley. However, prior to his removal and replacement, D'Oyley engaged in negotiations with the discovered town of “negroes” to the end of establishing a collaborative working relationship. Within the span of weeks, this political maneuver gave rise to campaigns against “other negroes” and the Spanish:

“they, with our men, routed and destroyed two settlements of other negroes and then took them to the Spanish camp where of about 140 we killed and took about 80...About four days since another settlement was destroyed where 30 negroes were taken. ‘Though the number of these was inconsiderable yet their advantages were so great that it is God's mercy a man of our regiment was left alive.’”<sup>94</sup>

This passage presents the first iteration of the eventual black militia under Juan de Bolas and further underlines the inconsiderable nature of the English Jamaican forces. The year 1660 thus marks a turning point in the English conquest of Jamaica and the history of Marronage upon Jamaica.

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<sup>94</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 335.

### 3 EARLY COLONIALISM, COSMOPOLITANISM, AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE JAMAICAN MAROON CONSCIOUSNESS

Marronage was a pervasive experience of the Europeanized New World. Maroon communities were brought together by circumstances constructed by the onslaught of colonialism and early modernity and, as such, were the foremost precipitates of European conquest and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.<sup>95</sup> However, each iteration of Marronage emerged along independent timelines that were facilitated as the result of unique local experiences with broader colonial systems. The Jamaican Maroons are thus distinctly indicative of the history of Jamaica as a result of the many historical influences to which it played host. The individual Palenques and bands of “negroes” who constructed these communities can be better understood through an understanding of the European influences that inculcated life for all upon Jamaica during the early modern period.

Throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Portugal maintained near monopolistic control over the African slave trade. In the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, Portuguese traders and raiders began claiming territory, establishing trade routes, and forming economic relationships with kingdoms along the coast of West Africa.<sup>96</sup> These relationships and territories evolved over the course of the next century, becoming important facets in affairs of both Portugal and the African kingdom, Kongo. The foundation of the African colony of Portuguese Angola and long-term transcultural economic connections and interactions gave birth to new creolized communities. The allure of Portuguese wealth and power, alongside its slight advantage in scale and population, also instigated the Europeanization of elite Kongo social classes, which led to the adoption of

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<sup>95</sup> Kathryn Joy McKnight and Leo Garofalo, *Afro-Latino Voices: Narratives from the Early Modern Ibero-Atlantic World, 1550-1812*, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2009).

<sup>96</sup> McKnight and Garofalo, xii.

Africanized Catholicism and European forms of education.<sup>97</sup> The formation of the Iberian Union brought the Portuguese kingdom under the Spanish Crown and allowed Spain access to the African trade routes established by Portugal, which offered a long-term solution to the labor deficit in the New World.<sup>98</sup> Despite continued complaints by Spanish colonists that more slaves were required for their estates, the number of Africans in the West Indies increased only modestly during the era of the Iberian Union (1580-1640).

Concomitant with the transatlantic slave trade were issues related to logistics and safety. The ceaseless resistance of African slaves presented a serious impediment to Spanish colonial projects. Uprisings were exceedingly common, occurring at every juncture of the middle passage, in ports along the way, and upon arrival to the Americas.<sup>99</sup> Slave escapes and rebellions were a fixture of the New World experience, which made oversight vital to European intentions. During this Spanish-dominated era, the first iterations of runaway slave communities began to coalesce through the combined efforts of African slaves, free blacks, and the remnants of native populations. The concentration of Spanish and Portuguese colonial populations within the immediate vicinity of port cities allowed for the dispersal of these syncretic communities in the more inaccessible reaches of islands.<sup>100</sup>

Free black communities benefitted from the inability of European states to effectively assert control over the vast territories of the New World. From the northernmost reaches of the English North American territories, to the southern stretches of Spanish-controlled South America, the foundations of Marronage were the unavoidable consequences of early European

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, xii-xvi.

<sup>98</sup> Jason Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 26-31.

<sup>99</sup> Herbert S. Klein, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 196-197. "From the very first days in all American slave societies, running away, or *marronage*, was a common occurrence."

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 56-58. Colonization of the interior happened "rather haphazardly" and was "restricted to the areas marked by semi-rural population". Thus, the Spanish population was consolidated in townships like Santiago de la Vega.

colonialism. The displacement and decimation of indigenous communities, along with the importation of Central and West African slaves, created the conditions under which new and independent identities and societies formed. In resistance to European imperialism, these peoples adapted and persisted, forging cultural traditions that outlasted the very colonial structures from which they sought solace.

The calendar of state papers for English Jamaica from 1657-1661 details countless encounters, ambushes, and raids enacted by bands of “negroes” against the nascent colony. Life in the harsh Jamaican interior for Palenques was exacerbated by English aggression and necessitated a sophisticated defensive and opportunistic posture. However, these communities did not enter into existence upon arrival of the English. Their transition toward Marronage instead began throughout the Spanish colonial era.<sup>101</sup> They existed alongside the Iberians - at once isolated from, exploited by, and active in the colony. Members of these – in some sense imagined – communities acted with agency whenever possible, remaining hyperaware of and reactive to European colonialism. Constant interaction with Europeans imparted these individuals with a salient understanding of its political structures and legal traditions.<sup>102</sup>

Spanish Jamaica experienced three more or less distinct epochs in its history as it regards the supply and utilization of slave labor. Upon arrival of the conquistadors to the island, there existed an estimated 60,000 indigenous inhabitants.<sup>103</sup> Following conquest and pacification of Jamaica, it was resolved by the Spanish monarchy that the pioneer colonists were in need of a labor force to exploit the natural resources of the new territory. The arrival of Governor Juan de Esquivel in 1509 signaled the incorporation of indigenous Jamaicans into the Spanish colonial

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<sup>101</sup> Padrón, 129, 156-157. In 1596, Spanish Governor Don Fernando Melgarejo Córdoba established a company of troops that included “indigenous inhabitants and free mulattoes”. Oidor Juan de Retuerta would also report that the cavalry was composed of “mulattoes, free blacks, and paid servants”.

<sup>102</sup> McKnight and Garofalo; Padrón. Each work outlines the long-term and intricate relationship between European colonialism and kingdoms of West and Central Africa and indigenous communities of the Americas.

<sup>103</sup> Padrón, 31.

system as its sole source of manual labor. In the first brief era of the Spanish Jamaican labor scheme, natives were put to work in pursuit of rumored mines upon the island.<sup>104</sup> When these mines failed to materialize and were abandoned, indigenous labor was transferred to cotton and yucca cultivation and textiles. With the final production shift toward labor-intensive sugar cane cultivation in the second half of the sixteenth century, it was apparent that the native population could no longer satisfy colonial demands.<sup>105</sup>

The issue of labor became a pressing concern of the colony, so much so that in 1601 Governor Don Fernando Melgarejo sent an expedition into the Sierra de Bastida – or, Blue Mountains – with the intention of subduing and subjugating independent indigenous communities that occupied the area.<sup>106</sup> However, such actions were a temporary salve to the gradual deterioration of Spanish Jamaica. State centralization and commercial isolation would restrict development upon the island, fomenting haphazard colonial growth.<sup>107</sup> At the turn of the seventeenth century, the scant island population reflected these impediments, which stood at 1,510 individuals – with African slaves outnumbering adult Spaniards.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, there existed a significant free black population, such that it outnumbered non-Spanish Europeans and indigenous persons.<sup>109</sup> The presence of a free black population is further affirmed by a dispatch from the Oidor Juan de Retuerta, who detailed the Spanish Jamaican cavalry composed of “mulattoes, free blacks, and paid servants”.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Padrón, 147-148.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 152. “The disappearance of the island’s Indian population was such a real and fundamental loss that, at the end of the sixteenth century, Governor Don Fernando Melgarejo expressed his alarm to the King.”

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 31-35.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 156.

Despite the growing economic significance of African slavery in the first half of the seventeenth century, the Spanish Crown refused to increase the number of licenses issued for their importation. Colonists, who illegally purchased Angolan slaves from ships visiting Jamaican ports for supplies and repairs, eventually circumvented restrictive royal import duties.<sup>111</sup> As of English conquest in 1655, the non-European population of Jamaica included an estimated 1,000 African slaves from the Gold Coast and Angola.<sup>112</sup> Life in isolation thereafter held paradoxical implications for the various inhabitants of Spanish Jamaica. For its former Spanish masters, the untamed north provided a base of operations from which to obtain supplies and reinforcements while the Crown prepared a full re-conquest of the island. Meanwhile, the former “negro” subjects of Spanish Jamaica sought the Blue Mountains, Mount Diablo, and the vast karst-lined interior for refuge.<sup>113</sup> Under the leadership of Cristobal Arnoldo Ysassi, the last Spanish contingent upon the island engaged in raids against English colonists and plantations. For their part, the English were tireless in their pursuit of the Ysassi and his men, claiming victories at nearly every encounter.<sup>114</sup> Although undoubtedly Spanish slaves were utilized throughout the guerrilla campaign against their will, the remaining “negroes” of Spanish Jamaica unequivocally distanced themselves from the former Iberian masters.<sup>115</sup> Instead they sought an existence in isolation from the violent European rivalry, constructing their Palenques as sites of refuge. These newfound communities sprang up as autonomous political entities, possessing a “captain” to act as an executive in all matters social and political. They were – in no uncertain terms – distinct and separate from the European populations upon the island during this period in

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 157.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Figure 1. The Palenque of Juan de Bolas, formally incorporated by colonial proclamation in 1661 is recognized as lying at the base of Mount Diablo. English and Spanish account recognize additional Palenques situated in the interior, on either side of what would become Cockpit Country.

<sup>114</sup> Padrón, 210-211. Ysassi receives the brunt of the blame for Spanish failures in retaking Jamaica. Despite limited material support from the metropolis, Ysassi’s strategic incompetence is noted ad-nauseum.

<sup>115</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 4 (Sept 1655 - May 1656), 454-462.

all matters social, cultural, and political. As such, friction with the rapid English colonial expansion was unavoidable.

Symptomatic of their lifestyle of resistance were terse yet tremendously meaningful exchanges between the “negroes” and representatives of the English colony.

“We sent other parties abroad, and finding nothing, we took up our quarters there for that night; a negro came on horseback demanding what we came for, for victuals? answer was no, but to seek out the Spaniards in those parts; his, that they had no more to do with the Spaniards than with us, and if we came to kill them, they would kill our men when they pleased. Being asked what they did there? they did intend to live there so long as there was any cattle to kill... Meeting with two negros on horseback, I and one more fired upon them, their horses carried them from the path.”<sup>116</sup>

This passage – excerpted from the journal of Captain Sabada, a Jewish pilot who served at the behest of Vice Admiral Goodson – details a reconnaissance mission to uncover the whereabouts of the Spaniards remaining on the island. Although a Spanish captive was taken and interrogated, the interaction between Sabada and the “negroes” is more prominent for a few vital reasons. It foremost highlights how they engaged in communications with both the English and Spanish. They assert an acute familiarity with the European rivalry and express a clear intention to avoid it altogether. Furthermore, their aggressive and defensive stance against intrusion by European agents is punctuated by the threat of death. This passage speaks to the unequivocal rejection of overtures from both the Spanish and English. This encounter, in the region nearest Point Pedro on the southwestern coast, underlines the political calculations of the many communities of “negroes” and is indicative of their independent political and social identities. Hierarchical leadership structures, defined boundaries, built environments, agricultural production, armed forces, and cultural traditions underline how, as of 1658, these “negroes” were coalescing toward

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<sup>116</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 4 (Sept 1655 - May 1656), “Capt. Sabada’s journal”.

a state of neutral, self-sustaining independence.<sup>117</sup>

The most prominent figure that emerges within the colonial record from these new communities within the period of 1655-1663 is Juan de Bolas, leader of a Palenque near Spanish Town. In their settlement – which this study situates due north of Morant Bay at the base of Mount Diablo in St. Anne’s Parish given cartographic and written evidence – upwards of forty people led by de Bolas were confronted by the real and persistent threat of discovery by English forces.<sup>118</sup> From the arrival of the English upon the island until 1658, the Palenque was faced with the threat of being forcibly absorbed into the European rivalry due to their history with the Spanish, their proximity to the colony, and the unease they stirred given their undefined loyalties. The Europeanized history of Jamaica paints a portrait of its Spanish founders, colonists, governors, and conquerors as petty, myopic oligarchs with little regard for the rights of the indigenous or the proper development of the island as a colony. The arrival of the English marked the advent of a new era defined by conquest, expansion, settlement, and incorporation. In its earliest years, English Jamaica was consumed with efforts to expel the Spanish, settle the arable lands of the island, and establish a productive colony.

The wholly new, syncretic communities of the Jamaican Palenques engaged in a guerrilla lifestyle necessitated by their surroundings and imperial forces. Raids on English settlements complemented their isolated subsistence agricultural existences through the acquisition of manufactured goods. Irregular military engagements in the island interior further convinced

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<sup>117</sup> These elements were born out in: leadership structures – Captains served as “executive” figures of each Palenque; defined boundaries – the envoys in their interaction with the English display an understanding of the savannahs as being common and public and defend their rights therein to hunt undisturbed; built environments – palisades and huts were defining features of Palenques; agricultural production – the free blacks, mulattoes, and natives who formed Palenques constituted the labor force of Spanish Jamaica and utilized these skills once free of the Iberians; armed forces – free blacks, mulattoes, and slaves served and were maintained in a company of the Spanish Jamaican armed forces as a cavalry and did so as well in their Palenques; and cultural traditions – Palenques expressed cultural elements of Central and West African societies, adopted indigenous practices, communicated in Spanish, and formed syncretic beliefs.

<sup>118</sup> Figure 1.



Commander D'Oyley that his forces and their lack of familiarity with the island surroundings left the colony at a serious disadvantage against non-English combatants. The soldiers were ill prepared and lacked adequate training for the mountains of Jamaica with its dense woods and unrelenting humidity. However, what they lacked in ability, English forces more than made up for in numbers and arms. The bands of former Spanish subjects, on the other hand, each totaled an estimated 40 inhabitants, the majority of which were experienced, talented lancers who used the island foliage and the cover of night as strategic advantages.<sup>119</sup> These inequities in force were on full display when, in April of 1656, a settlement of one such band was discovered by the forces under D'Oyley:

“Since my writing this, it hath pleased God to give us some successe against the Negroes. A plantation of theirs beeinge found out, wee fell on them, slew some, and totally spoiled one of their chief quarters.”<sup>120</sup>

This letter represents the first report of a substantial confrontation between the English and the nearest established Palenque. Taken in the context of the northern Jamaican campaign and complementary reports, this passage warrants significant consideration.

Efforts by Colonel D'Oyley and the English armed forces to root out their Spanish enemies upon the island had, prior to April 1656, been fruitless. Guerillas in the unsettled north and west of Jamaica remained unperturbed as they awaited reinforcements. Meanwhile, the scarcity of English plantation was further exacerbated by a sickly and discontented soldiery that refused colonial overtures to convert the armed forces to planters. As such, even sporadic raids by the “negroes” and Spanish guerrillas were devastating to the colonial project. The English, with their lack of experience upon the island, were forced to utilize the talents of privateers to

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<sup>119</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 4 (Sept 1655 - May 1656), 474-488.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, 710-722.

locate the Spanish guerrillas and assist with the coordination of attacks.<sup>121</sup> It is thus with considerable excitement that D'Oyley reported to Secretary Thurloe that a "plantation" of the scurrilous "Negroes" had been discovered and ransacked. Such news would have been met with great enthusiasm, were it not for the report issued by Major Sedgwick twelve days hence that revealed a demoralizing ambush by another band of "negroes" against the English forces:

"in two daies (presently after the Grantham's departure) more then forty of our souldiers were cutt off by the Negros...God will, I many times hope, carry on some worke for Christ in theis parts...I could willingly imbrace this mercy in cutting of those fue Negroes, and in subduing those discontented spiritts of our owne, as a singular mercy from heaven."<sup>122</sup>

The details of this single month elucidate the tenuousness of the English presence upon Jamaica and its incessant difficulties with the "negroes" of the island.

The initial three years upon Jamaica imparted Colonel D'Oyley with a salient understanding of the impediments to the fortification of English hegemony within the island. Despite their overtures at neutrality, material conditions upon Jamaica necessitated a confrontation between the Palenques and the English conquerors. Such that they represented difference as heterogeneous, non-European populations seeking independence, the Palenques aroused fears in the English colonists. Raids and guerrilla campaigns engaged in by these communities served to reinforce trepidations and spurred action by the English, whose efforts at attracting settlers to the island were hindered by the presence of hostile factions. The gradual English march toward the Spanish strongholds on the northern coast of the island brought the English armed forces into direct contact with a Palenque. These details of April 1656 expose a war being fought on two fronts. The contents of the correspondences emphasize the lack of

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<sup>121</sup> "Capt. Sabada's journal"

<sup>122</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 4 (Sept 1655 - May 1656), 737-751.

cohesion and disarray of the English colonial project post-conquest and the inability to grapple with the “negroes” whose disturbances exacerbated efforts against the Spanish.

The settlement “spoiled” by D’Oyley along his advance toward Spanish positions in the north is the first instance of an English encounter with a “negro” settlement. This episode also, speaks to a general misunderstanding of how such populations functioned. The sense of accomplishment exhibited by D’Oyley belies the actual strategic importance of the engagement. The former Spanish subjects were not defeated or subdued to any significant extent, nor were they representative of a single, homogenous “negro” community. Defiance of the English by the numerous independent bands of “negroes” continued unperturbed, as detailed by Major Sedgwick. It was a single blow struck against a singular contingent of these individuals. Its significance for the English, and D’Oyley more specifically, was for purposes of propaganda and morale. At a time when the future of Jamaica was far from determined, planters refused overtures to supplant themselves therein despite generous offers of land and the bountiful arable soil.<sup>123</sup> Progression toward stability was a necessary prerequisite for such endeavors and, given the intransigent nature of those who defied the English, this episode was trumpeted as a significant step in the proper direction.

The four years upon Jamaica following these letters from D’Oyley and Sedgwick were consumed by change. By July of 1657, colonists began to request support from the Protectorate against the threat that most prominently confronted planters on the island: the “wild Negroes”.

“(I have) written to you to procure...some blood-hounds, which are like to be of so great consequence here, for the finding and killing of the wild Negroes, that I am forced to joyne with...the same request to you. I am

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<sup>123</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 1 (1574-1660). Numerous entries from 1655-1660 detail offers of land and the excise of taxation on exports should planters remove themselves to Jamaica. Reports regarding the status of the island populace, the disaffection of the soldiery, and continued encouragements to planters elsewhere in the West Indies speak to the dire need to bolster the population of the island. Any attempts to supplant were also prevented by English governors on other islands, who detained such planters for “debts”. The truth was that governors were paid based upon the size of the populace, hence the prevention of departures.

confident, if his highnes did but know how usefull they might be here, he would cause some to be speedily sent.”<sup>124</sup>

This entreaty issued by Lieutenant-Colonel William Brayne underlines a coming strategic shift upon the island, even a year prior to the ultimate Spanish defeat. The transition would not be immediate, but the implementations of colonial imperium upon English Jamaica were beginning to take precedence as colonists recognized the productive possibilities of Jamaica and the impediment presented by the “negroes” of the island.

The partnership formed between the colony and the Palenque two years later, in terms of military strategy, was a natural fit. The regimented English troops, with their arms and structure, were complemented by the irregular guerrilla forces of the “negroes”, whose specialized skills as lancers allowed for more effective, concentrated attacks against the Spanish. The encroachment of English colonial expansion would confront the Palenque Juan de Bolas in 1658 following its discovery by English scouts. The discovery of this settlement was a turning point in the interactions between the English colonists and the “negroes”. Isolation was problematized by the conflict between the Spanish and English, which consumed Jamaica. While Edward D’Oyley lacked the official authority to govern the colony after the fall of the Protectorate, he attempted to advance the cause of English conquest by any means.<sup>125</sup> This aspect of the governorship of D’Oyley manifested in 1658 through the formation of a strategic partnership with Juan de Bolas and his Palenque.

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<sup>124</sup> CSP of John Thurloe, Volume 6 (January 1657 - March 1658), 376-391.

<sup>125</sup> Orlando Patterson, “Slavery and Slave Revolts: A Socio-Historical Analysis of the First Maroon War Jamaica, 1655-1740” *Social and Economic Studies* 3 (1970), 289-325.

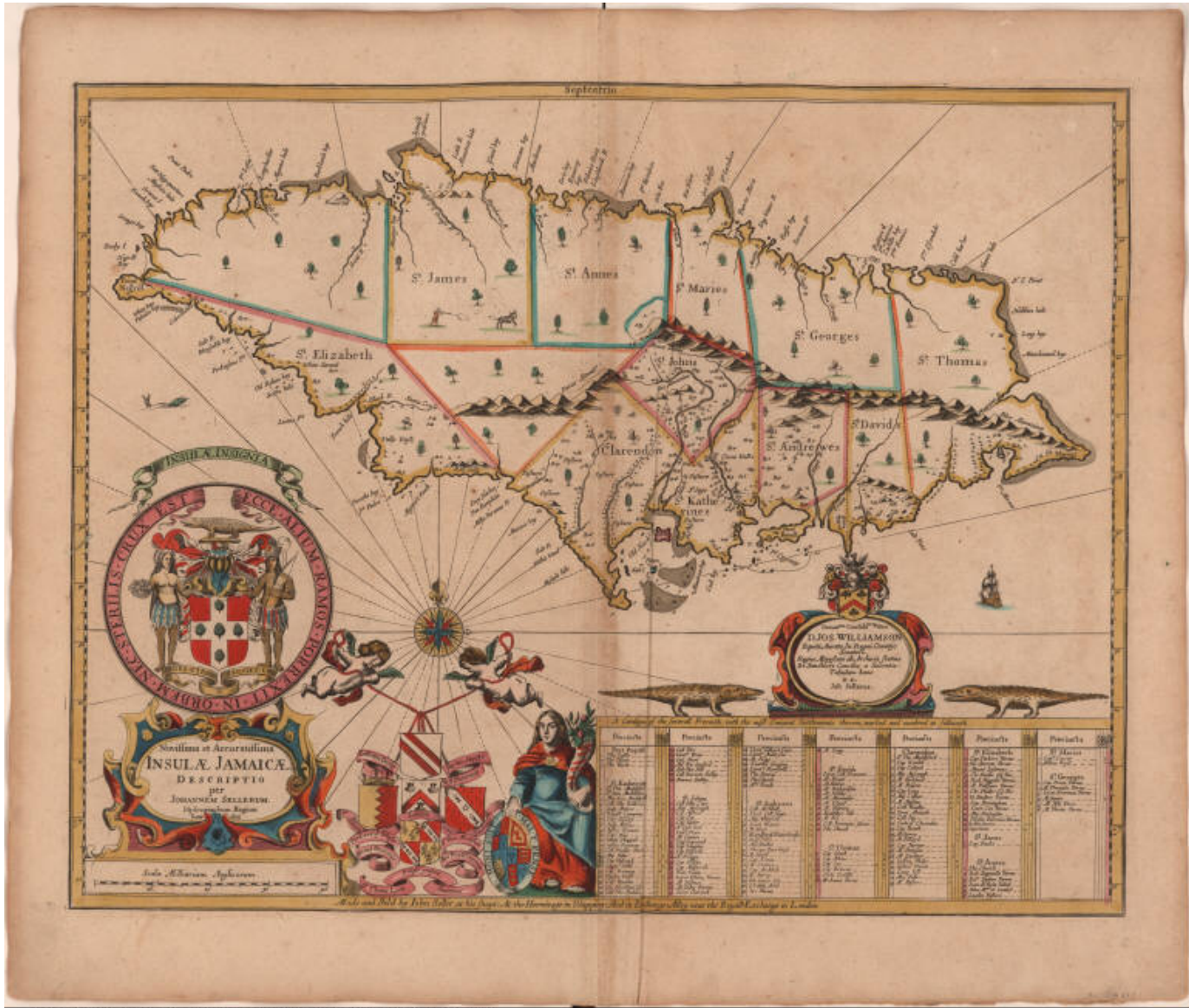


Figure 1. Map published by John Seller in London in 1671, based upon notes and surveys performed by John Mann during his time upon Jamaica from 1661 until his death around 1671. The “Iuan (sic) de Bola Ialink (sic)” is shown as being situated at the base of the western extent of “Mount Diabla” (sic) and as one of three settlements in St. Anne’s Precinct.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>126</sup> John Seller. *Novissima et Accuratissima Insulae Jamaicae*. Map, London: John Seller, 1672. The John Carter Brown Library Map Collection at Brown University. <<http://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/JCBMAPS~1~1~1869~105420005:Novissima-et-Accuratissima...>>

The campaigns entered into by Juan de Bolas and his *Palenque* put them at odds with the additional settlements of “Spanish negroes”.<sup>127</sup> The navigation of a reality muddled by conflict accents how these former Spanish subjects approached the issue of identity and their relation to the nascent colonial society in the early years of English Jamaica. Unlike the Spanish before them, the English sought to settle and develop a formidable colonial presence upon the island, which included plantations and substantial commerce. However, in this early English period, the colony lacked the human capital to provide adequate protection of the island from the belligerent presence of the Spanish in nearby Cuba and Hispaniola.

Spanish documents that emanated from post-conquest Jamaica provide ample detail about the “palisades” constructed by the bands of “Blacks”, such that they were considered the most suitable staging grounds for a Spanish reconquest of the island.<sup>128</sup> However, the Spanish operated on the mistaken conception that hostility toward the English post-conquest by these settlements was indicative of loyalty to the Spanish. Within both the English and Spanish record, interactions are recorded that underline the refusal of overtures from each European power. The Europeans employed a problematic binary that misunderstood the choices that confronted these populations. Rather than choosing between European colonial loyalties, these groups opposed colonialism in its entirety. Their interactions were imbued with an isolationist intent that refused the Europeans in favor of independence. However, such isolation left the communities of “negroes” bereft of products with which they had grown accustomed prior to English conquest. Prominent amongst goods desired by these settlements was liquor, a fact understood and exploited by D’Oyley:

“the negroes...have done more mischief than in the past two years, having snatched away a captain, two ensigns, and divers soldiers, and killed others, which hath necessitated (D’Oyley) to set an impost on strong liquors which has had the good success of finding out where the negroes

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<sup>127</sup> Patterson.

<sup>128</sup> Padrón, 213-214.

have lurked these four years undiscovered...The unexpectedness of this mercy makes him hope they may receive a better account of this unhappy design and place than in human probability could be expected.”<sup>129</sup>

The location of the Palenque was betrayed by the desires of its inhabitants as D’Oyley hatched his scheme. Thanks to a stroke of good fortune, the English were able to track the “negroes” back to their settlement – although exactly how this occurred was not detailed in the record. Exposed to possible confrontation by the full might of the English Jamaican colonial forces, nonalignment became untenable. The arrival of the English forces presented the “negroes” with a clear choice: either to collaborate with the English colony against its enemies and retain their settlement, or face an assault from the English. In a reality constrained by English conquest and Spanish intransigence, the immediate threat of the English forces problematized the pursuit of an existence in isolation for these “negroes”.

As previously detailed, the historical experiences of these individuals upon Spanish Jamaica were dominated by its Spanish oligarchical hierarchy and defined by social disenfranchisement despite their essential roles in its colonial military. The construction of Palenques allowed for independence and self-determinism hitherto disallowed even to those recognized as “free blacks” because freedom for non-Spaniards within the Spanish colonial system required submission and deference to the Iberian masters. Prior to the discovery of the Palenque by the English in 1660, these individuals had forged an existence removed from this systematized subjection. Their transition to isolation provided the opportunity for self-governance and self-determination, which in turn contributed to a conception of their communities as politically independent. Therefore, upon discovery, the discourse with the English took the shape of negotiations between two distinct polities, “the enemy having

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<sup>129</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9, (1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674), 129-139.

proffered their friendship and delivered up twelve hostages to make good their promise.”<sup>130</sup> The “enemy” herein was the Palenque of Juan de Bolas. The rhetoric in this passage, that of “friendship” and a “promise”, speaks to two parties of equal standing, engaging in a relationship that relied upon acts of good faith rather than force or subjection. The English did not assert their authority over the Palenque, they met “in conjunction with some negroes” who, “made peace” with the colony.<sup>131</sup> It is therefore no stretch of the imagination to conceptualize these negotiations as both exhibitiv of the political identity of the Palenque and the earliest indication of the agency of the “negroes”.

The formation of the collaborative relationship by the “negroes” commanded by Juan de Bolas was recognition of the reality that, to maintain their autonomy, political means had to be pursued. Experiences alongside Spanish Jamaica had imparted an understanding that self-governance and liberties were reserved for those with land who operated within the colonial system. Juan de Bolas, on behalf of his Palenque, thus pursued a means of assuring the persistence of their settlement through the preeminent authority of the English Crown as embodied by its Jamaican colony. However, in this nascent stage of English Jamaica, the colonial government was incapable of providing an effective, lasting defense of the island. Each side therefore arrived at the negotiations with clear intentions.<sup>132</sup>

The instability and insecurity of the English colony manifested in fashions beyond the pursuit of collaboration with the Palenque. Planters from nearby English West Indian possessions were reticent to transplant to Jamaica for this very reason. Negotiations between the colonial leadership and the Palenque of Juan de Bolas were a strategic and pragmatic course of

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<sup>130</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 335.

<sup>131</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 334.

<sup>132</sup> Mark Thompson, *The Contest for the Delaware Valley: Allegiance, Identity, and Empire in the Seventeenth Century*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013), 9-10. “...the same conditions that promoted identification with nations and empires also encouraged subjects to forge relationships that bridged or undermined those national and imperial boundaries.”



action that was an implicit effort to rectify the inequities of English Jamaica and thus assuage the fears of English colonists throughout the West Indian World. It was also a clear manifestation of the cosmopolitanism that imbued early modern English colonial projects.<sup>133</sup> Such endeavors included the expansion of rights and liberties within the colony, borne out through the experiences of the Palenque of Juan de Bolas and overtures to nearby colonies that were not limited to Englishmen, but rather included women, adolescents, and other “outsiders”:

“The King's proclamation for the encouraging of planters in Jamaica. His Majesty, fully satisfied that the island of Jamaica, with its fertile soil, and commodious situation for commerce, is likely to be a great benefit to his Majesty's other dominions, hereby declares for the encouragement of planters and settlers: That during the next two years, 30 acres of land shall be allotted by the Governor to every person, male or female, above 12 years of age, who shall reside upon said island within six weeks after application, to be held for ever by the tenure usual in other plantations; ...Children born in Jamaica of his Majesty's natural born subjects of England, to be free denizens of England.”<sup>134</sup>

By 1661, cosmopolitanism within English Jamaica had become essential to its growth and stability. Such social inclusivity was further evidenced by requests from Jewish and Presbyterian residents to mine and trade on the island, in fulfillment of the declaration of religious toleration issued by King Charles II upon the Restoration.<sup>135</sup> The socio-religious tensions that preoccupied domestic English affairs were trifles the colony could not afford in its nascent and precarious state. In lieu of stability and security, liberties and the right to land ownership were extended to social classes that, in the burgeoning metropole, had been reserved for aristocratic, Protestant Englishmen. The context of early modern England also meant that

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<sup>133</sup> Games, 10. “Although colonists, who emerged by the middle of the seventeenth century as an important population of English overseas, tended to have little interest in appreciating the customs of indigenous people, they happily pursued new economic opportunities, learned how to cultivate new crops, lived with and governed African and Indian laborers, and devised innovative social forms to sustain their colonial ventures.”

<sup>134</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 61-66; CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 1 (1574-1660), 490-492. “Proposals concerning Jamaica by James Earl of Marlborough. A small vessel to be dispatched with the King's letters to the several Governors of the Caribbee Islands, to encourage all willing to transplant themselves to Jamaica...Religious toleration to be granted to all who desire it.”

<sup>135</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 42-50.

race and its systematic manifestation in structures of governance – and thus social hierarchy – had yet to materialize, which was also true in the colonial frontier of Jamaica.

The emphasis on the establishment of English imperium and authority upon Jamaica was reflected by the efforts of the colonial governorship in the 1660s. From Edward D'Oyley to Lord Thomas Hickman-Windsor and Sir Charles Lyttelton, the Restoration regime in London promoted the peopling of Jamaica alongside structural reforms in the pursuit of stability. The success of the campaign against the Spanish and the abundance of arable lands on the island convinced the restored King Charles II to eschew his stated intention to return the island to Spain and instead formally recognized the tenure of D'Oyley, despite his close ties to the Protectorate regime. The structure and foundation of relations between English Jamaica and the Palenque of Juan de Bolas was therefore not manifest of a singular strategy employed by the metropole, but rather the result of decades of experience of the English in the West Indian World. The actions of the Palenque in conjunction with the colony were likewise not spontaneous. They were the result of experiences with European colonialism upon the island. As such, the formation of a relationship with English Jamaica underscores the distinct political awareness and agency of these individuals who, prior to English conquest, had learned how to effectively navigate European colonial milieu.

#### 4 THE “BLACK MILITIA” – ENGLISH JAMAICA AND THE BIRTH OF A NASCENT MAROON CONSCIOUSNESS

“That Juan (de Bolas) and the rest of the negroes of his Palenque, on account of their submission and services to the English, shall have grants of land and enjoy all the liberties and privileges of Englishmen, but must bring up their children to the English tongue. That other negroes in the mountains shall enjoy the same benefits, provided they submit within 14 days after receiving this notice. That (de Bolas) be colonel of the black regiment of militia, and he and others appointed magistrates over the negroes to decide all cases except those of life and death.”<sup>136</sup>

This proclamation by Governor Charles Lyttelton in 1663 formally recognized the status of the Palenque and offered political recognition and legal status. The “negroes” governed and commanded by Juan de Bolas engaged in a calculated political process that aimed to situate the community as a distinct, independent entity. Over the course of three years (1660-1663), their collaborations with the English forces had facilitated greater security for the colony and allowed for the continued autonomy of the Palenque. The foundations of this relationship, despite the imperialist intentions of the English upon Jamaica, were not in capitulation but rather political negotiation. This early modern episode underlines how the path to Marronage was not linear and required the constant coordination of responses to colonialism and imperialism. The legal recognition of the Palenque by Governor Lyttelton was the codification of a relationship that had developed in a collaborative struggle for stability and was a formal manifestation of strategies pursued by communities of “negroes” in their progression toward Marronage and a life in direct opposition to the English colony. This proclamation effectively maintained their separation from the colony, while insuring their armed assistance in the case of invasion. As such, it mimicked

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<sup>136</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 412.

the social structure encountered within Spanish Jamaica, with the addition of “liberties and privileges of Englishmen.”

Juan de Bolas and his people swore their services to the colony in return for an autonomous existence. Within the terms of this decree was the guarantee that the offspring of the Palenque must be brought up in the “English tongue”.<sup>137</sup> This of the formal relationship displays how, beyond the preoccupation with ridding Jamaica of hostile forces, the English colonists likewise distinctly feared the difference presented by Spanish-ness and the Spanish language. Understanding the roots of English Jamaica and its emergence from a campaign conducted by a Protectorate government that rose to and asserted power through opposition to the Spanish and Catholicism offers insight into the mindset of Englishness in this West Indian frontier.<sup>138</sup> The lack of support provided by the central government in the subsequent political tumult of the Reformation left the colony weak in terms of human, political, and financial capital. Assault by the Spanish or the additional settlements of “other negroes” that maintained their armed resistance against the English, was an untenable affront to the nascent colony.<sup>139</sup> Thus, in the face of insecurity and this political and social instability, Governor Lyttelton codified the relationship with the Palenque that had proved so effective in combatting English enemies. In doing so, the inclusion of the provision regarding the guarantee to “bring up their children to the English tongue” was an explicit attempt to ward against Spanish influence through the “negroes” who emanated from Spanish Jamaica.

Initial efforts at settling the island by the English forces had been miserable failures prior to the settlement of military affairs. Soldiers had no desire to become planters and planters were

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, (Manchester University Press, 2002), 79. “...Cromwell’s skillful explanation of the government’s foreign policy was surely designed to tap the deep roots of anti-Catholic prejudices shared by most Englishmen at this time. ‘Why, truly, your great enemy is the Spaniard’...”

<sup>139</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 335.

unwilling to relocate to an island so rife with insecurities.<sup>140</sup> Thus, the English were faced with a social crisis in addition to Spanish invasion. Returning to the proclamation of Governor Lyttelton, the terms are more comprehensible in the context of these social and political fixations. The English colonists confronted insecurity in all its manifestations upon Jamaica and, in doing so, pursued political strategies that addressed their most immediate trepidations. This proclamation was thus effective in two-fold manner: it bolstered the armed forces by bolstering the forces and removing an enemy from the battlefield, while also assuring the social preeminence of Englishness upon Jamaica.

Understanding the formal relationship from the perspective of the “negroes” under Juan de Bolas, it elucidates how the incorporation of the Palenque was a strategic political calculation. As subjects of Spanish Jamaica, they had been exploited for labor and armed assistance, but received no benefits or guarantees from the Iberian masters. Upon the invasion of the English and abandonment by the Spanish, the “negroes” escaped into the mountainous interior of Jamaica and constructed settlements governed by their own self-interest.<sup>141</sup> The experience imparted an acute understanding of independence and its inherent advantages for those previously subjugated and exploited. The successful resistance of the Palenque against the English armed forces on Jamaica further verified their capabilities, while the symbiotic relationship formed thereafter demonstrated their political aptitude and legitimacy. The English, exhausted in their attempts to root out their Spanish enemies, made the pragmatic decision to offer recognition and political guarantees in return for services rendered. For more than three

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<sup>140</sup> For instance, see: CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 257-258. “As yet no planters come down to them, our soldiers are too much addicted to sloth, and would rather famish than use means of preservation... The soldiers are being employed by the Commissioners in planting, and it not being relished by many, about 25 of them ran from their colours but were retaken and some of them executed.”

<sup>141</sup> Such a lifestyle followed the same path pursued by the indigenous Taino after conquest by the Spanish. The Blue Mountains served as a historical site of refuge and isolation from colonialism at numerous junctures throughout the post-Columbian history of Jamaica.

years thereafter, these “negroes” were charged with conducting raids on the Spanish guerrillas and the “other negroes” who maintained hostilities.<sup>142</sup> These demonstrated services to the nascent colony elicited the guarantees and incorporation of the Palenque as the “black regiment of the militia”.<sup>143</sup> The nature of their existence alongside and within the colonial order of Jamaica was preserved thereafter so long as their assistance proved useful to the English.

The Restoration in England resurrected the royal order that had prevailed under Charles I, removed restrictions against religious practices, and in turn restructured its external political engagements.<sup>144</sup> Its effects, although delayed for a number of years, were indelible upon Jamaica. When Charles Lyttelton inherited the Governorship of Jamaica from Thomas Hickman-Windsor, it was a colony teeming with yet unrealized possibility. Despite the reorganization of the armed forces on the island by Windsor, the military presence on English Jamaica was found wanting in the face of Spanish aggression, which necessitated the formalization of the relationship with the “negroes” by Lyttelton. The brief tenure of these successive governors provided a pivotal bridge to the pursuits and strategies of Restoration governance, given the desire of Charles II to expand the Jamaican colony and exploit its arable lands.<sup>145</sup> Without the benefit of the transatlantic slave trade, however, labor and human capital was at a premium in Jamaica.<sup>146</sup> Despite the increasing regularity of transactions involving African slaves on the island, these now “free negroes” were valued for their role in protecting and assuring Jamaica during this tenuous period in its history.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Patterson, 295-297; CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 335.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Gary De Krey, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>145</sup> Jack Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 64-80.

<sup>146</sup> Curtin, 51-94.

<sup>147</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 412. “Proclamation of Sir Chas. Lyttelton...concerning the free negroes.”

During the transition inherent with the Restoration, Jamaica persisted without authority, capital, and direction. As such, its governors employed strategies that intended to achieve stability without support from London. Through collaboration with the “negroes,” following their submission, the Jamaican governor sought to augment the situation of the island and transform it from a site of conquest to one of English imperium.<sup>148</sup> The unique ability of the “negroes” to manipulate the landscape to their benefit neutralized deficits of the English forces and was instructive to the colonists.<sup>149</sup> The additional notion of the “liberty of the negroes...and their heirs for ever” promotes the non-racial conception of Englishness within the context of Jamaica.<sup>150</sup> The “negroes” under Juan de Bolas were to be made “English” upon Jamaica and their militia was to be conscripted into permanent service for the colony and Kingdom. What emerges is the essential notion of cosmopolitanism that imbued early colonial interactions for the English.

Orlando Patterson understood the formation of this relationship on the part of the “negroes” under Juan de Bolas as, “downright treachery,” against the former Spanish slaves lead by Juan de Serras.<sup>151</sup> However, there is little evidence that the individual Palenques were in active communication with each other, nor that they felt a common kinship. These communities operated in isolation and engaged in a life of subsistence. The actualities of such an existence were further constrained by the European conflict that consumed the island. The Palenque of Juan de Bolas, as well as Juan de Serras, responded to the threat of confrontation in oppositional manners based upon their interactions with the English colony. The settlement of Juan de Bolas

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<sup>148</sup> Hickeringill, 44.

<sup>149</sup> Patterson.

<sup>150</sup> For further exploration of “liberty” and “Englishness” from 1640-1661 in the English Atlantic, refer to: Carla Gardina Pestana. *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004; Allison Games. *The Web of Empires: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560-1660*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

<sup>151</sup> Patterson, 296.

was the first discovered and was engaged with diplomatically. Meanwhile, the collaborative actions that emerged from political negotiations between the English and the Palenque of de Bolas subjected the settlement of Juan de Serras to raids.<sup>152</sup>

Proximity, perhaps more so than disposition, was a determining factor in the strategies employed by the English in the case of each Palenque. The Palenque of Juan de Bolas was uncovered lying due north of Spanish Town, which inherently made it of greater utility to the English colony situated therein.<sup>153</sup> Familiarity may have likewise been a consideration, as the Palenque of Juan de Bolas had engaged with colonial merchants for the purchase of liquors.<sup>154</sup> The English and Spanish colonial records do not elucidate a differing comportment of these Palenques in relation to the English prior to engagement with Juan de Bolas. Instead, it speaks to the isolationism pursued by each. The “negroes” on Jamaica were outnumbered by each of their European counterparts, especially when considered in the context of the West Indian World, and there is no evidence to suggest that either Palenque was keen to align with the colonists until compelled to do so. Each of the parties on the island post-English conquest independently navigated the unsettled political dynamics within Jamaica from 1655 until the Spanish guerrillas were ultimately defeated in 1660. Even thereafter 1660, the English were insecure in their sovereignty over the island, which then compelled Lyttelton to formalize the relationship with the Palenque of Juan de Bolas.

Jamaica, as a “frontier” English colony in the Americas, was faced with innumerable threats. Its first fifteen years were defined by its insubstantial colonial infrastructure, an issue

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<sup>152</sup> CSP, 335.

<sup>153</sup> Patterson, 296.

<sup>154</sup> David Buisseret and SAG Taylor, “Juan de Bolas and His Pelinco,” *Caribbean Quarterly* 54 (2008), 98. Liquor was also used as compensation for the services of the Palenque, who received “three gallons of brandy” in November 1660.



compounded by some initial mismanagement.<sup>155</sup> The lack of English manpower to foment stability and prosperity elicited the numerous charters issued to encourage planters to transplant to Jamaica from elsewhere in the English West Indies.<sup>156</sup> These edicts contained rhetoric similar to that employed by the Council of Jamaica in its guarantees to the Palenque of Juan de Bolas, which granted a, “proportion of Land to them and their heires for ever.”<sup>157</sup> Within this rhetoric, a theme of English colonial cosmopolitanism begins to emerge. English Jamaica, constricted to an area stretching from Spanish Town to present-day Kingston in its precarious early years, was guided by concepts of resistance and perseverance. Actions of the Governors and Councils of Jamaica during this period reflect a willingness to employ unique and adaptive cosmopolitan measures to sustain the colony. Race, gender, and religion – beyond the obvious friction between Protestantism and Catholicism – played no distinguishable role in these early interactions and typical ideological divisions were dismissed by pragmatism.

The nature of English – and later British – colonial dominion over Jamaica, which lasted well into the 20th century, grants insight into the development of political and social relations upon the island. The early epoch of English colonization, its nascent period of 1655-1670, encompassed a concerted project irrespective of the racialized imperial spectrum that emerged alongside the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The “negro” Palenques of Juan de Serras and Juan de Bolas existed in a reality polarized by European forces, but which was not yet imbued by structural racism. The Spanish-English battle for supremacy upon the island was problematized by the existence of these communities that inhabited the interior of Jamaica. Neither colonial entity was capable of defeating these Palenques, just as they were incapable of defeating one

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<sup>155</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), “Preface”.

<sup>156</sup> For example, see: Daniel Gookin. “To all persons whom these may concern, in the several townes, and plantations of the United Colonies in New-England.” Council of New England (1656).

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

another without assistance from extra-colonial factors. As such, attempts at collaboration were a logical and pragmatic solution to one of the many problems confronting the English conquerors of Jamaica. Similar to how the Spanish utilized “Negroes and Molettoes” upon Hispaniola to gather intelligence and harass the English troops, so too did the English privateers and colonists engage with the “negroes” of Jamaica to combat the Spanish and obtain intelligence on the Spanish guerrillas. Thus, the experiences of the Jamaican Palenques were indicative of a broader early modern West Indian state of relations, such that both the Spanish and English – as they stood in the period of 1655-1670 – were incapable of achieving the imperial designs outlined by their metropolises. That Juan de Bolas aligned with the English and their political overtures of good faith rather than the Spanish and their dwindling guerrilla remnants, should not be cast in a treacherous light.<sup>158</sup> The decision of Juan de Serras on behalf of his Palenque to reject these offers and to remain active in the guerrilla campaign – whether formally aligned with the Spanish or not – must likewise be understood as a means of navigating constrained realities. In short, each Captain pursued the best interests of their settlement, independent of a not yet-formed concept of race.

The historiography of the Jamaican Maroons, who descended from the “negro” Palenques, places significant emphasis on the actions of the English for the establishment of the partnership. An essential aspect is that the negotiated agreement was contingent on whether the Palenque would “change sides” and cast their support to the English rather than the Spanish.<sup>159</sup> This notion mistakes the actual history such that it assumes collaboration between the “negroes” aligned with Juan de Bolas and the Spanish and the “other negroes”. Elements of this narrative are true, while its suppositions arrive at additional unsubstantiated conclusions. Juan de Bolas, on

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<sup>158</sup> Buisseret and Taylor, 98.

<sup>159</sup> Patterson, 297.

behalf of his people, possessed the ultimate authority to accept or reject any deal proposed. In this diplomatic role, he was presented with an offer by the English and considered it alongside alternatives. The options presented were: rejection of the proposal and abandonment of the Palenque – as a result of English knowledge of its location – and its crops, or acceptance of the offer of co-existence and autonomy along with reciprocal protection. The relationship formed thereafter the agreement was an unequivocal success for both the Palenque and the colony in its short lifespan.

Absent a concept of race, the actions of the Palenque of Juan de Bolas, in conjunction with the colonial forces, cannot be ascribed to “treachery”.<sup>160</sup> The recognition that such distinctions are contemporary and did not influence early modern political calculations allows for a careful reconsideration of the relationship that emerged in 1660 and was formalized in 1663. Juan de Bolas was shrewd in his recognition of the restraints of his settlement. Although the isolation of the Palenque offered autonomy previously unattainable, such an existence would unavoidably deny his people the colonial commerce and goods with which they had been accustomed from their time alongside both Spanish and English Jamaica. The successful collaborations between the Palenque and the colony were borne out in the sweeping defeats of the Spanish guerrillas thereafter and the losses suffered by the “other negroes” at the hands of Juan de Bolas and his lancers. The decree of Governor Lyttelton in 1663 reflects the political intentions of Juan de Bolas throughout the three years of the informal relationship with the English, such that the settlement was maintained as separate and distinct from the colonial body and the Captain was positioned as the sole adjudicator of laws and propriety within the territory of the Palenque. It is clear that – either through experience or direct communication – the

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<sup>160</sup> Buisseret and Taylor, 97. The agreement between the Palenque and the English colony is categorized in this article under the heading, “Treachery”.

English recognized that the “negroes” would not submit to rule by Europeans. Thus, the role of Juan de Bolas was central to the proclamation Captain and lead negotiator. His death at the hands of an ambush by the “other negroes” less than a year later led to the gradual unraveling of the relationship formed between the colony and the Palenque and eventually necessitated a return to their guerrilla roots.<sup>161</sup> This experimental relationship spoke to the strategic and political capabilities of Juan de Bolas. The many manifestations of guerrilla warfare waged by the distinct “negro” settlements throughout Jamaica were remarkable for their efficacy. In a period of Jamaican colonial history when the Spanish maintained claims to the island and intercolonial conflict was rampant, the Palenque of Juan de Bolas presented an attractive strategic partner, as the successful campaigns enacted thereafter were testament.

Alongside the proclamation of 1663 is a passage from the minutes of the Council of Jamaica, which outlined the exact provisions of its guarantees. The Council provided that, “the free Negroes shall be in the same state and freedom as the English enjoy, and shall for every head (being eighteen years old) receive thirty acres of improvable land...to them and their heirs for ever.”<sup>162</sup> This record speaks to an expanded conception of Englishness on Jamaica and the social adaptability and cosmopolitanism that was so indicative of early English colonialism. The ability to bestow these liberties and to recognize these “negroes” in the same state of freedom as the “English” redefines how colonists understood difference in this early modern period. The sum of these acts proposes a supplementary view of these events than has been presented through the historiography of early modern English Jamaica. These are acts of “*real-politik*” inasmuch as they were calculations of need and recognition of the restraints of both the nascent colony and the Palenque. Thus, this relationship, rather than manifest of treachery or amorality,

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid, 100.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 98.

was pragmatism. Looking also to the expansion of “religious liberty and toleration” detailed in the acts of the brief Governorship of Thomas Hickman-Windsor, this theme of pragmatism is further clarified on behalf of the English.<sup>163</sup> In its breadth and in its specific language, the proclamation sought to address the most pressing need of the early English colony in Jamaica: soliciting human capital to support and stabilize its ongoing development. For its part, the Palenque of Juan de Bolas addressed these inequities while assuring their rights to land and independence. In the brief epoch of 1655-1670, the two parties of this strategic relationship achieved the pragmatic ends they pursued.

The perspective of the Restoration regime of Charles II, through its many initial actions regarding colonialism, asserted that the most pressing needs upon Jamaica could be solved by an influx of persons to plant and enrich the island.<sup>164</sup> These proclamations consisted of guarantees to land for a remarkably inclusive swath of people relative to the era. Presbyterians, Jews, women, and “negroes” were offered lands and licenses to improve Jamaica. Such actions likewise expanded the concept of liberty – in respect to the colony – beyond Englishmen. These efforts complemented the assertion of imperium and dominium upon Jamaica and are vital to the consideration of post-Restoration colonial efforts. It provides fundamental insight into how the colony shifted toward a new social cosmology that eschewed inflexible and exclusive concepts of Englishness. Although this period of inclusivity was brief, its effects were nonetheless important.

The successive governorships of Edward D’Oyley, Lord Windsor, and Charles Lyttelton undertook various policies regarding the “negroes” of Jamaica. Each head of the English colony prioritized security and stability and pursued cosmopolitan means of doing so. Entries related to

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<sup>163</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), Preface.

<sup>164</sup> For instance, see: CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 631-635.

the “negroes” of Jamaica from 1655-1670 promote a sense of respect for the abilities of the Palenque inhabitants. The “negroes” of Jamaica presented a direct threat to the English upon the island and had repeatedly harassed and ransacked English settlements. The colonial body made repeated pleas to London, hoping for reinforcements from a pending Spanish assault and to address the issue of intractable guerrilla warfare. However, time, distance, and political complications separated Jamaica from the London metropole and often left the colony bereft of support.<sup>165</sup> The renewed support from King Charles II and increased investment in the plantation of Jamaica thereafter the year 1664 expanded economic opportunity on the island. The growth of the productive capabilities of the colony increased noticeably throughout the final decades of the seventeenth century, but the colony persisted hamstrung by the lack of cheap labor.<sup>166</sup>

The arrival of Thomas Modyford as governor in 1664 was fundamental to the new approach promoted by Charles II. His foremost efforts concerned the attraction of planters from nearby English possessions and emphasized a focus on plantation economics. Moreover, Modyford pursued investment in the form of the Royal African Company, with which he was intimately tied.<sup>167</sup> Thus, the year 1664 began the long and gradual process of reshaping English Jamaica. The fragility and cosmopolitanism of the colony that emerged from conquest defined its first decade of existence. The actions of Governor Modyford (1664-1670) transformed Jamaica into a royal colony dominated by sugarcane plantations and populated by African slave labor.

Modyford moreover made overtures to English privateers throughout the West Indies, who were incorporated into the armed forces of the colony, which in turn decreased the reliance on the relationship with the “negroes” of the Palenque formerly captained by Juan de Bolas. Each of

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<sup>165</sup> Games, 166. “The gap between company orders and local circumstances shaped the reality of a governor's or ambassador's life and required adaptation and ingenuity.”

<sup>166</sup> David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*, (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 205-206.

<sup>167</sup> Swingen, 77-78. Thomas Modyford had served as the Royal African Company's factor in Barbados, where he likewise encouraged trade with the Spanish. This was the result of his numerous connections with the Company, including his brother James Modyford who was a founding member of the African Company.

these actions fundamentally redefined the focus of the colony as well as its composition. Over the course of his governorship, the reforms and efforts of Modyford increased the population and production of Jamaica, while abandoning the cosmopolitan strategies its founders had pursued. The evolution of English Jamaica from 1664 until 1670 reflected its transition under Modyford, which saw the island transform from frontier colony of the Protectorate to jewel of the Restored Kingdom of England. Although the transatlantic slave trade would come to dominate the economic climate of Jamaica throughout the final quarter of the seventeenth century, for this brief period the colony was shaped by navigation of, and adaptation to, the realities of the early modern West Indian World.

## 5 CONCLUSION: MARRONAGE AND IMPERIALISM – THE FALL OF COSMOPOLITANISM AND THE BIRTH OF THE JAMAICA MAROONS

Charles II and the Restoration regime envisioned Jamaica as the jewel of the English West Indies and as the base of an ambitious imperialist project. The utility of the Palenque of “negroes”, despite its services rendered in conjunction with the colony, served no purpose for the imperial schemes when considered in the context of alternative forces – including privateers and an influx of soldiers from England – availed to the colony thereafter 1664 and the arrival of Governor Thomas Modyford.<sup>168</sup> Until such point, Jamaica had been a frontier colony, which signified both its Leeward location, the means of its acquisition, and its level of development throughout its first decade post-conquest. The adaptive, cosmopolitan nature of early English Jamaica permitted social inclusion in lieu of forces as a means of asserting preeminence upon the island. Therefore, prior to the advent of the colonial developments associated with the governorship of Modyford, the proclamation that recognized the autonomy of the “free negroes” was a political device that functioned as a temporary continuation of war by alternative means.<sup>169</sup> English Jamaica endeavored to fortify their primary front against the Spanish by forming a partnership with a former belligerent. The utilization of the black militia in campaigns against the “other negroes” and Spanish guerrillas thereafter assisted the colony in its attempts to assert sovereignty and imperium upon Jamaica. Investment by Charles II and the incorporation of privateers into the armed forces under Modyford transformed the character of English Jamaica, such that force rather than cosmopolitanism could assure the colonial order. The gradual wane of necessity and importance of the formal strategic relationship with the Palenque founded by Juan de Bolas was precipitated by these alternative means of the colony.

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<sup>168</sup> Swingen, 74.

<sup>169</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).



The rejected and unrequited offers to the additional bands of “Spanish negroes”, along with continued harassment of colonists, reinforced the apprehensions of those who attested that English intention was best served by force.<sup>170</sup> As of 1665, Governor Modyford had put the colony in a posture of war toward the Palenque of Juan de Serras, now named the “Carmahalay” or “Varmahalay negroes”.<sup>171</sup> Modyford likewise exhibited himself to be a staunch proponent of peace with Spain, much as he had during his time upon Barbados, and promoted an exponential increase in the English utilization of the Royal African Company.<sup>172</sup> The transformation of political conditions within the colony of Jamaica emphasized its ability to conduct itself through force.<sup>173</sup> English Jamaica was beginning to sprout its imperial roots as a royal colony in earnest, as indicated in the shift from the pursuit of sovereignty through political means to the assertion of imperium and dominium by force.

The earliest years of the English colony of Jamaica were typified by attempts to impart safety and security. In the early 1660s, the colony was beset by the threats of famine, disease, and Spanish reconquest. Despite the political transition that took place in London, new institutions were constructed throughout tumultuous first decade that attempted to impart the order sought by colonists on the island. Increased investment and the normalization of the colonial rule under Charles II ensured the slow, but sure, realization of the potential of Jamaica as a royal colony. The divergence from a path of collaboration and cosmopolitanism with the “free negroes” followed in due course, as economic interests and enhanced means of force coincided to diminish the importance of the partnership. This transition likewise incited a redefinition of “Englishness” embodied in restrictions of “liberties” and land ownership to

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<sup>170</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 1038.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, 777, 826.

<sup>173</sup> For example, see any number of entries in the CSP, including: CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 5 (1661-1668), 882.

Anglo-Saxon Protestant males. Thus, 1664-1665 was pivotal turning point in the relations between early English Jamaica and its “free negro” cohabitants. Although the Palenque of Juan de Bolas was featured on the map of Jamaica composed by John Seller in 1671 and its inhabitants appeared in the colonial record as late as the census of 1680, the “free negroes” were no longer an important facet to the perseverance of English Jamaica.<sup>174</sup>

By the turn of the eighteenth century, Jamaican intracolonial affairs had become markedly violent. Alongside natural disasters and slave revolts, conflict between colonists and “negroes” persisted uninterrupted throughout the last quarter of the seventeenth and into the first quarter of the eighteenth century and beyond.<sup>175</sup> This stands in stark contrast to the initial decade of English Jamaican history, when the best interests of the colony necessitated collaboration and negotiation. During these ten years, the Commanders, Governors, and Councils of Jamaica pursued the incorporation of the “negro” ancestors of the Maroons into the colonial military structure. The formal culmination of warfare with the Spanish as a result of the Godolphin Treaty in 1670 coalesced with marked changes in investment and the heightened role of the Royal African Company to alter the character of English colonialism upon Jamaica thereafter.

The delicate state of English Jamaica that persisted throughout the 1650s and into the 1660s was the precipitate of its many political, military, and economic preoccupations. The political ambiguities and dislocation imparted by the death of Oliver Cromwell and the subsequent Restoration compelled colonists to explore innovative partnerships for its preservation.<sup>176</sup> The collaborative relationship formed with the Palenque of Juan de Bolas and the “free negroes” embodied the brief, but imperative trend of cosmopolitanism in nascent English Jamaica. The colonial appendages of the English government, much like the “negroes”

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<sup>174</sup> Buisseret and Taylor, 100. “In the 1680 census, we read of ‘5 free Negroes’ in St. John’s...”

<sup>175</sup> Patterson, 298-300.

<sup>176</sup> Pestana.

of Jamaica, navigated realities delimited and imbued by isolation. The demonstration of this character of early English Jamaica is vital to understanding the nature of the tenuous partnership formed in Jamaica during its earliest years.

The English colonies of the West Indies and the broader Atlantic World were subject to shifting alliances and operatives that challenged and redefined the purposes of colonization. While Jamaica and the additional West Indian possessions of England suffered due to a lack of capacity and capital under the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, the Restoration promised new economic opportunity for English colonists. The soldiers, planters, privateers, slaves, and “negroes” who cohabitated upon Jamaica during its tenuous first English decade were directed by preservation rather than the economic schemes of imperialism. The relationship with the “negroes” under Juan de Bolas personified an imperative of collaboration that likewise informed the establishment of commercial partnerships with Dutch traders.<sup>177</sup> In this period, these informal interactions ensured assured their existence and the preservation of the colony in contravention of the imperialism that imbued British Jamaica.

English Jamaica underwent a dramatic political shift beginning in 1664. The departure of Governor Charles Lyttelton, along with the death of Juan de Bolas and the surmounting importance of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, altered the composition of the island colony. The successor to Lyttelton, Thomas Modyford, was instrumental in this transformative process through his advocacy of peace with Spain and investment into the Royal African Company. The formal declaration of war promulgated by Modyford and the Council of Jamaica was the first incremental step toward the devolution of amicable affairs between the colonial inhabitants and the “free negroes” of the island, as colonists began to employ force rather than diplomacy in the resolution of tensions. The rhetoric observed in the Calendar of State Papers from 1664 onward

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<sup>177</sup> Koot, 7.

in reference to the “negroes” of Jamaica reflects the growth of racialized notions propriety and a redefinition of the “free negroes” in the context of warfare against the “Varmahaly negroes”. Fears related to these “traitorous villains,” who, according to the colonial government, “committed murders, robberies, and other outrages on his Majesty’s subjects,” places an emphasis on a conception of difference that puts the onus on the “negroes”.<sup>178</sup> These claims of impropriety conveniently make no mention of the declaration of war issued by the Council of Jamaica five years prior.

The protracted warfare instigated by the colony against the “Varmahaly negroes,” evolved and transformed over subsequent decades. The encroachment of plantations, the exponential increase in the importation of African slaves, and aggression by English colonial forces displaced the inhabitants of the island Palenques. Those “negroes” who had maintained hostilities against, or at the very least isolated themselves from, the colony retreated into the rocky, karst-lined Cockpit Country of the Jamaican interior.<sup>179</sup> The abandonment of the land ownership rights of the “free negroes”, as evidenced by the appearance of plantations on the location of their former Palenque, likewise initiated their migration further into the Jamaican interior.<sup>180</sup> In doing so, these peoples were dispossessed of their settlements (Figure 1) and further isolated from European merchants. Despite the malicious intentions of the English, this process of dislocation and vilification was edifying for the “negroes” of Jamaica. It fostered and galvanized otherwise disparate and disconnected communities that had previously engaged in violent campaigns against one another. The subsequent eighty years of warfare between the “negroes” and the might of the English and the British Empire necessitated collaboration between the independent factions to ensure the efficacy of their guerrilla warfare. This

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<sup>178</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 7: 1669-1674, 179.

<sup>179</sup> Buisseret and Taylor, 100.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid*, 101.

cooperation and the formation of cultural kinship bonds between these distinct populations over time transformed these disconnected settlements into the various interconnected towns of the Jamaican Maroons. The syncretic Jamaican Maroon identity included a fully realized political consciousness as a result of the disparate experiences of the “negroes” with Spanish and English Jamaica. A consciousness informed by the political will, institutional machinations, and armed capabilities of the colony gave birth to the Jamaican Maroons who persist to the present day. The relationship formed between the various former Palenques, including collaboration and isolationism, were fused through the crucible of war. The distinct political character of the Jamaican Maroon society was informed by each experience and exemplified by the Maroon Treaties that followed the decades of violence of the Maroon Wars:

“1<sup>st</sup> That all hostilities shall cease on both sides forever.

2<sup>nd</sup> That the said Captain Cudjoe, and the rest of his captains, adherents and men, shall be forever hereafter in a perfect state of freedom and liberty...

3<sup>rd</sup> That they shall enjoy and possess for themselves and posterity forever, all the lands lying between Trelawny Town and the Cockpits...

4<sup>th</sup> That they shall have liberty to plant the said lands with...and dispose the produce or increase of the said commodities to the inhabitants of the island...

5<sup>th</sup> ...that they shall have liberty to hunt where they shall think fit...

6<sup>th</sup> That the said...do use their best endeavours to take, kill, or destroy...all rebels, wheresoever they be throughout this Island unless they submit...

7<sup>th</sup> That in case this Island shall be invaded by foreign enemy, the said...shall then upon notice given, immediately appear...in order to repel the said invaders...

8<sup>th</sup> That if any white man shall do any manner of injury to ...any...of their people, they shall apply...for Justice; and in case any of (Captain

Cudjoe's) people shall do injury to any white person he shall submit himself, or deliver up such offender to Justice.

9<sup>th</sup> That if any negroes hereafter shall run away from their masters...and fall into Captain Cudjoe's hands, they shall immediately be sent back...

10<sup>th</sup> That all negroes taken since the raising of this party, by Captain Cudjoe's people, shall immediately be returned.

11<sup>th</sup> That Captain Cudjoe and his successors shall wait on His Excellency or the Commander in Chief...once every year...

12<sup>th</sup> Captain Cudjoe...and the Captains succeeding him shall have full power to inflict any punishment they think proper for crimes committed by their men among themselves, death only excepted; in which case...(they) shall order proceedings on their trial equal to those of other free negroes.

13<sup>th</sup> That Captain Cudjoe with his people, shall cut, clear and keep open large and convenient roads...

14<sup>th</sup> That two white men...for the time being shall constantly live and reside with Captain Cudjoe and his successors, in order to maintain a friendly correspondence with the inhabitants of this Island.

15<sup>th</sup> That Captain Cudjoe shall during his life, be Chief Commander in Trelawny Town...<sup>181</sup>

The terms of this treaty contain striking resemblances to the proclamation issued by Charles Lyttelton as Governor of Jamaica in 1663. The guarantees of “freedom and liberty”, the possession of lands “forever”, the commitment to defend the island from “foreign enemy”, and the self-government by the “Captain” of the polity are almost identical to the language and rhetoric of the proclamation. The noticeable differences and diversions from the script of the proclamation can be easily understood in the context of the transformations undergone by the colony and as well the Maroon communities thereafter 1670.

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<sup>181</sup> “Kenneth Bilby, “Swearing by the Past, Swearing to the Future: Sacred Oaths, Alliances, and Treaties among the Guianese and Jamaican Maroons”, *Ethnohistory* 4 (1997): 655-689.

The departures from the prior proclamation in the form of concessions granted the Maroons in the Treaty are imbued by economics, which is embodied in articles four and five. As previously detailed, the Palenque of Juan de Bolas was discovered as the result of an impost on “strong liquors”. Edward D’Oyley successfully tracked a member of the “negroes” following their transaction with merchants and uncovered their town planted with “200 acres” of provisions.<sup>182</sup> The inclusion of economic measures in the Leeward Treaty would have been of significant importance to the Maroons, providing the opportunity to plant and hunt for subsistence – almost without reservation – and to utilize whatever surplus possible to trade for goods that could not be produced within the settlements. In return, the Treaty included concessions to the British that included the required permanent occupancy of two white men in Trelawny Town, the clearing and maintenance of roads between the colony and Maroon towns, and armed service against “rebels”. The article regarding the roads was a considerable strategic priority for the British given the inaccessibility of the towns and apprehensions regarding future conflict. Each article of the Treaty echoes elements of the 1655-1670 period, including explicit reference to the “free negroes” and the pre-imperial social dynamics of English Jamaica. As such, they facilitate a genealogy of the Jamaican Maroons political consciousness and agency.

Under the Governorship of Thomas Modyford, Jamaica became a dominant force in the vast Atlantic World. Against the backdrop of burgeoning English imperialism, Modyford recruited planters and privateers from throughout the West Indies to bolster the colony and its productive capabilities. The ten-year period preceding his arrival to Jamaica constitute the nascent years of English Jamaica, which included the non-racial approach to collaboration that was essential to the perseverance of the colony. Brief though it was, this experimental

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<sup>182</sup> CSP, *America and West Indies*, Volume 9 (Addenda 1574-1674), 332. These interactions with the merchants were more likely than not an exchange of goods in-kind, such that provisions constituted their method of payment.

relationship reconstituted political realities, such that the “free negroes” received recognition of their legitimacy and autonomy from the colony. English Jamaica was not the static, oligarchical exercise that depicted its Spanish colonial era. Rather, the actions of the commanders and governors in its nascent era were exceedingly cosmopolitan. The expansion and transformation of the colony under Modyford, along with the subsequent fifty years of warfare, challenged the conceptions of independence and agency affirmed by the “free negroes”. Upon the signing of the Maroon Treaties in 1739-1740, these political notions were enshrined as central tenets of the Jamaica Maroon identity.<sup>183</sup> These elements were display in the early years of English Jamaica, during which time collaboration and cosmopolitanism guided the navigation of unsettled dynamics in the West Indian World and informed the transition toward, and foundations of, Marronage.

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<sup>183</sup> Kopytoff.



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