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AFRICAN AND INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Tony Martin

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African consciousness

> I love the [African] race. I am not fighting for the race for my personal benefit, for having obtained the object of my ambition, I could sit down and practice my profession; but I believe that the cause of the people is greater than the cause of the individual, hence I am associated with it.
>
> *Henry Sylvester Williams*
> the Princes Building, Port of Spain, 1901[1]

The fact of African consciousness is a recurrent and dominant theme in the history of the twentieth-century Caribbean. It has been a major influence on political development and closely intertwined with the history of trade unions and with expressions of popular culture.

The roots of twentieth-century African consciousness naturally stretch back into the nineteenth century and beyond. The end of slavery unleashed a flood of pent-up African interest, which sought to capitalize on the newfound freedom in its efforts at concrete expression. A desire for a physical return to Africa became the preoccupation of many, including Jamaican Maroons who went to Sierra Leone in 1800, even before the abolition of slavery. Mandingoes from Trinidad sought repatriation to the Gambia. Jamaican John Brown Russwurm became Governor of Maryland colony in present-day Liberia. Robert Campbell of Jamaica relocated to Nigeria, where he became a leading citizen of Lagos. Edward Wilmot Blyden of St Thomas became a major intellectual figure from his base in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Congolese from Cuba, in their organized thousands, sought repatriation to the Congo. Missionaries and revolutionaries journeyed to Africa.[2] Liberia's president saw in the immigration of several hundred Barbadians the 'vindication of [God's] goodness and justice. . . .'[3]

African consciousness was fed also by a brisk commerce in the other direction. 'Liberated Africans', rescued from slave ships, were brought to the Caribbean. So were indentured workers after slavery. African-born soldiers of the West India Regiment were demobilized in the British Caribbean.[4] African leaders were exiled to the islands – King Behanzin of Dahomey to Martinique, King Jaja of Opobo in Nigeria to St Vincent. King Jaja's widow was still very much alive in Trinidad in 1937.[5] Caribbean-based intellectuals,

[1] The *Mirror*, 1901, quoted by James R. Hooker, 1975, *p. 44*.

[2] Carey Robinson, 1969, p. 152; Carl Campbell, 1974b, p. 29–38; *idem*, 1974a, pp. 129–32; Hollis R. Lynch, 1967, p. 34; *idem*, 1971, p. 46; Okon E. Uya, 1971, p. 46; Robert Campbell's account of his trip to Abeokuta can be found in Martin R. Delany and Robert Campbell, 1969; Benito Sylvain, 1905; Tony Martin, 1984b, p. 211–15; C. L. R. James, 1938a (1963), p. 265; A. H. Barrow, 1900.

[3] Edward Wilmot Blyden to the Gentlemen of Barbados, 10 March 1864, in Hollis R. Lynch, 1978, p. 64.

[4] See A. B. Ellis, 1885.

[5] 'African Queen Found in Mayaro', *Sunday Guardian*, 28 February 1937, p. 3.

not surprisingly, evinced a great interest in things Pan-African, through their newspapers, books and private correspondence. African consciousness in the twentieth century therefore rested on deep foundations.

The century opened in a fashion highly symbolic for Afro-Caribbean racial consciousness. A Trinidadian former schoolteacher, Henry Sylvester Williams, convened the world's first Pan-African Conference. He brought together over thirty eminent delegates from Africa, African America and the Caribbean, augmented by people of African origin living in Europe. There had been gatherings with an international flavour among African peoples before, but this was the first self-consciously 'Pan-African' conference.[6]

Caribbean delegates came from Jamaica, Antigua, St Lucia, Dominica, Haiti and Trinidad. Williams and Antiguan delegate Joseph Mason, pastor of a London church, were secretary and president respectively of the African Association, founded in London in 1897. It was under the auspices of this association that the Pan-African Conference was convened. Trinidad delegates R. E. Phipps and A. Pulcherie Pierre, both lawyers, were among the association's earliest members. Other delegates included Professor W. E. B. DuBois, African America's most prominent intellectual of the time; Bishop Alexander Walters of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, a prominent political and church figure in the United States; Benito Sylvain of Haiti, who had journeyed to Ethiopia to meet the Emperor Menelik II, and who represented both Ethiopia and Haiti at the conference; and T. R. Johnson, former Attorney-General and later Secretary of State of Liberia.

The conference sought to inform delegates of conditions facing the African race world wide. It tried to organize a Pan-African lobby in London and to foster a spirit of common purpose among Africans scattered around the world. It especially sought an amelioration in the conditions facing Africans in South Africa and it petitioned Queen Victoria to this effect. The official conference document, 'To the Nations of the World', of which Williams was one of the signatories, contained the following prophetic and often quoted passage: 'The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line, the question as to how far differences of race ... will hereafter be made the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization.'[7]

At least three of the Caribbean delegates later emigrated to Africa. George Christian of Dominica became a successful lawyer and legislator in the Gold Coast (Ghana) where

[6] For general accounts of the conference see James R. Hooker, 1975; Owen C. Mathurin, 1976; Tony Martin, 1984b, pp. 201–16; Bishop Alexander Walters, 1914.

[7] Quoted in Tony Martin, 1984b, p. 208.

he was a member of the Legislative Council from 1920 to 1940.[8] Richard E. Phipps, the Trinidad barrister, returned home after the conference and emigrated to the Gold Coast in 1911. He remained there until his death around 1926.[9] Williams himself lived in South Africa from 1903 to 1905,[10] and died in Trinidad in 1911.

Williams moved rapidly to implant in the Caribbean the Pan- African Association (PAA) formed at the conference. He toured Trinidad and Jamaica in 1901, lecturing and organizing branches. The quality and enthusiasm of the response in both places attested to the potency of racial consciousness as a mobilizing force among the Caribbean masses. The Trinidad branch of the PAA was formally established during Williams' visit in early July 1901. Attorney Emanuel M'Zumbo Lazare was president of the central executive, with the 'strikingly beautiful school mistress',[11] Mrs Philip John, as secretary. Lazare's rationale for joining the association may be inferred from his motion carried unanimously at Williams' first Port of Spain lecture, to a crowd of over one thousand persons. 'The meeting assembled here,' he moved, 'appreciates the successful efforts made by the Pan-African Association in London to ameliorate the condition of our oppressed brethren in Africa, and is of the opinion that the organization should be strongly supported by members of the race in this island.'[12]

For Lazare, as for his middle-class African-conscious contemporaries, the struggle at home (in this case, Trinidad), was largely indivisible from the struggle for African advancement around the world. Their strong commitment to Africa did not prevent them from playing leading roles in the struggles not only for racial justice, but also for broad political reform at home. Edgar Maresse-Smith, a foundation member, had led the famous campaign in 1888 for a strong Afrocentric observance of the fiftieth anniversary of emancipation.[13] So had Rev. Philip Henry Douglin, head of the Pan-African Association in San Fernando. A Barbadian by birth, Douglin had laboured for 17 years with the West Indian Church Association at the Rio Pongo.[14]

Williams had stopped in Jamaica on his way to Trinidad. There he reported five hundred members enrolled during his visit and a further five hundred by the time he got to Trinidad.

[8] Owen C. Mathurin, 1976, p. 165.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 167.
[10] See James R. Hooker, 1975, chap. 7 and Owen C. Mathurin, 1976, chap. 8. Hooker says Williams remained in South Africa until 1904. Mathurin gives the date as 1905.
[11] James R. Hooker, 1975, p. 39.
[12] Quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 43–4.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[14] Owen C. Mathurin, 1976, p. 95.

The rapid growth in Jamaican PAA membership was facilitated by the affiliation, *en masse*, of the People's Convention, led by Dr J. Robert Love.[15]

African consciousness in the first two decades of the century was further fed by a variety of sources. The quest for democratic government, even where pursued by multi-racial pressure groups, almost inevitably harboured racial undertones. The governments were mostly white, while the disfranchized masses were mostly African.

Many of the older forms of interaction with Africa also continued. Missionaries continued to travel to Africa. A reduced West India Regiment still did service on the continent. The British government recruited policemen, civil servants, and railway employees in the Caribbean for work in Africa,[16] just as African soldiers and police had earlier been recruited for service in the Caribbean. Lawyers, doctors, teachers and other professionals qualifying overseas continued to head for Africa after graduation, as they have continued to do to the present day, in larger numbers than is popularly realized. Caribbean seamen settled in African ports. Some of these people returned eventually. Others stayed but maintained contact with friends and relatives in the Caribbean.[17] Out of all this came a complex network of mutual knowledge and cross-fertilization of ideas.

Thus Henry Sylvester Williams could have two Caribbean employees in his Cape Town law practice from 1903 to 1905;[18] Caribbean workers in Kano, Northern Nigeria, could organize a branch of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (LUNIA) around 1920;[19] and a Vincentian, J. G. Gumbs, could be chairman of South Africa's Industrial and Commercial Workers Union in the 1920s (the executive committee often contained three or four Caribbean members).[20] This cross-fertilization of experience is richly demonstrated in the case of the Jamaican, A. S. W. Shackleford, who emigrated to Nigeria as a railway employee, headed Marcus Garvey's UNIA in Lagos and became an important

[15] James R. Hooker, 1975, p. 48; Owen C. Mathurin, 1976, p. 89.

[16] The author interviewed a Trinidadian, the late Mrs Irene Cleghorn, who accompanied her husband, a Trinidad Government Railway employee, to Nigeria in the early twentieth century. In 1975 he met a Guyanese lady who was born in the Gold Coast (Ghana), where her father worked as a policeman. His own grandfather, a Trinidad Government Railway station master, is said to have passed up an opportunity to work in Nigeria, for reasons unknown. Trinidadians were offered a free second-class passage to and from Lagos, three-year contracts renewable for a second term and, after one year, free passage to Lagos for their families in lieu of a free return passage home. A copy of the contract is in Enclosure to Trinidad Despatch No. 411 of 14 October 1913, CO 295/484, Colonial Office Records, Public Record Office, London.

[17] African-born demobilized West India Regiment soldiers were the major element in the Trinidad Police Force at some points in the nineteenth century according to Algernon A. Burkett, 1914, p. 3. They were called 'Yurabas' (Yorubas), according to this account.

[18] James R. Hooker,1975, pp. 67–8.

[19] *Negro World (New* York), 21 August 1920.

[20] Clements Kadalie, 1970, p. 220; Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), pp. 119–20.

businessman in Ghana and Nigeria.[21] Some Caribbean emigrants to Africa, such as soldiers and policemen, may have played less than positive roles. But even here, the experience of Africa could have the ultimately positive result of an enhanced racial consciousness.

The most forceful articulators of pride in the African race were often also the leaders of organizations and movements, whether multi-racial or not, for broad political and social change. It may be that early conditioning to a life of struggle for racial justice equipped them with the tools for the wider struggles against colonialism and lack of democracy. Certainly colonialism was at the core of the problem of racial injustice, so that the struggle against colonialism was a natural extension of the struggle for basic human rights for Africans. As members and leaders of multi-racial movements they easily made the transition to representing the welfare of the entire community, though usually not at the cost of denying their own racial pride. Thus Emanuel M'Zumbo Lazare, the son of African-born parents, could be an elected member of the Port of Spain Borough Council, president of the PAA, a leader of the multi-racial Ratepayers Association and later the second African Trinidadian appointed to the Trinidad & Tobago Legislative Council.[22] These activists regarded the entire society as rightfully theirs. Their strong espousal of African consciousness did not in any way deter them in their quest to capture centre stage in the political and social affairs of the respective territories.

It can be argued that a new African ethnicity developed out of slavery in the Caribbean (and in many other places as well). Due to the intermingling of African ethnicities during and after slavery, the post-emancipation African in the Caribbean owed allegiance to the continent, and not necessarily to any individual polity within it.[23] It was this essentially Pan-African reality and outlook that allowed Africans in the Caribbean and America to pioneer the movement for worldwide African collaboration.

It is nevertheless also true that self-consciously African communities persisted in some areas in the Caribbean into the twentieth century, providing an ongoing source of African remembrance for the population at large. Some, like the Maroon communities of Jamaica and Suriname, evolved during slavery and though associated with a particular geographical area, may well have become essentially part of the new Caribbean African ethnicity.

Others, like the Yoruba, Congo, Hausa and other communities of Trinidad, were influenced by post-emancipation arrivals. Even here, though, the movement towards a new African ethnicity was well advanced by the 1900s. There is no doubt, for example, that

[21] Rina Okonkwo, 1985, pp. 45–58.
[22] For a biographical sketch of Lazare, see Algernon A. Burkett, 1914, p. 95; Brinsley Samaroo, 1971, p. 89.
[23] For an argument to this effect see Don Robotham, 1988, pp. 23–38.

the Yoruba communities in Trinidad established their dominance over rival African ethnicities and then absorbed many of them into their religious and cultural milieu.

The early calypsonian, Sam Manning, gave a brief but interesting description of one such Yoruba community in Trinidad around 1910. He identified a fierce racial pride as one of their outstanding characteristics. 'The Yorubas were a proud, independent people. ... Through everything [they] still clung to the beliefs and culture of their tribe' and, it would appear, despised other Africans who resorted to race mixing.[24] Since it has been demonstrated that these Yorubas had a tremendous impact on the culture and outlook of Trinidadians (and noteworthily on the development of calypso),[25] it must be assumed that they also influenced the feelings of racial consciousness that diffused throughout the community. In Dominica the African 'Oku' community in the early twentieth century preserved its own language, settled its own internal disputes, practised co-operative work and celebrated 1 August, Emancipation Day, every year.[26]

The practice of journalism was yet another important element fostering racial consciousness. Several of the major proponents of African consciousness and political reform also doubled as owners of newspapers and active journalists. Dr J. Robert Love, the third African to sit on Jamaica's Legislative Council, and 'kingmaker' for the first two, mentor of Marcus Garvey and head of the Jamaican Pan-African Association, published the *Jamaica Advocate*. The slogan 'Africa for the Africans, at home and abroad', popularized later by Garvey, appeared in a Love article as early as 1898.[27]

Theophilus Albert Marryshow, Grenada's 'Father of West Indian Federation,' published the *West Indian* from 1917. He supported Garvey in the 1920s and attended W. E. B. DuBois' 1921 Pan-African Congress in London.[28] Garvey himself, in whom African consciousness reached its apogee, published three newspapers in Jamaica – *Garvey's Watchman* around 1910 or earlier, the *Blackman* from 1929 to 1931, and the *New Jamaican* from 1931 to 1933. He also began *Black Man* magazine in Jamaica in 1933 and continued it in England, and published two papers, *La Nación* and *La Prensa*, among Caribbean emigrants in Costa Rica and Panama respectively, between about 1910 and 1912.

[24] Tony Martin, 1984b, p. 218.
[25] See Maureen Warner-Lewis, 1991, pp. 141–57.
[26] Interview with J. R. Ralph Casimir, Roseau, 1985, cited in Tony Martin, 1988 (1989), p. 123.
[27] Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), p. 111.
[28] *Ibid*., p. 96.

Where Afro-Caribbean newspaper editors were not themselves major political figures, their publications were usually active in the struggle for racial uplift and social change.[29] Somewhat unusual was the case of the *Argos* in Trinidad. There the wealthy Chinese-Trinidadian merchant, George Lee Lum, owned the paper but allowed the editorial staff free rein to play a major role in the propagation of an African consciousness. White community leaders complained to the Colonial Secretary in 1919 that the *Argos* was 'owned by a Chinaman of no particular persuasion and run by four or five "coloured gentlemen" of the most pronounced type of hater of the white man.'[30]

A similar radicalizing role was played by foreign-based publications owned, edited or otherwise influenced by Caribbean emigrants abroad, especially in North America and Europe. Garvey's *Negro World* (1918–33) occupies pride of place in this category. In the early 1920s its circulation in Dominica exceeded that of the two local papers, one African- and the other European- owned.[31] It was implicated in the rise of African consciousness and accordingly banned (along with other foreign-based publications) by governmental authorities in several Caribbean territories, from Cuba to Guyana.[32]

The *Africa Times and Orient Review*, published in London (1912–14, 1919–20) by the African Dusé Mohammed Ali, circulated in the Caribbean and carried articles pertinent to the area. Garvey worked for and published in this magazine in 1913. From New York after the First World War came the *Crusader*, organ of the African Blood Brotherhood, led by Kittitian Cyril Briggs. Jamaican W. A. Domingo published the *Emancipator* at about the same time, also from New York.

From Hamburg and elsewhere in Europe in the 1930s came the Communist International's *Negro Worker*, edited by Trinidad's George Padmore, head of the Negro Bureau of world communism's Red International of Labour Unions (Profintern). From London in 1937 Padmore launched *International African Opinion*, organ of his newly formed International African Service Bureau, with fellow Trinidadian C. L. R. James as editor.[33]

The general pattern of African consciousness described here was true also for Cuba, the Caribbean's largest island and most populous nation. The fact that Afro-Cubans were not in a clear majority, the reality of United States occupation (1898–1902 and 1906–9)

[29] The following were among nineteenth century examples for Trinidad – the *Trinidad Press*, the *Trinidad Colonist*, the *Telegraph, New Era* and *San Fernando Gazette*. See Bridget Brereton, 1993, pp. 274–83; and M. Thomas-Bailey, 2001.

[30] Messrs George T. Huggins *et al.* to Colonial Secretary, 30 July 1919, Colonial Offices Files, Public Record Office, London, CO 295/522. See also Tony Martin, 1984c, p. 49.

[31] Tony Martin, 1988 (1989), p. 134.

[32] Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), pp. 94–6.

[33] James R. Hooker, 1967, p. 49.

and the grant of universal male adult suffrage in 1902, nevertheless provided Cuba with distinctive features. Cuba formally ended slavery in 1886, the last Caribbean nation to do so, even though most Afro-Cubans had already emancipated themselves by that time. The Afro-Cubans formed themselves into African 'societies', published newspapers, maintained a strong practice of African religion and, for thousands of Congolese in Cuba, tried to return to Africa.[34] Inspired by the Afro-Cuban General Antonio Maceo, they constituted the majority of the Liberation Army in the 1895–8 War of Independence against Spain.

Traditional Spanish racism, which existed even within the Liberation Army, and which not even Maceo, Cuba's most successful general, could avoid, intensified during the United States occupation of 1898–1902. The United States withdrew in 1902 leaving white Cubans and Spaniards firmly in charge. Afro-Cubans were largely locked out of political power, segregation remained rampant and aspects of African culture, such as the *Santería* religion, were criminalized. In addition, losses in the independence wars of 1868–78 and 1895–8, coupled with a deliberate 'whitening' policy of massive Spanish immigration, together put the Afro-Cuban population into relative decline.

The enduring Cuban (and Latin American) fiction of a racial democracy made the situation more complex and frustrating.[35] By 1907 a rising consciousness had produced several manifestos and proposals to stem the racist tide. There were calls for the recognition of the inordinate sacrifices made by Afro-Cubans in the recent independence war; there were calls to boycott elections until Afro-Cubans were guaranteed the right, not merely to vote, but to be appointed to high office; there were calls for an independent African political party. Evaristo E. Estenoz, a former Liberation Army officer, tried unsuccessfully to establish an Afro-Cuban caucus within the Liberal Party, the party favoured by most Afro-Cubans. Over two hundred people attended a 1907 conference in Camaguey to establish a *Directorio de la Raza de Color* (Co-ordinating Council for People of Colour). The group promised to unite Africans and mulattos in a self-reliant organization for 'the progress of our race'. It eschewed any intention of forming a race-based political party.[36]

On 7 August 1908 Estenoz formally established the Independent Party of Colour (Partido Independiente de Color), which was legally recognized by the United States occupation. The total absence of Afro-Cuban winners in the local and provincial elections appeared to be the last straw for Estenoz. The new party condemned the exclusion of Afro-

[34] 'Benito Sylvain of Haiti on the Pan-African Conference of 1900', in Tony Martin, 1984b, pp. 211–5. For a detailed treatment of the broader picture see Aline Helg, 1995. The present discussion of the period relies heavily on Helg.

[35] Aline Helg, 1995. For a similar fiction of racial democracy in Brazil see Abdias do Nascimento, 1979 (1989).

[36] Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, pp. 311–12.

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Cubans from the judiciary and diplomatic service, proposed a campaign against illiteracy and in favour of expanded elementary education, demanded the admission of Africans into military and naval academies, denounced the death penalty, and advocated prison reform, workmen's compensation and an eight-hour working day. It opposed the ban on African immigration. It also opposed the Platt Amendment, under which the United States reserved the right to intervene in Cuban affairs. All of these proposals spoke directly or indirectly to areas of racial discrimination. The party prematurely contested national elections in 1908 and was heavily defeated.[37]

Correspondents to the party's newspaper, *Previsión (Foresight)*, meanwhile exhibited the same racial pride and desire for a strong race that were by now commonplace in the Caribbean. 'I am a black dot,' wrote one reader, 'one out of the anonymous mass of my race, who longs to see the advance of my people through our own effort, through the compact union and solidarity of our family.'[38]

The white Cuban power structure repressed the Independent Party of Colour with a ferocity which, while not fundamentally unusual in the context of Caribbean history, nevertheless assumed many of the characteristics of contemporary North American racism. Estenoz was arrested and jailed twice in 1910, as were the top leadership of the party and hundreds of supporters. Many Afro-Cubans were randomly arrested and jailed. US-type stereotypes of Afro-Cubans as rapists and rumours of a Haitian-type revolution were used as a smokescreen to cover the repression. Emulating a common North American tactic, Cuba's white rulers found an Afro-Cuban, Martin Morúa Delgado, the only African in the island's senate, to introduce a law banning racially based and therefore 'racist' political parties. The Morua Law passed in 1910, by which time Estenoz was claiming 93,000 members. Morua obligingly died four days afterwards, mercifully spared the carnage soon to be visited upon Afro-Cubans in the name of his law.[39]

With the leadership out of jail in 1911 the party continued to mobilize while trying to appease white racism. In 1912, with the party still banned and presidential elections imminent, a few hundred party members staged an 'armed protest', in the tradition of similar contemporary protests by veterans and other groups. This provided the pretext for their annihilation. The white structure, always united across party lines in its eagerness to extirpate the Afro-Cuban party, unleashed a reign of terror. Thousands of troops were deployed and the white population was armed. Africans were lynched, shot and beheaded. Afro-Cuban corpses were left to litter the streets. An estimated 2,000 to 5,000 Afro-Cubans,

[37] *Ibid*., p. 317; Aline Helg, 1995, pp. 146–7.
[38] Aline Helg, 1995, p. 151.
[39] *Ibid*., pp. 165, 172. Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, pp. 318–19.

many of them people unconnected to the party, were killed by the military and vigilantes. Thousands were arrested. A large number became refugees. Estenoz and other leaders were slaughtered and their bodies desecrated.[40]

The Cuban massacre of 1912 remains one of the worst reverses suffered by African consciousness in Caribbean history. No other race, save for the indigenous people, has suffered this type of carnage primarily on the basis of racial aspiration.

The First World War ushered in a period of intense African consciousness in which the middle classes, though still as race-conscious as before, were frequently upstaged by the masses. Consciousness on a mass level had always been present, often as a normal concomitant of working-class life, not requiring any special demonstration. In so far as the Afro-Caribbean working class maintained African religious practices, or passed on the art of drumming and other cultural and social expressions, it was a living repository of African consciousness. It often also, on that account, bore the brunt of colonialist repression. Its bass drum was outlawed; its annual carnival celebrations in Trinidad were endemically under attack; various expressions of African religion were criminalized in Cuba; its Spiritual Baptist religion was banned in Trinidad's Shouter Prohibition Ordinance, patterned after a similar law against the Shakers of St Vincent;[41] and it came under police attack in the carnival-related Canboulay Riots of 1881 in Trinidad. Canboulay, the torchlight procession that ushered in carnival, was outlawed.[42] Trinidadian Lewis Osborn Innis, writing in 1910 of the events of previous decades, observed that 'it was found necessary to make special legislation against the beating of the big African drum, to which the *bass people* were fond of dancing *calindas* (a most indecent performance) on account of the noise it made.' The consequence of hostile legislation was that 'the archaic instrument died a natural death, and quatros, bandols, flutes and clarionettes reigned in its stead, to the great comfort of the decent inhabitants.'[43]

The upsurge in mass African consciousness which took place around the First World War was fed by a variety of forces. First, the war itself served as a profound radicalizing influence. The endemic racism at home erupted into startling clarity in the British colonies when local Whites refused to serve in the same military units as non-Whites, except as commissioned officers. The result was that many white volunteers proceeded directly to England or Canada where they enlisted in white units. Those who went through the initial formalities at home did so, in the case of Trinidad, in a Whites-only Merchants and Planters

[40] Aline Helg, 1995, pp. 211–26; Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, pp. 322–34.
[41] See Edward L. Cox, 1994, pp. 208–43.
[42] For a pro-establishment account of anti-Canboulay activity see L. O. Innis, 1910, pp. 82, 89–91.
[43] *Ibid*., p. 97. The Indian 'tom tom' (presumably tassa drum), also a nuisance to authorities, was not banned.

Contingent, organized by the white community for the occasion. C. L. R. James, later one of the region's leading intellectuals, recalls being rudely rejected when he (perhaps inexplicably) attempted to join the white contingent.[44]

The imperial government in London did not help matters by proclaiming the conflict a 'white man's war' and initially rejecting Afro-Caribbean efforts to volunteer. When non-white soldiers were finally accepted they were mustered primarily into the British West Indies Regiment (BWIR), a specially organized unit. Here the rank and file were mostly African and the officers were white. Though trained as soldiers the former were used for the most part as labourers. The final indignity came at Taranto, Italy, at war's end, when they were required to clean the latrines of Italian labourers. It was at this point that the West Indians mutinied.[45]

During their stay abroad the men of the BWIR experienced racism in its most virulent forms. They were especially incensed at the treatment of continental African troops and came into conflict with white South African and other soldiers on this account.[46] They also came in contact with Garvey's race-uplift ideas. This was an explosive combination and the soldiers returned home in 1919 bitter, radicalized and more race-conscious than before. They were heavily implicated in the political agitation, labour unrest and anti-racist violence that ensued in British Honduras, Trinidad, Jamaica, Grenada and elsewhere.[47] Several veterans emerged as major leaders of the inter-war years, among them S. A. Haynes of British Honduras, the anomalous popular "white leader, Captain A. A. Cipriani of Trinidad and Tubal Uriah Buzz Butler of Grenada and Trinidad.

The war years with their increase in prices and allegations of profiteering also gave the Workingmen's Association and similar bodies issues around which to rally. As in earlier periods, the activities of Caribbean emigrants abroad again helped raise consciousness at home. The British-based Society of Peoples of African Origin (SPAO) brought together Africans, Caribbean residents and African Americans in England. Led by a Sierra Leonean, J. Eldred Taylor, its membership included prominent Caribbean residents such as F. E. M. Hercules and Audrey Jeffers.[48] Jeffers would return home to Trinidad in 1920 and found the Coterie of Social Workers (1921), for decades the dominant social service and women's organization in the region.

[44] C. L. R. James, 1963, p. 40.

[45] For the story of the British West Indies Regiment, see C. L. Joseph, 1971, pp. 94–124 and Glenford D. Howe, 1994, pp. 27–62. On the Taranto mutiny see W. F. Elkins, 1970, pp. 99–103.

[46] Conversation with Mr Baden Semper, a BWIR veteran, 1968, Ellerslie Park, Trinidad.

[47] See, for example, Tony Martin, 1984c, pp. 47–58.

[48] See, for example, W. F. Elkins, 1972, pp. 47–59.

As a schoolboy at Queen's Royal College in Port of Spain, Hercules founded a Young Men's Coloured Association in 1907. During the British anti-African riots of 1919 he emerged as a major spokesman for his embattled community.[49] Shortly afterwards he toured the Caribbean, like Henry Sylvester Williams 18 years earlier, and established local branches of the SPAO.[50]

The intensified race consciousness of the First World War period and afterwards was part of the worldwide phenomenon known as the New Negro Movement. Emanating from African America, the New Negro ideology embraced pride in race, advocated the strengthening of Pan-African linkages, urged resistance to oppression and encouraged a deeper identification with Africa. It also spawned its literary and artistic counterpart, known in African America as the Harlem Renaissance. The single most important catalyst for the New Negro movement, in the Caribbean, in African America and around the world, was the Jamaican Marcus Garvey.

Garvey's instrument was the UNIA (its full name being the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League) which he founded in Jamaica in 1914. His perspective was global from the very beginning and the formation of the UNIA came after four years of travel in Central and South America and Europe. In the Americas he had followed the footsteps of Caribbean emigrants to places like Costa Rica and Panama. In England he met with African seamen and intellectuals, the latter at the *Africa Times and Orient Review*, which employed him. His consciousness had already been fed by early reading of Pan-African history, particularly the works of Edward Wilmot Blyden. He was said to have been a protégé of Dr J. Robert Love and corresponded in 1915 with the African American Pan-Africanist and educator, Booker T. Washington.

Like many of the leading race-conscious Caribbean personalities of his and earlier generations, Garvey had passed through the crucible of agitation for political reform. In 1910, the year in which the Independent Party of Colour was banned in Cuba, he was an assistant secretary of the National Club in Jamaica. Legislative Council members were among the club's adherents. Unlike many of the middle-class leaders, however, Garvey also had intimate experience of the labour movement, having led one of the British Caribbean's earliest strikes in 1908.[51]

As a result of his travels and his readings Garvey was struck by the universal suffering of the race, as well as by the possibilities of regeneration inherent in organization. He saw

[49] *Ibid*.
[50] *Ibid*.
[51] I have documented all of this in Tony Martin, 1976 (1986).

race consciousness in the Caribbean as pivotal to this regeneration and Caribbean people as the instruments of positive change. Writing in London in 1913 he declared:

> As one who knows the people well, I make no apology for prophesying that there will soon be a turning point in the history of the West Indies; and that the people who inhabit that portion of the Western Hemisphere will be the instruments of uniting a scattered race who, before the close of many centuries, will found an Empire on which the sun shall shine as ceaselessly as it shines on the empire of the North today.[52]

Garvey's grand design envisaged a strong African race, with its African homeland reclaimed from European colonialism, strong enough to protect its scattered members and respected in the world comity of nations. These ideas could be seen in the aims and objects of the UNIA published in 1914.[53] In a word, Garvey's was the philosophy of Black or African nationalism (as he himself described it). Its main tenets were race first, self-reliance and nationhood (political self-determination).

After a year and a half of modest success in Jamaica, Garvey left for the United States, where a projected five-month stay lasted 11 years. There, by dint of relentless effort backed by superb promotional and organizational skills, he was well established by 1918. By 1919 the movement had assumed a solidly international character, with branches in Canada and the Caribbean, among other places, in addition to the United States. The UNIA's major organ, the *Negro World*, begun in New York in 1918, almost immediately appeared in the Caribbean.

One of the earliest British West Indian branches of the new UNIA (the organization having reorganized itself in New York) was in St Vincent, under the leadership of R. E. M. Jack.[54] The St Vincent branch helped in the formation of branches in Dominica and other islands.[55]

In the Caribbean, as in many other places, the Garvey Movement found itself preaching to the converted. But the converted lacked a global organization and they flocked to the UNIA with its immense ability to link up local struggles and provide material and moral support in a systematic way. Even before starting a local UNIA chapter, the nucleus of would-be Dominica Garveyites, under J. R. Ralph Casimir and others, formed a Dominica Brotherhood Union in January 1920. One of their first acts was the drafting of a pledge, 'The Negro to Help the Negro.' It read:

[52] Quoted in Tony Martin, 1983c, p. 21.
[53] Quoted in *ibid*., pp. 31–2.
[54] Tony Martin, 1988 (1989), p. 121.
[55] *Ibid*.

> We hereby sincerely and truly pledge to give our support, and we are quite ready at any moment to shed our blood and to give our very lives to this cause and shall do all what is in our power to help one and all members of the race who [are] for this good and just cause.
>
> We vow that we are sincerely and truly New Negroes. So help us Good God.[56]

The impact of Garvey's movement on the Caribbean was immense. His 'race first' ideology found ready acceptance both among the masses and among substantial sections of the middle classes. There were branches of the UNIA throughout the Greater Caribbean area. Next to the United States, this was the region where the UNIA proliferated most. Cuba led the world outside the United States, with at least 52 branches; Panama was next with 48; Trinidad & Tobago was third with 32.[57]

The movement penetrated every level of society and became entrenched among the most influential agencies for political and social change. The regional labour movement of the inter-war years in the British Caribbean was thoroughly Garveyite. D. Hamilton Jackson, leader of the St Croix Labour Union, was a Garvey sympathizer.[58] Hubert Critchlow of the pioneering British Guiana Labour Union reported Garveyite influence within his union.[59] Clement O. Payne of Barbados and Trinidad, founder of the Barbados Workers Union, was a Garveyite.[60] Garvey himself founded a Jamaican Workers and Labourers Association in 1930. In Trinidad the connection between the Trinidad Workingmen's Association, for years the country's major quasi-political body, and the UNIA was especially close. There was considerable overlapping between the leadership of the two organizations, and the Workingmen's Association held its regular meetings at Liberty Hall, the UNIA's Port of Spain headquarters.[61]

The massive UNIA presence in Cuba provided a new source for African consciousness in the wake of the slaughter of 1912. Historians of Cuba have in the past largely ignored it, however, since the UNIA based itself primarily among the Jamaican immigrant population. United States corporations (especially in the sugar industry) were able to get around the

[56] 9 January 1920; papers of J. R. Ralph Casimir, Roseau, Dominica, quoted in Tony Martin, 1988 (1989), p. 117.

[57] These figures are based on surviving records lodged in the UNIA Central Division (New York) files, Schomburg Center for Research into Black Culture, New York. In many instances the figures are actually understatements. For a complete listing and tabulation of branches based on the Central Division files, see Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), pp. 36l-73.

[58] Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), p. 99.

[59] *Ibid*., pp. 235, 267n.48; Hubert Critchlow, 1945, p. 51.

[60] *People* (Trinidad), 21 August 1937, p. 4. Here Payne is listed along with other Garveyites as a member of the Universal Management Committee planning Garvey's visit to Trinidad.

[61] Tony Martin, 1984b, pp. 50, 60, 65, 67–70, 78, 79. On the Jamaican Workers and Labourers Association see *Blackman* (Jamaica), 26 April 1930.

ban on African immigration by importing Jamaicans and Haitians as contract labourers.[62] (Many thousands were deported in the most deplorable conditions in the 1930s.) There was also a sprinkling of workers brought in from throughout the anglophone and francophone Caribbean and Bermuda, but they tend in historical accounts to be subsumed under the designation Jamaican. Between 1907 and 1929, 102,972 Jamaicans are said to have entered Cuba. Between 1912 and 1929, 183,983 Haitians entered, for a total influx of 304,955 Africans.[63] This was more than the entire 'black' Cuban population of 1907 and about half of the combined 'black' and 'mulatto' populations, to use the census terminology of Cuba's notoriously inaccurate racial statistics.[64]

The immigrants were concentrated in the eastern provinces of Oriente and Camagüey, where the bulk of the Afro-Cuban population resided. While the Haitians were overwhelmingly illiterate, the Jamaicans enjoyed a much higher literacy rate than the Afro-Cubans,[65] and access, however limited, to the diplomatic support of a powerful nation (Great Britain).

The racist Cuban press kept up a hysterical tirade against the newcomers, and especially the Jamaicans. They accused them of corrupting their 'docile' Afro-Cuban kinsmen and of sacrificing white Cuban children for their Obeah rites. At least one Jamaican was lynched in 1919 on a false charge of Obeah.[66]

It was into this tropical version of the southern United States that the Jamaicans injected the most powerful African-conscious organization in the world. A mere eight years after the slaughter of 1912 the officers of Garvey's Black Star Line were entertained to a banquet by President Mario G. Menocal.[67] In 1921 Garvey himself visited Cuba and was treated almost as a head of state. He was received by President Menocal and the Governor of Oriente province. He addressed various Afro-Cuban groups, including Club Atenas, Havana's most prestigious society of colour.[68] So great was the power of the Cuban UNIA by 1923 that the resident British diplomatic representatives agreed to extend it recognition as the

[62] For details of Cuba's Spanish- and US-inspired anti-African immigration laws see Juan Pérez de la Riva, 1979, pp. 28–9.

[63] *Ibid*., tables VI and VII, n.p.

[64] For a discussion of the racial flip-flops of Cuban census records see Carlos Moore, 1988b, pp. 357–65. The census figures are in Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, p. 353.

[65] 84.4 per cent of the Haitians were illiterate; 92.4 per cent of the Jamaicans were literate; only 30 per cent of Afro-Cubans in Matanzas province in 1919, in the same age range as the immigrants, were literate: Juan Pérez de la Riva, 1979, tables VI and VII, and p. 12.

[66] Juan Pérez de la Riva, 1979, pp. 57, 63–5.

[67] *Negro World*, 1 May 1920; Hugh Mulzac, 1972, pp. 83–5; Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), p. 154.

[68] Amy Jacques Garvey, 1963, p. 58; Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), p. 184; Bernardo García Domínguez, 1988, pp. 300–2.

quasi-official body representing British Caribbean workers in Cuba. (The Foreign Office in London vetoed the idea after canvassing Caribbean governors.)[69]

The precise impact of the UNIA on Afro-Cubans remains to be definitively studied but it must have been substantial. Immigrants were targets of the same racist hysteria confronting Afro-Cubans and some Jamaicans and Haitians joined the Independent Party of Colour's armed protest in 1912.[70] Cubans are said to have been avid readers of the *Negro Worlds*' Spanish section. Jamaicans translated the English sections for them.[71]

Of 88 (possibly 89) names of Cuban UNIA presidents and secretaries in the mid-1920s, only three are Spanish and none appear to be Haitian,[72] but this does not necessarily refute the presumption of UNIA influence on the Afro-Cuban population. A Cuban historian has made the plausible but undocumented assertion that '[t]en per cent of the UNIA branches of Oriente and Camagüey included Cubans in their hierarchy.'[73] The sheer size of the Cuban UNIA, the diplomatic courtesies extended to Garvey and the fact that the virulently anti-African Machado dictatorship found it necessary to ban the UNIA for a while in the late 1920s and early 1930s,[74] all suggest an organization of some influence.

The entire political generation between the world wars was profoundly touched by Garvey. His popularity in the Caribbean was still evident in 1937, way past his heyday, when he toured the area for the last time. He was entertained royally and was everywhere the recipient of diplomatic courtesies usually reserved for representatives of a sovereign people. In Port of Spain the Mayor, Alfred Richards, and City Council honoured Garvey with a civic reception.[75] 'This is my second visit to Port of Spain,' Garvey told a Port of Spain audience. 'The first time was in 1914 when I was returning to Jamaica from England. I stopped off here then unknown to those I met.' In Guyana he was received by the British Governor and feted at the Town Hall in Georgetown.[76]

Garvey's African nationalism was the dominant organizational expression of Pan-Africanism in the inter-war years, but it was not the only expression. Caribbean Africans both at home and abroad continued to be prominent in all variants of Pan-Africanism. The leadership of George Padmore and C. L. R. James, in what may be described as the communist variant of Pan-Africanism, has already been noted. In the Pan-African Congresses

[69] Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), pp. 49–51.
[70] Aline Helg, 1995, pp. 209–10.
[71] Bernardo García Domínguez, 1988, p. 303.
[72] UNIA Central Division (New York) Files, Schomburg Collection, New York Public Library.
[73] Bernardo García Domínguez, 1988, p. 303.
[74] *Negro World*, 4 August 1928; *Blackman* (Jamaica), 28 June 1930; Tony Martin, 1976 (1986), p. 51.
[75] *The Caribbee* (Trinidad), Xmas Number, 1936, p. 8; Tony Martin, 1984b, p. 85.
[76] *Port of Spain Gazette*, 21 October 1937, p. 13; *Daily Argosy* (Georgetown), 23 October 1937.

of African-American scholar W. E. B. DuBois, Pan-Africanism found its liberal integrationist expression. DuBois convened congresses in 1919, 1921, 1923 and 1927. The first three convened in a variety of European capitals (Paris, London, Brussels and Lisbon). The fourth, largely the work of African American women, convened in New York. Caribbean delegates were sometimes the majority element at DuBois' congresses. E. F. Fredericks of Guyana served on the executive committee of DuBois' first congress in Paris in 1919.[77]

The ascendancy of working-class African nationalism in the Garvey Movement and in trade unions into the 1930s, meanwhile, did not in any way eclipse similar sentiments among the African middle and upper classes. Nationalistic elements everywhere made common cause with Garveyism; and independent expressions of African nationalism continued to arise among those not openly associated with the UNIA.

The African Caribbean middle class was in the ascendant in the 1930s, and a dim light appeared visible at the end of the colonialist tunnel. A superior secondary education awaited the academically gifted. University education abroad followed for the exceptionally brilliant, the wealthy, the fortunate and the ambitious. The result was an African middle class of great erudition, with a confidence tested in successful intellectual competition with the best of Europe and North America and with no reason to be awed by European colonialists, many of whom they regarded as their intellectual inferiors. With Marcus Garvey rising to pre-eminence in the Pan-African movement, George Padmore becoming the major African figure in the Communist International and C. L. R. James occupying a similar position in the Trotskyist Fourth International,[78] African Caribbean people had no need to doubt their abilities.

Among the middle classes, as among the working class, interaction with African Americans and continental Africans overseas continued to help raise racial consciousness. The role of Trinidad's F. E. M. Hercules in inter-war London has already been noted. At about the same time Audrey Jeffers, later the doyenne of Trinidad's rising African élite and the leader of the anglophone Caribbean women's movement, was an active participant in London-based Pan-African activities. Jeffers was present at the inaugural dinner of the African Progress Union (APU) in London in 1918. The largely West African and Caribbean membership of the APU were 'actuated ... by intense love for their country and race ....' They felt 'that only Africans or descendants of African blood can rightly and truly interpret the feelings, aspirations and idiosyncrasies of their kith and kin ...,'[79]

[77] W. E. B. DuBois, 1919, p. 271.
[78] Three of James' most important books appeared in the 1930s – *A History of Negro Revolt (I938b* [1994]); *The Black Jacobins* (1938a [1963D; *World Revolution* (1937). See also Tony Martin, 1984a, pp. 165–78.
[79] *African Telegraph* (London), December 1918, p. 89, and January-February 1919, p.1ll.

Jamaica's Amy Ashwood Garvey, first wife of Marcus Garvey, actually founded a West African organization, the Nigerian Progress Union, in London in 1924.[80] H. O. B. Wooding, later Chief Justice of Trinidad & Tobago, was made an honorary member of WASU, the British-based West African Students' Union. *WASU* magazine commented on this event in 1927:

> Mr. H.O. Beresford Wooding, President of the Union of Students of African Descent of Great Britain, was appointed as honorary member of the WASU ... for though a West Indian by birth, he has shown such widespread interest in general Negro questions – African and other – that most of us have come to regard him as a man of exceptional value – an *agboni agba* – for the whole Negro race.[81]

Wooding took his Pan-Africanism to the ultimate level when he married a Ghanaian. 'It will no doubt interest our readers,' *WASU* commented in 1928, 'to learn of the recent marriage of Mr. Wooding to Miss Coussie, a member of a prominent family on the Gold Coast. Surely this is one of the signs of the times pointing to the ultimate and desired return of our brethren to their motherland.'[82]

People like Jeffers and Wooding, though politically conservative and economically well-to-do, nevertheless maintained a finely-developed sense of racial consciousness. They could be quite outspoken on perceived slights to the race and strove, within the limits of their social orientation, for the uplift of their group.

The nationalism of this group found an increasingly important outlet through literature, both scholarly and creative. Garvey helped usher in the 'Harlem Renaissance' of the 1920s with an unparalleled promotion of African-conscious literary activity. He defined the aesthetic of his literary offensive in his essay on 'African Fundamentalism' in 1924:

> The time has come for the Negro to forget and cast behind him his hero worship and adoration of other races, and to start out immediately to create and emulate heroes of his own. We must canonize our own saints, create our own martyrs, and elevate to positions of fame and honor black men and women who have made their distinct contributions to our racial history. . . . We must inspire a literature and promulgate a doctrine of our own without any apologies to the powers that be. The right is ours and God's. Let contrary sentiment and cross opinions go to the winds.[83]

T. Albert Marryshow of Grenada joined Garvey's literary movement with a poem, 'And Yet', published in the UNIA's *Negro World* in 1920:

[80] 'Nigerian Progress Union,' *Spokesman*, I, 3, February 1925, p. 16.
[81] *WASU*, 3 and 4, March and June 1927, pp. 6–7.
[82] *WASU, 6* and 7, August 1928, p. 4.
[83] Tony Martin, 1991, p. 4. See also *idem*, 1983a and 1983b.

Poor rags and all tatters
My portion might be,
And yet robed in Manhood
No slave dwells in me;
The world's dearest mantle
Is true Liberty![84]

Dominica's Garveyite poet, J. R. Ralph Casimir, published poems for at least seven decades, sometimes under the pseudonym *Civis Africanus* (Citizen of Africa). His early poems were often penned in praise of prominent literary and political figures of the race. At least one of his poems, 'To the Africans at Home' (1922), was published 'at home' in the *Gold Coast Leader*.[85]

H. A. Vaughan of Barbados captured the resurgent celebration of blackness in his poem, 'Revelation':

Turn sideways now and let them see
What loveliness escapes the schools,
Then turn again, and smile, and be
The perfect answer to those fools
Who always prate of Greece and Rome,
'The face that launched a thousand ships,'
And such like things, but keep tight lips
For burnished beauty nearer home.[86]

Vaughan was a leading figure in the Forum Club of Barbados. Their members kept in close touch with the literary developments of the Harlem Renaissance.[87] His reference to the 'loveliness' that 'escapes the schools' reflected another concern of his colleagues, namely the need for a more Afrocentric curriculum. In January 1932 a Forum Club committee of C. W. Wickham, J. C. Hope and Vaughan, together with two members of the Barbados

[84] Tony Martin, 1991, p. 171.

[85] On Casimir's poetry see Tony Martin, 1983a, pp. 64–5. On Casimir's career in the UNIA see Tony Martin, 1988 (1989). Casimir's books of poetry include *Poesy: An Anthology of Dominica Verse, Book Four* (1948), *The Negro Speaks* (1969), *Farewell (And Other Poems*) 1971), *Black Man, Listen! And Other Poems*, with an introduction by Phyllis Shand Allfrey (1978), and *Freedom Poems* (1985). Casimir also published the following books, which this author has not seen: *Pater Noster And Other Poems, Africa Arise And Other Poems, A Little Kiss and Other Poems, The Negro Speaks* and *Poesy*, Books I, II and III. Casimir's poems are also to be found in Dominican newspapers and in Tony Martin, 1991, p. 234.

[86] H. A. Vaughan, 1985, p.1. This collection was first published in 1945. 'Revelation' is undated. Only two items are dated: one 1935 and the other 1944.

[87] Interview with H. A. Vaughan, Christ Church, Barbados, 1980.

Elementary Teachers Association, met with a Commission of Enquiry into the educational needs of the British West Indies. They requested further Caribbean content and the removal of racially offensive material from the British-imposed textbooks.[88]

Carter G. Woodson, 'Father of African-American History,' considered Caribbean Africans to be ahead of their African-American counterparts in this respect. 'It would hardly seem out of place,' Woodson wrote, 'to remark that while the "highly educated Negroes" of [the United States] oppose the teaching of Negro culture these leaders of the West Indies are boldly demanding it. . . ,'[89] Garvey's 1920 First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World had also called for the teaching of black history in schools.[90] Garveyite Hubert H. Harrison of St Croix and Harlem observed in 1920 that 'The educational system in the United States and the West Indies was shaped by white people for white youth, and from their point of view, it fits their purpose well.' The lamentable results of such mis-education he saw in the fact that Caribbean and African American boys and girls 'readily accept the assumption that Negroes have never been anything but slaves and that they never had a glorious past as other fallen peoples like the Greeks and Persians have.'[91]

Garvey's call for Africans to 'inspire a literature and promulgate a doctrine of our own' found a ready echo in the non-anglophone Caribbean as well. The indigenist movement of Haiti was ushered in by the journal *La Revue Indigène* (1927–8). The writers of this movement, among them Jean Price-Mars and Jacques Roumain, rediscovered and treated with a new respect the folkways and religion of their fellow Haitians. They translated and read the works of the Harlem Renaissance.

This trend intensified with the Griot movement, led by François Duvalier and Lorimer Denis, whose *L'Essentiel de la Doctrine des Griots* appeared in 1938. They also published the magazine *Les Griots* in 1938–9. Duvalier and Denis were uncompromising in their advocacy of 'race first'. They urged Haitians to rediscover and respect the African essence of their culture as a means of national regeneration.[92]

The *négritude* movement of francophone Caribbean and African writers, like its Haitian counterpart, took off with the publication of a magazine: *L'Etudiant Noir was* published in Paris in 1934. Its editors were *négritudes* best-known personalities, the poets Léopold Senghor of Senegal, Léon Damas of French Guiana and Aimé Césaire of Martinique. For over ten years these three oversaw a flourishing movement which combated French cul-

[88] *Forum Quarterly*, March 1932, pp. 30, 31.
[89] *Negro World*, 18 April 1931.
[90] Amy Jacques Garvey, 1923 (1986), p. 142.
[91] Tony Martin, 1991, p. 9.
[92] J. Michael Dash, 1975, pp. 117–34; G. R. Coulthard, 1962, pp. 42, 48; Janheinz Jahn, 1969, p. 215.

tural imperialism, rejected the European demeaning of African history, sought escape from assimilation into French culture and embraced the Harlem Renaissance. This did not prevent them from adopting some aspects of European radicalism, such as communism and socialism.

In their efforts to reject Europe, however, the *négritude* poets practically fell into the European pseudo-scientific trap of presenting Europe as the embodiment of science and reason while willingly embracing the stereotype of Africa primarily as emotion and rhythm. 'Hurray for those who have never invented anything,' proclaimed Aimé Césaire in his famous *Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal*, 'for those who have never explored anything/for those who have never tamed anything.' The more radical Martiniquan, Frantz Fanon, rejected all of this as 'banal exoticism'.[93]

The most incongruous irony of the *négritude* trap lay in the word itself. Contrary to popular scholarly opinion and doubtless unknown to the movement's founders, the term had been invented over a hundred years earlier by the 'father of American psychiatry,' Benjamin Rush (1746–1813). 'Negritude', for Rush, connoted the disease allegedly derived from leprosy, of black skin colour.[94] If the African-conscious *négritude* movement almost fell into the trap of its Eurocentric opposite, its *negrista* counterpart of Cuba and Puerto Rico was, from its very conception, a by-product of European pseudo-scientific disdain for the African. *Negrismo* was 'launched' by the white Puerto Rican Luis Pales Matos' poem 'Pueblo Negro' in 1926. Its proponents, almost exclusively white, presumed to speak for the African masses in the Caribbean's two 'whitest' countries. *Negrismo* was perhaps an inevitable development in societies which adhered to the myth of a racial democracy, societies capable of probably the worst purely racial massacre of the post-emancipation Caribbean (the 1912 racial massacre in Cuba),[95] which segregated Africans and kept them illiterate while ruthlessly discouraging any manifestations of independent African political activity, and which simultaneously proclaimed the absence of racism in their countries.

The *negrista* movement, like *négritude*, exoticized African people into sensuous, sinewy, simple-minded, non-ambitious, animalistic, drum-beating, dancing children of nature who had somehow preserved the desirable primitive purity which Europeans had lost through what Pales Matos called their 'dangerous cerebralisation,...'[96] For Pales Matos, Asia

[93] Janheinz Jahn, 1969, p. 225.
[94] Thomas S. Szasz, 1970, pp. 153–9.
[95] The 1912 Afro-Cuban death toll (two to five thousand) appears greater than fatalities for the Jamaica rebellion of 1865. The Dominican Republic's later massacre of Haitians (1937) may possibly be included in this comparison, depending on whether one classifies it as a purely racial event or not.
[96] Quoted in G. R. Coulthard, 1962, p. 30.

dreamed of *nirvana*, America danced to its jazz and Europe theorized, while Africa grunted 'nyam nyam.'[97]

Negrismo was an Antillean derivative of the European 'anti-rationalist' movement personified by Leo Frobenius, André Gide, Pablo Picasso, Oswald Spengler, Sir Harry Johnson, Sigmund Freud and others. Its earliest Antillean luminary was the Cuban ethnologist Fernando Ortiz. *Negrista* poets mostly constructed primitive straw Africans whom they could idealize while oppressing the real Africans all around them.

In the Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén *negrismo* found its only non-white luminary. Guillen wrote his share of naked African women poems, though his communist affiliation brought him an awareness of the real struggles of Afro-Antilleans. But he was no more able than his white counterparts to "write the genuine race-uplift poetry of the Garvey Movement, or the indigenist movement in Haiti, or the other movements more rooted among African-Caribbean intellectuals. *Negrismo* got as far as advocating a 'mulatto' poetry to reflect the reality, as they perceived it, of Caribbean life.[98] It got no further.

All of these literary movements of the 1920s to the 1940s interacted with and were influenced by the Harlem Renaissance. Some of the leading figures of the renaissance, including Jamaican Claude McKay and Barbadian/Guyanese/Panamanian Eric Walrond, were themselves from the Caribbean. But the greatest Harlem influence of all was Langston Hughes. His works were widely praised, reproduced and translated in such places as the *Forum Quarterly* (Barbados), *La Relève* (Haiti) and *Adelante* (Cuba). Léon Damas and Palés Matos read Hughes. Guillén met him in Havana and "wrote up a record of their conversation.[99] Amy Jacques Garvey, wife of Marcus Garvey, praised him in 1926 on the publication of his now famous essay on 'The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain', wherein Hughes had written in terms reminiscent of Garvey's 'African Fundamentalism' – '... "Why should I want to be white?"....We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If "white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter.'[100]

[97] From the Luis Pales Matos poem, 'Nam-Nam' – *'Asia sueéa su nirvana./America baila el jazz/ Europa juega y teoriza./Africa grune: ńam-ńam.'* Quoted in Paul A. Davis, 1979, p. 73. Representatives of the 'anti-rationalist' idea were active even around the Harlem Renaissance, where white literary bankroller, Charlotte Osgood Mason, tried to steer her beneficiaries into 'primitive' expression. See David Levering Lewis, 1981 (1989), p. 155.

[98] For more on *negrismo* see Magali Roy Fequiere, 1996, pp. 82–7; Dennis Sardinha, 1976; Keith Ellis, 1973; Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, pp. 352–89.

[99] See, for example, *Forum Quarterly*, Xmas Number 1931, pp. 7ff.; J. Michael Dash, 1975, p. 122; Dennis Sardinha, 1976, p. 11; Jorge Castellanos and Isabel Castellanos, 1990, p. 372; G. R. Coulthard, 1962, pp. 51, 83; Magali Roy Fequiere, 1996, p. 86.

[100] Amy Jacques Garvey, 1991, p. 84.

The rising African consciousness of the period was reflected throughout the arts. C. L. R. James' 1936 novel, *Minty Alley*, made a statement by setting itself in an impoverished African Trinidadian environment.[101] Boscoe Holder chose African Caribbean subjects for his paintings. In Trinidad, Holder and Beryl McBurnie took African dance from the countryside and the barrack yards onto the stage,[102] as Olive Walke would later retrieve folk songs from village and hamlet. Nicolās Guillén elevated Afro-Cuban music (the 'son') to respectability. To crown it all, "working-class Trinidadians would, after years of experimentation, reinvent the banned African drum in the guise of the steelband.

The spirit of a blossoming racial consciousness could also be seen in scholarly writings of the period. Despite (perhaps even because of) the Eurocentric education forced on Caribbean children, there was a long tradition of Afrocentric journalism and scholarly writing. In the inter-war years J. A. Rogers of Jamaica and the United States travelled the world in search of obscure information on African history. So for many years did his friend Arturo A. Schomburg of Puerto Rico and New York, African America's most celebrated bibliophile.[103] In 1917 Grenada's T. Albert Marryshow wrote *Cycles of Civilization* wherein he chastised the racist utterances of General Jan Christian Smuts of South Africa and asserted the African origins of civilization.[104] Rogers' books, beginning with *From Superman to Man* in 1917, are still immensely popular. Norman Eustace Cameron of Guyana published *The Evolution of the Negro* in two volumes in 1929 and 1934. He advocated race pride, saw no need for massive (as opposed to selective) emigration to Africa and saw economic advance as the way out for African people. 'As long as Negroes are poor they will be despised,' he wrote. 'When they become wealthy as a people all their faults will be overlooked or spoken of in hushed whispers which will not affect them.'[105]

The foreign-based, among them James, Padmore and Rogers, surpassed those at home in the sheer volume of their output. Most were self-trained as historians. In Eric Williams of Trinidad, however, the Caribbean produced a formally trained historian of great brilliance. With an island scholarship from Queen's Royal College and an Oxford first-class degree behind him, he moved on to a doctorate at Oxford University in 1938. His dissertation, revised and published as *Capitalism and Slavery* in 1944, combined the race consciousness of the age with brilliance of scholarship. The result was a seminal work. Following a thesis advanced by James, Williams meticulously demonstrated the slave trade to be a major

[101] C. L. R. James, 1936 (1971).
[102] See, for example, Molly Ahye, 1983.
[103] On Schomburg see Elinor Des Verney Sinnette, 1989; Winston James, 1996, pp. 92–127.
[104] T. Albert Marryshow, 1917 (1973).
[105] Norman Eustace Cameron, 1929–34 (1970).

source of the capital formation that financed England's Industrial Revolution.[106] His first book, in keeping with the spirit of the period, was *The Negro in the Caribbean* (1942).[107] He surveyed the history of the Caribbean masses, championed their anti-colonial grievances, spoke favourably of Garvey and looked towards a better future for the region.

A discussion of African consciousness in the inter-war years would not be complete without reference to the Rastafarian Movement and the Italian fascist invasion of Ethiopia. Rastafarianism emerged in Jamaica in the early 1930s. Many of its initial adherents came out of the Garvey Movement, with its universal African consciousness and its widespread Ethiopian symbolism. The coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie (formerly Ras Tafari) of Ethiopia in 1930 provided a rare opportunity for an internationally disseminated non-pejorative view of Africa. Out of the Garveyite background and with the stimulus of the coronation came the new movement.

The poor and oppressed Africans of Jamaica who initiated the movement ingeniously constructed an Afrocentric theology, world view and lifestyle to replace European cultural imperialism. Haile Selassie, an African, was recognized as God. Africa was the promised land and focal point of repatriation. Africans had been forcibly deposited into exile in the west (Babylon). Africans, as the true Israelites of the Bible, were God's chosen people. The white so-called Jews of Europe, relatively recent converts to Judaism, were a trick to confuse Africans. Like the contemporaneous Nation of Islam in the United States, Rastafarians argued that only Africans, in the universal persecution meted out to them and in their forced dispersal throughout the earth, satisfied the biblical conditions for God's chosen people. The new movement proclaimed a doctrine of black supremacy. Rastafarians embraced Garvey as a prophet, a John the Baptist, second in veneration only to His Imperial Majesty, Haile Selassie.

The movement emerged from intense repression in the colonial and post-colonial Jamaican state to impact fundamentally Jamaican and Pan-African society. Rastafarians practically developed a new language. They gave the world reggae music. They Africanized painting, sculpture, dance, theatre and ceramics in Jamaica. They influenced the culinary arts. They challenged some of the core concepts of Christianity. Their once-persecuted dreadlocks in time became commonplace all over the African world among adherents

[106] Eric Williams, 1944.
[107] Washington, DC: The Associates in Negro Folk Education, 1942.

and non-adherents alike. Non-Africans have become attracted to the movement in recent years.[108]

The Italian fascist invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 was perhaps the most traumatic event to affect the Caribbean and the rest of scattered Africa since the European 'scramble' for the continent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ethiopia became the only African country to repel European aggression militarily when the Emperor Menelik II routed the Italians at the Battle of Adowa in 1896. The coronation of Haile Selassie enhanced this tradition of veneration for Ethiopia. Then in 1935 Benito Mussolini, Italy's dictator, invaded Ethiopia, dropped poison gas on its inhabitants, overran the country and forced the Emperor to flee to Europe. The League of Nations declined to come to Ethiopia's aid. In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, the populace was enraged. Young men tried to volunteer for the Ethiopian army; dock workers refused to unload Italian ships; there were protest rallies and demonstrations. Calypsonian Tiger, in Trinidad, sang: 'De gold, de gold, de gold, de gold/De gold in Africa/Mussolini want from the emperor.'[109]

Caribbean emigrants abroad were equally active. In England, James formed the International African Friends of Ethiopia.[110] Garvey, now also resident in England, criticized the Emperor for keeping Ethiopia weak but nevertheless supported the Ethiopian cause. His support often found poetical expression, as witness the following lines from 'The Beast of Rome' (1935):

> The Rome of sin and human hate
> Has plagued the world before,
> But God will serve their awful fate
> On Ethiopia's shore.
> Their guns and gas may threaten all
> As hymns they sing at home
> But ere Adowa's final fall
> The fight shall pass from Rome.[111]

[108] Among the voluminous literature on Rastafarianism the following may be mentioned – M. G. Smith *et al.*, I960; Leonard E. Barrett, 1968; Horace Campbell, 1985; Joseph Owens, 1976 (1979); Rex Nettleford, 1972; Barry Chevannes, 1994; *idem*, 1995.

[109] Richard K. Spottswood, 1987; Canboulay Productions, 1991.

[110] C. L. R. James, interview with the author, San Fernando, Trinidad, 13 March 1980.

[111] Tony Martin, 1983b, p. 85.

Caribbean emigrants also proliferated in the myriad pro-Ethiopia movements that flourished in the United States. One New Yorker, former Trinidadian Colonel Hubert Fauntleroy Julian, went to Ethiopia to help train Haile Selassie's air force.[112]

The Second World War, like the first, brought more blatant racism, and as a consequence, heightened racial consciousness. A heavy United States military presence in the Caribbean (including African-American units) inevitably brought United States-style race relations closer to home. As in the First World War, the British War Office resisted African-Caribbean troops and non-combatant forces for as long as it could. This included women aspirants to the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), who like their male counterparts were only allowed in late in the war.[113]

Those who eventually went overseas were rewarded with enhanced opportunities for Pan-African contact, as they mingled with Africans, African Americans and other colonized and oppressed peoples brought together for the war effort. Dudley Thompson, a Jamaican volunteer in the Royal Air Force, described the experience this way: 'One lasting effect on me of this war period was that by 1945, I was coming into contact [in England] for the first time with West Indian, African, and Black American soldiers, and with students, writers and blue-collar workers from the British colonies – all of us meeting in the Mother country . . . '[114]

This contact had repercussions for the growth of African consciousness and anti- colonialism all over the African world. Perhaps most symbolic of this was the Fifth Pan-African Congress which met in Manchester, England, in 1945. It was convened by Padmore of Trinidad and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, with African America's DuBois as honorary chair and Jamaica's Amy Ashwood Garvey as co-chair of the opening session. Delegates included Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, a UNIA delegation from Jamaica, workers domiciled in Britain and trade unionists from the Caribbean and Africa. Two of those present, Nkrumah and Kenyatta, returned home shortly afterwards to lead their respective independence struggles; and Caribbean delegates followed them, as it were. Padmore was later to become Nkrumah's adviser on African affairs in independent Ghana. Thompson, who attended the conference, subsequently won a Rhodes scholarship, studied law at Oxford and Gray's Inn, and practised in Tanzania and Kenya. It was he who organized the legal defence for Kenyatta's trial for alleged leadership of the Mau Mau uprising.[115]

[112] On Caribbean and other African reaction to the Italian invasion, see William R. Scott, 1993; Joseph E. Harris, 1994; Robert G. Weisbord, 1970, pp. 34–4l; Kevin A. Yelvington, 1999, pp. 189–225.

[113] Ben Bousquet and Colin Douglas, 1991.

[114] Dudley Thompson, 1993, p. 31. See also Khafra Kambon, 1988, pp. 17–25.

[115] Dudley Thompson, 1993, *passim*.

Caribbean pre- and post-independence politics in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s would be leavened by several leaders with a Pan-African experience. Eric Williams returned home from America to become Trinidad's first prime minister. Thompson returned from East Africa to Jamaica to become a Cabinet minister in People's National Party governments. Errol Barrow, son of a Garveyite,[116] and a Royal Air Force officer in the Second World War, became prime minister of Barbados. Forbes Burnham, law student in England and later prime minister and president of Guyana, seems to have picked up some Garveyite sympathies along the way. His People's National Congress adopted Garvey's colours of red, black and green for its flag. *Négritude* founder Aimé Césaire became Mayor of Fort-de-France, Martinique, in 1945.

George Weekes, Trinidad's pre-eminent labour leader from the 1960s to the 1980s, replicated the experience of the First World War generation. He served in Africa and Europe with the Second World War Caribbean Regiment and returned home to join the Universal African Nationalist Movement and other neo-Garveyite organizations.[117] As late as 1970 Maurice Bishop, radicalized by the Black Power movement in England, returned home to Grenada to lead a similar struggle and eventually become prime minister.

Many returnees of the 1950s and 1960s in time made the transition from youthful idealism (or even radicalism) to middle-aged pragmatism (or even conservatism). A new generation of race-conscious individuals took their place. Soon some of those who were on the cutting edge of race consciousness in the 1930s and after, would find themselves defending the status quo against Black Power.

The Caribbean Black Power movement spun off from the civil-rights movement in the United States, and became fully conscious of itself in the mid-1960s. Several of its main North American leaders had a Caribbean connection. Malcolm X, the most important theoretician of the movement, despite his early death in 1965, was the son of Garveyite parents and a Grenadian mother. Kwame Touré (formerly Stokely Carmichael), who first popularized the slogan 'Black Power' in 1966, emigrated from Trinidad to New York as a child. Once established in the United States, Black Power quickly spread to the largely Caribbean-African populations of Britain and Canada. Caribbean students demonstrated in London in 1967 against the banning of Carmichael by the Trinidad government.[118]

In the United States, Black Power called for racial pride and empowerment in the face of the traditional denial of human rights to African Americans. In the Caribbean it called

[116] Barrow's father was also a bishop in the African Orthodox Church, which had its origins in the Garvey Movement: Bishop Reginald Barrow, interview with the author, Barbados, 1980.

[117] Khafra Kambon, 1988, pp. 20–5.

[118] *Trinidad Guardian*, 18 August 1967, p.1; *Morning Star* (London), 18 August 1967, p. 3.

for racial pride and empowerment against the multinational corporations that dominated regional economies. Its efforts were also directed against the new local ruling elements who were perceived as conduits for neo-colonial foreign domination.

The historical connections between African consciousness at home and abroad were vividly demonstrated in 1968, when events in Montreal, Canada, triggered what came to be known as the 'Black Power Revolution' in Trinidad. In the aftermath of a Black Writers Conference in Montreal in 1968, Walter Rodney, a Guyanese history professor at the University of the West Indies, was denied re-entry into Jamaica. Rodney was disliked by the government for having made common cause with the poor in general and Rastafarians in particular. His summary expulsion led to demonstrations, and police repression against the demonstrators and riots. Three people were killed. That same year Caribbean students and their allies at Sir George William University in Montreal occupied some campus property. They had vainly sought redress for years against a white professor who had been shown to discriminate against black students in the awarding of grades. Students at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad expressed solidarity with their colleagues in Montreal and pressured the Trinidad authorities into providing legal and other assistance to the arrested victims. When the Canadian Governor-General visited Trinidad, students blocked the university entrance. The distinguished visitor and Prime Minister Eric Williams were unable to enter. Demonstrations against Canadian targets (including banks and the country's High Commission) ensued. The students, organized in the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), were joined by workers, the unemployed and broad segments of the general populace. By 1969 the movement had grown to massive proportions. It now operated under the banner of Black Power. As in the United States, leaders adopted African names and styles of dress. Once again, as in earlier historical periods, race consciousness served as catalyst for broad social change. The whole neo-colonial structure of the society came under scrutiny and efforts at African-Indian co-operation were initiated.[119]

Radical elements within Williams' People's National Movement persuaded the 1968 party convention to sanction a commission of enquiry into racism faced by Caribbean residents in Britain, Canada and the United States.[120] In 1969 an aroused public opinion pressured the government into appointing commissions of enquiry into racial discrimination at the Trinidad Country Club and in the private sector, with an emphasis on banks.[121]

[119] The literature on the Black Power movement is voluminous. See, for example, Khafra Kambon, 1988, chaps 12, 13 *et passim;* Catherine A. Sunshine, 1988, pp. 58–64; Selwyn D. Ryan and Taimoon Stewart, 1995.

[120] *Report of a Cabinet Appointed Enquiry into Discrimination, 1969*.

[121] The Country Club hearings were widely reported in the Trinidad press and overseas during August 1969 and beyond. See also Tony Martin, 1970.

By April 1970, a state of emergency was declared, an attempted army coup failed and the Williams government barely kept power. In the immediate aftermath the Williams administration heeded the wishes of the people by nationalizing and localizing many of the 'commanding heights' of the economy.

In Grenada, Black Power had its greatest success when demonstrations in sympathy with the Trinidad struggle of 1970 grew in time into the New Jewel Movement (NJM), led by Maurice Bishop. The NJM seized power in 1979 from the government of Eric Gairy, in the Commonwealth Caribbean's only successful coup (Trinidad having had unsuccessful attempts in 1970 and 1990).[122]

As in the case of the Garvey Movement in the 1920s and the literary movement of the 1930s, the Black Power radicalism of the late 1960s and the 1970s in the English-speaking states had its counterparts throughout the Caribbean. The May 1969 workers' riots in Curaçao, for example, were alleged to have a Black Power connection, though those allegations rested more on objective similarities than on organizational links. A new party, the Workers' Front, emerged from the agitation and captured three of the 12 available seats in the September 1970 elections, enabling it to enter into a coalition government. In the process the workers challenged the incumbent Democratic Party and what one workers' leader, Stanley C. Brown, called 'the Protestant-Jewish power group' on the island. Brown demanded 'our own culture, reparations from Holland ... just like the Germans gave the Jews' and social services at least to the minimal level enjoyed in Holland.[123] Papiamentu, the local Creole language, was one of the beneficiaries of the riots. Workers insisted on increased status for their language; politicians and the media acceded to these demands. Much later (1986) Papiamentu obtained a foothold in the school curriculum.[124]

Related efforts in Suriname to recognize officially the African-based Sranan Tongo *lingua franca* ran foul of Hindu and Javanese opposition.[125] The Créole language of St Lucia, Dominica and other islands has undergone significant revitalization. In Trinidad, Yoruba classes, once held by Garveyites in the 1940s, have been revived in a small way,

[122] The following are among the many works on the Grenada Revolution – Didacus Jules and Don Rojas, n.d.; David E. Lewis, 1984; Tony Martin, 1983–5; Chris Searle, 1983.

[123] Catherine A. Sunshine, 1988.

[124] *New York Times, I* March 1970. The Sephardic Jews among the island's élite were said to be looking for an accommodation with the African population. The Ashkenazi Jews were said to view the riots as the work of 'anti-Semitic' Black Power groups financed by Arab money. Such was apparently not the case, since 'the commission which investigated the... riots, which I chaired, didn't find any evidence of Black Power connections. The same goes for Cuban connections. Black Power slogans and Castro caps were used as symbols of protest' (personal communication from René A. Römer, 26 March 1998). See also William A. Anderson and Russell R. Dynes, 1975.

[125] Peter Meel, 1990, p. 277.

partly as a response to the widespread efforts to spread Hindi among the Hindu Trinidadian population.

In Cuba in the 1970s the Castro regime was able to funnel the rising tide of African consciousness into the most ambitious foreign-policy initiatives to come out of the Caribbean. Cuba established a military presence in several African countries, but none so startling as in Angola, where Cuban military might succeeded in reversing a South African invasion and ultimately hastening the demise of apartheid in Southern Africa.[126]

The 1980s often appeared to be marked by economic recession, a drift away from political radicalism and a trend back towards reinforced non-African economic influence, facilitated by IMF pressures and the global move towards economic privatization. Yet they were also a time of intense consolidation and regrouping among the preservers of African consciousness. After the overtly political activity of the 1970s there was a shift towards the painstaking 'consciousness-raising' work of cultural and academic effort. Grass-roots groups from Bermuda to Guyana initiated a brisk commerce of itinerant Afrocentric lecturers, primarily from the United States, many of Caribbean origin. They spoke to packed houses and helped usher in an era of expanded knowledge of, and pride in, African history. They were part of a tradition that went back at least to Henry Sylvester Williams' tour of 1901 and one that included Garvey and the many emissaries of the UNIA who criss-crossed the region in the 1920s and 1930s. In many ways they played roles similar to those of the more ostensibly religious (but nevertheless political) Indian missionaries who will be discussed later in this chapter.

A resurgence of interest in Garvey contributed to these developments and came to a climax in his centenary celebrations of 1987. Caribbean people at home and abroad joined with Africans everywhere for a year of conferences, building-dedications, pilgrimages, book-launchings and erection of monuments to Garvey's memory.

Middle-class Africans were again swept into the tide of rising consciousness. There were several attempts in Trinidad & Tobago to organize a confederation of African associations. In Barbados a Roman Catholic priest became an important stimulus to these developments. The middle class increasingly rediscovered such predominantly working-class African religions as Winti (Suriname), Orisha or Shango (Trinidad and elsewhere) and Voodoo (Haiti). Decolonization brought the decriminalization of Winti, Obeah (in Guyana) and the Spiritual Shouter Baptists (in Trinidad & Tobago). Caribbean and neighbouring people from Cuba to Brazil played a prominent role in a growing world Orisha movement.

[126] Carlos Moore, 1988a.

One tangible result of the cultural and academic interest was the movement for reinstating Emancipation Day (1 August) as a time of solemn celebration in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Emancipation Day became a public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago in 1984. As of 1998 it was being officially celebrated in Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana, the Bahamas, Grenada, Montserrat and St Lucia. In Trinidad the celebration has assumed massive

proportions. A permanently constituted Emancipation Support Committee co-ordinates a lecture series, an Emancipation Village, cultural extravaganzas, an outreach programme into schools and the work-place and an Emancipation Day street parade. As elsewhere in the African dispersion, the wearing of African traditional clothes on important occasions has become widespread, actually exceeding, in some countries, the practice on the African continent itself.

So African consciousness once again gathers momentum outside the structure of government, though this time governments appear less hostile than before, and on occasion they are even supportive.

Indian consciousness

> If the East Indian showed that progressive increase in number which they had shown up to now, and taking into account their natural productivity, it was no mere hyperbolical statement that Indians would people the colony and drive out the rest of the inhabitants. The African was not as productive as the East Indian: and if circumstances did not compel him to leave the colony, he would naturally die out. Such a thing had taken place at Mauritius. And Trinidad would be maintained and owned by the Indian in the field, the office and the shop.
>
> Report of Speech by F. E. M. Hosein,
> Trinidad, 1913[127]

In Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname, areas of very large Indian population, and to lesser degrees elsewhere, African consciousness has had to co-exist with Indian consciousness. African consciousness, as we have seen, has traditionally wedded itself to the wider national interest and has tended to direct its activity against colonialism and other forms of foreign domination. In so far as foreign influence has emanated from Europe and North America, white people have borne the brunt of whatever racial animosity African consciousness has generated. Until relatively recently, African consciousness has tended either to treat its Indian counterpart with 'benign neglect' (to borrow a North American phrase) or to incorporate it into a presumed common struggle against a common European foe.

Indian racial consciousness, while exhibiting many features in common with African nationalism, and often utilizing the same rhetoric, has tended historically to assume a more narrowly communal posture with a resultant focus on the African, more than on the European, as a primary adversary. Yet the interaction between the two groups has been fluid enough to ensure full acceptance for the occasional Indo-Caribbean who chose to operate within African nationalist organizations. This was true even for Garvey's UNIA, the most African-conscious of Caribbean movements. Here, the easy acceptance of Indians (and occasionally others) underscored the broader nationalism of these movements, despite their emphasis on African racial pride. The secretary of the UNIA in Montreal, Canada, was for many years an Indo-Caribbean.[128] Hucheshwar G. Mudgal of India and Trinidad edited Garvey's *Negro World* in the 1930s and was a staunch defender of Garvey's African nationalism.[129]

[127] *Port of Spain Gazette, 6* May 1913, p. 5.

[128] The Montreal UNIA files give his name as Felix A. Mahomed (possibly a misspelling for Mohamed or Mohammed). He joined the branch on 25 October 1920 and became secretary in 1926 – information courtesy of Dr Leo Bertley of Vanier College, Montreal, who is working on a book on the Montreal UNIA.

[129] H. G. Mudgal, 1932. See also *Negro World*, 23 September 1922, p. 4, 21 October 1922, p. 4, 2 August 1930, p. 6; Tony Martin, 1984b, *p. 81; idem*, 1976 (1986), pp. 93, 254, 260–1.

In the Caribbean itself Africans have occasionally intervened decisively in the promotion of Indian nationalism. The *East Indian Weekly* (1928–32), perhaps Trinidad's most important Indian nationalist newspaper to date, was owned by Leonard Fitzgerald Walcott, an African nationalist and Garveyite.

Indians outside of Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname, for their part, have often been less resistant than in the areas of major Indian population to an accommodation with African culture. In St Lucia in the 1940s, three Indian members of the Garveyite Universal African Nationalist Movement, which had its headquarters in New York, answered 'yes' on their application forms to the question, 'Are you of African blood and descent?'[130]

A half-million indentured Indian labourers were introduced into the Caribbean between 1838 and 1917, in an effort on the part of the European planters to deprive the newly emancipated Africans of the bargaining benefits of free labour.[131] The immigrants came in large numbers to Guyana, Trinidad and Suriname, and in smaller numbers to Guadeloupe, Jamaica, Martinique, St Vincent, Grenada and St Lucia. Africans were forced to help finance Indian immigration through general taxes. In Jamaica additionally, African emigrants to Panama and elsewhere had to pay a 'departure tax' which went towards financing Indian immigration.[132]

In the territories of significant Indian settlement especially, conditions favoured a communal existence and the consequent maintenance of an Indian consciousness. As in the case of the failed 1806 attempt to settle Chinese in Trinidad,[133] Indians were consciously developed into a buffer by the European rulers in an effort to deflect African agitation away from themselves. 'One thing more,' wrote a committee of white leaders in Trinidad in 1919, when it seemed that the buffer arrangement might have been in danger of breaking down,

> in the years gone by the large East Indian indentured population, numbering many thousands and largely under the control of their respective plantation owners, managers and overseers, was looked upon as a substantial safeguard against trouble with the negroes and *vice versa*. With the abolition of immigration such a counterpoise has ceased to exist and the "creole coolie" will either remain an interested spectator or join the mob.[134]

[130] Application forms (including photographs of applicants), Unit no. 14, Castries UANM in privately held UANM papers. One hundred forms were perused by the author. The three Indian members were from Forestière.

[131] Eric Williams, 1970 (1984), pp. 347–60.

[132] Winston James, 1998, p. 29.

[133] Barry W. Higman, 1972, p. 33.

[134] George F. Huggins *et al*. to Colonial Secretary, 30 July 1919, CO 295/522, Colonial Office files, Public Record Office, London.

In 1897 an assistant under-secretary at the British Colonial Office urged increased Indian immigration and its spread to new areas such as Dominica 'not as a means of procuring labour, but with the distinct object of not leaving any of these Islands entirely to the Negro race.' Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was sympathetic to the idea of immigration 'to maintain and strengthen the leaven of East Indians in the population.'[135] Influential French opinion in Martinique in 1855 saw the buffer value of Indians as the strongest argument for preferring them to other immigrants. Indians, it was argued, would stand aloof from African-fomented strikes and disturbances.[136]

Buffer policies were facilitated by residential separation and differences in race, religion, language and legal status between indentured Indians and Africans. Furthermore, though most Indians remained in the Caribbean, the fact that as many as 25 per cent exercised their option to return to India may long have contributed to a psychology of transience. Two decades after the end of indenture in 1917, specially chartered ships still encountered more Guyanese and Trinidadian Indians wishing to return home than there was space for.[137]

Communalism among the Indians, more developed than for any other Caribbean group, provided the infrastructure for Indian nationalism and quickly found expression in politics. In 1897 Trinidad Indians memorialized a visiting West India Royal Commission for communal representation in the Legislative Council.[138] Indian communalism in politics could on occasion be used as a weapon to frustrate or delay constitutional advance sought by Africans. The case of the Wood Commission of 1921–2 is illustrative of this. The commission was sent to the Caribbean from London in response to the demands, spearheaded by the African population, for democratization of the political process. These demands figured prominently in the primarily African riots of the post-war period in Belize, Trinidad and elsewhere.[139]

Several Trinidad Indians appearing before the commission opposed introduction of the elective principle into Trinidad politics. The East Indian National Congress (EINC) demanded proportional or communal representation 'on the ground', as Wood explained, 'that otherwise there was a danger of their being outvoted.'[140] C. B. Mathura, later editor

[135] Minute by C. P. Lucas, October 1897, CO 884/5: West Indian no. 79, Colonial Office files, Public Record Office, London, quoted in K. O. Laurence, 1994, p. 517.

[136] 'L'Immigration Indienne,' *Journal Officiel de La Colonie, 4* February 1855, p. 395.

[137] *Trinidad Guardian, 7* August 1936, p.1. Here only 50 of 100 assembled hopefuls were chosen, with more selections promised for the following week. Those selected were sent to a holding station (on Nelson Island) to await the repatriation ship *Ganges*, due in with Guyanese repatriates.

[138] Bridget Brereton, 1981, pp. 110, 115.

[139] See, for example, Tony Martin, 1984c, pp. 47–58.

[140] *Report by the Hon. E.F.L Wood*, 1922, p. 224 (the Wood Report).

of the *East Indian Weekly* and one of an Indian minority favouring an elective franchise, saw the position of the EINC and its chief spokesman, Rev. C. D. Lalla, as the introduction into Trinidad of 'a miniature India with class legislation, perhaps caste representation – Brahmin for Brahmin, Hindu for Hindu and so on.'[141]

The East Indian National Association of Princes Town and several prominent Indians preferred to keep undemocratic Crown Colony rule, since they did not think that there were enough qualified Indians to compete successfully in an elective system.[142] Several of the Indian leaders advanced as a further reason for opposing the African quest for democracy what F. E. M. Hosein described as 'the veiled and some times open hostility of the coloured race.'[143]

The positions of the Indian leadership were finely nuanced, however. They were overwhelmingly separatists, and disagreed only on how best to secure this objective. F. E. M. Hosein felt that non-communal elections need not be an obstacle 'to preserve the purity and pride of race'. The entire leadership, he said, was 'at one in its aim; namely, the advancement and prestige of East Indians separate and distinct from the rest of a heterogeneous community.' This, he said, 'is a laudable desire with which the whole [Indian leadership] fully sympathizes,. . . '[144]

Major Wood partly acceded to the Indian demands. He denied their request for communal representation while nevertheless retaining a strong non-elective element which made it possible for the government simply to appoint Indians to the Legislative Council, if they should fail to secure adequate representation via elections. His arguments against communalism were nevertheless interesting:

> . . . it would accentuate and perpetuate the differences which, in order to produce a homogeneous community it should be the object of statesmanship to remove. The East Indians are an important element in the community, and it would be a great misfortune if they were encouraged to stand aside from the main current of political life instead of sharing in it and assisting to guide its course. Finally, if a concession of this kind were granted to the East Indians, there would be no logical reason for withholding it from persons of French, Spanish or Chinese descent, a situation which would became impossible.[145]

A similar demand from the British Guiana East Indian Association in 1936 elicited a similar official response.[146]

[141] Editorial, *East Indian Weekly*, 12 January 1929, p. 6.
[142] *Ibid*.
[143] F. E. M. Hosein, 1929, p. 3.
[144] *Ibid*.
[145] *Report by the Hon. E. F. L. Wood*, 1922, *p. 24*.
[146] Hugh Tinker, 1982, p. 38.

In objecting to Indian communal requests, Trinidad's Legislative Reform Committee 'deprecated differentiation between East Indian and Creole, since they formed one community and the difference between them was one of domestic life only. . . . In their view any system of communal representation involving preferential treatment to one race would create friction.'[147] This remains a classic statement of the traditional Trinidadian African view of Indian nationalism, with its presumption of a commonality of interest between the two groups, its profound under-estimation of Indian opinions to the contrary and its mild irritation at the recurrence of 'preferential treatment'.

Among the key elements feeding communalism was an intense interaction with emissaries from India. Whether secular or religious, such emissaries encouraged attitudes of separatism and bolstered feelings of racial pride. Long after the end of the indenture system, members of the Indian Civil Service visited the Caribbean periodically. They lobbied on behalf of local Indians, encouraged feelings of closeness to Mother India and arbitrated disputes within the Indo-Caribbean community.[148] (From the late 1940s diplomatic representatives of independent India played a similar role – with the United States State Department being among those evincing an interest in Indian diplomatic activity.)[149]

When in 1938–9 London sent out a West India Royal Commission (once more following rioting, primarily among the African population), the (British) Indian government sent along a special 'officer on deputation' to mobilize Caribbean Indians and help them put their grievances before the commissioners. While full publication of the commission's report was withheld until after the Second World War, the separate *Report on the Condition of Indians in Jamaica, British Guiana and Trinidad* was published straight away in 1939.[150] This represented merely the latest episode in a hundred years of special British solicitude for its Caribbean Indian population, which gave rise, as early as the nineteenth century in British Guiana, to the 'notion of the "pampered coolie"'.[151]

Visits by India-based religious missionaries were even more frequent than those of the Indian Civil Service and equally influential, if not more so. Both Hindu and Muslim missionaries travelled the circuit from Trinidad to Guyana to Suriname, with sometimes a stop in the United States, or other Caribbean destinations. Missionaries commanded great respect among their overseas compatriots. They founded local religious organizations and

[147] *Report by the Hon. E. F. L. Wood*, 1922, *p. 23*.
[148] For example, Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), p. 242.
[149] Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, DC, RG 59, 844g.OO 'Activities and duties of the Indian Commissioner to the West Indies,' 22 December, 1949, from Port of Spain, Index to Purport Books.
[150] J. D. Tyson, 1939 (the Tyson Report).
[151] K. O. Laurence, 1994, p. 283.

local branches of Indian ones. They also explicitly preached racial pride and encouraged racial exclusiveness. Their missionary zeal was exemplary. Visiting Vedic missionary to Trinidad, Pundit Mehta Jaimini, visited 38 towns and villages and delivered 79 lectures in less than three months in 1928–9.[152]

The parting advice given by visiting Pandit Ayodha Prasad to the Arya Samaj Association of Trinidad in 1936, was instructive. He was on his way to Suriname, he explained, when he discovered the Indian community of Trinidad. He completed his work in Suriname and retraced his steps to Trinidad, where, despite some local opposition (probably from rival religious groupings), he was welcomed by Indian Hindus, Muslims and Christians. 'I am leaving Trinidad,' he said on his departure, 'but I want Indians to think that they are Indians first and everything else after.' He continued, 'They must maintain their national identity and their language.'[153] His local followers were profuse in their gratitude. '[You have achieved] the redemption of sons of India who had been denationalised and alienated,' they confessed. An address presented to Prasad, Professor Satya Charan and B. T. Shastri showed the close relation between religious proselytization and racial consciousness:

> The introduction of the Arya Samaj Movement in this colony has, indeed, infused new life in Indian Society. It has made us proud of the civilisation of India. It has engendered in our hearts a love for the ancient glory and culture of our Motherland. It has urged upon us the necessity of preserving and maintaining a knowledge of our mother-tongues. It has sponsored the cause of Indian thought and Indian culture. It has saved the Indian community from the perilous plight of being hopelessly absorbed by alien religions and alien culture. The movement has, in short, raised us from a mine of disillusionment and has created for us a bright and prosperous outlook.[154]

While Hinduism and Islam may have seemed natural vehicles for Indian communalism and racial pride, the Christian denomination most closely associated with the Indians in Trinidad played a similar role. The Canadian Mission (Presbyterian Church of Canada) was unique among Christian churches in its single-minded concentration on the Indian community. Its missionaries often trained in India for Caribbean work. They studied Indian religions and spoke Indian languages. Their local catechists and clergy were Indian. The churches and schools (elementary, secondary and teacher-training) they established were overwhelmingly Indian, as were the local teachers they recruited. Classes were taught in Hindi, which was a compulsory subject in their teachers' colleges.[155]

[152] *East Indian Weekly*, 16 March 1929, p. 6.
[153] *Trinidad Guardian*, 11 June 1936, p. 14.
[154] *Ibid, 4* June 1936, p. 14.
[155] Brinsley Samaroo, 1975, pp. 225–9 *et passim*.

Communalism found further expression in the media. Some major newspapers and periodicals in Trinidad carried special Indian sections in the 1930s.[156] (A Trinidad Garveyite leader noted in 1937 that the major dailies carried Indian, Portuguese, Spanish and Chinese sections, but no African sections.)[157] The 'Indian National Hour', begun in January 1936 on Afro-Guyanese radio station VP3BG, was apparently heard on short-wave radio in Trinidad.[158] By the mid-1930s, movies imported from India had become important missionaries of cultural rejuvenation and racial awareness.[159]

The 1930s activity represented a major upsurge in Indian consciousness paralleling (or perhaps competing with) the contemporaneous rise in African consciousness. The 'Indian News and Views' section of the *Trinidad Guardian* in 1936 welcomed the growing popularity of saris among Indian women as a manifestation of this consciousness and commented, 'It is hoped that others will identify themselves in like manner and thus preserve their national characteristics as true and loyal daughters of Mother India.'[160] (Interestingly, the dhoti, the most characteristic form of Indo-Caribbean male attire, was allowed to die a natural death.)

One of the most enduring aspects of Indo-Caribbean nationalism has been the demand for Hindi in schools. The Canadian Mission schools, as we have already seen, accommodated these demands very early on. Schools run by Hindu organizations continued the practice later. By 1938, 49 Guyanese schools were receiving government grants for the teaching of Hindi.[161] Public interest in this subject has remained strong.[162]

The main arguments on both sides of this issue were aired in 1936, in what may be the definitive statements on the question. In the course of the debate differing perspectives on Indian nationalism were ventilated. The anti-African feeling which has informed Indian nationalism from time to time also found frank expression. 'Trinidadian' initiated the exchange with a letter to Trinidad's *Sunday Guardian*. He agreed with Indian missionary P. Kodanda Rao of the Servants of India Society, Poona, and a personal friend of Mahatma Gandhi, that there was no need for the compulsory teaching of Hindi to Indian children

[156] The *Trinidad Guardian's* Indian section existed for several years from 1934. The *Beacon's* section ran from 1932 to the journal's demise in 1933.
[157] *People*, 10 July 1937, pp. 9, 10. The Garveyite was P. O. Thompson.
[158] *Trinidad Guardian*, 29 October 1936, *p. 14*.
[159] Ranjit Kumar, 1981, pp. 12, 13; Kumar was a pioneer in this endeavour. Brinsley Samaroo, 1987, pp. 43, 44.
[160] *Trinidad Guardian*, 11 June 1936, p. 14.
[161] Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), p. 287.
[162] An expatriate Englishman living in Trinidad ignited considerable controversy in 1987 when he gave Hindi equal billing with English as the national languages of Trinidad & Tobago in a publication designed primarily for tourists – *BWIA Sunjet* magazine, 1987, p. 84.

in Trinidad schools. (Rao, who also laboured among the Indians of Guyana, was not the last Indian to consider Indo-Caribbean nationalism excessive.) 'Trinidadian' reviewed the pronouncements of 'prominent' Indo-Trinidadians on the issue. One had said that if Hindi were not taught, Indians would lose their culture. Another said that Indians would become denationalized, and no longer true Indians.

It was all right for Indians to learn Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, or any of the multitudinous languages spoken in India, 'Trinidadian' thought. But it was unreasonable to advocate the compulsory teaching of Hindi. Suppose for the moment that the government did indeed grant the Indian request. This would, in 'Trinidadian's' view, open a Pandora's box of inter- and intra-ethnic strife:

> What will be Government's position when the Negroes of Trinidad also demand that one of the languages of Africa must be compulsorily taught to Negro children in our schools . . . ? Is it to be expected that Government will begin to reorganize our schools to suit the whims of every national community of Trinidad which has representatives of almost every people under the sun . . . ? And if even the Negroes do not agitate because of a broader outlook, is it not a certainty that among the Indians who constitute about one hundred and fifty thousands, you will find one-third approaching Government [for the teaching of Tamil, since Tamils are one-third of the Indian population]?

A demand for Bengali would be next, 'Trinidadian' thought, and the process could potentially be never-ending. He (or she) perceived a misapprehension among Trinidad Indians to the effect that India was a cohesive society with a single 'mother tongue'.[163]

The 'Indian News and Views' section of the *Trinidad Guardian* provided the forum for the Indian response. It came from H. M. Khan of St Joseph. In a minor concession to 'Trinidadian' he urged the teaching of both Hindi and Urdu, the two most popular local Indian languages.

> In advocating the claims of the East Indians I am not unmindful of the claims of the African race . . . . Yet the fact that no similar demand is made by the African people [he ascribed not to] their broader outlook, but [to their] apparent, and to me, sad and deplorable loss of national consciousness. Sad it is indeed for the majority of them have merged themselves in custom, culture and language foreign to their own. Their national spirit seems to be almost dead. . . . East Indians have not as yet reached that phase of life, but if no cognisance is paid to their languages and culture, their story some day will be like their African neighbours.[164]

Khan's analysis went to the heart of the two communities' differing approaches to racial consciousness and was fairly reflective of attitudes among Indian communal leaders. It ignored the special circumstances of slavery and the legislative proscription of African

[163] *Trinidad Guardian, 7* June 1936, p. 4.
[164] *Ibid*, 14 June 1936, p. 26.

religion, music and the like. It also ignored the government-sanctioned activities of the Canadian Mission, Indian government emissaries, 'Protectors of Immigrants' and the whole panoply of Indian protection, for which there was no counterpart in the African community. In dismissing the African claim to 'broader outlook', Khan in fact overlooked a great strength of African nationalism. For people like Henry Sylvester Williams, Garvey, F. E. M. Hercules and Padmore had salvaged what they could from their much-repressed African heritage and had built a new racial consciousness, less dependent on the mechanical transference of African cultural forms, but no less potent for that. This may explain why Africans from the Caribbean often played leadership roles in the Pan-African struggle (not infrequently on the African continent itself), while Caribbean Indians were more likely to be *recipients* of cultural largesse from Mother India.

Khan's ideas nevertheless were then, and continue to be now, orthodoxy among some influential segments of Trinidad Indian opinion. In 1988 the small Trinidad Hindu journal *Sandesh* editorialized in similar vein, though with a slightly new twist: 'The Europeans spared no moment in denuding the Africans of their culture and religion and left no stone unturned in trying to do the same to the Indians. But the Indians were made of stener [sic] stuff . . . '.[165]

Khan said that the East Indian Educational Board had extracted a promise of part-time Hindi and Urdu teachers in schools where Indians predominated. He acknowledged that Trinidad was now home for its Indian community. But his was a Trinidad where Indians would aggressively 'mould their character from Indian Culture, thereby retaining their national consciousness.'[166]

'Trinidadian' predictably took exception to Khan's disparaging remarks on African racial consciousness. He saw Trinidad Indians' fierce communal-ism as reflective of the worst of India itself, where communalism and intolerance were responsible for most of the country's problems. 'The Indian mind is probably the most intolerant in the world,' he declared. 'And this communal and caste intolerance has defied even the vastnesses of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It scorns the distance of many thousand miles between India and Trinidad. . . . And the worst part of it is, they are called Cultures of India, and if you dare to go against them, you are termed denationalised!' 'Trinidadian' finally contrasted the extreme communalism of Trinidad Indians with more progressive elements in India itself. He quoted J. M. Len Gupta of the Indian National Congress, addressing his own people, in terms reminiscent of Karl Marx's essay on 'The British Rule in India': 'If it is found that Hindu Culture means purdah, and Mohammedan Culture means the harem, both

[165] *Sandesh, I* April 1988, p.1.
[166] *Trinidad Guardian*, 14 June 1936, p. 26.

[cultures] must go. If Hindu Culture means caste system and marriage before puberty, and Mohammedan culture means polygamy, none of them should have a place in our social reforms.'[167]

Yet African and Indian nationalisms co-existed reasonably peacefully despite mutually negative stereotypes and petty name-calling. Among some intellectual articulators of Indian consciousness, however, there could be found a mature anti-African racism, reinforced with apparent relish from the prevailing notions of European pseudo-scientific intolerance.

F. E. M. Hosein, the leading Trinidad Indian intellectual of his day (a graduate of Canadian Mission schools, Queen's Royal College, Oxford University and Lincoln's Inn), made something of a classic statement along these lines in 1913, when he likened his African compatriots to 'an inferior race'. The occasion was a major address at an 'inaugural' meeting of the East Indian National Congress. Before a multi-racial (but predominantly Indian) audience which included the British administrator of St Vincent, and Governor Sir George R. LeHunte of Trinidad & Tobago, Hosein predicted the demise of the African population and the ultimate control of the country by Indians. In language indistinguishable from the racist rhetoric of Anthony Trollope, James Anthony Froude and other purveyors of European pseudo-scientific racism,[168] Hosein declared that:

> The Indian was full of his racial prejudice. The time was not when he was not civilized. He had heard of the great races of the earth. But among the great sons of the earth Africa was not mentioned, and when mentioned it was in a humble capacity. From him, the son of India had nothing to learn, – unless, perhaps, something to ridicule. . . .[169]

Hosein's remarks drew instant reprimands from the administrator of St Vincent and Governor LeHunte. The African Trinidadian writer, Algernon Burkett, responded in the press and the *Argos* editorially blasted this 'tirade of a half baked East Indian collegian against the Afro-Trinidadian and tacitly others. . . .'[170]

In 1936 the prominent and not particularly radical African Trinidadian lawyer, Henry Hudson-Phillips, felt similarly compelled to refute publicly a disparaging allegation, this time by the Rev. J. D. Ramkeesoon, Anglican minister and first regular non-white columnist in the *Trinidad Guardian*. Ramkeesoon blamed the Africans, victims both of

[167] *Ibid.*, 21 June 1936, p. 4. In his further response (*Trinidad Guardian*, 28 June 1936, p. 4), Khan rather implausibly suggested that the Hindu-Muslim conflict was 'more of a newspaper propaganda for the outside world'. For Marx's essay see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 1968, pp. 35–41.

[168] See, for example, Eric Williams, 1962 (1993), pp. 30–4.

[169] *Port of Spain Gazette, 6* May 1913, p. 5.

[170] *Argos, 7* May 1913, p. 5, and 8 May 1913, p. 4. But Burkett's biographical sketch of Hosein published in 1914 did not refer to this incident – Algernon A. Burkett, 1914, p. 66.

slavery and the post-slavery assault on free labour, rather than the European planters, for the 'necessity' of importing Indian labour.[171] Like Hosein, Ramkeesoon was again appropriating the prevailing arguments of European anti-African racism. In fact, four years earlier leaders of the Forum Club and the Elementary Teachers' Association of Barbados had protested about similar passages in British-authored textbooks imposed on Caribbean schoolchildren.[172]

The Indo-Guyanese historian, Dwarka Nath, as late as 1970 was still broadcasting these sentiments almost verbatim: 'But nothing could induce [the Africans] to work regularly,' he lamented. The greater number did nothing at all, but lived on such fruits and ground provisions as they could get.'[173] Like Hosein, Ramkeesoon remained unmoved by public criticism. The Colonial Indian Committee, of which he was a member, told the West India Royal Commission in 1939 that 'at a perilous time' in Trinidad's history, Indians had 'saved it from ruin . . . '.[174]

The Indian masses often harboured similar feelings of racial superiority towards Africans. This was a contributory factor (together with fear of Christian proselytization) in a widespread early Indian refusal to send their children to school with Africans. The 1869 Keenan Report on Trinidad education noted that the Indian

> is able fully to appreciate the importance and value of education. But he is proud of his ancient lineage, is influenced by the prejudices of caste, and declines to associate intimately, or to bring up his children in the same school, with créoles of the African race. If, therefore, it be deemed desirable to educate the Coolies, exceptional provisions and arrangements are indispensable.[175]

As late as 1939 Indians in Jamaica and Trinidad were preferring to keep their daughters at home and uneducated rather than letting them attend racially integrated schools. Jamaica's East Indian Association requested a return to the racially exclusive schools of

[171] *Trinidad Guardian** 12 February 1936, pp. 2, 3, 12. The Indian view of Indian immigrants 'rescuing' the Caribbean from ruin induced by 'lazy' Africans remains an enduring and contentious historiographical notion.

[172] *Forum Quarterly*, March 1932, p. 31, quoting the following racist statements 'With the abolition of slavery the prosperity of Jamaica declined. The present population consists largely of blacks most of them averse to work as their wants are few and easily satisfied.' (From *Our Empire Overseas*, published by Blackie and Sons). 'Negroes are lazy, and finding that they could make as much money as they wanted by working only two or three days a week they could not be persuaded to work more and most of the West Indian planters were in consequence ruined.' (From Professor Meiklejohn's *Short History of England*). Eric Williams has refuted these arguments – Eric Williams, 1970 (1984), pp. 328–60.

[173] Dwarka Nath, 1950 (1970), p. 6.

[174] J. D. Tyson, 1939, p. 101. For other similar Indian submissions to the commission see also pp. 95 and 96.

[175] Patrick J. Keenan, 1869, p. 47.

the indenture period, but that island's Director of Education preferred a policy of 'no race discrimination'. In Trinidad an Indian government representative, like Keenan in 1869, endorsed local Indian requests, which included enhanced recognition for Hindu and Muslim schools, 'non-Christian Indian teachers', and a technical institute exclusively for Indians, although the latter never materialized.[176]

Such attitudes were reinforced by the colour-caste system of Hinduism, which held light skin in high regard. While intra-Indian caste distinction tended to diminish in the Caribbean, the Indian community as a whole incorporated Africans into their scheme of things as the blackest and lowest of outcasts.[177] Some associated Africans with 'the demon Rakshasa and Ravan the enemy of the God Rama…'[178]

Indo-Trinidadian nationalist, H. P. Singh, pointed out in 1965 that Hinduism recognized four main castes. 'Outside the pale was a fifth class, the Panchamas, … the "untouchables, the unapproachables and the unlookables."' Below these outcasts came the rest of humankind (but, in this context, Africans specifically). Any advocacy of Indian-African miscegenation would be 'asking Indians to violate their sacred laws'.[179] (The Dalits or Untouchables of India, on the other hand, have in recent years reached out to African Americans for support in their struggle against upper-caste Hindu oppression.)[180]

Indian racial disdain for Africans was also influenced by Indian attitudes towards Europeans. Despite occasional fatal clashes between Indian workers and European plantation managers, there was often a deep Indian posture of admiration and respect for Europeans. Whites had brought the Indians to the Caribbean in conditions of semi-slavery, but they also occupied a special paternalistic and benevolent relationship with Indians. Whites were also the power élite in a multi-racial society. By judiciously offering a limited promise of Indian-European racial kinship, the European community could provide the hope of exalted status, at least over the Africans. Some benevolent Europeans even founded and participated in Indian organizations. Suriname's first important Indian organization, the Suriname Immigrants' Association, was founded in 1910 by a Dutch immigration agent-general.[181] An English Methodist missionary organized the Susamachar East Indian Young Men's Society in Guyana in 1919. Other British missionaries followed him as leaders of

[176] J. D. Tyson, 1939, pp. 8, 71–2, 87, 99.
[177] Walton Look Lai, 1993, p. 255.
[178] K. O. Laurence, 1994, p. 279.
[179] H. P. Singh, 1993, p. 97. Singh's ideas were apparently widely held, though not necessarily always expressed so forthrightly. See, for example, Rabindranath R. Maharaj, 1977, p. 82.
[180] V. T. Rajshekar, 1987, p. 4.
[181] Rosemarijn Hoefte, 1990, p. 148. The association originally included Indonesians, but it soon became all-Indian.

the organization.[182] At the society's inaugural meeting the acting Governor, Cecil Clementi, delivered an address on 'The Kinship between the Indian and British Races'.[183]

Clementi is sometimes considered one of Guyana's more racist British rulers.[184] Yet his declaration of 'kinship' with Indians suggests a fascinating, though as yet unexplored, further dimension of anti-African feeling among the Indians. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a flowering of European adulation for the supposed Aryan super-race who had thousands of years ago allegedly subjugated India and enshrined the idea of a master race via the caste system. All-conquering Europe of the modern age became the latest manifestation of Aryan genius. 'Sir William Hunter's *Imperial Gazeteer of India* (1881) referred to the Aryan as "the splendid ... stock from which the Brahman, the Rajput, and the Englishman alike descend.'"[185] Indo-Caribbeans could therefore now bask in the glory of a presumed Aryan kinship with the British. A British finance minister in the Government of India in 1862 saw the British presence there as an expression of 'a sacred mission, to stretch out the right hand of aid to our weaker [Indian] brother, who once far outstripped us, but has now fallen behind in the race.'[186] An Indo-Surinamese Marxist historian saw Suriname's 'Indian compradors', even in the post-independence era, as still promoting 'the colonial view according to which Indian culture was more close to the "normal" white culture.'[187]

Many of these racial factors came into play in the success of the Canadian Mission. Indians respected the Canadians in part 'because they were white'.[188] The Canadians in turn championed political causes seen as anti-African by the African community and helped institutionalize Indian exclusivism.[189] The occasional white racist statement directed against Indians did not materially affect the relationship discussed here. The resulting paradox saw the African Trinidadian historian Eric Williams much more exercised over European racist treatment of the Indians than is the case among most contemporary Indo-Caribbean historians themselves.[190]

The insistent advocacy of racial nationalism on the part of Indo-Caribbean leaders did not completely stem the tide of acculturation to the larger societies. The twentieth

[182] Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), pp. 218, 250–1.
[183] *Ibid*., p. 249.
[184] Francis M. Drakes, 1991, pp. 8, 9; Eusi Kwayana, 1988, p. 49.
[185] V. T. Rajshekar, 1994, *p. 26*.
[186] *Ibid*., p. 27, quoting Samuel Laing, 1862. Europe's infatuation with Aryanism culminated in Adolf Hitler.
[187] Sandew Hira, 1987, p. 205.
[188] Brinsley Samaroo, 1975, pp. 48.
[189] *Ibid*, pp. 54, 55.
[190] For example, Eric Williams, 1962 (1993), pp. 109, 110.

century witnessed a steady increase in Indian participation in such African-dominated cultural expressions as Trinidad carnival and calypso music. Sometimes such acculturation took place in spite of the strident efforts of the Indian leadership.

Newspaper photographs of the 1930s, even on the pages set aside for Indian opinion, already showed the inexorable progress of acculturation. There were scenes of Western-style weddings, and the exceptional photo of the marriage of a prominent Indian businessman to an Afro-Caribbean woman. There was the picture of Ms. Guyadeen's dance class in Trinidad, featuring girls, predominantly but not exclusively Indian, posing in the stylized gestures of European dance. Prominently featured in Ms. Guyadeen's class was Freida McBurnie, sister of Beryl McBurnie, the great figure of Trinidad's Afro-Caribbean dance.[191]

Powerful elements within the Indian leadership cautioned against such signs of acculturation. Attacks on the 'denationalization' of their people and programmes of 're-Indianization' have been the largely successful devices used to whip the Indian masses back into line. 'The process of denationalization of the Indian born in this colony is even now proceeding rapidly apace and unchecked,' F. E. M. Hosein wrote in 1922; and there was 'every indication that the younger generation of East Indians will be completely assimilated with and absorbed by the coloured race' if something were not done soon. He sought to forestall assimilation and 'preserve the purity and pride of race'.[192]

Trinidad's *East Indian Weekly* in 1929 bemoaned the increasingly denationalized young generation which had done nothing to advance the race and was 'day by day, becoming increasingly disrespectful to their women folk.' Missionary Pundit Jaimini had reversed this trend, however, for 'whereas previously there has been [a] sort of losing of ground, now a spirit of renaissance, or of race-determination, or race consciousness has gone forward throughout the whole Indian community.'[193]

The Indian government's emissary, J. D. Tyson, provided the formula for continued successful re-Indianization in 1939 when he astutely pointed out that while some acculturation was unavoidable, it was not necessarily inconsistent with the laudable goal of Indian nationalism. The correct strategy, he advised, was for 'the Indian, while retaining his purity of race [to] become a Trinidadian in outlook. . . .'[194]

Despite the competing nationalisms, there has often been a lingering perception on both sides that this did not amount to serious racial animosity. C. L. R. James ventured

[191] Interview with Frieda McBurnie-Artmann, Trinidad, 28 January 1987.
[192] *East Indian Weekly*, 12 January 1929, p. 3.
[193] *Ibid., 9* February 1929, p. 10.
[194] J. D. Tyson, 1939, p. 26.

the opinion in 1938, perhaps unduly sanguine even for that period, that there was 'no racial ill-feeling' between Indians and Africans in Trinidad.[195] One Muslim and two Hindu organizations informed the visiting British Moyne Com mission at about the same time that there was no racial prejudice in Trinidad.[196] In 1966, after the worst racial riots in British Caribbean history, Marxist Cheddi Jagan still argued that '[r]ace has never been a serious problem' in Guyana.[197]

Nor was the African population reluctant to encourage the more benign expressions of Indian nationalism. Such an opportunity was afforded by a celebratory banquet of 1936 for Leslie Grant Dookhie, Trinidad's fifth Indian Island Scholarship winner, and the first to capture the Jerningham Gold Medal in the process. Dookhie, a 'son of India', had distinguished himself, thereby proving 'not only a credit to himself, or his parents, but to the East Indians of the colony'.[198] C. Henry Pierre, a featured speaker for the occasion, considered it 'a natural and laudable' thing for Indians to be proud of one of their own. 'This race-consciousness is a difficult, if not impossible, thing to cast into the Stygian waters of oblivion,' he said. 'In spite of every effort, it proves irrepressible and asserts itself at every odd moment.' But he did not favour the demand, coming from some quarters, for a specially Indian education for Indo-Trinidadian youth. For 'it seems to me,' he argued, 'that for weal or for woe, the present and future of Trinidad Indians are inextricably bound with the destiny of this beautiful and gorgeous island of ours.' He acknowledged, however, that he was treading on sensitive ground – 'I have said enough either to bring down the approval or the ire of many but I do not mind; it is an honest conviction even though it may be erroneous.'[199]

Indo-Caribbean nationalism has been supported by a plethora of racially-focused organizations extending into every sphere of life. The East Indian Institute was founded around 1892 as British Guiana's first 'organized attempt to bring Indians together' for social, economic, political and other reasons.[200] This was followed in 1916 by the omnibus British Guiana East Indian Association (BGEIA). The association's constitution was an articulate and representative statement of Indo-Caribbean nationalist aspirations. It promised in part:

> 1. To unite the members of the East Indian race in all parts of the colony for representative purposes . . .

[195] C. L. R. James, 1938b (1994), p. 58.
[196] Brinsley Samaroo, 1974, p. 95.
[197] Cheddi Jagan, 1966, p. 289.
[198] *Trinidad Guardian, 2* July 1936, p. 4.
[199] *Ibid., 4* July 1936, p. 8. Pierre was of mixed African and Indian ancestry but still well-respected in the Indian community.
[200] Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), p. 234.

> 5. To secure representatives of East Indian nationality in the Legislature and in all corporations where the interests of East Indians are concerned or stand to be affected, every candidate selected, to give a pledge, beforehand, to protect and further the interests of the race, as far as it lies in his power . . .
>
> 7. To urge the establishment of special Government Schools under East Indian Masters for the teaching of both Hindi and English to children of East Indian parents . . .
>
> 11. To advocate and promote, by all possible legitimate means, the intellectual, moral, social, economical, political and general public interest and "welfare of the East Indian community at large . . .[201]

Trinidad's counterparts of the BGEIA were the East Indian National Association (1897) and the East Indian National Congress (1909). Jamaica in 1938 boasted an East Indian National Association and a 'newly formed' East Indian National Union.[202] Throughout the twentieth century exclusively Indian organizations have permeated every sphere of existence. An East Indian Literary and Debating Association was active in Trinidad in 1917. Clubs bearing similar names were still active decades later.[203] There was an East Indian Cricket Club in Guyana in 1914 and both individual clubs and an East Indian Cricket Board of Control in Trinidad. International matches were arranged (e.g. in 1942) between Indian teams from both countries.[204]

The Balak Sahaita Mandalee (Child Welfare Society) founded in Guyana in 1936 had as its motto, 'Better mothers, better children, better house life and a better Indian community.'[205] Trinidad boasted a Trinidad Girls in Training, 'an organization for East Indian teen age girls in the Canadian Mission.'[206] In an apparent effort to parallel the work of Trinidad's premier social worker, Audrey Jeffers, Indian leaders in 1936 attempted to establish a 'Breakfast Shed for Indian children'. The moving force behind the effort was A. C. B. Singh, president of the Trinidad Indian League and chairman of the East Indian Social Workers of Port of Spain. 'If we have any element of sympathetic and charitable feelings for which our race is so characteristic,' he said, then his committee should 'leave no stone unturned . . . to enhance our position in the colony . . . '[207]

[201] *Ibid., pp. 235*, 236.

[202] J. D.Tyson, 1939, p. 10.

[203] For example, *Port of Spain Gazette*, 18 December 1919, p. 4 (East Indian Literary Club); *Trinidad Guardian, 5* July 1936, p. 2 (Indian Literary and Debating Club); H. P. Singh, 1993, pp.xvi-xvii (the Minerva Club, 'an Indian Social, Literary and Debating Club' of the 1930s and 1940s).

[204] For example, Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), p. 256; *Trinidad Guardian*, 2 March 1939, p. 5; *Port of Spain Gazette*, 22 November 1942, p. 6.

[205] Peter Ruhomon, 1938 (1988), pp. 251, 252.

[206] *Trinidad Guardian*, 14 June 1936, *p. 26*.

[207] *Ibid., 7* May 1936, p. 4. Among the members of Singh's committee were Mrs F. E. M. Hosein of Arima, C. B. Mathura (later a well-known politician) and H. P. Singh, the 'Father of Indian Nationalism in Trinidad' to his followers.

During the Second World War some Trinidad Indians wished to form a separate Indian contingent.[208] There was a short-lived Indian Teachers Union in Trinidad combining the Canadian Mission Teachers Association, the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha (Hindu) Teachers Association and the Muslim Teachers Association.[209] A 1947 editorial in the Trinidad *Observer*, edited by H. P. Singh, referred to recently abortive efforts at an Indian motor insurance company, an Indian Chamber of Commerce and an Indian Welfare Committee.[210]

The India Club (1942–54), an ostensibly social organization in Port of Spain's exclusive Queens Park West, was started by Dr D. P. Pandia, a visiting Indian Congress Party member. 'Clearly,' commented an Indo-Trinidadian historian of this development, 'the Indian community [in Trinidad] viewed itself as a distinct and separate community, one nation living in a common space with other nations.'[211] Pandia also founded several other Indian political, cultural and welfare associations throughout Trinidad.[212] Other social clubs of this period and later carried names such as the West India Club and Himalaya Club. By the 1980s and 1990s, with Indo-Trinidadian nationalism possibly at its most strident ever, the University of the West Indies (Trinidad campus) boasted a Society for the Propagation of Indian Culture (SPIC), which was inevitably followed by the Society for the Propagation of African Nationalism (SPAN).[213] An Indo-Trinidadian nationalist was probably correct when he observed in the 1990s that Indians 'were the most organized community in Trinidad.'[214]

Indian organization has been paralleled over the years by Indian publications. In Trinidad these have included *Koh-i-noor* (1898–99), the *East Indian Herald* (1919), the *East Indian Patriot* (1921–25), *East Indian Weekly* (1928–32), the *Indian Magazine* (1937), the *Sentinel* (1946), the *West Indian Magnet* (1932), the *Statesman (c* 1940s), the *Observer* (1941) and *Sandesh* (1980s).[215] Guyana in the 1930s published *Indian Opinion* and the *Guiana Indian*. In politics Indian nationalism has run the gamut from the early efforts at communal representation to open advocacy of Indian parties to calls for secession and the building of an Indian 'homeland' or empire in the West.

In 1944 the communal representation idea was still alive and well when Trinidad's Adrian Cola Rienzi (born Krishna Deonarine) threatened (unsuccessfully) to demand

[208] *Trinidad Guardian*, 21 February 1942, p. 4. There is a reference here to a similar call for a Chinese contingent.
[209] H. P. Singh, 1993, p.xlii. No date is given here but it appears to be *circa* the 1940s to early 1950s.
[210] *Ibid.*, p.xxiv.
[211] *Ibid*. Pagination in this book is erratic. Sometimes more than one page bear the same number.
[212] *Ibid.*, p.xxv.
[213] Keith Smith, 1993, p. 7. According to Smith SPIC was 'to many on campus, a racist organization.'
[214] H. P. Singh, 1993, p.xxvii.
[215] *Ibid.*, pp. xvii-xx for information on most of these.

'special representatives on all elective and representative bodies.'[216] Trinidad's Indian Association sought (also unsuccessfully) to have proportional representation enshrined in the country's 1962 independence constitution. A three-man delegation (H. P. Singh, Lennox Deyalsingh and Kenneth Lalla) was despatched to London for the purpose.[217] In the 1970s Vernon Jamadar, representing one faction of the Indian-dominated Democratic Labour Party, renewed the call for proportional representation.[218] In Guyana, where ethnic animosity led to serious violence, all major political players, including the British government, had by 1964 come around to advocacy of proportional representation (though there was no agreement as to its precise implementation).[219]

The plethora of separatist cultural and social organizations and the early and frequent calls for communal representation did not automatically translate into exclusively Indian political parties. From the limited representative government introduced into Trinidad by the Wood Report of the 1920s, to universal adult suffrage in 1946 (and beyond), Indian politicians often participated in multi-racial parties and groupings. This was true of both major early parties, the Trinidad Workingmen's Association/Labour Party of A. A. Cipriani and the British Empire Workers and Citizens Home Rule Party of Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler. Timothy Roodal was leader of the southern section of the former in the 1920s; Adrian Cola Rienzi, a veteran of the radical Indian National Party of the 1920s, became a leading Butler collaborator in the 1930s. In Guyana Joseph A. Luckhoo in 1916 became the first Indian to be elected to the legislature. He did so as a candidate for the multi-racial People's Association.[220]

To many, both observers and participants, it was universal adult suffrage (1946 in Trinidad & Tobago, 1948 in Suriname, 1953 in Guyana), with its new potential for appeals to the mass of citizens, that brought race to the forefront of electoral politics. Trinidadian Dr Patrick Solomon, an electoral candidate in 1946 and later deputy prime minister under Eric Williams, blamed Indians for this development.[221] H. P. Singh blamed Africans.[222] From this point on, the Hindi expression meaning 'vote for your own' passed into the political vocabularies of Trinidad (*apan jhaat*), Suriname (*apanjaht*) and Guyana (*appan jaaf*). In 1958 chief minister Eric Williams of Trinidad deplored a letter from 'Yours Truly,

[216] Brinsley Samaroo, 1974, p. 95. Rienzi was contesting the Franchise Committee's recommendation of English language tests for voting eligibility.
[217] H. P. Singh, 1993, p.xiv, and pp. 23–56, text of *idem*, 1962.
[218] John Gaffar La Guerre, 1974, p. 105.
[219] Hamilton Green, 1987, p. 90; Cheddi Jagan, 1966, p. 314.
[220] Francis M. Drakes, 1991, p. 8.
[221] Patrick Solomon, 1981, p. 75.
[222] H. P. Singh, 1993, p.xliii.

Indian' to 'My Dear Indian Brothers,' said to have been circulated by partisans of the Indian-dominated Democratic Labour Party. The letter contained 'nothing of taxation or Government policy,' he noted. It was 'sheer race,...'[223] In 1961 Janet Jagan, American-Jewish wife of Indo-Guyanese politician Cheddi Jagan, denied a newspaper allegation that she had openly advocated *appan jaat*.[224] Her husband blamed 'Indian racist leaders' for 'originat[ing]' the term.[225]

Indian nationalism became entrenched in Trinidad politics with the appearance of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to contest the 1956 elections. Bhadase Sagan Maraj doubled as leader of the major Hindu organization, the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha, and the new party. The result was a party that was perhaps closer to Hindu communal association than orthodox political party. It lacked the basic political structures (party groups, a constitution, etc.) and relied instead on pundits, prayer meetings and the like[226] to spread a political message clothed in the authority of religious and racial sanctions.

The PDP's offspring, the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), inherited the mantle of an Indian party, though with an infusion of multi-racial appointees imposed from the top of its still haphazard party structure. Some Indo-Trinidadian intellectuals were among the critics of the communalization of Trinidad Indian politics. 'It was a great pity,' they wrote of the DLP, 'that the broader, national issues were not emphasized as against the narrow racial problems.' On the PDP/DLP continuum of the 1950s and 1960s they observed:

> The link between the Maha Sabha and the politicians ensured a preoccupation with the cultural concerns of one racial grouping and discouraged the mass of East Indians from looking critically at the society and their leaders.
>
> A leader was judged by his ability to erect temples or chant the rudiments of Hindi. His ability to discuss the problems of an emergent country was hardly even considered.[227]

The communalization of Indian politics in Trinidad was heightened with the rise of Eric Williams and his People's National Movement (PNM) in 1956. Williams was heir to a hundred years of African struggle at the centre of Trinidad politics. Africans inevitably predominated in the PNM's hierarchy and membership. Williams' gifted leadership unleashed the pent-up African nationalist fervour of decades, as British colonialism seemed headed for certain demise. Yet the PNM was never a narrowly communal party, in the manner

[223] *Trinidad Guardian, 2* April 1958, pp. 1, 13. See also Selwyn D. Ryan, 1972, p. 191.
[224] *Thunder* (Guyana), 13 May 1961, p. 3.
[225] Cheddi Jagan, 1966, p. 114. Hamilton Green blamed Jagan's party – see Hamilton Green, 1987, pp. 50, 58.
[226] Selwyn D. Ryan, 1972, pp. 141, 143.
[227] John Gaffar La Guerre *et al*, 1973, pp. 5, 6.

of the PDP and the DLP. It aspired to be a genuine national party which reflected its multi-racial society.

In the prospect of PNM rule, the more extreme elements of Indian nationalism saw writ large all the fears of their forefathers, who had consistently sought communal representation since the early 1900s. For H. P. Singh in 1956, 'A vote for a PNM candidate [would be] a vote against the Indian community ....' And PNM rule meant, in the words of a Singh disciple, 'racist black fascist neo-colonial domination.'[228] Singh was an executive member of the DLP but chafed at the efforts of its leaders to impose a multi-racial executive on its Hindu base. He insisted on a totally 'Indian organization – call it a political party if you will .... We are conscious of the full implications of the advocacy of such a measure ...,'[229] It was to this end that he formed the small Indian Association of Trinidad and Tobago in 1962.[230]

Criticism of this nature, compounded by a PNM defeat at the federal elections of 1958, caused Williams to call the Hindu-based DLP a "'recalcitrant and hostile minority" ... masquerading as the Indian Nation and prostituting the name of India "for its selfish and reactionary political ends."'[231] In India itself, Williams showed, the (Trinidad) Maha Sabha's namesake had been denounced by leader Jawaharlal Nehru as representing 'small upper class reactionary groups taking advantage of the religious passions of the masses ...'[232] He dismissed the local Maha Sabha types as 'reactionary Indian politicians who see the political leader as a man of racialism....'[233]

The PDP/DLP group underwent various name changes in later years. In a coalition with African (often ex-PNM) and French Creole elements it shared power in the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) government of 1986–91, only to reconstitute itself as a separate party (this time called the United National Congress), when the NAR coalition unravelled. The UNC finally became the government in 1995, with the help of the Tobago-based remnants of the NAR.

The historic quest for Indian communalism has sometimes led, especially in recent years, to extremist demands for partition and/or secession. In the 1950s there were calls and rumours of calls for a Guyana-Trinidad unification, presumably to constitute 'an East

[228] H. P. Singh, 1993, pp.xlv, xlvi, Ixiii.
[229] *Ibid*., p. 3.
[230] In response to PNM questions raised in parliament the DLP eventually tried to distance themselves from Singh, while resisting pressure to disavow him unequivocally – *Ibid*., p.1xv.
[231] *Trinidad Guardian, 2* April 1958, p. 13.
[232] Selwyn D. Ryan, 1972, p. 140, quoting Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India* (no further reference given).
[233] Eric Williams, 1959, p. 107. Williams thought here that 'little remains of ... African culture ...'

Indian Empire.'[234] Similar sentiments were said to have been expressed in the 1940s.[235] Trinidad's Indian Association in its 1962 pre-independence memorandum to the British government demanded 'parity' (defined as 50 per cent of civil service, police, legislative and other appointments) or 'partition'.[236]

In the 1980s some Indo-Trinidadians sought entry into Canada as 'refugees' from alleged political persecution in Trinidad.[237] Others sought entry into the United States on similar grounds.[238] Such 'refugees' may have been among those who constituted themselves the Indesh Freedom Party in 1990. From Canada they claimed a substantial portion of Trinidad for the establishment of an 'Indian homeland'.[239]

A coalition of Trinidad-based Indian groups countered 'with the more grandiose proposal of a federated homeland of Bharatiyadesh/Industan, comprising Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname. Its 1991 'Declaration on the Question of the Creation in the Americas of an Indian Homeland' announced that 'it is only with the creation of Bharatiyadesh/Industan can the Indian spirit realize its full potential. This vision of Bharatiyadesh/Industan is latent in the very being of every Indian, it has been a persistent and strong desire, a longing, a dream – a vision awaiting realisation.'[240]

Secessionist tendencies in most countries have been accompanied by violence. Indo-Caribbean nationalism has also been characterized by persistent undertones of threatened violence. H. P. Singh saw violence as inevitable where two peoples co-existed in the same space – 'one must as a rule become the HAMMER,' he warned, 'and the other the ANVIL.'[241] His disciples in 1993 saw violence as a viable option for attainment of an Indian homeland. If 'peaceful constitutional means' proved ineffective, they wrote, 'Indians should not hesitate to use militant means for ultimate freedom.'[242] 'Ethnic tensions reached their peak [in pre-independence Suriname of the early 1970s] with stoning,

[234] H. P. Singh, 1993, p. 117; Cheddi Jagan, 1966, p. 299, quoting the British Robertson Commission of 1954 in Guyana.

[235] H. P. Singh, 1993, p. 115.

[236] *Ibid., c.l.*

[237] *Ibid.*, p. 115. This was also widely discussed in the Trinidad press.

[238] The present writer was approached by public defenders in the Boston area who sought historical data to make a case for indigent Indo-Trinidadians facing deportation. The potential deportees were seeking refugee status.

[239] H. P. Singh, 1993, p. 117.

[240] *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 119. The groups were the Indian Review Committee, Equality Editorial Committee and Indian Arrival Day Committee.

[241] *Ibid.*, p. 48. Singh's thinly veiled threats of violence were expressed as early as 1953 – see p.xliii.

[242] *Ibid*, p.1xvii.

arson, and continued protest demonstrations mounted by Hindustanis and others against the Creole-led [independence] movement.'[243]

As early as 1913, F. E. M. Hosein resorted to ambiguously militaristic metaphors to 'play the prophet' and suggested that the 'invasion from India' would in time 'drive out the rest of the inhabitants' of Trinidad. 'The African was not as productive as the East Indian,' he said, 'and if circumstances did not compel him to leave the colony, he would naturally die out.' Indians would then become 'master of the whole island . . . '. Governor G. R. Le Hunte rose from the audience in an unusual gesture to object, *inter alia*, to Hosein's use of the terms 'invasion' and 'master'.[244]

During the election campaign of 1964 in Guyana, People's Progressive Party candidate Brindley H. Benn is said to have urged Indians to 'sharpen your cutlasses'.[245] In Trinidad, DLP leader Rudranath Capildeo in 1961 told an election campaign audience variously estimated at between 17,000 and 35,000 people, 'I am asking you to arm yourselves with a weapon in order to take over this country.'[246] The government of Eric Williams later declared a state of emergency in some DLP strongholds.

It was in Guyana, however, that the potential for violence inherent in the co-existing nationalisms became manifest. Guyana received the largest number of Indian immigrants in the region. By 1911 Indians were already officially the largest ethnic group (helped by the separation of 'Coloureds/Mixed' from 'Blacks' in the census).[247]

Africans in Guyana complained longer and more bitterly than their compatriots elsewhere of the British assault on their well-being brought about by Indian immigration. They often demanded equal facilities for African and Caribbean immigration to redress the population imbalance being foisted upon them. A. R. F. Webber raised this question in 1924 in his reply to the Governor's speech, read on behalf of the elected members in the colonial legislature. The lectives wanted a more vigorous government pursuit of Caribbean immigration, instead of 'pursuing feverishly our activities in India'. Webber warned of 'a large body of public opinion [which] feels that it is essentially necessary to preserve the balance of the races in the colony, and not allow any one race to become too predominant.'[248]

In 1925 Garveyites were among those appointed to a government-appointed committee looking into the possible importation of 'agricultural families of African race and origin'

[243] Edward Dew, 1990, p. 195.
[244] *Port of Spain Gazette, 6* May 1913, p. 5.
[245] Hamilton Green, 1987, p. 102.
[246] *Sunday Guardian*, 15 October 1961, quoted in Selwyn D. Ryan, 1972, p. 268.
[247] Walton Look Lai, 1993, p. 302.
[248] *Index to Debates of Combined Court*, 1924, 1925, p. 186, at Guyana National Archives, Georgetown. Webber was the Senior Financial Representative.

under the Colonization Scheme of 1919. A year earlier the Negro Progress Convention petitioned the Governor to appoint a committee to visit the Caribbean and Africa in search of immigrants who would come in 'on the same terms and conditions as are being offered to the Indians'. In 1919 a large delegation had asked Lord Milner, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to facilitate African immigration.[249] To add insult to injury, while Indian missionaries and Indian government emissaries were free to foster Indian nationalism, African-American race-uplift publications (including Marcus Garvey's *Negro World*) were banned.[250] Serious conflict between Indians and Africans was nevertheless long avoided because patterns of residential separation, until the 1940s, restricted day-to-day contact.

Universal adult suffrage in 1953 brought an electoral victory for the People's Progressive Party (PPP), led by the Indian Cheddi Jagan and the African Forbes Burnham. Some see this collaboration as a golden age of interracial co-operation, while others see it as an enlightened effort at the top which did not permeate down through the ranks of the PPP. The British ousted Jagan from government after 133 days for his Marxism, followed by a split in 1955 between Jagan and Burnham. Burnham's PPP faction eventually became the People's National Congress (PNC). The now predominantly Indian PPP won elections of 1957 and 1961 with the predominantly African PNC forming the major opposition party. The period 1962–4 saw inter-racial violence on a scale hitherto not known in the anglophone Caribbean. The British government introduced proportional representation in 1964, resulting in a PPP defeat at the polls that year. Some voices could be heard in the period from 1953 to 1964 in favour of partition of the country. It is noteworthy, however, that even in the most perilous times both major parties sought to maintain a least an appearance of inter-racial co-operation in their respective ranks.

The efforts to reconcile political separatism with a racial *modus Vivendi* have been at their most pragmatic in Suriname, where the three major political parties unabashedly based themselves on the three largest ethnic groups of Hindustanis (Indians), Creoles (primarily Africans, but not including the majority of African Maroons) and Indonesians. (Creole and Hindustani emigrants in Holland even vote for diferent Dutch parties.)[251] Major efforts at co-existence were directed at building coalition governments rather than forcing integration within each party. At one time in the 1950s and 1960s the Creole and Hindustani parties remained in coalition for 15 years. The military government's effort (1980–7) at

[249] *Negro World*, 9 May 1925, p. 6, quoting an article from the *Daily Argosy*, n.d.

[250] Officer Administering the Government, C. Clementi to Rt. Hon. Viscount Milner, PC, etc. etc., 2 September 1919, CO 111/624, Public Record Office, London. See also Tony Martin, 1976 (1986) p. 95.

[251] Wilhelmina van Watering, 1990, p. 295.

what one writer called ‘anti-apanjaht Utopianism’[252] gave way eventually to a resumption of coalition politics among separatist elements.

Indo-Caribbean nationalism may eventually co-exist peacefully with its African counterpart in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Escalating conflict cannot, however, be automatically ruled out. Indo-Caribbeans at times see themselves as the Jews of the Caribbean, evoking violent analogies with Nazi Germany and Palestine. ‘Hindus are like Jews,’ Indo-Trinidadian businessman Motilal Moonan told an interviewer. ‘They have an inner drive to do the best they can. Moreover, in Hinduism it is no sin to be wealthy.’[253] For the ex- tremist H. P. Singh the analogy had violent implications: ‘[Trinidad] is Nazi Germany and the Jews are the Indians.’[254] It was left to the British Moyne Commission in 1938–9 to warn against the potentially disastrous consequences of this analogy: ‘We would avoid any system of sectional quotas which would lead to the deplorable system of “government by arithmetic,” the adoption of which in Palestine . . . if anything exacerbates communal feelings instead of allaying it.’[255]

Compared with many parts of the world, Caribbean ethnic tensions have not been very severe. Yet the challenge remains – how to prevent ethnic nationalism from spilling over into ethnic violence.

[252] Edward Dew, 1990, p. 194. On Indian hostility to independence see Albert Gastmann, 1971, p. 146.
[253] Dave Ramsaran, 1993, pp. 113, 114.
[254] H. P. Singh, 1993, p. 48.
[255] Quoted by Hugh Tinker in Bridget Brereton and Winston Dookeran, 1982, p. 41.